

The London School of Economics and Political Science

**BYZANTINE HERITAGE, ARCHAEOLOGY, AND
POLITICS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE:
RUSSIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE IN
CONSTANTINOPLE (1894-1914)**

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A dissertation submitted to the Department of International History of the
London School of Economics and Political Science for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy, London, September 2014.

Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

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Abstract

This dissertation will analyse the history of the Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople, which operated between 1895 and 1914. Established under the administrative structure of the Russian Embassy in Constantinople, the institute occupied a place at the intersection of science and politics. Focusing nearly exclusively on Byzantine and Slavic antiquities in the Ottoman Empire, the activities of the institute reflected the imperial identity of Russia at the turn of the century. As was explicitly expressed by Russian diplomats, bureaucrats, and scholars, the establishment of an archaeological institution in the Ottoman capital was regarded as a foreign policy tool to extend Russia's influence in the Near East, a tool of "soft power" in modern parlance.

On the Ottoman side, foreign archaeological activities were regarded with suspicion especially in the later part of the 19th century. In an attempt to preserve its vulnerable sovereignty, Ottoman Empire closely monitored foreign archaeological activities on its territories. For the Ottoman Empire, archaeology was also a way of projecting its image as a modern, Westernised empire. For both Russian and Ottoman archaeologists, European scholarship was regarded as an example that should be followed, and a rival at the same time.

Russian archaeologists had to close down their office with the outbreak of World War I. The complications that arose with the disintegration of the institute were solved only in the late 1920s between the Soviet Union and Republican Turkey, under completely different political circumstances.

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Introduction

An ancient site, a monument, and an object of archaeological interest may have multiple histories and multiple meanings, depending on the position of the interpreter. An ancient monument is not only a reminder of a bygone past, but it is also a medium for the (re)construction and (re)making of identity through a particular interpretation of history. After all, remembering and interpreting the history of an ancient monument in a specific way, while ignoring other possible readings, is a political choice.

Ancient monuments, especially those with a controversial history, may be claimed by different ideological, social, ethnic groups within a society, or may be the object of international competition. This statement was also true for the antiquities found in the Ottoman Empire, especially in Constantinople in the late 19th century, where not only the ancient heritage, but the very territory was an object of political rivalry. In other words, the competition over antiquities may be correlated with political competition between different groups. Multiple actors with opposed world-views may promote their conflicting interests through the symbolism of historical monuments. The past, especially distant past, can be read and interpreted in a variety of ways, which often compete with each other for legitimacy. In the same vein, a particular ethnic, religious, social group's acquisition of a historical monument may signify a symbolic victory over assumed opponents. Ancient history is a useful terrain for states, which try to cultivate national identity and legitimise their contemporary political agendas by making references to a distant past. In this regard, items of cultural capital are

transformed into markers of contemporary identity.¹ The meaning of monuments may be manipulated by state authorities in a fashion that would suit official historiography.

Historical artefacts are particularly instrumental in the creation of nationalist discourses.

Broadly, the underlying question that motivated this dissertation is the interaction between archaeological scholarship and imperial identity, specifically the imperial identities of the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire in the late 19th century. Of course, identity is a very vague and open-ended concept and needs further elaboration. In both Russia and the Ottoman Empire, archaeology was nearly exclusively an elitist preoccupation in the period under examination. In addition, governments, not private institutions, were the most active promoters of archaeological activity. Therefore, the identity as revealed by archaeology mostly reflected the identity promoted by statesmen, bureaucrats, and to a certain extent, intellectuals and academics influential enough to inspire governmental activities. In other words, despite the broadness suggested by the term imperial identity, this dissertation is interested in understanding the identity embraced and promoted by a narrow segment of the society, as reflected by archaeological activities.

In the case of the Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople (RAIK), the relationship between Russian foreign policy priorities, imperial identity and archaeological projects was quite clear, as it was often emphasised both by Russian diplomats and archaeologists who encouraged the establishment of the institute. The projects of RAIK reflected Russian imperial identity and underlying ideological tenets

¹ David C. Harvey, “National Identities and the Politics of Ancient Heritage: Continuity and Change at Ancient Monuments in Britain and Ireland, c. 1675-1850,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, Vol. 28, No. 4 (December 2013), p. 473.

of Russian foreign policy at the turn of the century. At the same time, the shortcomings and failures of RAIK shed light on the limits of Russia's political influence abroad.

RAIK came into existence at a time when there was increasing international political competition over the Balkans and rest of the Ottoman territories. There was pressure both from above and from below: on the one hand, nationalist movements swept through Ottoman territories. On the other hand, European powers worked hard to preserve the international status quo in the face of Ottoman decline. Russia's inevitable rivalry with European powers, and the necessity to catch up with them in every sphere, including science, appeared frequently as a theme in the discourse of Russian archaeologists and diplomats. In the late 19th century, overseas archaeological institutes were the visual expressions of the political influence of European empires over a given region. The people behind the establishment of RAIK argued that if other European empires invested in archaeology, then Russia should follow the same path. Archaeological scholarship was regarded as a sign of prestige and civilisation, and a tool for extending political influence at the same time.

In addition to highlighting Russian imperial identity, RAIK's contacts with the Ottoman Empire and Balkan nations give insight about the identities promoted by these governments and Russia's relationship with them. Neither the Ottoman Empire nor Balkan states were merely passive actors in this process. The development of legal frameworks to monitor foreign archaeologists and sensitivity about ownership rights over ancient objects imply that monuments were regarded as symbols of sovereignty by the countries that hosted antiquities. Particularly for the Ottoman Empire, archaeology was a means of asserting its place among European empires. By sponsoring

archaeological studies of its own and compelling foreign archaeologists to obey certain regulations, the Ottoman government was in fact indicating that it was on an equal footing with Europeans. As two multi-ethnic and multi-religious empires, the “diplomacy of archaeology” between the Russian and Ottoman Empires defy easy categorisations such as nationalist, imperialist or colonialist archaeology; rather require a multi-faceted analysis.

This dissertation is based on official correspondence between RAIK and Russian diplomats, various ministries, government bodies, and the Ottoman government, as well as personal letters of RAIK members, especially those belonging to the director of the institute, Fyodor Ivanovich Uspenskii. Reports submitted to the Ministry of Public Education, excavation and expedition reports also constitute an important source-base for the study. These materials were gathered mainly from the St. Petersburg branch of the Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences (PFA RAN), Russian State Historical Archives (RGIA) in Russia, Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives (BOA) in Turkey, and from the Bulletin of the Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople (IRAIK).

The Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives is the major depository of official documents pertaining to the history of the Ottoman Empire. The holdings at the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives included correspondence between the Russian Embassy and the Ottoman government offices, most notably Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education. The Ottoman Imperial Museum was bureaucratically under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, therefore archival documents about the Imperial Museum are located under the Ministry of Education files. In this dissertation, there are several references to the documents of the Chief Secretary of the Ministry of Education

(*Maarif Mektubî Kalemi*, MF. MKT.). The activities of Russian archaeologists were overseen by local officials appointed by the Ministry of the Interior, in addition to the Ottoman Imperial Museum. The documents of various Ministry of the Interior offices are categorised into sub-groups under the files of the *Dahiliye Nezâreti* (The sub-groups used in this dissertation include DH. HMŞ., DH. İD., DH. MKT., DH. EUM. MTK.). Because of RAIK's diplomatic links, the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs was an active participant in the dialogue between Russian archaeologists and the Ottoman government. The references to the documents of the Chief Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Hariciye Mektubî Kalemi*, HR. MKT.) highlight the exchange between Russian archaeologists and the Ministry. The decrees sanctioned by the Sultan are referred to as *İrade*, and the various sub-groups used in this dissertation include İ. HUS., İ. MMS., İ. MSM., İ. SD., İ. TAL. Under the Hamidian regime, there was an extensive network of government officials and spies reporting every incident across the Ottoman Empire directly to the Sultan himself. The documents collected at the personal palace of Abdülhamid II are accessible under the title *Yıldız Evrâkı*. The archival documents cited as Y. A. HUS., Y. PRK. ASK., and Y. PRK. BŞK. are parts of this file. Finally, the documents from the office of the Grand Vizier (*Sadaret Mektubî Kalemi*, A. MKT.) and documents from the Archive of the Sublime Porte (*Bab-ı Ali Evrak Odası*, BEO) are widely used in this research.

Different from the Ottoman archives, where documents are categorised according to administrative units, Russian archives are classified thematically, which makes it easier for researchers to find an entire set of documents under a single title. The bulk of materials concerning the history of RAIK is located at the St. Petersburg Branch

of the Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences (PFA RAN).² This archive hosts the diplomatic correspondence between RAIK and the Russian Embassy in Constantinople and various Russian consulates across the Ottoman Empire, yearly reports of RAIK submitted to the Ministry of Public Education, personal papers of archaeologists affiliated with the Institute, and visual materials. Specifically, I looked into three *fonds*:³ *Fond* no. 116 holds documents pertaining to the director of RAIK, Fyodor Ivanovich Uspenskii (1845-1928). Uspenskii's correspondence with diplomats, bureaucrats, Russian and foreign archaeologists, as well as his personal notes can be found within this *fond*. *Fond* no. 127 is entitled "Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople" and holds documents about the establishment of the Institute, its bureaucratic structure, personnel profile, scientific expeditions, and the final dissolution. This *fond* also deals with relations of Russian archaeologists with the Ottoman government. The last *fond* I investigated at PFA RAN is *fond* no. 169, which holds materials about RAIK's Trabzon⁴ expedition in 1916-1917. One of the most politically interesting expeditions of the Institute, the Trabzon expedition coincided with Russian occupation of the city, and gives insight about Russian military and political presence in occupied Ottoman towns during World War I.

The second archive I visited in St. Petersburg was the Russian State Historical Archive (RGIA).⁵ At RGIA, I looked into files dealing specifically with the Russian Archaeological Institute, which were located under *fond* no. 757. Unfortunately, the

² For further information, please visit <http://www.ranar.spb.ru/eng/>.

³ *Fond* is an archival record group in Russian archival system. *Fond* refers to an entire set of documents from a particular individual or institution. Under *fonds*, there is *opis*, and under *opis*, there is *delo*.

⁴ Trabzon is a large port city on the Eastern Black Sea. The city was also the seat of the Trebizond Empire, one of the successors of the Byzantine Empire, until its conquest by the Ottomans in the 15th century.

⁵ For further information, please visit <http://www.fgurgia.ru>.

duration of this dissertation coincided with the closure of the Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire (AVPRI). Due to RAIK's official links to the Russian Embassy in Constantinople, AVPRI holds documents concerning the Institute, although at a smaller scale compared to PFA RAN and RGIA.⁶ Looking at secondary sources, we can conclude that the documents at AVPRI are mostly correspondence between Russian diplomatic services in the Ottoman Empire and the Ottoman government, as well as exchange between Russian archaeologists and Russian diplomats.

Although the initial research plan included a visit to AVPRI, the closure necessitated a change of plans. The original aim of the dissertation was to put a heavier emphasis on the diplomatic aspect of Russian archaeological activities in the Ottoman Empire, but the closure of AVPRI made this task impractical. Instead, I decided to analyse RAIK's activities within the context of Russian imperial identity. Moreover, I tried to make up for AVPRI by using Ottoman sources, and keeping an eye on Ottoman imperial identity as manifested in Ottoman archaeological policies. This way, I tried to make a comparison between the two empires of the pre-1914 international order, both of which could not survive after the war. The project to create an archaeological institute was born at the Russian Embassy in Constantinople, therefore it would be interesting to look at the exchange of letters between Russian diplomats and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to understand the conditions in which RAIK came into being. Luckily, the wealth of documents at PFA RAN and RGIA, both in terms of quantity and in terms of the value of information they provided, compensated for the loss of AVPRI. There were

⁶ I. P. Medvedev, *Arkhivy Russkikh Vizantinistov v Sankt-Peterburge* (Sankt-Peterburg: Izd-vo Dmitry Bulanin, 1995), p. 62.

a sufficient number of documents in both archives to examine the political and bureaucratic context in which RAIK was established and operated.

In addition to these archival sources, I also made use of published primary sources. Without doubt, the most important published source about RAIK was the annual publication of the Institute. From 1896 to 1912 RAIK published an annual journal, *Izvestiia Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole* (Bulletin of the Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople) in a total of 16 volumes. Except for the first two volumes, *Izvestiia* was published in Sofia. In addition to academic articles, *Izvestiia* included yearly reports outlining RAIK's scientific activities, communication with Russian and Ottoman government offices, and budgetary questions. Academic articles in the *Izvestiia* incorporated detailed archaeological information, but also provided interesting observations about local customs, topography, and political situation in the expedition area. The entire collection of the *Izvestiia* was available at the Library of the Istanbul Archaeological Museum – once known as the Ottoman Imperial Museum.

Individual archaeologists affiliated with RAIK also produced academic works based on their research in Ottoman territories. Among the most important of them, we can count Uspenskii's magnum opus *Istoriia Vizantiiskoi Imperii* (History of the Byzantine Empire), which was published in 1913 in three volumes, and his *Ocherki iz Istorii Trapezuntskoy Imperii* (Essays on the History of the Trebizond Empire), which was published posthumously. Russian academic journals, most importantly *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* (Byzantine Chronicle) and *Izvestiia Akademii Nauk* (Academy of Sciences

Gazette) contain articles relevant to my project. I had the chance to find these sources in the Library of the Academy of Sciences (BAN)⁷ in St. Petersburg.

Throughout the dissertation, place names are indicated as they were officially used in the time period under examination. For instance, Manastır is preferred instead of Bitola, or Üsküp instead of Skopje. Selânik, the official name of the *vilâyet*, is preferred instead of the often used version Salonica. An exception was made only with regard to Istanbul. The Ottomans used a number of terms to indicate the imperial capital, such as Dersaadet and Konstantiniyye. Because the full name of the Russian Institute included the word Constantinople, I preferred to use Constantinople throughout the text for the sake of consistency. In the 20th century, many city and town names in Asia Minor and the Balkans were changed by the newly established nation-states. The contemporary names of cities and towns are given in brackets when they are first mentioned in the text.

As for the transliteration of Russian words, the rules set out by the Library of Congress are followed. All the translations from Russian to English belong to myself.

The first chapter of the dissertation will discuss the theoretical framework of this research and will analyse existing literature about the relationship between archaeology and politics, especially in the 19th century. Specifically, the focus will be on the role of archaeology in the construction of national or imperial identity. In parallel with this, there will be discussion about the implications of archaeology for Ottoman and Russian imperial identities. The literature about Ottoman and Russian imagination of ancient history, and how this imagination reflected their imperial politics in the late 19th century will be examined in detail.

⁷ For further information, please visit <http://www.rasl.ru/>.

Since RAIK focused primarily on Byzantine history and archaeology, this dissertation will give special importance to the political aspect of Byzantine studies. Both the Russian and the Ottoman Empires had historical and cultural connections to the Byzantine Empire, although in different ways. For this reason, academic interest in Byzantine antiquities in these two Empires in the late 19th century is a relevant discussion question. The second chapter will be comprised of sub-chapters dealing with the development of academic archaeology in the Russian Empire. The special place of Byzantinology within Russian historical / archaeological scholarship, and more broadly, the image of Byzantium in Russian thought will be outlined in this chapter. After examining Russian interest in Byzantine history, both at ideological and academic levels, this chapter will also deal with Ottoman appreciation of Byzantine monuments and Byzantine history. The establishment of RAIK can be more clearly understood as an outcome of these scholarly developments.

After the theoretical discussions of the first two chapters, the third chapter will proceed with the outcomes of these intellectual developments in the practical realm. This chapter will explain the development of archaeology and archaeological preservation in the Ottoman Empire. The importance attributed to ancient objects in the late 19th century will be analysed within the context of Ottoman modernisation. The establishment of the Ottoman Imperial Museum and the antiquities regulations of 1869, 1874, 1884, and 1906 will be explained in detail. Ottoman views of foreign archaeologists will be examined looking at official archival correspondence. The aim of the chapter is to understand Ottoman appreciation of ancient history, and its implications for Ottoman self-perception at the turn of the century. The development of archaeology

in the Ottoman Empire is important to understand as the context in which RAIK was established and operated. Examining Ottoman policies vis-à-vis foreign archaeologists is also necessary to compare Ottoman attitudes towards Russian archaeologists with other European scholars.

The fourth chapter will explain the establishment of RAIK. Diplomatic and academic efforts for the establishment of an archaeological institute, alternative projects, and the ideas behind RAIK will be examined in detail based on the official exchange of letters between various government offices of the Russian Empire. The bureaucrats and diplomats who supported RAIK's establishment and their justifications will be outlined. Most importantly, the positions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Public Education, Holy Synod, and the Tsar himself will be explained. Finally, the bureaucratic structure of RAIK, its links to the Russian Embassy in Constantinople and the Russian government will be described. The aim of this chapter is to understand the underlying reasons for the establishment of an overseas Russian archaeological institute. Did the RAIK project reflect the mind-set of only a handful of individuals responsible for its creation, or did it indicate the ideological orientation of the Russian government in general? This question will be kept in mind while explaining RAIK's official links to the Russian government.

The fifth chapter will continue with the scholarly activities of RAIK. The focus of RAIK's scholarly interests, its studies on Byzantine and ancient Slavic history will be analysed, keeping in mind the political dimension of Russia's interest in Byzantine and Slavic archaeology. The scientific expeditions of the institute, with a specific focus on expeditions to Bulgaria, the Black Sea littoral, Macedonia, and Constantinople will be

explained. There will be discussion about the interactions between RAIK and the Ottoman government, Ottoman perceptions of Russian archaeologists, international political background, and Russian archaeologists' opinions on contemporary political developments.

The sixth chapter takes on from where the previous chapter left off, and continues with RAIK's archaeological studies in the Balkans right before the Balkan Wars. The archaeological activities will be explained in reference to the international political developments of the period. Special attention will be devoted to the Slavic Department established within RAIK in 1911, and what the Department meant for RAIK's mission in the Balkans.

The seventh and last chapter will highlight the fate of RAIK after 1914, and briefly explain the outcomes of the World War I. RAIK's last archaeological expedition, the Trabzon expedition in 1916-1917 will be analysed in this chapter. Diplomatic complications, which emerged as a result of RAIK's sudden evacuation of Constantinople were solved in 1929 by an agreement between the two new regimes in both countries, Republican Turkey and the Soviet Union. The developments between 1914 and 1929, and Byzantinology's fall from favour in the Soviet period will be explained in this chapter. The changing attitudes towards Byzantinology from the Russian Empire to the USSR implies that the activities of RAIK reflected Russian imperial identity, an identity that was deemed out of fashion in the Soviet period.

Chapter 1

Regenerating Distant Past:

Nationalist and Imperialist Uses of Ancient History in the 19th Century

“But no physical object or trace is an autonomous guide to bygone times; they light up the past only when we already know they belong to it. Memory and history pin-point only certain things as relics; the rest of what lies around us seems simply present, suggesting nothing past.”⁸

The 19th century was marked by the institutionalisation of archaeology as a scientific discipline. This was achieved by the establishment of university chairs and museums in the major capitals of Europe, as well as the projection of European influence with foreign archaeological institutes established in the periphery controlled by European powers.⁹ Academics from Great Britain, France, and later Germany and the United States organised archaeological institutes, societies, and schools in the major centres of the ancient world – primarily Rome, Athens, and Cairo.¹⁰ These historical cities became meeting points for archaeologists from different countries, who found the opportunity to share their projects with international academia. The study of the ancient world provided the archaeologists a window, through which they could look into the origins of

⁸ David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 238

⁹ Antiquarian interest in ancient monuments and systematic collection of such objects can be traced back to much earlier periods, even as far as Renaissance, but archaeology became a scientific discipline only in 19th century, during the heyday of nationalism and imperial competition in Europe. For the beginnings of scientific archaeology first in Scandinavia, then in Britain and France, see Bruce G. Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 73-103.

¹⁰ There was also a significant interest in the ancient history of colonial possessions, as illustrated by British archaeological activities in British India. But the major focus of this dissertation is classical archaeology, so colonial archaeology will be left outside the scope of discussion.

European civilisation as they saw it. Modern European empires defined themselves as the spiritual heirs of the ancient civilisations that flourished in the Mediterranean basin and the Near East.¹¹ On the political side, the creation of schools of archaeology in cities such as Cairo and Athens mirrored the political competition between major European powers. As a result of this competition, the success of archaeological activities was increasingly associated with national and imperial prestige.¹² The political rivalry between Britain and France was replicated by the British Museum and the Louvre, and Prussia caught up with them after its political unification in 1871. National museums in the imperial capitals became the visual representations of the territories each empire held under its control, while overseas archaeological institutes became the physical embodiments of their imperial presence in the given territory.

The Russian Empire joined the competition over the ancient world as a latecomer. In 1894, Russia established its first independent overseas archaeological institute. However, this independent Russian institute was neither in Rome nor in Athens – but in Istanbul, or Constantinople, or the Russian Tsarigrad; the former capital of the Eastern Roman Empire and Orthodox Christianity, a capital for whose possession some Russians longed in the 19th century. The Russian Archaeological Institute (RAIK) was also the first foreign archaeological institute to be established in Constantinople. In the following years, the Russian Archaeological Institute contributed significantly to the development of Byzantinology with its numerous excavations and publications.

¹¹ Magnus Bernhardsson, *Reclaiming a Plundered Past: Archaeology and Nation Building in Modern Iraq* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), pp. 23-24.

¹² Margarita Díaz-Andreu García, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology: Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 128; Stephen L. Dyson, *In Pursuit of Ancient Past: A History of Classical Archaeology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 86-87.

With a specific focus on the history of RAIK, my study aims at highlighting the diplomacy of archaeology between the Russian and the Ottoman Empires, which later continued between their successor states. Even though there is literature on the politicisation of archaeology in various parts of the world, this topic has not been covered as it relates to Russo-Ottoman relations in the late 19th century. Actually, the cultural and intellectual dimension of Russo-Ottoman relations in 19th century has stayed in the shadow of diplomatic relations between the two Empires, and has not been covered thoroughly. With regard to the institute in question, there are only two monographs, one in Greek and the other in Russian. The first monograph, *To Rosiko Arkheologiko Institutou Konstantinoupoleos (1894-1914) (Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople, 1894-1914)* was written by Konstantinos Papoulidis as his doctoral dissertation and was submitted to the Faculty of Theology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in 1984.¹³ The other monograph, entitled *Russkii Arkheologicheskii Institut v Konstantinopole (Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople)*, was written by Ye. Yu. Basargina in 1999. Both monographs portray the institutional structure of RAIK in a descriptive manner without engaging in a theoretical discussion about archaeology's links to political context. Probably as a result of the inaccessibility of Ottoman Turkish to researchers, these studies do not analyse the activities of RAIK within the context of Russo-Ottoman relations, looking at both sides of the story. Basargina particularly deals with the organisational structure of the Institute, its legal status, and relationship to the Russian Embassy in Constantinople.¹⁴

¹³ Konstantinos K. Papoulidis, *To Rosiko Arheologiko Institutou Konstantinoupoleos (1894-1914)* (Thessaloniki: Idrima Meleton Hersonisu tu Emu, 1987).

¹⁴ Ye. Yu. Basargina, *Russkii Arkheologicheskii Institut v Konstantinopole* (S. Peterburg: DB, 1999).

She also gives a detailed account of the biographies and academic achievements of individual archaeologists affiliated with the Institute.

The diplomacy of archaeology between Russia and the Ottoman Empire is distinctive for a number of reasons. Bruce Trigger identified three main currents in archaeology in the 19th century; nationalist, imperialist, and colonialist. He associated imperialist archaeology with a small number of states that exert political, economic, and cultural influence over large areas of the world.¹⁵ Nevertheless, none of these categories seem to explain Russian or Ottoman archaeological activities with justice. Actually, the literature on the political aspects of archaeology generally focuses on either colonial archaeology, as was practiced by European archaeologists in European colonial possessions, or nationalist archaeology, as was practiced by native archaeologists in sovereign nation-states in an attempt to legitimise the nation-state rhetoric. However, Russia and the Ottoman Empire, as two cosmopolitan, traditional empires of the pre-World War I period, do not fit in these categories. Russian archaeological activities in the Ottoman Empire and Ottoman reactions to them rather reflect their imperial identities, and how the political programs and imperial visions of the Ottoman Empire and Russia came into conflict with each other.

The objectivity of archaeology as a scientific discipline has long been challenged from within the discipline.¹⁶ Neil Asher Silberman argues that archaeology is by its nature a political and scientific enterprise at the same time.¹⁷ The theoretical evolution

¹⁵ Bruce G. Trigger, “Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist” *Man*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (1984), p. 363.

¹⁶ Trigger, “Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist,” p. 356.

¹⁷ Neil Asher Silberman, “Promised Lands and Chosen Peoples: The Politics and Poetics of Archaeological Narrative” in *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology*, ed. Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 249.

of archaeology is important to understand why objectivity became an issue in the last decades. From the late 19th century to the 1960s, the culture-historical approach, with a focus on the specificities of cultures and societies ancestral to modern nations, dominated archaeological scholarship.¹⁸ This approach legitimised nationalist claims to depict modern nations as direct descendants of ancient civilisations. This paradigm gave way to the positivist model of processual archaeology, or New Archaeology, especially in American academia in the 1960s.¹⁹ Instead of the qualitative and descriptive methods of the culture-historical approach, processual archaeologists applied the quantitative and explanatory methods of the natural sciences to archaeology. As a reaction to this positivist attitude, post-processual archaeology came on the scene in the mid-1980s. Post-processual archaeologists were more interested in the specificities of each culture, and argued that each case should be studied in its own context. They emphasised the subjectivity of archaeology and its inevitable links to politics and socio-economic background.²⁰

It should be noted that this dissertation does not intend to question the scientific legitimacy of archaeology or put forward epistemological questions about whether archaeological data can or cannot provide objective knowledge. The recreation of the past through archaeological or historical scholarship is not entirely a mental construction

¹⁸ John Bintliff, “History and Continental Approaches” in *Handbook of Archaeological Theories*, ed. R. Alexander Bentley, Herbert D. G. Maschner, Christopher Chippindale (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2008), p. 151; Michael Rowlands, “Objectivity and Subjectivity in Archaeology” in *Social Transformations in Archaeology: Global and Local Perspectives*, ed. Kristian Kristiansen and Michael Rowlands (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 35-36.

¹⁹ Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, pp. 294-303; Joseph Caldwell, “The New American Archaeology,” *Science*, New Series, Vol. 129, No. 3345 (6 February 1959), pp. 303-307.

²⁰ For instance, the collection of articles edited by Lynn Meskell provides insight about archaeology in the Middle East and the Balkans, and how archaeology was politicised in these regions. Lynn Meskell, *Archaeology Under Fire: Nationalism, Politics and Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East* (London: Routledge, 2002).

but requires data, therefore, even when their analyses is coloured by particular social and political concerns, the scholarship is justifiable as long as it helps us understand the past.²¹ Nevertheless, as Trigger pointed out, ideologies influence the questions archaeologists ask or refrain from asking.²² This dissertation is concerned with questions that archaeologists preferred to ask, the motivations that prompted governments to support and fund certain archaeological projects, and the symbolic meaning of ancient history in the diplomatic relations between states.

Benedict Anderson observed that along with maps and censuses, archaeology has been an important “institution of power” that reflected the way in which colonial states imagined the history of their colonial possessions.²³ Archaeological activities and the establishment of national museums helped visualise and classify history into strictly delineated national, geographic and demographic units. Ancient monuments proved to be visible links between particular cultures and lands, stretching from immemorial past to present, providing legitimacy for existing states to rule over territories once inhabited by their assumed predecessors.²⁴ In her study on the political uses of archaeology in Israel, Nadia Abu El-Haj claimed that archaeology created a rhetoric that shaped colonial, national, and cultural imagination. Ancient history became a platform where contested political and territorial designs of different actors and their struggles come to

²¹ Warwick Bray and Ian C. Glover, “Scientific Investigation or Cultural Imperialism: British Archaeology in the Third World,” *Institute of Archaeology Bulletin*, Vol. 24 (1987), p. 116.

²² Bruce G. Trigger, “Romanticism, Nationalism, and Archaeology” in *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology*, ed. Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 272.

²³ Anderson limits his analyses to Southeast Asia. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (New York: Verso, 1991), pp. 163-164.

²⁴ Anderson, p. 185.

the surface.²⁵ In this sense, archaeology offers a framework to examine the dynamics of colonial, imperial, and national aspirations and territorial claims of different groups.

The development of archaeology in the Near East was closely linked to the imperial rivalry between European powers. Napoleon's expedition into Egypt in 1798, followed by his army of *savants*, resulted in the discovery of the Rosetta Stone. The subsequent British acquisition of the Rosetta Stone initiated the Franco-British rivalry over Near Eastern antiquities.²⁶ At around the same time, French and British adventurists and antiquarians were also active in Mesopotamia. The congruence of archaeology and diplomacy was exemplified by the close links between diplomatic missions and archaeologists, as many diplomats, attachés, and consuls either engaged in archaeological activity themselves or privately funded excavations.²⁷ After a period of stagnation in the years following the Crimean War (1853-1856), archaeological activity in the Near East resumed in the 1870s, with Americans and Germans joining the race.²⁸

Following its political unification in 1871, the German government started actively supporting archaeological expeditions in the Near East. The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 was mirrored by the “aggressive rivalries” between German and French archaeological institutes abroad.²⁹ The acquisition of Pergamon antiquities from the Ottoman Empire in 1879 was the first ambitious archaeological “conquest” by the Germans. The strong connection between the academic and artistic interests of the archaeologists and the political motivations of the imperial bureaucracy was evident as

²⁵ Nadia Abu El-Haj, *Facts on the Ground: Archaeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 2.

²⁶ Donald Malcolm Reid, *Whose Pharaohs? Archaeology, Museums, and Egyptian National Identity from Napoleon to World War I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 40-44.

²⁷ Bernhardsson, pp. 40-47.

²⁸ Glyn E. Daniel, *150 Years of Archaeology* (London: Duckworth, 1975), pp. 132-136.

²⁹ Robert Shannan Peckham, *National Histories, Natural States: Nationalism and the Politics of Place in Greece* (New York: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 2001), p. 118.

Bismarck personally participated in the negotiations with the Ottoman Empire over the transfer of archaeological findings.³⁰ For sure, this was more a competition for status and prestige, a competition to be at the forefront of civilisation, than for political gains in any direct sense. Against the backdrop of imperial rivalry, the Pergamon antiquities aroused national pride. In particular, the Pergamon Altar was something to boast against the Parthenon marbles exposed in the British Museum.³¹ In the parliament, Heinrich von Sybel exclaimed: “By incorporating the Pergamon creations, our museum has instantly moved to the forefront of European collections.”³² In a way, the museums were showcases displaying the image German leaders wanted to create at home and abroad that Berlin would be the new cultural centre of the world.

By the late 19th century, national museums became indispensable features of the European cityscape. Andrew McClellan argues that there were two main functions of public art museums in Europe. First, to create a sense of collective belonging in a space where there was equal access for all citizens, and second, through their objects and display strategies, to champion their sponsor nation-states as the heirs to, and leaders of, the Western civilisation.³³ Different from private collections, public museums were manifestations of national pride and had an educative role to instruct visitors. History was made physical and tangible in the exhibition halls of a museum. Historical processes were also presented in a systematic, linear, and classified manner. Especially in Britain and France, museums reflected the ethnic, cultural, and geographical diversity

³⁰ Thomas Gaehtgens, “The Museum Island in Berlin” in *The Formation of National Collections of Art and Archaeology* ed. Gwendolyn Wright (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1996), p. 70.

³¹ Debbie Challis, *From the Harpy Tomb to the Wonders of Ephesus: British Archaeologists in the Ottoman Empire, 1840-1880* (London: Duckworth, 2008), pp. 156-157.

³² Gaehtgens, p. 70.

³³ Andrew McClellan, “Nationalism and the Origins of the Museum in France” in *The Formation of National Collections of Art and Archaeology*, ed. Gwendolyn Wright (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1996), p. 29.

within the borders of these colonial empires and the achievements of each empire in the scramble for colonies. Just as economic and political rivalry intensified, this competition was reflected in the museums by the collection of antiquities flowing from Egypt and the Near East.³⁴

Classical archaeology developed as an extension of the popularity of philhellenism in European universities in the 19th century.³⁵ Different from previous trends of classical revival, in the 19th century classical studies had a broader institutional and social basis, and “pursued the beauty of the Greek body not only in art but also in life as a *national* goal.”³⁶ Ancient Greeks were believed to embody the perfect human form and European nations competed with each other to claim the heritage of classical civilisations. In the second half of the 19th century, classical archaeologists did not justify their discipline only on the basis of individual intellectual enrichment, but they especially “exalted the benefits of scholarship for the state.”³⁷

The prevalent archaeological approach of the 19th century, the culture-historical tradition, attributed unique characteristics and specific historical significance to certain cultures. Greeks, Romans, and peoples of the Bible were thought to possess a distinctive cultural development and some societies were seen to be more innovative than others, therefore it was assumed that cultural change occurred at different pace in different parts of the world.³⁸ Swedish archaeologist Gustav Oscar Montelius (1843-1921) put forward the theory that cultural progress was spread across the world through diffusion and

³⁴ Bernhardsson, p. 23.

³⁵ Suzanne Marchand, *Down From Olympus: Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. xix-xx; Athena Leoussi, *Nationalism and Classicism: The Classical Body as National Symbol in Nineteenth-Century England and France* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), p. 200.

³⁶ Leoussi, p. 202.

³⁷ Marchand, p. xx.

³⁸ Bintliff, p. 151.

colonisation from centres to the periphery. This idea found an audience in Europe, as cultural diffusion from the Near East to Europe both accorded with biblical accounts and politically legitimised European interventions in the Near East.³⁹

Intensive European archaeological involvement in other parts of the world implied that modern inhabitants of ancient lands either had lost the glamour of their past or were the descendants of “barbarians” who destroyed the ancient civilisations under examination. After a long period of ignorance and neglect, it was European archaeologists who were unearthing this glorious past, and were therefore the legitimate heirs to the heritage left by ancient civilisations.⁴⁰ Therefore, a direct historical line was drawn from the ancient civilisations of the Near East to modern European nations, with European culture standing at the peak of human progress.⁴¹ In an 1853 issue of the *Illustrated Magazine of Art*, an anonymous author professed that “France and England divide the glory of having rescued from the underground darkness and oblivion of twenty-five centuries, some of the most magnificent remains of the old world.”⁴² As Díaz-Andreu García argued, archaeological discourse was useful in legitimising the assumed inferiority of peoples inhabiting the regions under European political, economic, and cultural control.⁴³ In fact, archaeology provided a narrative explaining the “inevitability of certain lands to be conquered and the right of certain people to rule.”⁴⁴ Archaeology’s links to power politics became even more evident during World

³⁹ Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, pp. 160-161.

⁴⁰ Silberman, p. 255; Trigger, “Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist,” p. 365; Shawn Malley, “Layard Enterprise: Victorian Archaeology and Informal Imperialism in Mesopotamia,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (November 2008), pp. 637-640.

⁴¹ Bernhardsson, pp. 23-24.

⁴² “Layard and the Discoveries at Nimroud,” *The Illustrated Magazine of Art*, Vol. 1, No. 4, (1853), p. 206.

⁴³ Díaz-Andreu García, p. 127.

⁴⁴ Silberman, p. 256.

War I, when many archaeologists put their knowledge of local languages, cultures, and topography to the service of the intelligence services of their states.⁴⁵

Díaz-Andreu García divided archaeological activities in the 19th century into two main types: The activities undertaken by the imperial powers, and local archaeology that developed in reaction to it.⁴⁶ This duality is oversimplified as archaeology in the 19th century did not simply reflect the imperialist motivations of the great powers and nationalist reaction in regions under European political influence. In many instances, nationalist and imperialist concerns overlapped with each other. It would be more accurate to say that official support for archaeology was influenced by a variety of regional, national, and supra-national identities. Philip Kohl referred to the Franco-British archaeological rivalry in Egypt and Mesopotamia as examples of imperialist, colonialist, and nationalist archaeology at the same time.⁴⁷ In his article on the political uses of the Celtic past in France, Michael Dietler showed that albeit paradoxical, the same ancient record was simultaneously used to foster regional allegiances against the hegemony of the nation-state, to champion the cause of the nation-state, and to promote a pan-European unity.⁴⁸

The overlap of identities also applied to the two cases of this dissertation; namely, the Russian and the Ottoman Empires. Especially in the later parts of the 19th century, there was an obvious power asymmetry between the two empires to the advantage of Russia. Despite the relative Ottoman political and military weakness vis-à-

⁴⁵ Examples include the T. E. Lawrence, Gertrude Bell, Leonard Woolley, David Hogarth from Britain and Theodor Wiegand from Germany. Dyson, pp. 172-173; Bernhardsson, pp. 69-70, 59-65.

⁴⁶ Díaz-Andreu García, pp. 127-128.

⁴⁷ Philip L. Kohl, “Nationalism and Archaeology: On the Constructions of Nations and the Reconstructions of the Remote Past,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 27 (1998), pp. 226-227.

⁴⁸ Michael Dietler, “‘Our Ancestors the Gauls’: Archaeology, Ethnic Nationalism, and the Manipulation of Celtic Identity in Modern Europe,” in *Histories of Archaeology: A Reader in the History of Archaeology*, ed. Tim Murray and Christopher Evans (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 195.

vis the Russian Empire, the Ottoman Empire was clearly not a dependency under Russian tutelage. Therefore, it would be misleading to analyse Russian archaeological activities in the Ottoman Empire within the framework of imperial archaeology. It was rather a relationship between two sovereign empires with conflicting territorial claims and political agendas. While Russian interest in Byzantine and Slavic antiquities within Ottoman borders was a manifestation of Russian religious, national, and imperial identity, Ottoman archaeological activities could be read as a reflection of Ottoman self-perception after the modernisation reforms of the 19th century.

Along with heightened imperial rivalry, the 19th century also saw the rise of nationalist ideology. In Western Europe, with class conflicts becoming the major issue after the 1880s, ancient history was used for contrasting purposes by different groups. While nationalist and anti-socialist groups referred to ancient history to foster national unity,⁴⁹ reformists found inspiration for social change in the distant past. Göran Blix shows that in 19th century France, ancient history served as an inspiration for aesthetic, social, and political revival.⁵⁰ In any case, European archaeologists tried to trace the history of their nations back to ancient times and glorify the specific achievements of their ancestors.⁵¹ In this period, the theories of the German archaeologist Gustav Kosinna (1858-1931) became attractive for the advocates of nation-states. Kosinna argued that culture was rooted in ethnicity, therefore he established a direct link between ethnic and cultural continuity.⁵² Archaeology was used to demonstrate the continuity,

⁴⁹ Trigger, “Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist”, p. 358.

⁵⁰ Göran Blix, *From Paris to Pompeii: French Romanticism and the Cultural Politics of Archaeology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), pp. 200-201.

⁵¹ Trigger, “Romanticism, Nationalism, and Archaeology,” p. 269.

⁵² Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, pp. 163-167.

organic and natural coherence of the nation from pre-historic to modern times; as well as to claim “unredeemed” territories by nation-states.⁵³

Influenced by the post-Napoleonic wave of romantic nationalism, Central and Eastern European nations living under Austrian, Prussian, Russian, and Ottoman rule resorted to archaeology as a means to glorify their national past and encourage resistance against imperial powers.⁵⁴ For the newly emerging nation-states, ancient history provided legitimacy for freedom and national independence. Greece was a perfect example for such use of archaeological knowledge and practice. In Greece, ancient monuments were thought to link ancient past to present and future, while modern Greeks were seen as direct descendants of ancient Greeks and members of a distinctive Hellenic cultural community that existed continuously for more than a millennium.⁵⁵ In this sense, archaeology offered an imagined linear history for nations, and archaeologists were thought to hold the key to discover the origins of their nations by unearthing their past. As Kohl and Fawcett stated, archaeology was essential for the construction of national identities and to legitimise the claims of nations-states to have existed from time immemorial.⁵⁶

Hamiliakis argued that the development of archaeology as an organised discipline and the emergence of the nation-state as the most legitimate form of government occurred simultaneously in the 19th century. Therefore, an analysis of the

⁵³ Peckham, pp. 118-119.

⁵⁴ Peckham, p. 116.

⁵⁵ Yanna Delivoria, “The Notion of Nation: The Emergence of a National Ideal in the Narratives of ‘Inside’ and ‘Outside’ Greeks in the Nineteenth Century” in *The Making of Modern Greece: Nationalism, Romanticism, and The Uses of the Past*, ed. Roderick Beaton and David Ricks (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 118.

⁵⁶ Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett, “Archaeology in the Service of the State: Theoretical Considerations,” in *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology*, ed. Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 9-14.

link between nation-state and archaeology reflects how archaeology developed as a device of modernity, and in turn, served the most powerful ideology of modernity, that is, nationalism.⁵⁷ Making reference to Hobsbawm, Kohl drew attention to archaeology's role in "inventing traditions" and constructing collective memories and a shared past.⁵⁸ Especially in societies with ethnic and cultural diversity, nation-states used archaeological record to create a consciousness of togetherness as a nation. The strong link between official nationalism and archaeological research is not surprising, as often it was governments that funded research and therefore influenced the research agenda.⁵⁹

The political use of ancient history was not only a top-down process that was engineered by the state, but different segments of the society participated in the production of archaeological knowledge. Don Fowler focused on the generation, control and allocation of the past as a symbolic resource, both officially by bureaucrats and unofficially by nationalist citizens.⁶⁰ Hamiliakis gave an account of the social meaning of ancient material culture in a modern context. His focus was not only on the nationalist use of archaeology by the state, but more broadly, on how antiquity is incorporated as a part of social life, daily practices, touristic activities, literature, and theatre plays.⁶¹ Especially in the 19th century, touristic trips to ancient cities and museums became a part of leisure for European upper classes, who wanted to flee modernity into realms of alternative imagination. The first "Grand Tourists" of the 18th and early 19th centuries

⁵⁷ Yannis Hamiliakis, *The Nation and Its Ruins: Antiquity, Archaeology, and National Imagination in Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 14-15.

⁵⁸ Kohl, "Nationalism and Archaeology: On the Constructions of Nations and the Reconstructions of the Remote Past," p. 226; Kohl, Introduction to *Selective Remembrances: Archaeology in the Construction, Commemoration, and Consecration of National Past*, ed. Philip L. Kohl, Mara Kozelsky, and Nachman Ben-Yehuda (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 18.

⁵⁹ Kohl and Fawcett, "Archaeology in the Service of the State: Theoretical Considerations," pp. 4-9.

⁶⁰ Don D. Fowler, "Uses of the Past: Archaeology in the Service of the State," *American Antiquity*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (April 1987), p. 230.

⁶¹ Hamiliakis, pp. 15, 19.

were members of the European upper classes, but with the growth of mass tourism in the late 19th century, middle classes joined them.⁶² As a result of their visits to archaeological sites in Greece, Italy and the Near East, European travellers recorded their observations with the help of photographs, travel diaries and guidebooks and re-created the ancient past through a Western lens. The preoccupation of different segments of the society with ancient history meant that re-creation of the past in a modern context was not only an official project initiated by the state, rather, it was simultaneously influenced both from above by the state and from below by individuals.

As ancient history provided nationalist inspiration for intellectuals, at the same time, ancient monuments demarcated the boundaries of the nation. This territorial aspect is important, because the archaeological record can be read as testimony to the continuous existence of distinctly demarcated cultures and ethnic groups across a landscape.⁶³ Ancient remains on a territory strongly linked nationalist claims to a specific piece of land. For example, in Greece, Hamiliakis pointed out that “antiquities possessed the ability to create a spatiality, to transform the timeless, homogenous, empty space of the nation into a concrete place.”⁶⁴ Similarly in the Near East after World War I, different actors resorted to archaeology to expropriate land in a region with fluid and contested borders.⁶⁵ In her study on the role of archaeology in the historical imagination of Israeli society, Nadia Abu El-Haj examined how ancient history was used as evidence to endorse territorial claims.⁶⁶ In different cases across the globe, ancient history was

⁶² Deborah Harlan, “Travel, Pictures, and a Victorian Gentleman in Greece,” *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (July-September 2009), pp. 421-426.

⁶³ Abu El-Haj, p. 3.

⁶⁴ Hamiliakis, p. 121.

⁶⁵ Bernhardsson, p. 7.

⁶⁶ Abu El-Haj, pp. 6-7.

manipulated in such a way that it could fit into contemporary borders and justify irredentist arguments.

Diffusionist views pointed to the Near East as the origin of European culture and claimed that Europeans inherited the heritage of Near Eastern civilisations. This vision conflicted with local nationalisms, which emphasised ethnic and cultural continuity on a given territory instead of cultural diffusion.⁶⁷ The emergence of local nationalist ideas in the Near East produced a native challenge to European interpretations of ancient history. Donald Malcolm Reid showed how Egyptian intellectuals realised that archaeology could be turned to their advantage, and started training local archaeologists, most notably, Rifaa al-Tahtawi (1801-1873) who popularised ancient Egypt among his fellows.⁶⁸ Similarly, Kamyar Abdi analysed the beginnings of archaeological interest among Iran's ruling elite in the late 19th century, in the second half of the Qajar rule as a reaction to increasing foreign archaeological involvement.⁶⁹ Gradually, ancient Iranian history was made a part of the nationalist discourse, with special interest in the Achaemenid and Sasanian periods. National pride was reflected with official buildings, rebuilt along the lines of traditional Persian architectural models.⁷⁰ On a side note, Egypt's and Iran's discovery of ancient history opened eyes about the non-Islamic origins of these societies.

Similar to Iran and Egypt, the development of archaeology in the Ottoman Empire was to a large extent a reaction to increasing European activity within its borders. Nevertheless, different from their Egyptian and Iranian counterparts, Ottoman

⁶⁷ Peckham, p. 118.

⁶⁸ Reid, pp. 50-54.

⁶⁹ Kamyar Abdi, "Nationalism, Politics, and the Development of Archaeology in Iran," *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 105, No. 1 (January 2001), pp. 53-55.

⁷⁰ Abdi, pp. 56-61.

intellectuals or archaeologists never formulated a national mythology based on ancient monuments on their territory. Considering the fact that Greco-Roman antiquities constituted the main focus of Ottoman archaeological interest,⁷¹ neither could they claim ethnic and cultural continuity with the former residents of their lands. Although there was a small number of Ottoman intellectuals who argued that the Ottoman Empire inherited the Byzantine legacy, overall, Ottoman attitudes to Byzantine heritage were characterised by lack of interest, if not total rejection. For this reason, existing literature generally portrays Ottoman archaeology as if it were devoid of any political content.

Mehmet Özdoğan and Tuğba Tanyeri-Erdemir argued that archaeology in the Ottoman Empire began as an elite occupation without a socio-political agenda. They argued that only in the Republican period archaeology acquired a political character.⁷² Ayşe Özdemir observed that Ottoman archaeology lacked a systematic research strategy for excavations or for the accumulation of antiquities. The main aim of Ottoman archaeologists, Özdemir claimed, was rather to enrich the museum collections, mostly with objects with aesthetic value from Hellenistic and Roman periods.⁷³

It is true that archaeology in the Ottoman Empire was imported from Europe, and therefore Ottoman archaeologists had a Euro-centric attitude in their assessment of the value of archaeological objects. As an extension of European influence, archaeology in the Ottoman Empire was oriented nearly exclusively to Hellenistic and Roman

⁷¹ Mehmet Özdoğan, “Ideology and Archaeology in Turkey,” in *Archaeology Under Fire: Nationalism, Politics and Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East*, ed. Lynn Meskell (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 115.

⁷² Özdoğan, p. 111; Tuğba Tanyeri-Erdemir, “Archaeology as a Source of National Pride in the Early Years of the Turkish Republic,” *Journal of Field Archaeology*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (Winter 2006), p. 382.

⁷³ Ayşe Özdemir, “A History of Turkish Archaeology from the 19th Century to the End of the Single Party Period” (Unpublished Master’s thesis, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, 2001), p. 68.

antiquities and was not adapted to local conditions.⁷⁴ Objects from Turkish-Islamic history were not regarded as antiquities for a long time, even though this attitude began to change with the rise of the Committee of Union and Progress after 1908.⁷⁵ However, it would be too much of a simplification to argue that any archaeological activity before the Republican period was motivated only by aesthetic concerns and did not have any political dimension. For one thing, the development of archaeology was a reflection of Ottoman modernisation and Westernisation, as Wendy Shaw aptly illustrated in her detailed study of the development of museum-building practices in the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁶ Even though Ottoman archaeology cannot be identified with a nationalist agenda, it was clearly an expression of Ottoman imperial identity in the 19th century. Archaeology, as a practice originating from Europe, implied the Ottoman Empire's incorporation into the European cultural sphere.⁷⁷

Above all, archaeology was linked to the desire of the Ottomans to be accepted as part of the “civilised” realm. In addition, responding to foreign archaeological involvement with local archaeological projects implied a desire to protect the sovereignty of the Empire. Consequently, after the mid-19th century, ancient monuments within the borders of the Ottoman Empire were regarded as state property. Ottoman perception of foreign archaeologists, the intersection of archaeology, politics, and imperial identity in the Ottoman Empire started to attract scholarly attention in recent

⁷⁴ Özdoğan, p. 113.

⁷⁵ Wendy M. K. Shaw, “Islamic Arts in the Ottoman Imperial Museum, 1889-1923,” *Ars Orientalis*, Vol. 30, Exhibiting the Middle East: Collections and Perceptions of Islamic Art (2000), p. 64.

⁷⁶ Shaw, *Ottoman Müzeciliği: Müzeler, Arkeoloji ve Tarihin Görüşmesi* [Possessors and Possessed: Museums, Archaeology, and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire] (İstanbul: İletişim, 2004), pp. 94-95; Selin Adile Atlıman, “Museological and Archaeological Studies in the Ottoman Empire During the Westernization Process in the 19th Century” (Unpublished Master’s Thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, 2008), p. 4; Özdemir, pp. 64-69.

⁷⁷ Ussama Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 3 (June 2002), p. 783.

years, which culminated in the publication of a valuable collection of essays, *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914*.⁷⁸ This study successfully brought together articles dealing with European archaeological activities in the Ottoman Empire and Ottoman responses to them in a time span that stretches from the establishment of the British Museum to World War I, but unfortunately left out Russian archaeologists among other European scholars.

Selim Deringil defines Ottoman and Russian imperial identity in the 19th century with the term “borrowed imperialism.” He argued that Ottoman and Russian elites adopted European colonial discourse as regards the periphery of their respective Empires in their attempt to survive in a world where rules were made by the industrial empires of Western Europe.⁷⁹ Therefore, both for the Ottoman Empire and for Russia, embracing the imperialist rhetoric borrowed from Europe was a way of establishing their precarious status as “European.” This imperial self-perception was reflected in the way Russia and the Ottoman Empire responded to the archaeological rivalry among imperial powers in the 19th century. Since archaeological discoveries became a marker of national and imperial prestige, promoting archaeological excavations and exhibiting the findings in the imperial museum was essential both for Russia and for the Ottoman Empire. In addition, establishing an overseas archaeological institute, as was exemplified by RAIK, supporting archaeological expeditions abroad, and proclaiming itself as the legitimate inheritor of classical antiquity strengthened Russia’s position, if the Russian Empire wanted to assert itself as a major European empire.

⁷⁸ *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914*, ed. Zainab Bahrani, Zeynep Çelik, and Edhem Eldem (İstanbul: SALT, 2011).

⁷⁹ Selim Deringil, “‘They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery’: The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (April 2003), p. 313.

Archaeology offers a perfect example to show how Russia both was and was not European. On the one hand, Russia was a “latecomer” in science, arts, and other elements that defined the basis of European culture. Russians adopted museological and archaeological practices from Europe in the 19th century. In addition to its relatively late integration to the rest of Europe, Russian culture was also in some ways different. This difference was well illustrated by Russian archaeologists’ concentration on Byzantine archaeology more than classical Greece and Rome. Different from European empires that traced their histories back to the western part of the Roman Empire, Russia identified itself with Eastern Rome and archaeological interest in the Byzantine Empire reflected this imperial identity.

Unfortunately, as Díaz-Andreu García stated, there is nearly no comprehensive literature in English on the history of archaeology in Imperial Russia.⁸⁰ Even in Russian, I was unable to find an extensive monograph situating the development of archaeology in the Russian Empire in a political context. There is brief information about imperial archaeology in monographs outlining the history of Russian archaeology, but these works focus primarily on the history of Soviet archaeology and refer to the imperial period only in passing.⁸¹ A study on the institutional structure of the Imperial Archaeological Commission seems to be the only comprehensive work on archaeology in the Russian Empire, but it was published in Russian and therefore available only to

⁸⁰ Díaz-Andreu García, p. 251.

⁸¹ Mikhail Miller, *Archaeology in the USSR* (New York: Praeger, 1956); Aleksandr Mongait, *Archaeology in the USSR* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1959); *Ocherki Istorii Russkoi i Sovetskoi Arkheologii*, ed. A. A. Formozov (Moskva: Akademiiia Nauk SSSR, 1991); Lev S. Klejn, *Fenomen Sovetskii Arkheologii* (St. Petersburg: FARN, 1993); *Ocherki Istorii Otechestvennoi Arkheologii*, Vyp. 2 (Moskva: Gosudarstvenny Istoricheskii Muzei Institut Arkheologii RAN, 1998); A. D. Priakhin, *Istoriia Otechestvennoi Arkheologii* (Voronezh: Voronezhskii Gosudarstvenny Universitet, 2005).

Russian speakers.⁸² Nevertheless, in recent years, several works have been produced with regard to the involvement of scientists, particularly ethnologists, linguists, and archaeologists in Russian imperial politics.

Since Russia experienced rapid territorial expansion throughout the 19th century, cooperation between imperial bureaucracy and experts was necessary to administer non-Russian peoples in the newly conquered regions.⁸³ In addition, scholars helped legitimise Russian territorial expansion with the help of the archaeological record. Certainly, the willingness of some scholars to cooperate with the imperial regime does not suggest an all-embracing pattern defining the mentality of scholars. Nathaniel Knight asserted that the ideas and behaviours of scholars, as independent individuals, were not necessarily determined by factors outside their control, therefore scholars might or might not form alliances with the state. The behaviours of scholars were shaped by a set of constraints and possibilities, but “not predetermined by a set Orientalist ‘script.’”⁸⁴ The disagreements between scholars and imperial administration over policy questions verified the role of individual agency.⁸⁵ Knight strongly argued against generalizing Edward Said’s correlation between imperial power and scholarly activity to every single scholar in the Russian Empire. He stated that the mechanism

⁸² A. E. Musin, ed., *Imperatorskaia Arkheologicheskaia Komissiia, 1859-1917: U Istokov Otechestvennoi Arkheologii i Okhrany Kul’turnogo Naslediia: K 150-letiu so Dnia Osnovaniia* (S. Peterburg: DB, 2009).

⁸³ Daniel Brower, “Islam and Ethnicity: Russian Colonial Policy in Turkestan,” in *Russia’s Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700-1917*, ed. Daniel Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), pp. 123-124; David Wolff, *To The Harbin Station: The Liberal Alternative in Russian Manchuria, 1898-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 150-155.

⁸⁴ Nathaniel Knight, “On Russian Orientalism: A Response to Adeeb Khalid,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Fall 2000), p. 704.

⁸⁵ Juliette Cadiot, “Kak uporiadochivali raznoobrazie: spiski i klassifikatsii natsionalnosti v Rossiiskoi imperii i v Sovetskem Soiuze (1897-1939 gg.),” *Ab Imperio*, 4 (2002), pp. 184-186; Robert P. Geraci, *Window on the East: National and Imperial Identities in Late Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), pp. 295-296.

through which knowledge was transformed into colonial power was even more complicated in the Russian case than in Western Europe.⁸⁶

Although the relationship between academics and bureaucrats was not free of contention, still, the close-knit nature of imperial and domestic politics often resulted in the convergence of interests between the two groups. In fact, in many cases, it is even difficult to talk about a precise distinction between the two. Kulikova referred to the dual character of Orientalist scholarship, both scientific and political, and these two characteristics often intermingled with each other.⁸⁷ Adeeb Khalid remarked that even though scholars did not issue “marching orders to troops conquering regions of their expertise,” there was a complex network of relationship between experts and the state structure, and academic disciplines were not as autonomous as their image suggested.⁸⁸ Surely, French, British, and German scholarly institutes were also supported by their respective governments and diplomats, since it was easier to secure permits in a foreign country through diplomatic channels than it was for individual scholars. However, in an autocratic regime like Russia, where the autonomy and freedom of scholars were constrained by state authority, scientific projects that the imperial bureaucracy preferred to support indicated the priorities of imperial policy. Therefore, bureaucratic support for the establishment of an archaeological institute in Constantinople in 1894 should be examined in the light of these facts.

⁸⁶ Knight, “Grigor’ev in Orenburg, 1851-1862: Russian Orientalism in the Service of Empire?” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (Spring, 2000), pp. 97-99.

⁸⁷ A.M. Kulikova, *Vostokovedenie v rossiiskikh zakonodatel’nykh aktakh: konets XVII v.-1917 g.* (Sankt Peterburg: Tsentr Peterburgskoe vostokovedenie, 1994), p. 58.

⁸⁸ Adeeb Khalid, “Russian History and the Debate over Orientalism,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Fall 2000), p. 696.

Even though Soviet scholars dated back the origins of archaeological interest in Russia to medieval times and marked Peter the Great's reign as the beginning of serious scientific interest in antiquities,⁸⁹ it would be more accurate to say that scientific archaeology was introduced to Russia in the mid-19th century. Two pioneering institutions, the Imperial Archaeological Society in St. Petersburg and the Imperial Archaeological Society in Moscow were established in 1851 and 1864 respectively, and the Imperial Archaeological Commission, which supervised all archaeological research in Russia, was founded in 1859. As Austin Jersild reminded, "If the Geographical Society proposed to make sense of the empire's vast expanse, the Archaeological Commission promised to compose order out of the imperial past."⁹⁰ The Archaeological Commission issued calls to borderland communities to collect objects such as icons, musical instruments, and paintings. In the course of the 1870s-1880s, various local archaeological societies appeared in cities such as Tbilisi, Kazan, and Pskov.⁹¹ The initiative to create these societies generally came from within local communities though often it was encouraged by the government. The Black Sea coast, which was incorporated into the Russian Empire in the late 18th century, became the most preferred destination for archaeological expeditions with its ancient Greek sites and Schytian kurgans. Local museums were established in Crimea and Ukraine at very early dates. A museum was opened in Theodosia in 1811, in Odessa in 1825, and in Kerch in 1826.⁹²

The establishment of archaeological societies and museums in recently conquered regions with a substantial non-Russian population reflected a desire to export

⁸⁹ Mongait, pp. 48-49.

⁹⁰ Austin Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucasus Mountain Peoples and the Georgian Frontier, 1845-1917* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), p. 67.

⁹¹ Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, p. 210.

⁹² Mongait, p. 49.

Russia's "civilising mission" to the periphery of the Russian Empire. Archaeology proved to be a useful instrument in creating a legitimate basis for imperial expansion in the newly incorporated regions. The basic tenets of imperial Russian archaeology in two Muslim-populated regions, Crimea and Caucasus, offer valuable insight to understand the possible motivations of Russian archaeologists in the Ottoman Empire. In the North Caucasus, imperial Russian archaeologists searched for traces of classical Greek and Christian past.⁹³ Along with academic scholars, military officials participated in a series of archaeological conferences in Tbilisi, where the main focus was on Christian archaeology in the region.⁹⁴ Georgian clergy expressed their support for the Imperial Archaeological Commission and underlined that secular and religious institutions had similar concerns. They argued that Islam stood as a problem and obstacle for the preservation of the authentic Christian past in the Caucasus.⁹⁵

One of the main goals of the Caucasus Archaeological Commission, which was established in 1864, was the collection of "folk" (*narodnyi*) objects, as well as ancient materials. Very shortly after the total expulsion of the Circassians and other local peoples, the Commission collected and displayed objects belonging to the native cultures of the Caucasus through archaeological excavations. In other words, scholarship legitimised the recent Russian conquest by portraying the Circassian past of the Caucasus as an ethnographical detail and locating "true" culture in more distant past.

⁹³ Lori Khatchadourian, "Making Nations from the Ground up: Traditions of Classical Archaeology in the South Caucasus," *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 112, No. 2 (April 2008), pp. 254-255.

⁹⁴ Jersild, p. 45.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 70.

Imperial archaeology legitimated the belief that a “glorious Christian past” was buried underneath the Caucasus waiting to be rescued by the Russian colonial rule.⁹⁶

In Crimea, another region that caused political and military conflict between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, archaeology assumed a religious character. In her detailed study of the Christianisation of Crimea from its annexation to the post-Soviet period, Mara Kozelsky focused mainly on the period of Nicholas I, when identity became coterminous with religion and the Orthodox Church became an instrumental tool in Russian domestic and foreign policy. Kozelsky focused on the intermingling of religion, politics, and ethnic tensions along the Black Sea border, which should be examined within the framework of Russo-Ottoman relations. She pointed out that Crimea was designated as a holy place, as the cradle of Russian Christianity, and was transformed into the “Russian Athos.”⁹⁷ The Crimean War with the Ottomans further catalysed the Christianisation of Crimea at the expense of the peninsula’s Muslim-Tatar heritage.

Crimea indeed had a remarkable number of ancient Greek and Byzantine monuments from the period before the Tatar conquest, and its history was closely linked to Constantinople since the Roman period. Through archaeology, Russian scholars emphasised the Christian heritage of the peninsula and downplayed the Tatar-Muslim past. As the denominators of Orthodox Christianity, Byzantine monuments in Crimea had a special importance for the religious - nationalist project of the Russian Empire. Sergey Uvarov, the President of the Academy of Sciences, suggested scholars to make archaeological and historical investigations to prove the authenticity of Crimea’s

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 67-69.

⁹⁷ Mara Kozelsky, *Christianizing Crimea: Shaping Sacred Space in the Russian Empire and Beyond* (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010), pp. 83-88.

Russianness and Christianity. To this end, secular and church scholars engaged in archaeological excavations to prove the legend of Vladimir, according to which the Kievan prince Vladimir was believed to have been baptised in Chersonessos, Crimea.⁹⁸ Later, Sergey Uvarov's son, Aleksey Uvarov, the founder and the first director of the Imperial Archaeological Society in Moscow, personally undertook archaeological investigations in Crimea to determine the exact locations of places that were deemed important for the Christianisation of the Rus' by Byzantium.

One thing worthy of mention was the more frequent emphasis on Christian heritage, compared to ancient Greek heritage, especially after the mid-19th century. In a sense, especially in Crimea, Byzantine monuments were cleared of their Greek background, and their image was reconstructed only as markers of an Orthodox Christian past. Scholars from historical and archaeological societies based in Odessa and Crimea played important roles in the Christianisation campaign by designing plans for the preservation and restoration of Byzantine monuments.⁹⁹ It should be noted that the Odessa Society for History and Antiquities, founded in 1839, was one of the earliest local archaeological societies in the Russian Empire. By the late 19th century, there was already a tradition of Byzantine studies in Odessa. Therefore, it is not surprising that many archaeologists affiliated with RAIK, including its director Fyodor Uspenskii, were professors from the Novorossiya University in Odessa. Along with secular experts, the Russian Church adopted modern methods of scientific inquiry for the study of Christian

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 42-43. Throughout the text, the ancient city is referred to as Chersonessos, but the diocesan district is referred to as Kherson, as this was the official usage.

⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 5-6.

archaeology in Crimea. Kozelsky emphasises that the boundary between secular and religious was blurry in the context of Russian imperial archaeology.¹⁰⁰

The emphasis on Christian archaeology reflected the religion-inspired politics the Russian Empire formulated as regards the Eastern Question.¹⁰¹ Since religion is an important part of national identity, we should take the relationship between religion and official ideology into account when we analyse the political aspect of archaeology.¹⁰² As Kohl and Fawcett reminded, “[S]tate-sponsored nationalistic-oriented events and processes are typically and intimately linked to religion, either directly or by a civil-religion connection, to create an ambiance and semblance of sacredness in what otherwise could have been emotionless secular events and processes.”¹⁰³ In the Russian example, the connection between religion and imperial / national identity clearly manifested itself in the politics of archaeology.

The history of RAIK brings a new dimension to understand the nature of Russo-Ottoman relations in the late 19th century. Imperial Russian archaeology around the Black Sea coast illustrated the connection between religion, national identity, and official policy. Throughout the second half of the 19th century, one of the key themes in European diplomacy was the Eastern Question, in other words, the diplomatic problems posed by the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, which was seen as imminent. The Russian Empire was one of the most active participants in the political rivalry among European powers for the control over Ottoman territories after the possible collapse of the Ottoman Empire. For strategic as well as historical reasons, the Russian Empire was

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁰² Kohl, Introduction to *Selective Remembrances: Archaeology in the Construction, Commemoration, and Consecration of National Past*, p. 12.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 21.

particularly concerned with the fate of Constantinople, the Straits, and the Balkans. Strengthening mutual relations with the Southern Slavs and other Orthodox peoples of the Ottoman Empire constituted one of the most important pillars of Russian foreign policy. In this sense, the academic study of Slavic antiquities and Eastern Christianity coincided with Russian political interests in the region.

Similar to archaeological activities in Crimea, Russian archaeology in Constantinople primarily focused on Byzantine antiquities. Just like Western European empires viewed themselves as the spiritual heirs of ancient Hellenistic and Roman civilisations, the Russian version of philhellenism drew a direct lineage from the Byzantine Empire to contemporary Russia. By studying the history of the Byzantine Empire, Russian archaeologists stepped into a mystical world, a world from where Russia received Christianity, its alphabet, and the basis of its civilisation.

Chapter 2

The Double-Headed Eagle:

Interest in Byzantine Antiquities in Russia and the Ottoman Empire

“To advance through a Crusade,
 To purify the Jordanian waters,
 To liberate the Holy Sepulchre,
 To return Athens to the Athenians,
 The city of Constantine – to Constantine
 And re-establish Japheth’s Holy Land.”¹⁰⁴

Both Russian and Ottoman Empires had historical and cultural connections to the Byzantine Empire, although Ottoman and Russian discourses were shaped under different contexts. In reality, the Ottoman Empire took over many cultural and political traits from their Byzantine predecessors, and inherited the very territories ruled by Byzantine emperors. Despite these obvious connections, Byzantine legacy remained invisible for most Ottoman intellectuals in the 19th century, not to mention bureaucrats and policy-makers. On the other hand, Russian tsars perceived of themselves as culturally linked to the Byzantine Empire, as the protector of Orthodox faith, and openly proclaimed this identity. Therefore, it is not surprising that from its earliest beginnings, Byzantine antiquities occupied an important place in the development of archaeological scholarship in the Russian Empire. To better situate RAIK’s activities in the proper context, it would be interesting to compare the academic or pseudo-academic interest in Byzantine antiquities in Russia and the Ottoman Empire in the late 19th century. Before

¹⁰⁴ From Gavriil Romanovich Derzhavin’s (1743-1816) poem “Ode on the Capture of Izmail.” G. R. Derzhavin, *Sochineniia* (Moskva: Pravda, 1985), p. 98.

proceeding to this comparison, this chapter will first discuss the development of archaeology, especially Byzantine archaeology in the Russian Empire.

2.1 Academic Archaeology in the Russian Empire

Scholarly archaeological expeditions in Russia started as early as the mid-18th century, although these activities were quite amateur in terms of the quality of research.¹⁰⁵ Gerhard Friedrich Müller's expedition to Siberia and Scythian barrows in Ukraine in the 1730s was one of the first semi-professional archaeological expeditions.¹⁰⁶ German scholars played an important role in the development of Russian historical scholarship in its early beginnings.¹⁰⁷ Through these émigré scholars, German academic tradition penetrated into Russian educational institutions starting from the 18th century.

In the first decades of the 19th century, some of the first museums in the Russian Empire for the exhibition of ancient artefacts were established in Crimea and across the Black Sea coast.¹⁰⁸ The emergence of museums in this newly conquered region was a result of the region's rich ancient heritage. At the same time, museums helped the Russian administration visualise its imperial rule in a territory recently incorporated into the Empire. A museum was established in Nikolaev in 1803, and later in Feodosiya in

¹⁰⁵ Pavel M. Dolukhanov, "Archaeology in Russia and Its Impact on Archaeological Theory" in *Theory in Archaeology: A World Perspective*, ed. by Peter J. Ucko (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 327.

¹⁰⁶ Lev S. Klejn and Igor L. Tikhonov, "The Beginnings of University Archaeology in Russia," in *The Beginnings of Academic Pre- and Protohistoric Archaeology [1890-1930] in a European Perspective* (International Meeting at Humboldt-University Berlin, 13-16 March, 2003.) ed. Callmer, Meyer, et al. (Rahden: Marie Leidorf), p. 197.

¹⁰⁷ Anatole G. Mazour, *Modern Russian Historiography: A Revised Edition* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975), pp. 35-36.

¹⁰⁸ Of course, the Kunstkammer in St. Petersburg was established long ago, in the first half of the 18th century, which made it the first museum in the Russian Empire. However, the Kunstkammer was not a conventional antiquities collection, it was rather an incoherent collection of rare objects, mostly natural rarities. The Hermitage, on the other hand, evolved from a royal collection to a public museum only in 1852.

1811.¹⁰⁹ The first antiquity and coin collections in universities emerged in St. Petersburg (1822), Kazan (1810), Kharkov (1806), Kiev (1837), and a museum was established within St. Petersburg University in 1841.¹¹⁰

In 1724, Peter the Great ordered the establishment of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, with a university as an integral part of it, which was reconstituted as the St. Petersburg University in 1819. In 1804, a chair for the Department of Fine Arts and Archaeology was established at this institution under the Faculty of History and Philology.¹¹¹ The university Moscow (1755) also became an important centre for the development of archaeology especially after the 19th century. Archaeological terminology penetrated university curricula very early in the 19th century. However, at this early stage, the line between pre-history, classical history, and archaeology was blurry, and these subjects were taught in the same departments and regarded as the branches of the same discipline.¹¹² By the mid-19th century, there was increasing interest in the scientific study of antiquities. In this period, universities assumed a more prominent role in preparing specialists, and more sophisticated excavation techniques were used.¹¹³ There were also increasing numbers of academic studies in the fields of classical and pre-historic archaeology.¹¹⁴

Until the late 19th century, classical archaeology in Russia developed mainly in three centres, these being Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Odessa. While Moscow and St. Petersburg, as the two most important metropolitan centres of Imperial Russia, do not

¹⁰⁹ A. D. Priakhin, *Istoriia Otechestvennoi Arkheologii* (Voronezh: Voronezhskii Gosudarstvenny Universitet, 2005), p. 48.

¹¹⁰ Igor L. Tikhonov, "Archaeology at St. Petersburg University (From 1724 Until Today)," *Antiquity*, Volume: 81, Number: 312 (2007), p. 447.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 446.

¹¹² Klejn and Tikhonov, p. 197.

¹¹³ Priakhin, p. 55.

¹¹⁴ Klejn and Tikhonov, p. 197.

come as a surprise, what made Odessa an attractive centre of archaeological research was its geographical proximity to classical Greek and Byzantine antiquities along the Black Sea coast. One of the most prominent archaeological societies, where scholars and antiquarians came together, was the Odessa Society of History and Antiquity, established in 1839. The Odessa Society was particularly important for the development of Black Sea and Byzantine studies in the Russian Empire, and it quickly became a centre of classical archaeological research in Novorossiya.¹¹⁵

The institutions that shaped Russian archaeology in its early phases included museums, universities, and the Imperial Academy of Sciences. Compared to universities, which were more teaching-oriented, the Academy of Sciences focused more on research.¹¹⁶ Local archaeological societies, which were dependent on support from the nobility, local administrators, and the upper ranks of the clergy, also produced valuable archaeological research. An important centre of classical archaeology, the Russian Archaeological Society was established in St. Petersburg in 1846. The Russian Archaeological Society was divided into three branches, these being Russian-Slavic archaeology, Eastern archaeology, and classical and Byzantine archaeology.¹¹⁷

The first centralised archaeological institution in the Russian Empire, the Imperial Archaeological Commission (IAK) was established in 1859 under the Ministry of the Imperial Court.¹¹⁸ IAK was responsible for overseeing all archaeological activities

¹¹⁵ I. V. Tunkina, *Russkaia Nauka o Klassicheskikh Drevnostiakh Iuga Rossii (XVIII-seredina XIX v.)* (S. Peterburg: Nauka, 2002), p. 608.

¹¹⁶ Klejn and Tikhonov, p. 197.

¹¹⁷ George Vernadsky, *Russian Historiography: A History* (Belmont, Mass.: Nordland Publishing, 1978), pp. 124-125.

¹¹⁸ Dolukhanov, p. 327.

within the Russian Empire.¹¹⁹ It is worth noting that not all scientific societies were under imperial tutelage. The Imperial Geographical Society, one of the most important scholarly institutions of the late imperial period, was not placed under the Ministry of the Imperial Court, although the Imperial Hermitage and IAK were attached directly to the Court. The royal support for archaeology might be yet another instance indicating that patronising art and archaeology was regarded as the insignia of imperial prestige in the 19th century.

These institutions were followed by the establishment of the Moscow Archaeological Society in 1864 by Count Aleksey Sergeyevich Uvarov.¹²⁰ Professor Mikhail Pogodin collaborated with Count Uvarov for the establishment of the Moscow Archaeological Society.¹²¹ On the initiative of Count Uvarov, the Moscow Archaeological Society initiated national archaeological congresses. These congresses produced lively debates and theoretical discussions about the importance of archaeology in Russian academia. The discussions particularly pointed to the political importance of Slavic and Orthodox antiquities along the Black Sea coast.¹²² In the 1st Russian Archaeological Congress, organised in Moscow in 1869, the main goal of Russian archaeology was designated as the preservation of ancient Slavic and Orthodox monuments, especially in remote and multi-cultural regions with a substantial Muslim population such as southern Russia, Transcaucasus, and the Volga valley.¹²³

¹¹⁹ I.V. Tunkina, *Russkaia Nauka o Klassicheskikh Drevnostiakh Iuga Rossii* (XVIII-seredina XIX v.), p. 608.

¹²⁰ Priakhin, pp. 69-70.

¹²¹ Klejn and Tikhonov, p. 198.

¹²² Priakhin, pp. 73-75.

¹²³ Victor A. Shnirelman, "The Faces of Nationalist Archaeology in Russia," in *Nationalism and Archaeology in Europe*, ed. by M. Díaz-Andreu García and T. C. Champion (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), p. 225.

The founders of RAIK were academically most influenced by the educational programme of St. Petersburg University, the alma mater of most of its members. The institutionalisation of archaeological studies at St. Petersburg University can be dated back to the establishment of the Department of Art Theory and History in 1863.¹²⁴ Especially from the 1880s onwards Nikodim Pavlovich Kondakov and later his students Sergei Aleksandrovich Zhebelev, Iakov Ivanovich Smirnov, and Dmitry Vlasevich Ainalov gave lectures about classical Greek, Byzantine, and Slavic archaeology at this university.¹²⁵ Therefore, from the early stages of their academic careers, the future director of RAIK, Fyodor Uspenskii and his colleagues at the Archaeological Institute in Constantinople received a solid background in the study of Slavic and Byzantine antiquities.

Other prominent centres of archaeological research in the Russian Empire included the St. Petersburg Archaeological Institute, established in 1878, and the Moscow Archaeological Institute, established in 1907 with the intention of training professional archaeologists. Both of these institutes were established under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Education.¹²⁶

The second half of the 19th century was also marked by the beginnings of church archaeology in Russia. Church archaeology developed as a both cultural and scientific enterprise, and its particular importance lay in the parallel study of written and material artefacts regarding the history of Orthodoxy.¹²⁷ In addition to universities and

¹²⁴ Tikhonov, “Archaeology at St. Petersburg University (From 1724 Until Today),” pp. 449-450.

¹²⁵ Klejn and Tikhonov, p. 199.

¹²⁶ N. B. Strizhova, “Moskovskii Arkheologicheskii Institut po Materialam Otdela Pis’mennykh Istochnikov Gosudarstvennogo Istoricheskogo Muzeia,” in *Ocherki Istorii Russkoi i Sovetskoi Arkheologii*, ed. A. A. Formozov (Moskva: Akademiiia Nauk SSSR, 1991), p. 102.

¹²⁷ Priakhin, p. 93.

archaeological societies, the Holy Synod had an interest in the advancement of church archaeology, and developed projects for the preservation and restoration of religious artefacts in collaboration with government bodies, the Imperial Archaeological Commission, and local archaeological societies.¹²⁸

In short, from the 18th century to the last decades of the 19th century, archaeology was in a process of institutionalisation as an academic discipline in Russian universities.¹²⁹ Archaeological knowledge was shared through a number of academic journals. There was also a burgeoning number of archaeological societies and museums not only in St. Petersburg and Moscow, but also in the provinces, a reflection of increasing interest in ancient history across Russia. From the early years of the 20th century to the Bolshevik Revolution, there was further professionalisation, and we see the appearance of specialised courses and seminars fully dedicated to archaeology, and regular excavations attended by students.¹³⁰ By the first two decades of the 20th century, the period right before the Bolshevik Revolution, Russian archaeology was already classified into different disciplines and areas of specialisation, like classical archaeology, Russo-Slavic archaeology, pre-historical archaeology, church archaeology, and Oriental archaeology.¹³¹ Eventually, this period was followed by World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution, and the Civil War, which meant the destruction and consequent reconstruction of the entire academic structure.

¹²⁸ Priakhin, p. 158.

¹²⁹ Lev S. Klejn, *Fenomen Sovetskii Arkheologii* (St. Petersburg: FARN, 1993), p. 17.

¹³⁰ Klejn and Tikhonov, pp. 206-207.

¹³¹ Priakhin, p. 135.

Unlike their colleagues in European nation-states, Russian archaeologists objected to Gustav Kosinna's paradigm linking cultural continuity with ethnicity.¹³² The scholars who set the principles of Russian archaeology in the 19th century embraced a diffusionist approach and emphasised that multiple influences, primarily ancient Greek, Byzantine, Tatar, and Persian in addition to Slavic elements, shaped Russian culture. Russian archaeologists also differed from scholars of European empires – especially French and British archaeologists – in their approach to antiquities display. While European archaeologists transferred their discoveries from overseas excavation sites to museums in imperial capitals, Russian archaeologists preferred on-site display, which accounted for the increasing numbers of local museums in the Russian Empire. The major reason for this preference was financial, as Russian archaeologists had limited resources compared to Europeans, which restricted the possibility of antiquities transfer to the capital.

2.2 Archaeology in the Black Sea Region

From the start, the major focus of Russian archaeology included classical, Byzantine-Orthodox, and ancient Slavic studies. Oriental studies were added to this list later in the 19th century. Already in the late 18th century, the Greek, Scythian, and Sarmatian mounds around the Black Sea coasts attracted the attention of Russian antiquarians and historians.¹³³ Not different from other imperial or national settings, archaeology in Russia developed with implicit or explicit ideological underpinnings in its early years as

¹³² Vera Tolz, "Orientalism, Nationalism, and Ethnic Diversity in Imperial Russia," *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (March 2005), p. 134.

¹³³ Igor L. Tikhonov, "Deiatel'nost' Akademika A. S. Lappo-Danilevskogo v Arkheologii," in *Ocherki Istorii Otechestvennoi Arkheologii, Vyp. 2* (Moskva: Gosudarstvenny Istoricheskii Muzei Institut Arkheologii RAN, 1998), pp. 154-166.

a scientific discipline. A relationship was established between Scythian artefacts, which were abundant in the southern shores of Russia, and ancient Greeks. This distant and very indirect link to ancient Greece fostered imperial “pride” in classical archaeology.¹³⁴ The physical embodiment of this imperial pride was illustrated in the newly emerging museums and antiquity collections. There was yet another political aspect of archaeological activities in the region around the Black Sea coast. Southern Russia, including Ukraine and Crimea, was annexed only in the late 18th century, and the region was demographically highly multi-cultural and multi-religious. Therefore, proving the antiquity of Slavdom and Orthodoxy in this region, especially vis-à-vis Islam, was a precondition of proving the legitimacy of Russian expansion around the Black Sea coasts.

As early as the last decades of the 18th century, scholars turned their attention to southern Russia, especially to Ukraine and Crimea. The first scientific expeditions to the Black Sea coast were undertaken by I. A. Tiul’denshtedt (1773-1775), V. F. Zuev (1781-1782), P. S. Pallas (1793-1794), and P. I. Sumarokov (1799, 1802) among others.¹³⁵ The number of professional expeditions and archaeological research in this region gradually increased over the years. In addition to archaeologists, amateur antiquarians visited ancient sites and produced maps and plans, with descriptions of ancient monuments. However, most excavations in this period were motivated by amateur concerns, and the intention was the enrichment of collections rather than research. Unsurprisingly, excavations often resulted in the plundering of ancient sites.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Dolukhanov, p. 327.

¹³⁵ Priakhin, p. 46.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 47.

The first archaeological museum in the Russian Empire was a cabinet of curiosity, opened in 1803, in the Black Sea coastal city of Nikolaev. The idea to exhibit the collection of naval maps, plans of ships, naval instruments, and other interesting objects was put forward by the commander-in-chief of the Black Sea fleet, Jean Baptiste de Traversay (also known as Ivan Ivanovich Traverse in Russian).¹³⁷ A few years later in 1811, one of the first antiquities collections was organised upon state initiative in Feodosiya. These early 19th century collections did not have systematic exhibition methods, rather they brought together different and unrelated materials in an unorganised manner. At the end of the first quarter of the 19th century, more specialised collections emerged, exemplified by the museums in Odessa, established in 1825, and in Kerch, established in 1826.¹³⁸

Already in the early 19th century, there was growing sensitivity among both academics and local administrators regarding the preservation of ancient monuments in southern Russia. In 1823, archaeologist and historian I. A. Stempkovskii, who made extensive research on the Black Sea coast,¹³⁹ presented a note to the General-Governor of Novorossiya M. S. Vorontsov entitled “Ideas Regarding the Study of Antiquities in the Novorossiya Krai.”¹⁴⁰ In this document, Stempkovskii outlined the urgent need to save monuments, which were evidence of the religious, cultural, and artistic achievements of ancient peoples. He pointed to the need to establish local museums and scientific societies for effective preservation of antiquities.

¹³⁷ I. V. Tunkina, “Kabinet Redkostei Chernomorskogo Depo Kart,” in *Ocherki Istorii Russkoi i Sovetskoi Arkheologii*, ed. A. A. Formozov (Moskva: Akademiiia Nauk SSSR, 1991), p. 9.

¹³⁸ I. V. Tunkina, *Russkaia Nauka o Klassicheskikh Drevnostiakh Iuga Rossii (XVIII-seredina XIX v.)*, p. 608; Willard Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field: Colonization and Empire on the Russian Steppe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), p. 99.

¹³⁹ Gocha R. Tsetskhladze, *North Pontic Archaeology: Recent Discoveries and Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), p. XI.

¹⁴⁰ Priakhin, p. 56.

The establishment of the Odessa Society of History and Antiquities in 1839 was an important turning point for the study of antiquities in Russia's southern shores.¹⁴¹ In a short time, the Odessa Society became the scientific and organisational centre for the archaeological study of the Black Sea littoral. The activities of the society included excavations in ancient settlements under the surveillance of the members of the society, drawing plans and maps of ancient settlements and monuments, and making descriptions of findings.¹⁴² The archaeological interests of the Odessa Society mostly concentrated on Byzantine and Orthodox antiquities in southern Russia, implying a philorthodox orientation.¹⁴³ Restoring Byzantine monuments and reviving Orthodox imagery in a region with a substantial Muslim population was a political as well as an archaeological project. Through its archaeological studies on Byzantine antiquities, the Odessa Society helped to prove the antiquity of Orthodoxy vis-à-vis Islam in southern Russia. Starting in the 1830s, the Russian government provided financial support for excavations and archaeological projects in the Black Sea region, especially in Kerch, Chersonessos, and Taman.¹⁴⁴ Dolukhanov argued that official support for classical archaeology in imperial Russia had ideological reasons, explained by Russia's perception of itself as the heir to the Byzantine Empire.¹⁴⁵

The Imperial Archaeological Commission had a specific interest in strengthening research programs in southern Russia and the Black Sea coasts. Particularly, Chersonessos received special interest, because it was regarded as the place where

¹⁴¹ Mara Kozelski, "Ruins into Relics: The Monument to Saint Vladimir on the Excavations of Chersonessos, 1827-57," *Russian Review*, Vol. 63, No. 4 (October 2004), p. 661.

¹⁴² Priakhin, p. 57.

¹⁴³ Kozelski, "Ruins into Relics: The Monument to Saint Vladimir on the Excavations of Chersonessos, 1827-57," p. 662.

¹⁴⁴ Priakhin, p. 60.

¹⁴⁵ Dolukhanov, pp. 327-328.

Prince Vladimir was baptised.¹⁴⁶ Actually, in southern Russia, the study of ancient history symbolised the quest for the roots of Russia's religious and imperial identity. Constructing a link between Prince Vladimir and the history of Crimea legitimised the recent Russian conquest of this region and proved the antiquity of Russian and Orthodox culture in a geography with a multi-cultural history.

Apart from the ideological background that linked RAIK's studies in the Ottoman Empire to the previous archaeological studies in southern Russia, especially in Crimea, RAIK's studies were also practically interrelated with archaeological studies in Crimea and Ukraine. Members and secretaries of RAIK, Boris Vladimirovich Farmakovskii (1870-1928) and Roman Khristianovich Leper (1865-1918) worked with the Imperial Archaeological Commission to undertake studies in Chersonessos and in Crimea before joining RAIK.¹⁴⁷ Farmakovskii was especially noted for his studies on artefacts from the Pontic Greek colony in Olbia, discovered in southern Ukraine.¹⁴⁸ These scholars used their expertise on both Ottoman and Russian coasts of the Black Sea to present a coherent picture of Pontic and Byzantine history.

Archaeological expeditions in southern Russia were directed not only by secular institutions like universities or archaeological institutes. There was also a significant religious interest in ancient history. A letter written in 1908, from the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, P. P. Izvolskii to the Imperial Archaeological Commission revealed that ancient history had become an attractive subject among the bureaucrats of the Holy Synod and upper ranks of the clergy. In this letter, Izvolskii proposed to organise an

¹⁴⁶ For “archaeology of the Chersonessos legend” and the relation between science and religion in Imperial Russia, see Mara Kozelsky, “Ruins into Relics: The Monument to Saint Vladimir on the Excavations of Chersonessos, 1827-57,” pp. 658-661.

¹⁴⁷ Musin, pp. 183-184.

¹⁴⁸ Klejn and Tikhonov, p. 199.

expedition to Chersonessos, led by the Tauride Diocese. Izvolskii asked the Imperial Archaeological Commission to make excavations for the benefit of the Orthodox Church, in addition to scientific purposes. For this reason, he requested the appointment of not only an academically competent archaeologist, but also an Orthodox believer to the proposed expedition to Chersonessos.¹⁴⁹

Among the clergymen who were interested in archaeology, Innokentii Borisov, the Archbishop of Kherson and Tauride (1848-1857) stood out. Innokentii had a devout interest in Byzantine archaeology in southern Russia, and his articles offer an excellent example of the intersection of religion, politics, and archaeology in Imperial Russia.¹⁵⁰ Innokentii developed a project to transform Crimea into a “Russian Athos.” His project found a ready audience. Especially after the mid-19th century, the Tauride Diocese supported the revival of ancient monasteries and the reconstruction of ancient Byzantine monuments in Crimea as part of this project with religious and political underpinnings.¹⁵¹ Innokentii outlined his opinions in “Note on the Restoration of Ancient Holy Sites in the Mountains of Crimea,” written in 1861. Innokentii’s project was published by the Kherson Diocesan Gazette, and was approved by the Holy Synod. The project described Byzantine monuments, monasteries, and churches around Crimea in detail and offered ways for their preservation. Innokentii suggested that financial resources for the reconstruction and restoration of monuments could be provided by private donors and benevolent societies.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ Musin, p. 186.

¹⁵⁰ Kozelski, “Ruins into Relics: The Monument to Saint Vladimir on the Excavations of Chersonessos, 1827-57,” pp. 663-670.

¹⁵¹ Innokentii, Archbishop of Kherson and Tauride, *Izbrannye Sochineniia* (Sankt Peterburg: Russkaia Simfoniiia, 2006), pp. 571-575.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 572.

At the background of archaeological descriptions, Innokentii's articles abound with comparisons between the Orthodox faith and Islam. He viewed the restoration of Byzantine churches and monasteries in Crimea as a final victory against the Tatars, and the symbol of the “resurrection” of Orthodoxy in the region.¹⁵³ Marked by a religious and nationalist overtone, Innokentii's discourse linked Russian conquest to the revival of Greco-Byzantine antiquity, and presented Russia as the saviour of the Byzantine heritage. In this sense, Crimean, and overall Black Sea archaeology offered a perfect example to the Orthodox Church's active involvement in the production of scientific knowledge and the confluence of science, religion, and imperial identity in the Russian Empire.¹⁵⁴ Russian archaeological endeavours in the Ottoman Balkans, Constantinople, and the Turkish Black Sea coasts can be analysed within the context of the same religious, imperial, and historical interest.

2.3 Byzantine Studies in the Russian Empire

For sure, it was not only Russians who showed interest in the history of the Eastern Roman Empire. British and French explorers were the first to record and investigate Byzantine monuments in Anatolia and Constantinople.¹⁵⁵ In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, art historians and archaeologists made systematic and comparative studies of Byzantine remains in the Ottoman Empire. Among such scholars, Charles Texier (1802-1871), Gertrude L. Bell (1868-1926), Joseph Strzygowski (1862-1941), Karl

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 574.

¹⁵⁴ For a discussion about the relation between religion and science in the Russian Empire, see Kozelsky, “Ruins into Relics: The Monument to Saint Vladimir on the Excavations of Chersonessos, 1827-57,” pp. 670-671.

¹⁵⁵ Semavi Eyice, “Türkiye’de Bizans Mimarisi Hakkındaki Yabancı Araştırmaların Kısa Tarihçesi,” in *Sanat Tarihi Yıllığı VI, 1974-1975* (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1976), pp. 453-469.

Krumbacher (1856-1909), Charles Diehl (1859-1944) and Sir William Ramsay (1851-1939) produced some of the most comprehensive works on Byzantine monuments.¹⁵⁶

Even though Classical Greece received more attention, in the late 19th century Byzantine imagery appeared as an exotic theme for European intellectuals, as it combined elements of Greek civilisation, Christianity, and the Orient. European interest in Byzantine archaeology also stemmed from political and religious concerns and can be analysed within the context of the Eastern Question. The development of Byzantine archaeology reflected an attempt to portray Constantinople as a historical extension of the Christian, therefore European civilisation, and legitimised European claims over the imperial capital.¹⁵⁷

If European visitors were captivated by the charm of medieval Constantinople, the imperial centre of Orthodoxy was even more fascinating for Russians. As the cradle of Orthodox Christianity, the Byzantine Empire had everlasting influence on the evolution of Russian culture and identity. After the conversion of Vladimir of Kiev to Orthodoxy in 988, mutual interactions with the Byzantine Empire had a determining role on the evolution of Russian ecclesiastical, cultural, and political development.¹⁵⁸ Even the Cyrillic alphabet was invented by Greek monks in the 9th century to disseminate Christian teaching among the Slavs. The strong Byzantine imprint on

¹⁵⁶ Şule Kılıç Yıldız, “A Review of Byzantine Studies and Architectural Historiography in Turkey Today(1),” *METU Journal of the Faculty of Architecture*, Vol. 28, Issue 2 (2011 / 2), p. 64.

¹⁵⁷ Robert Ousterhout, “The Rediscovery of Constantinople and the Beginning of Byzantine Archaeology: A Historiographical Survey,” in *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914*, ed. Zainab Bahrani, Zeynep Çelik, and Edhem Eldem (İstanbul: SALT, 2011), pp. 181-182.

¹⁵⁸ Immediately after converting to Christianity, Vladimir ordered the construction of a church in the place where there had previously been ancient pagan idols, and invited architects from Constantinople to this end. The long-lasting Byzantine impact on Russia thus started. Nikolay Mikhailovich Karamzin, *Istoriia Gosudarstva Rossiiskogo, Tom:1* (Moscow: Olma-Press, 2004), pp. 132-133.

church dogmas and rituals was beyond dispute.¹⁵⁹ On the other hand, different from the Balkan Peninsula, medieval Rus' did not fall directly under Byzantine political jurisdiction.¹⁶⁰ Russian subordination to Byzantine cultural, political leadership, and ecclesiastical hierarchy had a symbolic rather than a practical character.¹⁶¹ In the eyes of the medieval Rus', which were geographically remote from the core of the Byzantine Empire, Byzantium represented not the earthly but the heavenly seat of the ecumenical church. Its holy capital Constantinople, or Tsargrad as the Slavs called it, was the "symbol of world Christian unity," and held "an ideal, almost mystical conception."¹⁶²

The most fundamental legacy that the Byzantine Empire bequeathed to the Rus' was Orthodox Christianity. The peculiar formulation of Orthodoxy had its repercussions not only in art but also in the political sphere. After the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, Muscovy remained as the most powerful sovereign Orthodox state. The holy city was captured by the "infidel" Turks, and the universal emperor of all Orthodox Christians was dead. The empty seat of the *basileus* demanded a new successor.

¹⁵⁹ George [Yuri] Ivask, "North and South: Some Reflections on Russian Culture," *Russian Review*, Vol. 24, No: 3 (July, 1965), p. 238.

¹⁶⁰ Whether Kievan Rus' was a vassal of the Byzantine Empire or a totally independent state is a matter of discussion. Vasiliev contended that the real circumstances were between these two poles. The Byzantine aim was to establish effective control over this newly baptised Northern neighbour by appointing a Greek metropolitan, whose influence went beyond ecclesiastical matters. However, in the practical world of politics, it would be misleading to think that the *basileus* in Constantinople had direct influence on Rus'. Russian recognition of the universal emperor remained to a great extent a religious conviction. Alexander A. Vasiliev, "Was Old Russia a Vassal State of Byzantium?" *Speculum*, Vol. 7, No: 3 (July, 1932), pp. 350–360.

¹⁶¹ John Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia: A Study of Byzantino-Russian Relations in the Fourteenth Century* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989), p. 14.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 16. Tsargrad is the historic Slavic name for Istanbul, or Constantinople, which had a meaning far beyond geographic connotations. The word implied the dignity and sacredness of the city.

In the early 16th century, an abbot named Filofei formulated the “Third Rome” theory.¹⁶³ Filofei’s theory purported that after the downfall of the first two Romes, the first pagan and the second Christian, Moscow was destined to be the third and the last heir of the Roman Empire; and naturally had the right to fill the political vacuum in the Orthodox world created by the demise of the Byzantine Empire.¹⁶⁴ Although Filofei’s theory remained rather obscure in the 16th century, his ideas were taken up much later in the 19th century and molded according to the political context of the time.

On a symbolic level, the marriage of Ivan the Great (Ivan III) with the Byzantine princess Sophia Paleologue in 1472, who was the niece of the last Eastern Roman Emperor Constantine XI, also provided legitimacy for Russia’s self-identification with Byzantium. The adoption of the originally Eastern Roman symbol of the double-headed eagle signified the identification with the Roman heritage. In the 16th century, the title “Tsar” or “Caesar,” which was originally used to address Byzantine emperors, was also adopted in diplomatic correspondence by Muscovite rulers, a practice which became official when Ivan the Terrible (Ivan IV) was crowned in 1547.¹⁶⁵ With the gradual shift

¹⁶³ Vasily V. Zenkovsky, “The Spirit of Russian Orthodoxy,” *Russian Review*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (January 1963), p. 39.

¹⁶⁴ Legendary claims were also put forward to justify the links between the Byzantium and ancient Rus’. However, the logical explanation follows that after the demise of the Golden Horde, the Russian Church promoted the Grand Prince of Muscovy as its new benefactor. For further information regarding the discussion of Third Rome and attempts to trace a genealogy of Russian rulers back to Roman emperors, see Anderson, *Russian Political Thought* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), pp. 69–80; Michael Florinsky, *Russia: A History and an Interpretation* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953), pp. 165–166. Actually, as Cherniavsky argued, even during the Kievan period, the Russian image of the Roman emperor vacillated between recognition of his sovereignty and the desire to usurp his image. With the latter’s downfall, Russian rulers had the opportunity to take over the role of the Roman emperor. Michael Cherniavsky, “Khan on Basileus: An Aspect of Russian Mediaeval Political Theory,” *Journal of the History of the Ideas*, Vol. 20, No: 4 (October-December, 1959), p. 463.

¹⁶⁵ Michael Boro Petrovich, *The Emergence of Russian Panslavism, 1856–1870* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 6. For the rulers of the medieval Rus’, Byzantine emperor symbolised absolute authority. During the “Tatar Yoke,” the Tatar khan was considered as the secular authority while Byzantine emperor was still respected as the dignified ruler of Eastern Christianity. Therefore, Tatar and Byzantine rulers represented two faces of authority, the earthly and worldly ones. With the decline of both in late sixteenth century, Muscovite rulers, namely, Ivan IV, assumed the title Tsar with a claim to fill their vacuum. For

in the balance of power between the Russian and the Ottoman Empires after the 18th century in Russia's favour, Russian tsars often viewed themselves as the protectors of Orthodox peoples living under Ottoman rule. This discourse served as a legitimising basis for expansionist Russian foreign policy towards the Ottoman Empire.

Despite the appropriation of the Byzantine legacy in the sense of assuming the protector role of Ottoman Christians, Russian perception of Byzantium was not always positive. As Russia turned its face towards the West, Byzantium came to represent stagnation and everything that explained why Russia lagged behind Western Europe. As a reflection of the influence of Enlightenment ideas, Peter the Great blamed Byzantine heritage for Russia's backwardness.¹⁶⁶ For Russia's Western-oriented Tsar, Byzantium was a negative, but instructive example. In other words, Byzantium was regarded as a predecessor whose heritage was on the one hand appropriated and adopted to Russia's special conditions, and on the other hand held responsible for Russia's backwardness.

Russia's self-perception as the "new Rome" reached its most obvious expression during Catherine the Great's (r. 1762-1796) reign. Catherine the Great's scheme to re-establish the Eastern Roman Empire, the "Greek Project" as it was called, foresaw the regeneration of the Byzantine Empire, its capital being Constantinople and its emperor being a Russian prince. Specifically, the Greek Project called for the expansion of Russian influence towards the southern shores of the Black Sea. Capturing Constantinople was only the ultimate aim.¹⁶⁷ In line with the ideological mission of the Greek Project, Catherine brought up her grandson, Constantine, with knowledge of

the medieval Russian perceptions of the Byzantine emperors before and after the Tatar domination, see Michael Cherniavsky, "Khan or Basileus: An Aspect of Russian Medieval Political Theory," pp. 459-476.

¹⁶⁶ Dimitri Obolensky, *Byzantium and the Slavs* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1971), p. 63.

¹⁶⁷ Hugh Ragsdale, "Evaluating the Tradition of Russian Aggression: Catherine II and the Greek Project," *Slavonic and East European Review*, No: 66 (1988), pp. 93-94.

Greek culture. The name Constantine was consciously selected for the young Grand Duke, who was expected to be the emperor of the resurrected Byzantium. Many town names in southern Ukraine and Crimea were changed from local languages to Greek. Catherine's interest in the Greco-Byzantine tradition was not so much a continuation of the previous Muscovite appropriation of Byzantine symbolism. It was rather a reflection of the influence of neo-classicism on the erudite Empress, an idea that permeated the intellectual tradition of 18th century Europe.¹⁶⁸ In this regard, Catherine's interest in Greek culture was more of an import, rather than an idea that formed as a natural continuation of the Russian state tradition.¹⁶⁹ Catherine's plans of capturing Constantinople were based on economic as well as ideological reasons, which were linked to Russia's expansion in Ukraine and Crimea. Although she never totally abandoned the idea, Catherine pragmatically avoided any move that would upset the European balance of power throughout her reign, therefore refrained from carrying out the Greek Project in its full scale.¹⁷⁰

Another turning point for Russian appreciation of the Byzantine heritage was the Greek War of Independence in the 1820s. The Greek independence movement received mixed reaction in the Russian government because of its secular and democratic tenets and because it risked breaking the fragile European balance of power. However, the promise of Greek independence aroused philhellenic and Pan-Orthodox sympathy among Russia's educated public. The unofficial support for Greek freedom proves that Russia's identity as the protector of Orthodox Christians was more than an official

¹⁶⁸ Theophilus C. Prousis, *Russian Society and the Greek Revolution* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1994), pp. 86-87.

¹⁶⁹ Stephen L. Baehr, "From History to National Myth: *Translatio Imperii* in Eighteenth Century Russia," *Russian Review*, Vol. 37, No: 1 (January, 1978), p. 3.

¹⁷⁰ Ragsdale, pp. 111-112.

foreign policy principle and was embraced by broader segments of the society.¹⁷¹ From radicals to conservatives, intellectuals from different political camps had different reasons to sympathise with Greek independence. Nevertheless, after gaining independence in 1832, Greeks resisted Russian paternalism, like other Balkan nations would do in the coming decades. Greek elites preferred Western European political, cultural, and economic development models instead of autocratic Russia. The foreign policy shift in Greece caused friction with the Russian government in the coming decades.

In the 19th century, Russia's increasing military and political advantage vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire influenced the way in which Russian intellectuals viewed Russia's role in world history. Of course, not every intellectual was mesmerised by the possibility of the restoration of the Byzantine Empire under the aegis of Russia. For critics of Russia's social and political development, Byzantine heritage was to blame: the first and one of the most famous examples of anti-Byzantine criticism was put forward by Pyotr Chaadaev (1794-1856) in the 1830s. In his "Philosophical Letters," Chaadaev expressed his contempt for the Byzantine culture and regretted that Russia took on its heritage.¹⁷² Chaadaev's perception of the Byzantine Empire reflected the prevalent attitude among Westernised educated public.

The Slavophiles, despite their obvious differences with the Westernisers, displayed an ambiguous attitude as regards the Byzantine Empire.¹⁷³ In the writings of the early Slavophiles of 1840s-1850s, with a few exceptions, there was nearly no

¹⁷¹ Prousis, pp. 161-163.

¹⁷² Peter Chaadaev, "Letters on the Philosophy of History," in *Readings in Russian Civilization*, Vol. II, ed. Thomas Riha (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969), pp. 304-308.

¹⁷³ Obolensky, pp. 64-65.

indication of a desire to conquer Constantinople, to regenerate the Byzantine Empire and there was little reference to Russia's mission as regards the Balkan Slavs.¹⁷⁴ The first generation of Slavophiles were interested in the spiritual development of the Russian nation, rather than the direction of Russian foreign policy. In this regard they could rightly be defined as pacifists rather than expansionists. The early Slavophiles emphasised the importance of Orthodox Christianity but only in the way it was reformulated by the Russian people. Otherwise, they did not attribute a specifically sanctified role to the Byzantine Empire. They were more preoccupied with criticising Western European influence on Russian institutions, than fighting Ottoman supremacy in the Balkans.

Only with the mobilisation of the Russian public after the Crimean War (1853-1856), the pacifist, and in a sense apolitical, Slavophilism evolved into Pan-Slavism, which had clearer political goals. After the 1860s, the conquest of Constantinople and Russia's assumed historical mission to unite the Balkan Slavs became frequent themes in Pan-Slavist texts. The Slavic component of Russian imperial identity was regarded as inseparable from the Orthodox component. In other words, Orthodoxy was seen as intrinsically linked to Slavdom. It is interesting that while the first Russian archaeologists in the late 18th and early 19th centuries studied ancient Greek and Scythian artefacts, especially after the second half of the 19th century, the focus of archaeological scholarship in southern Russia shifted from ancient Greece to the monuments of Orthodoxy and the Byzantine Empire. Simultaneously, ethno-religious sensitivities replaced the neo-classicism of the 18th century. This ideological shift was

¹⁷⁴ Andzej Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought: From the Enlightenment to Marxism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979), pp. 111-113.

partly a result of the estrangement between Greece and Russia after the former's independence. While Greece's Western-oriented direction disappointed Russian intellectuals, at the same time rising Pan-Slavism alienated Greek intellectuals from Russia.¹⁷⁵ It should be noted that Pan-Slavist statesmen or intellectuals by no means rejected the Byzantine legacy, but the rise of ethno-national sensitivities transformed the way in which Russians embraced the Byzantine legacy.

The most famous ideologue of Russian Pan-Slavism, the man who transformed the Slavophile mysticism into a concrete political programme, was Nikolai Ia. Danilevskii (1822-1885), who expounded his opinions in *Rossiia i Evropa* (Russia and Europe), published in 1869. Danilevskii formulated a cyclical approach to world history and categorised cultures into several cultural-historical types. The Romano-Germanic culture of Western Europe, according to Danilevskii, was on the brink of disintegration, and the future belonged to the Slavic cultural type.¹⁷⁶ Russia's destiny, along with other Orthodox peoples, "was the destiny of Israel and Byzantium: to be the chosen people."¹⁷⁷ Constantinople – or Tsargrad as he preferred to call it – would be the capital of the future Slavic confederation led by Russia. For the sake of fairness to their Slavic brethren, Danilevskii argued that Constantinople would not be directly annexed to the Russian state but would be the free city of the entire union.¹⁷⁸

Another very influential Pan-Slavist text, second only to Danilevskii's "Russia and Europe" was Major-General Rostislav A. Fadeyev's (1824-1883) pamphlet entitled "Opinion on the Eastern Question." Fadeyev's pamphlet appeared the same year as

¹⁷⁵ Prousis, p. 164.

¹⁷⁶ Petrovich, *The Emergence of Russian Panslavism*, pp. 66-77.

¹⁷⁷ Nikolai Danilevsky, "The Slav Role in World Civilization," in *Readings in Russian Civilization*, Vol. II, ed. Thomas Riha (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 384.

¹⁷⁸ Petrovich, *The Emergence of Russian Panslavism*, pp. 278-281.

Danilevskii's "Russia and Europe" and expressed similar opinions. Fadeyev was also an ardent supporter of Russian imperial expansion. Fadeyev's pamphlet voiced the general mood among Russian Pan-Slavists in the aftermath of the Crimean War.¹⁷⁹ Fadeyev argued that the ultimate mission of Russia should be leading the Slavic and Orthodox world, without making a separation between the two. The historical mission of Russia was the liberation of Orthodox and Slav nations. In this struggle, Fadeyev argued, Russia's principal enemy was the Germanic peoples. Once Russia fulfilled its historical duty, the Russian Tsar would be the natural head of the liberated Slavs and Orthodox peoples. Like Danilevskii, Fadeyev argued that Constantinople should be a free city, equally shared by the Orthodox nations; not a national or imperial capital of any particular nation. Fadeyev explained why Constantinople should not belong to any single nation:

there is yet another place on the earth immeasurably important to Russia, having no national character, but from its exceptionable position too important to belong to any small people – Constantinople, with the surrounding suburbs, country, and straits. The most positive interests of Russia render it desirable that that city, far more eternal than Rome, should become the free city of a tribal union.¹⁸⁰

One of the most famous and vocal supporters of Russian expansion towards the Ottoman Empire was Fyodor Dostoyevskii, a writer with significant influence on public opinion. Like Danilevskii and Fadeyev, the identification of Orthodoxy with Slavdom was visible in the writings of Dostoyevskii. His treatise, "The Utopian Conception of History," written in June 1876 in the midst of unrest in Bulgaria, summarised Dostoyevskii's opinions on the Eastern Question. In this treatise, Dostoyevskii argued that Orthodox Christianity was the only religion that kept its purity. Russia, as the

¹⁷⁹ Rostislav A. Fadieev, "What Should Be the Policy of Russia?" in *Readings in Russian Foreign Policy*, ed. Robert A. Goldwin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 67-73.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 70-71.

greatest and strongest Orthodox nation, was destined to put Orthodoxy, its most valuable treasure, to the service of mankind. This way, Russia would inspire a spiritual regeneration and bring entire mankind together in a universal harmony.¹⁸¹ In this regard, Russia had a specifically important task to take the lead and liberate the Slavic and Orthodox nations from Ottoman rule. Dostoyevskii differed from Danilevskii and Fadeyev in his opinions on Constantinople. He argued that Constantinople was more than a strategically important city, it had a spiritual significance and was too important to leave either to Greeks or Balkan Slavs. Dostoyevskii explained Russian pretensions over Constantinople with these words:

Relying upon what sublime aims could Russia demand Constantinople from Europe? – Precisely as a leader of Orthodoxy, as its protectress and guardian – a role designated to her ever since Ivan III, who placed her symbol and the Byzantine double-headed eagle above the ancient coat of arms of Russia ... Such is the ground, such is the right to ancient Constantinople.¹⁸²

Later in November 1877, after the breakout of the Russo-Ottoman War, Dostoyevskii elaborated his analyses on the Eastern Question. Different from Danilevskii or Fadeyev, he rejected the idea that Constantinople should be a free city of the Slavic-Orthodox confederation. He argued that Russia was superior to the rest of the Slavic-Orthodox world in every sense, therefore it would be illogical to leave Constantinople to a confederation of Slavic and Orthodox nations. Such an arrangement would not bring unity to the Slavic-Orthodox world, on the contrary, would antagonise smaller nations against each other. On the contrary, Dostoyevskii argued that Russian possession of Constantinople would bring peace and freedom to the Slavic-Orthodox

¹⁸¹ F. M. Dostoevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, trans. Boris Brasol (Santa Barbara: P. Smith, 1979), pp. 361-362.

¹⁸² Ibid., p. 364.

world. He claimed, “Constantinople is the center of the Eastern world, while Russia is its spiritual center and its head.”¹⁸³

It is noteworthy that in all of the above-mentioned texts, the conquest of Constantinople was regarded as linked to Russia’s union with the Balkan Slavs. Pan-Slavists were not interested in resurrecting the Byzantine Empire in the original sense, but they wanted to recreate Byzantium as an empire characterised by Slavic culture. In other words, regenerated Byzantium was detached from its Greek origins and depicted as a Slavic – more specifically, Russian – achievement. In this regard, Russia usurped the Byzantine legacy and reformulated it with an emphasis on Slavic culture. At this point, the possible conquest of Constantinople symbolised the fulfilment of a Russian imperial dream. From the 18th to the 20th centuries, references to Russian seizure of Constantinople would continue to come up in nationalist literature under different political circumstances.

In addition to Westernisers, there were critics of the Byzantine legacy among intellectuals who did not fit into the Westerniser camp. For instance, an original perspective about Byzantium was put forward by the theologian and philosopher Vladimir Soloviev (1853-1900). Soloviev argued that the Byzantine Empire was cut off from antiquity and lost the spiritual foundation of its existence, consequently represented stagnation.¹⁸⁴ He was particularly critical of the church’s subservience to the state in Byzantium, which he thought destroyed the universality of the Christian tradition. Even in the writings of the most conservative thinkers, Byzantine civilisation was not deemed praiseworthy in itself, but only in its association with “Holy Russia.”

¹⁸³ Ibid., p. 905.

¹⁸⁴ G. I. Shchetinina, *Ideinaia Zhizn’ Russkoi Intelligentsii: Konets XIX-Nachalo XX v.* (Moskva: Nauka, 1995), p. 74.

Among other intellectuals of late imperial Russia, only Konstantin N. Leontiev (1831-1891) attributed Russia's value specifically to its association with the Byzantine Empire. Leontiev formulated a political theory which he called "Byzantinism," a curious amalgamation of political autocracy and Orthodox mysticism.¹⁸⁵ Having a Nietzschean disdain for European bourgeois culture, Leontiev was inimical towards Pan-Slavism and nationalism in general, and was reluctant to express solidarity with the Balkan Slavs. Rather than designating a special mission to Moscow as the Third Rome, Leontiev wanted to see the regeneration of the Second Rome, the Byzantine Empire, from its ashes.

In a nutshell, in Russian intellectual life, the image of the Byzantine Empire had a complicated meaning. Despite continuous claims to the Byzantine heritage, Russian appreciation of Byzantium was an "ambiguous blend of attraction and repulsion" since the medieval times.¹⁸⁶ On the one hand, under different circumstances and in different forms, Russian statesmen, ecclesiastical authorities and intellectuals viewed Russia as the legitimate heir to the Byzantine legacy, being the most powerful Orthodox nation. On the other hand, especially in the later part of the 19th century, those who looked for the origins of Russia's contemporary social and political problems turned their faces towards the Byzantine Empire. Intellectuals on the Westerniser camp were on the whole negative towards the Byzantine culture, and blamed it for Russia's autocratic heritage and cultural isolation from the rest of Europe.

Even those intellectuals such as Danilevskii, Fadeyev, and Dostoyevskii, who called for the conquest of Constantinople and reconstruction of the imperial city as the

¹⁸⁵ Stephen Lukashevich, *Konstantin Leontiev (1831-1891): A Study in Russian 'Heroic Vitalism,'* (New York: Pageant Press, 1967), pp. 136-140.

¹⁸⁶ Obolensky, p. 62.

capital of Orthodoxy, kept a certain distance from the Byzantine legacy.¹⁸⁷ The messages of Pan-Slavist scholars merged Orthodoxy with ethnic particularism. They reconstructed the image of the Byzantine Empire by adding a Slavic, and more specifically Russian identity to it. Looking at Pan-Slavist texts, it would be more accurate to say that Russian intellectuals usurped Byzantine imagery, and moulded it in a Russian context. The Byzantine heritage was not appraised in itself; it was exalted only as part of Russia's imperial identity. Except for the rather distinctive opinions of Konstantin Leontiev, intellectuals on the right linked Russia's cultural achievements not to the Byzantine culture imposed from above, but to the peculiar formulation of the Byzantine legacy by the Russian people from below. For sure, the origin of Orthodoxy was Byzantium, but the way in which Orthodoxy was interpreted defined the transformation of the pagan Rus' into "Holy Russia." Among other Orthodox nations, Russia was depicted as the only candidate which had the capacity to restore the holy city Tsargrad and the political unity of Orthodox believers.

In any case, whether Russian intellectuals exalted the Byzantine heritage, downplayed its achievements or entertained mixed feelings, the common theme was that they did not question Russia's status as the inheritor of the Byzantine legacy. There was nearly a consensus among Russian intellectuals, who otherwise had totally different political opinions, that Russia should actively protect the rights of its Slavic and Orthodox brethren in the Ottoman Empire, a role bequeathed to Russia by Byzantium.¹⁸⁸ Liberals and radicals saw the promise of liberty in the Balkan nations' struggle for

¹⁸⁷ Ivask points out that Kievan Rus', Muscovy and imperial Russia had their peculiar reasons to keep a certain distance from Byzantine influence. Ivask, "North and South: Some Reflections on Russian Culture," p. 238.

¹⁸⁸ Prousis, p. 166.

independence and hoped a similar spirit of freedom would sweep through Russia. Conservatives and religious thinkers, on the other hand, emphasised Russia's destiny to lead the Orthodox-Slavic world and emancipate its ethnic and religious kinsmen.

As Fyodor Uspenskii put it, the development of Byzantinology as a scientific branch of study in Russia should be analysed within the context of Russia's political and cultural interests and self-perception (*samoopredelenie*).¹⁸⁹ Scholarly study of Byzantine history in Russia dates back to the 18th century, to the establishment of the Imperial Academy of Sciences in 1725. The First scholars who devoted attention to Byzantine sources were German historians who settled in Russia.¹⁹⁰ Russia's Greek community, inhabiting mostly in southern Russia, also played an important role in the development of Byzantine studies both as scholars and as benefactors. Aleksandr Sturdza (1791-1854) and Gavriil S. Destunis (1818-1895) are especially worth mentioning at this point.¹⁹¹ Destunis taught Byzantine history and literature at the Historical-Philological Faculty at St. Petersburg University, whereas Sturdza personally funded archaeological studies in Novorossiya, and was instrumental in the establishment of the Odessa Society of History and Antiquities in 1839.

Only in the last quarter of the 19th century, did Byzantine studies develop as a scientific discipline in Russia. Two academic centres, the Imperial St. Petersburg University and the Imperial Novorossiya University in Odessa were especially active in training scholars and conducting research in this field. It can be said that V. G. Vasilevskii (1838-1899) from St. Petersburg University laid the scientific foundations of

¹⁸⁹ Fyodor Ivanovich Uspenskii, "Iz Istorii Vizantinovedeniia v Rossii" *Annaly* (Petrograd: RAN, 1922), p. 110.

¹⁹⁰ Obolensky, p. 67.

¹⁹¹ Prousis, p. 167.

Byzantinology in Russia.¹⁹² Vasilevskii was originally a classicist and a student of Theodor Mommsen, the famous German classical historian.¹⁹³ Vasilevskii published valuable textual sources unknown until then. His analyses determined the major trends in Byzantine studies both in Russia and in Europe.¹⁹⁴ Among other things, Vasilevskii particularly studied Byzantine relations with the peoples of the steppe and the Slavic influence on Byzantine institutions. Under Vasilevskii's editorship, the first scholarly journal on Byzantine history, *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* (the Byzantine Herald) was launched in 1893.¹⁹⁵ In fact, the idea of the establishment of an all-Russian Byzantine society and a journal dedicated to Byzantinology was put forward by Uspenskii long before the initiation of *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* and *Vizantiiskii Vremennik*.¹⁹⁶

In the late 19th century, the centre of Byzantine studies shifted from the Imperial Academy of Sciences to St. Petersburg University. The last decades of the 19th century and the early 20th century was the “golden age” of Russian Byzantine studies. In this period, there was intensive correspondence and exchange of ideas between Russian and foreign scholars. Foreign scholars asked help from their Russian colleagues especially with regard to ancient manuscripts from the Christian East.¹⁹⁷ Russian Byzantine studies reached such a respectable status in European academia that Karl Krumbacher, the well-

¹⁹² Alexander A. Vasiliev, “Byzantine Studies in Russia, Past and Present,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (April 1927), pp. 539-545.

¹⁹³ Obolensky, p. 68.

¹⁹⁴ Alexander Kazhdan, “Russian Pre-Revolutionary Studies on Eleventh-Century Byzantium,” in *Byzantine Studies: Essays on the Slavic World and the Eleventh Century*, ed. Speros Vryonis, Jr., Vol. 9 (Hellenism: Ancient, Medieval, Modern) (New Rochelle, NY.: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1992), p. 110.

¹⁹⁵ Igor Pavlovich Medvedev, *Peterburgskoe Vizantinovedenie* (Sankt Peterburg: Aleteia, 2006), pp. 130-142.

¹⁹⁶ Uspenskii, “Iz Istorii Vizantinovedeniia v Rossii,” p. 119.

¹⁹⁷ Medvedev, p. 133.

known German Byzantinist scholar, learnt Russian to follow academic literature in this language and made his students do the same.¹⁹⁸

Imperial Russian academics made significant contributions to Byzantine studies, primarily by focusing on the interactions between ancient Slavs, the Byzantine Empire, and the nomadic peoples of the Eurasian steppes. The emphasis on this particular aspect of Byzantine history set Russian scholars apart from their European colleagues. Interest in social-economic aspects of Byzantine history also became a landmark of Russian Byzantine studies. From Vasilevskii to Uspenskii, Russian Byzantinists accepted the paradigm that Slavic settlements in the Byzantine countryside played a decisive role in the formation of land-ownership laws, as Slavic customs gradually penetrated into the Byzantine legal system.¹⁹⁹ As a result of their interest in the history of Slavic peasantry in the Byzantine Empire, Russian Byzantinists focused on social-economic history of the Byzantine Empire. Leading Russian Byzantinists concluded that Slavs played a more or less similar role as Germanic tribes did in the West. The most widely accepted argument was that while the Macedonian dynasty that ruled the Byzantine Empire from the 9th to the 11th centuries sympathised with the Slavic peasantry in the countryside and was supportive of the Slavic village commune, the ascendance of the Latins after the 11th century changed the harmony between the Byzantine state and its Slavic inhabitants. Russian scholars argued that with Latin supremacy, feudal institutions penetrated into Byzantium.²⁰⁰ The argument followed that the Westernised and Latinised rulers after the 11th century neglected the peasantry and brought the destruction of the Byzantine Empire. The underlying message of this argument was that

¹⁹⁸ Obolensky, p. 68.

¹⁹⁹ Kazhdan, pp. 111-119.

²⁰⁰ Kazhdan, p. 120.

feudalism and oppressive policies were not characteristic of the Byzantine Empire, but came from the West with the Latin invasion. This perspective was very much in line with the Slavophile conception of world history.

The St. Petersburg school of Byzantinology reached its peak during the last quarter of the 19th century. V. G. Vasilevskii and his students V. E. Regel', H. M. Loparev, P. B. Bezobrazov, A. A. Vasiliev, B. A. Panchenko, among others, took the lead in Byzantine studies in this period. The latter also served as RAIK's secretary from 1901 to 1914.²⁰¹ Among the most notable scholars who made contributions to the development of Byzantinology, we can count Vladimir Ivanovich Lamanskii (1833-1914) and Nikodim Pavlovich Kondakov (1844-1925). Lamanskii was renowned for his studies on the southern Slavs and their relations with the Byzantine Empire.²⁰² He was also the mentor and professor of the later director of RAIK, Fyodor Uspenskii. Kondakov, a specialist in the history of Byzantine art, was especially distinguished for his research on Russian civilisation in the Middle Ages, and the relations between the Byzantine and Slavic worlds.²⁰³ From 1870 to 1890, Kondakov undertook many scientific expeditions in the Russian Empire, especially Crimea and the Caucasus, and he joined expeditions in the Balkans, Ottoman Macedonia, Greece, Syria, Palestine, and the Sinai Peninsula. He also extensively studied Byzantine monuments in Constantinople.²⁰⁴

Along with Kondakov, F. I. Uspenskii, the only director of RAIK throughout its existence, made notable contributions to the development of Byzantine studies.

²⁰¹ Basargina, *Russkii Arkheologicheskii Institut v Konstantinopole*, p. 204.

²⁰² Vasiliev, "Byzantine Studies in Russia, Past and Present," p. 540.

²⁰³ Priakhin, pp. 131-132.

²⁰⁴ Musin, p. 47.

Uspenskii was born in 1845 to a priest's family in the Galich district of Kostroma. He attended the Galich religious school and Kostroma's seminary before entering the Historical-Philological Department of the St. Petersburg University.²⁰⁵ Uspenskii's early religious education might have had influence on his future interest in the history of Orthodoxy. At St. Petersburg University, Uspenskii was V. I. Lamanskii's student.²⁰⁶ Lamanskii was well-known for his Pan-Slavist political views, which apparently left a mark on his student. Early in his career, Uspenskii was distinguished by his academic erudition, and used comparative analyses to better situate Byzantine Empire in world history.²⁰⁷ His research interest especially concentrated on the socio-political history of the Byzantine Empire and Byzantine relations with the Balkan Slavs. While still a student at the Historical – Philological Faculty at St. Petersburg University, Uspenskii received a prize from the Slavic Benevolent Committee in 1871 with his article "The First Slavic Monarchs in the North-West" which was published as a book in 1872.²⁰⁸ In 1874, Uspenskii defended his thesis "The Byzantine Author, Nicetas Choniates from Chonae."²⁰⁹ This work was based on important sources from the 12th and 13th centuries, that is, the period of the Comnenos and Angelos dynasties of the Byzantine Empire and Latin supremacy. This thesis proved to be an important contribution to Byzantine studies with its information about the mutual relations between Christian and Muslim societies in the Middle Ages, and its in-depth and detailed historical analyses.²¹⁰

²⁰⁵ Vernadsky, p. 208.

²⁰⁶ L. P. Lapteva, *Istoriia Slavianovedeniia v Rossii v XIX Veke* (Moskva: Indrik, 2005) p. 376.

²⁰⁷ B. T. Gorianov, "F. I. Uspenskii i Ego Znachenie v Vizantinovedenii," *Vizantiiskii Vremennik*, Vol. 1 (26) (1947), pp. 101-107.

²⁰⁸ M. G. Popruzhenko, *Sorokaletie Uchenoi Deiatel'nosti Akademika Feodora Ivanovicha Uspenskogo (rech', skazannaia v zasedanii Istoriko-Filologicheskogo Obshchestva pri Imperatorskom Novorossiiskom Universitete v den iubileia – 3 Noiabria 1911 g.)* (Odessa: Ekonomicheskaiia Tipografia, 1912), pp. 1-3.

²⁰⁹ F. I. Uspenskii, *Vizantiiskii Pisatel' Nikita Akominat iz Khon*, 1874.

²¹⁰ Popruzhenko, p. 3.

Immediately after completing his degree at St. Petersburg University, Uspenskii was appointed to the Imperial Novorossiya University as a lecturer, and started giving lectures on Byzantine history.²¹¹ In these lectures, Uspenskii underlined the relevance of studying Byzantine history to understand Russian and broader Slavic history. Uspenskii claimed that the Byzantine Empire undertook an educative (*vospitatel'ny*) role in its relations with its European neighbours in the West (*novoevropeiskie narody*) and Slavic neighbours in the North. He argued that European historians, while expressing gratitude for the positive influence the Byzantine Empire exerted on “wild hordes” (*dikiia ordy* – with this, probably meaning peoples inhabiting areas north of the Byzantine Empire, notably the Slavs) and transforming them into “historical nations” (*istoricheskie narody*), they should also not forget the sacrifices the Byzantine Empire made in defence of Europe, making itself the “bastion of civilisation” (*oplot' tsivilizatsii*).²¹² Uspenskii argued, “the new empire in Tsargrad, in the period of a thousand years of its existence, continued, by virtue of its historical mission, the development of ideas and institutions (*poniatiiia i uchrezhdeniia*), bequeathed [to it] by Rome, and following the tradition, spiritually educating new peoples.”²¹³

Uspenskii’s doctoral dissertation, which was completed in 1879, was entitled “The Formation of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom.” In this study, Uspenskii shed light on the relations between the Bulgarians, Serbs, the Byzantine Empire, and medieval Rus’.²¹⁴ After the completion of his doctoral studies, Uspenskii’s concentrated on the history of the Byzantine Empire as well as the history of southern Slavs.²¹⁴ Working

²¹¹ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

²¹² Ibid., p. 6.

²¹³ Ibid., pp. 10-11.

²¹⁴ Lapteva, *Istoriia Slavianovedeniia v Rossii v XIX Veke*, p. 376.

extensively on Byzantine interactions with its neighbours, Uspenskii also studied the relations of the Byzantine Empire with its Muslim neighbours. His study “*Melik Gazi and Danishmends*” (*Melik Gazi i Dzul-Nun Danishmendy*), which appeared in 1879, focused on Muslim-Byzantine relations during the First Crusade.²¹⁵ Uspenskii’s “*Essays on the History of Byzantine Civilisation*” offers a deep analysis of Byzantine cultural life with the rich and novel material base he used.²¹⁶

In his academic studies, Uspenskii emphasised the organic links between Russia, the Balkan Slavs, and the Byzantine Empire. His arguments implied the antiquity of Russian cultural existence in the region once ruled by the Byzantine Empire. If there had been intensive cultural interactions between Russians and Byzantine civilisation, then it was only natural that Russian culture had penetrated into regions within the Byzantine sphere of influence. This argument further strengthened Russia’s position as the legitimate inheritor of the Byzantine tradition. The historical and cultural interactions between Russians and Byzantium legitimised contemporary Russian scientific (in fact, not only scientific, but also political) interest in the history of the Byzantine Empire. Uspenskii outlined his arguments in a speech at the Odessa Slavic Benevolent Society in 1885, in commemoration of the 1000th anniversary of St. Methodius’s death. Uspenskii argued that the priest brothers St. Cyril and St. Methodius might have had contacts with Russians in Chersonessos – although this argument was not grounded on any objective evidence. Uspenskii further claimed that Russian cultural existence on the Black Sea coast, especially in Crimea, dated back to as late as the 9th and 10th centuries.²¹⁷ By tracing archaeological records in the Black Sea basin, Uspenskii’s arguments in fact

²¹⁵ Popruzhenko, p. 12.

²¹⁶ Ibid., p. 124.

²¹⁷ Ibid., p. 15.

underlined the antiquity of Russian existence on the Black Sea coast, and implicitly endorsed the legitimacy and even necessity of incorporating these regions to the Russian Empire.

In another speech he delivered in commemoration of the 900th anniversary of the Christianisation of Rus', Uspenskii explained the relationship between medieval Rus' and the Byzantine Empire. He argued that even though the medieval Rus' society tried to stand against Byzantine cultural influence, Byzantine culture gradually penetrated into Rus' lands, which altered the political ideals of the latter. With the Christianisation of the Rus' in the 10th century, Uspenskii argued that the "Hellenic genius" of the Byzantine Empire merged with a "great nation" (*velikii narod*) to the north of the Black Sea.²¹⁸

Uspenskii's discussion of the Crusades also revealed how he linked distant history to contemporary political issues. In his discussion of the importance of the Crusades for Eastern European history, Uspenskii claimed that the Crusades opened the path for the struggle between the East and the West, which continued up to the 20th century under the name of the "Eastern Question," a multi-faceted problem that combined various underlying factors with religious, economic, and political aspects. Uspenskii nearly identified the Crusades as the origin of the Eastern Question, and claimed that Russia was "destined" (*suzhdeno*) to take part in it.²¹⁹ Therefore, he defined the Eastern Question not only as a political problem, but as a civilisational encounter between what he saw as opposing forces, the East and the West, although how he conceptualised East and West remained blurry.

²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 16.

²¹⁹ F. I. Uspenskii, *Ocherki Po Istorii Vizantiiskoi Obrazovannosti: Iстория Крестовых Походов* (Moskva: Mysl', 2001), p. 320.

The theme of “Eastern Question” appeared at various times in Uspenskii’s writings. In fact, he identified the history of Byzantine studies with the history of the Eastern Question. Uspenskii expressed very openly the view that scientific interests always went hand in hand with political and economic interests. Making comparisons with European nations, especially with France, which he deemed the cradle of Byzantine studies, Uspenskii complained that scientific Byzantinology developed comparatively late in Russia. He argued that while the French, since the Crusades, planted the seeds of scientific Byzantinology through their missionaries, consuls, and commercial colonies in the Near East, Russians were late in embarking on a scientific study of the Byzantine Empire, despite the fact that political and religious tendencies brought Russia closer to Byzantine civilisation than any other European nation.²²⁰

Uspenskii found it embarrassing that Russian academics lagged behind their European colleagues in a field as intrinsically linked to Russian imperial identity as Byzantine studies. He sadly acknowledged that until the establishment of RAIK, very little was done in the name of Byzantine studies in Russia. There was not a single institution dedicated exclusively to the study of Byzantine history, although Byzantine studies had to be the “main duty of Russian science,” and a national obligation.²²¹ To overcome this shortcoming, Uspenskii made great efforts to strengthen Byzantine studies in Russian academia throughout his academic career. On several occasions, he expressed dismay at the absence of an institution for Byzantine studies and advocated the necessity of a multi-functional institute of Byzantinology. When he was the head of the Odessa Historical-Philological Society, he worked for the establishment of a

²²⁰ Uspenskii, “Iz Istorii Vizantinovedeniia v Rossii,” pp. 111-112.

²²¹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 99-100 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 1914).

Byzantinology department, which was realised in 1892. Two years later, when the most prominent academic publication in the field of Byzantine studies, *Vizantiiskii Vremennik*, started to be published, one of the promoters of the journal was Uspenskii.²²² When RAIK was established upon the initiative of Russian diplomats in Constantinople, Uspenskii ardently participated in this project. In many respects, the achievements of the institute were unthinkable without the personal contribution of Uspenskii.²²³

In addition to Uspenskii, a number of other important Byzantinist scholars were actively involved in RAIK's activities as secretaries and researchers of the institute. From 1895 to 1914, six scholars served as secretaries at RAIK, these being, P. D. Pogodin (1894-1897), B. V. Farmakovskii (1898-1901), R. K. Leper (1901-1908), B. A. Panchenko (1901-1914), F. I. Shmit (1908-1912), and N. L. Okunev (1913-1914). All of these scholars were graduates of the Historical-Philological Faculty of St. Petersburg University, except for Farmakovskii, who was a graduate of the Historical-Philological Faculty of the Imperial Novorossiya University.²²⁴ The educational background of these scholars point out to the academic influence of these two universities on RAIK.

To sum up, in the Russian Empire Byzantine studies was marked by an ideological undertone, explained by Russia's perception of itself as the legitimate heir to the Byzantine civilisation. Geographically, Russian archaeological interest was mostly concentrated around the Black Sea, because this region was rich in terms of Greco-Byzantine antiquities. In addition, the areas surrounding the Black Sea were annexed to

²²² Popruzhenko, p. 21.

²²³ Ibid., pp. 22-24.

²²⁴ For biographical information about the secretaries of RAIK, see Basargina, *Russkii Arkheologicheskii Institut v Konstantinopole*, pp. 87-120.

Russia relatively recently, and were highly multi-ethnic and multi-religious. Therefore, proving the antiquity of Russian and Orthodox cultural presence in southern Russia was not only a scientific enterprise, but had a political aspect to it. Different from their European colleagues, Russian Byzantinists prioritised the study of Slavic influence on Byzantine institutions. The context in which Russian archaeology and specifically Russian Byzantinology developed is essential for understanding the establishment of RAIK in 1894, the scope and geographical focus of its scientific interests.

2.4 Byzantine Studies in the Ottoman Empire

Archaeology was not institutionalised as an academic discipline in the Ottoman Empire as it was in Russia. Therefore, it is impossible to trace the academic development of Byzantine studies in Turkey before the Republican period. The limited number of intellectuals who touched upon Byzantine history in their works were either historians, or intellectuals with a particular interest in antiquities. The first book about Byzantine monuments written by an Ottoman citizen was a short brochure by the Greek Patriarch Constantios I (1770-1859) from 1861.²²⁵ In the 19th century, Ottoman historians, such as Ahmed Midhat Efendi, Mizancı Mehmed Murad, Celal Nuri, and Namık Kemal started to integrate Byzantine history into general histories of the Ottoman Empire, often as a historical background to explain and praise the successes of the Ottoman Empire in comparison to its predecessor.²²⁶

²²⁵ Semavi Eyice, “Türkiye’de Bizans Sanatı Araştırmaları ve İstanbul Üniversitesi’nde Bizans Sanatı” [Byzantine Art Studies in Turkey and Byzantine Art in İstanbul University], *Cumhuriyetin 50. Yılına Armağan* [50th Anniversary of the Republic Memory Book] (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1973), p. 378.

²²⁶ Şule Kılıç Yıldız, “A Review of Byzantine Studies and Architectural Historiography in Turkey Today,” p. 64; Michael Ursinus, “From Süleyman Pasha to Mehmet Fuat Köprülü: Roman and Byzantine History in Late Ottoman Historiography,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, Vol. 12 (1988), pp. 306-

Actually, right after the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans in 1453, Ottoman rulers embraced the heritage of their predecessors and refashioned themselves as the heirs of the Byzantine Empire. The adoption of Byzantine traditions was especially visible in early Ottoman architectural practices, protocols and ceremonial performances.²²⁷ The use of Byzantine symbols was a means of providing a legitimate basis for Ottoman acquisition of imperial power, authority, and sovereignty in the 15th century. Mehmed II (r. 1444-1446; 1451-1481) was known with titles similar to those used by the Byzantine *basileus*. In addition to Ottoman self-perception, post-1453 texts by some Greek scholars show that the Ottomans were viewed as the legitimate heirs to the Byzantine throne by a broader audience.²²⁸ The Greek historians Kritoboulos (1410-1470) and Amiroutzes (1400-1470), both of whom personally witnessed the transformation of imperial power from the Byzantines to the Ottomans, eulogised Mehmed II as the legitimate emperor of the Romans, perhaps with a pragmatic intention to accommodate to the new political reality.

Despite the early Ottoman appropriation of Byzantine legacy, this identity gradually changed and the memory of the Byzantine Empire drifted into the dusty pages of history. Byzantium was once again remembered by Ottoman intellectuals only in the 19th century, in a very different context. In the last decades of the 19th century, Ottoman historians discovered the Turkic identity of the Ottoman Empire. However, different from other Turkic states with nomadic traditions, the Ottoman state transformed itself

307; Michael Ursinus, “Byzantine History in Late Ottoman Turkish Historiography,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, Vol. 10 (1986), pp. 214-215.

²²⁷ Claire Norton, “Blurring the Boundaries: Intellectual and Cultural Interactions between the Eastern and Western Christian and Muslim Worlds,” in *The Renaissance and the Ottoman World*, ed. Anna Contadini, Claire Norton (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), p. 18.

²²⁸ Michael Angold, *The Fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans: Context and Consequences* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 67.

into an Empire, a cosmopolitan political entity with established political traditions. The imperial character of the Ottoman Empire intrigued intellectuals like Ahmed Midhat Efendi as regards the sources of this imperial tradition, which he found in the Byzantine Empire.²²⁹ Ahmed Midhat noted that the Byzantine Empire had no historical connection to modern Greeks. He added that for the sake of historical coherence, Byzantine history should be treated as part of Ottoman history.²³⁰ The common theme in the works of first Ottoman historians who dealt with Byzantine history was that they based their analyses on Western sources, and therefore adopted the negative European attitudes towards the Byzantine Empire, considering it as a despotic and corrupt political entity. In a period when Ottoman intellectuals were speculating about the reasons of Ottoman decline and looking for remedies to reverse the situation, it was practical to link the decline of the Ottoman Empire to the negative impact exerted by the Byzantines, than blaming it on Islam.²³¹ It is a curious coincidence that Ottoman intellectuals' criticism of Byzantine despotism and corruption echoed the views of Russian intellectuals, who blamed the Byzantine heritage for Russia's contemporary problems.

The first, and in fact the most comprehensive book published by an Ottoman Turk exclusively on Byzantine history was Celal Esad Bey's (Celal Esad Arseven) *Constantinople from Byzantine to Istanbul (Constantinople de Byzance à Stamboul)*, published in 1909. The preface of this work was written by the noted French Byzantinist Charles Diehl. Written in French, the book obviously targeted a foreign audience. In the preface, Diehl noted that Celal Esad's ardent nationalism, which came to the surface in

²²⁹ Ursinus, "From Süleyman Pasha to Mehmet Fuat Köprülü: Roman and Byzantine History in Late Ottoman Historiography," pp. 307-309.

²³⁰ Ursinus, "Byzantine History in Late Ottoman Turkish Historiography," pp. 215-218.

²³¹ Ibid., pp. 221-222.

some parts of the book, might bring smiles to specialists in the West, but he praised Celal Esad for successfully undertaking a comprehensive study on Byzantine monuments in Constantinople.²³² Despite the imperfections of the book, Diehl noted that Celal Esad successfully portrayed Byzantine architecture and completed the study with a description of Ottoman monuments in the city. Until the publication of Celal Esad's book, the study of the Byzantine Empire was monopolised by Greeks, Russians, Germans, the British, and the French, and Diehl concluded that it was interesting to see an Ottoman Turk writing about Byzantine art and history.

Celal Esad argued that the separation of Latin and Orthodox churches prevented European archaeologists from taking an active interest in the history of the Byzantine Empire. Therefore, Byzantine monuments remained in the shadow of Greco-Roman antiquities for quite a long time in European academia. Celal Esad critically stated that there had been many academics and specialists in Europe, who scorned Byzantine art and downplayed its influence on the development of Western art. At this point, Celal Esad drew similarities between European perceptions of Byzantine and Turkish art, and pointed out that Turkish artistic development was also subjected to similar prejudices.²³³

Diehl had a point when he said that Celal Esad's analysis of Byzantine history was shaped by a nationalist overtone. Although Celal Esad acknowledged the influence of Byzantine art on European as well as Islamic artistic traditions, he provided a negative picture with regard to Byzantine rulers and society. He contended that internal problems, such as the decadence of morals, and economic problems, which were caused by very high court spending, made the Byzantine Empire vulnerable to foreign

²³² Celal Esad Arseven (Djelal Essad), *Constantinople de Byzance à Stamboul* (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1909) (traduit du turc par l'auteur, préface de M. Charles Diehl), pp. II-III.

²³³ Ibid., pp. 151-153.

exploitation. Eventually, the Byzantine Empire found itself in the middle of a political debacle in the 13th century.²³⁴

In his description of the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks, Celal Esad made comparison with the Crusader conquest in the 13th century to portray the Ottomans in a favourable light to his European readers. He stated that after the Turkish conquest, Constantinople was looted, as was the common practice at the time. Celal Esad referred to the pillage of the churches such as Chora and St. Jean Baptiste by the Ottomans, but he legitimised the situation by contending that the pillage of the Crusaders far exceeded the pillage of the Turks. Celal Esad argued that apart from looting the city, the Ottomans also respected and in fact embraced the existing civilisation they encountered in Constantinople. The adoption of Byzantine civilisation was visible at the level of state symbols. Celal Esad claimed that upon the conquest of the city, Mehmed II adopted the crescent as the state emblem, which was actually the sign of the Byzantine Empire, and added a star to it.²³⁵

Celal Esad acknowledged the impact of Byzantine art on Seljukid, and later Ottoman art. Especially after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, Turkish architecture was definitely inspired by local traditions.²³⁶ Ottoman exposure to Byzantine architectural tradition was particularly visible in religious architecture, considering the similarities between Byzantine churches and Ottoman mosques. But he also added that in a short time Turkish art acquired a unique character.

Another Ottoman intellectual who compiled a work on Byzantine art and architecture was İhtifalci Mehmed Ziya, who was a member of the Permanent

²³⁴ Ibid., p. 10.

²³⁵ Ibid., pp. 33-36.

²³⁶ Ibid., pp. 169, 176.

Committee for the Preservation of Antiquities (*Muhâfaza-i Âsâr-i Atîka Encümen-i Dâimîsi*). His book, *İstanbul ve Boğaziçi: Bizans ve Türk Medeniyetinin Eserleri* (*Istanbul and the Bosphorus: The Monuments of Byzantine and Turkish Civilisations*), originally published in 1920, was more like a list of Byzantine and Ottoman monuments in Constantinople.²³⁷ In his descriptions of Byzantine-era buildings, Mehmed Ziya drew comparisons with European and Ottoman architecture, and concluded that Byzantine monuments had more in common with Ottoman, rather than European architecture. For instance, in his description of the Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors, built during the reign of Constantine the Great in the 4th century, Mehmed Ziya claimed that this palace had more similarities with the Russian Kremlin or Ottoman Topkapı Palace, rather than the Versailles or the Louvre.²³⁸ In an attempt to justify Ottoman conquest, Mehmed Ziya claimed that the Ottomans were not responsible for the destruction of the Great Palace, since it was already in ruins during the Byzantine period.²³⁹

Mehmed Ziya's analyses included interesting comparisons between European and Byzantine civilisations. He contended that while European peoples were still in a state of "nomadism" (*bedevi*; could also be translated as "barbary"), the Byzantine Empire flourished with magnificence.²⁴⁰ Like Celal Esad, Mehmed Ziya also blamed foreigners for the downfall of the Byzantine Empire. He claimed that the Byzantine Empire lost its glamour because of the negative impact of foreigners that penetrated into

²³⁷ Despite its relatively late publication (1920), in the aftermath of World War I, this book was considered as belonging to the pre-Republican literature. It was published before the proclamation of the Republic and when the Sultan was still the official head of the state. Therefore, the author could not have been influenced by Republican ideology.

²³⁸ İhtifalci Mehmed Ziya, *İstanbul ve Boğaziçi: Bizans ve Türk Medeniyetinin Eserleri* [Istanbul and the Bosphorus: The Monuments of Byzantine and Turkish Civilisations] (İstanbul: 1937), p. 133.

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 135.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 9.

Byzantine society, which ultimately led to the fall of the Byzantine capital to the Turks in 1453.²⁴¹

The studies by Celal Esad and Mehmed Ziya were unique in the way they handled Byzantine history, and definitely did not reflect overall Ottoman historiography. By examining Byzantine history in a more or less positive light, these two studies offered a rare perspective among Ottoman intellectuals. Not surprisingly, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, alongside Celal Esad's and Mehmed Ziya's accounts about Byzantine history, there were an even greater number of historical works with nationalist undertones, which portrayed the Byzantine Empire as the bastion of corruption and intrigues. In the last years of the Ottoman Empire, the newly emerging nationalist historiography presented a negative image of the Byzantine Empire. What the studies by Celal Esad and Mehmed Ziya had in common was their appropriation of the Byzantine legacy vis-à-vis European rivals. They both pointed to similarities between Ottoman and Byzantine art, and implied that the major recipient of Byzantine civilisation was the Ottoman Empire, not any other European power. In an attempt to legitimise Ottoman destruction of the Byzantine Empire, both intellectuals underlined that Byzantine rule was already in decline, and its ultimate downfall was only a matter of time.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter intended to emphasise that RAIK was not a unique phenomenon: rather, it was part of an already established intellectual and academic tradition within Russian academia. Civilisations that prospered around the Black Sea constituted an important

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 17.

focus of Russian archaeology since the late 18th century. Interest in Byzantine archaeology did not develop only in secular institutions: theological academies and the Orthodox Church also actively engaged in archaeological projects. Actually, RAIK's studies echoed similar archaeological projects in Crimea and southern Russia. Often, the same scholars participated in archaeological projects on both sides of the Black Sea. The director and mastermind of RAIK, Fyodor Uspenskii was a product of this academic tradition, both in terms of his education and training, and his ideological standpoint.

The Russian and Ottoman approach to the Byzantine legacy represented two opposing world-views, but at the same time included similar concerns. To start with similarities, both Russian and Ottoman intellectuals scapegoated the Byzantine Empire for the contemporary problems of their respective empires. However, the differences between Ottoman and Russian approaches to Byzantium were more obvious. Russian archaeologists claimed a mythical cultural link between medieval Byzantium and the 19th century Russian Empire. This argument was supported by religious and historical premises. In this discourse, Russia emerged as the saviour of Byzantine antiquities. On the other hand, Ottoman intellectuals were generally silent about the Byzantine legacy. Even when they made references, the Byzantine Empire often appeared as a negative symbol in their discourse. This was in contrast with the much earlier post-conquest era when the Ottoman sultans viewed themselves as the representatives of the Roman-Byzantine tradition. Only in the last years of the Ottoman Empire, did a handful of intellectuals in their pseudo-academic historical works establish a link between Ottoman history and the Byzantine Empire. However, the discourse of these intellectuals was also

problematic because while appropriating Byzantine legacy, they also had to legitimise its destruction by the Ottomans.

Chapter 3

Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire:

Cultural Property as a Symbol of Sovereignty

Starting from the mid-19th century, the number of professional foreign archaeologists in the Ottoman Empire rose dramatically as a reflection of the increasing institutionalisation of archaeology in Europe. German, American, and finally Russian archaeological missions followed British and French expeditions. In the first decades of the 19th century, Ottoman officials and rulers viewed foreign archaeological involvement with a lack of enthusiasm, if not outright apathy. However, towards the end of the century, this indifference was replaced by a growing concern and mistrust about the goals of foreign archaeological activities. In their struggle to protect the sovereignty of a disintegrating empire from the encroachments of the great powers of Europe, the founders of the Ottoman Imperial Museum (*Müze-yi Hümayun*) came to regard cultural property as a symbol of the fragile sovereignty of the Empire and promoted protective measures to regulate and finally prohibit the export of antiquities. Moreover, the establishment of museums and the initiation of native archaeological expeditions in the Ottoman Empire reflected the process of modernisation that started in the mid-19th century.²⁴² It should be noted that until the last days of the Empire, the policy of

²⁴² In this dissertation, the term modernisation broadly refers to Ottoman reactions to growing political, cultural, and economic influence of Europe in 19th century. Politically and economically, this influence manifested itself as a tacit agreement between major European powers to control Ottoman markets and political stage but keeping it as a separate entity to prevent a possible inter-European conflict. Ottoman bureaucrats, who were influenced by prevalent ideologies in Europe, tried to counter European demands by a reform program that focused primarily on increasing administrative centralisation, thus trying to

archaeological protection was not consistent, and rulers continued to use ancient monuments as gifts and bargaining tools in their dealings with foreign governments. In any case, archaeological objects acquired a political significance beyond their historical and aesthetic meaning. Ancient history became an arena where the national programs and visions of different actors came into a symbolic conflict with each other.

This chapter will analyse the development of Ottoman archaeology in the face of increasing foreign activities across the Empire and how ancient objects and monuments acquired a symbolic meaning in diplomatic relations between the Ottoman Empire and European powers. Ottoman perceptions of foreign archaeologists and major foreign archaeological expeditions which prompted a change in Ottoman policies will also be examined. The development of Ottoman archaeology will be analysed as a reflection of Ottoman modernisation. In order to gain a better understanding of the mentality of the first generation of Ottoman archaeologists, the political and cultural developments of the 19th century will be briefly explained. Finally, this chapter will deal with the interactions between RAIK and Ottoman officials and how Russian archaeologists were perceived by the Ottoman bureaucracy. The temporal framework of this chapter is 1846-1914, that is the period starting with the organisation of the first museum in the Ottoman Empire to the outbreak of World War I.

In the last decades of the 19th century, classical archaeology shifted its attention from Italy and Greece to Ottoman territories.²⁴³ After the unification of Italy, Italian state institutions regulated archaeological activities on the Italian Peninsula more strictly

transform Ottoman Empire from a traditional land-based empire to a modern state. For further information, see Erik Jan Zürcher, *Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi* [Turkey, A Modern History] (İstanbul: İletişim, 2007), pp. 18-19.

²⁴³ Suzanne Marchand, *Down From Olympus: Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. xx.

and initiated a period a nationalisation of archaeology. In the early 19th century several Italian states issued edicts outlawing the export of antiquities.²⁴⁴ Greece followed a similar pattern after its independence in 1832: the first law prohibiting the export of antiquities outside Greece was promulgated in 1834, right after independence.²⁴⁵ Even though these measures were not always effective, nevertheless, they signalled the development of local archaeology in Italy and Greece. Therefore, the number of foreign excavations in these two countries became less frequent in the later part of the 19th century. Governments or private institutions in Europe were more likely to sponsor archaeological projects that would eventually enrich the collections of museums in their capitals.²⁴⁶ After Italy and Greece started to implement protective policies, the Ottoman Empire, particularly Anatolia and Mesopotamia, remained as the primary source of ancient objects for European museums.

Ottoman relations with major European powers in the 19th century can be examined within the framework of informal imperialism.²⁴⁷ Informal imperialism can be defined as limited political, cultural, and economic control exerted over a weak sovereign state by a powerful adversary. As the politically weak power is also sovereign and has its own laws, complete military and political control by the powerful state does not occur, but domination is revealed in terms of political assistance and cultural/economic predominance. In the late 19th century the relationship between the

²⁴⁴ Díaz-Andreu García, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 103.

²⁴⁵ Lucia Patrizio Gunning, *The British Consular Service in the Aegean and the Collection of Antiquities for the British Museum* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 46.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁴⁷ Díaz-Andreu García, pp. 99-100.

major European powers and the Ottoman Empire can be seen as an example of this pattern.

In the 18th and early 19th centuries most European archaeologists in the Ottoman Empire were amateurs, who wanted ancient objects either for their private collections or for the national museums in their countries. Most excavations were carried out on the Aegean coast, in the ruins of ancient cities such as Troy, Xanthos, Miletus, Ephesus, and Halicarnassus. Until the organisation of the first antiquities collection in Constantinople in the mid-19th century, Ottoman officials did not have much interest in the protection of artefacts, especially if they were only “stones.”²⁴⁸ It was not uncommon for Ottoman sultans to give ancient monuments to foreign kings and emperors as a sign of mutual friendship. An example was Mahmud II, who gave a large amount of the acropolis reliefs removed from Assos to the French archaeologist M. Raoul-Rochette in 1838 as a sign of his friendship with the French king Louis Philippe I.²⁴⁹

Starting from the mid-19th century, amateur adventurers who came to the Ottoman Empire in search of ancient civilisations were gradually replaced by professional archaeologists. Foreign archaeological activities were facilitated by the close collaboration between archaeologists and their respective consuls and ambassadors in Ottoman cities. Actually, in some cases, diplomats personally undertook archaeological excavations. For instance, Charles Newton, who was appointed to

²⁴⁸ James Goode, *Negotiating for the Past: Archaeology, Nationalism and Diplomacy in the Middle East, 1919-1941* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007), p. 24. Wendy Shaw argues for the opposite. She claims that even though there were not protective measures for the preservation of monuments, Ottoman officials and the ruling class were aware of the value of ancient objects. Foreigners at least needed official permission to remove objects even in the 18th century. See, Wendy M. K. Shaw, *Osmanlı Müzeciliği: Müzeler, Arkeoloji ve Tarihin Görüşleşmesi* [Possessors and Possessed: Museums, Archaeology, and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire] (İstanbul: İletişim, 2004), pp. 79-80.

²⁴⁹ Caroline Winterer, *The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life, 1780-1910* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 165.

Mytilene as consul in 1852, made excavations in Halicarnassus, Didyma, and Knidos. Stratford Canning, the British ambassador to the Porte, also played an important role in bringing monuments from the Ottoman Empire to Britain through diplomatic pressure.²⁵⁰ The Ottoman Empire was not a passive witness to the increasing foreign interest in the ancient heritage of its territories. In fact, the second half of the 19th century saw an increasing attention to the long-neglected ancient heritage of the Sultan's domains. Ottoman suspicions of European archaeological activities grew, especially in the face of increasing European political control over the Empire and domestic turmoil at home.

Ottoman reactions to foreign archaeological activities can be better understood in the light of political developments of the period. For Ottoman society, the 19th century was a period of constant change. The idea that Ottoman institutions were in need of reform appeared in Ottoman thinking in the late 18th century, when the military victories of previous centuries gave way to constant defeats by other major powers. Since it was military failures that stimulated the quest for renovation, reform started first in the military realm during the reign of Selim III (1789-1807).²⁵¹ Selim III's reign was followed by that of his cousin Mahmud II (1808-1839). As Mahmud II consolidated his authority, he undertook new measures to secure administrative centralisation, and he challenged the authority of local notables in the periphery of the Ottoman Empire. During Mahmud II's reign, Westernisation for the first time appeared as a formal policy. Mahmud II's policies put an emphasis on the necessity of learning European scientific

²⁵⁰ Stephen L. Dyson, *In Pursuit of Ancient Past: A History of Classical Archaeology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 137-138.

²⁵¹ Sükrü Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 43-45.

methods without transplanting its culture.²⁵² However, once contacts with Europe were established, the penetration of Western cultural influence was inevitable. Students were sent abroad and European-style educational institutions were established at home to create the new type of bureaucrat who was open to change and knew foreign languages, as well as the intricacies of European diplomacy.

These reforms culminated in the famous *Tanzimat* (in Ottoman Turkish, reorganisation) period (1839-1876). *Tanzimat* refers to a series of top-down modernising reforms carried out by a new generation of bureaucrats, which restructured the Ottoman Empire and accelerated the process of Westernisation.²⁵³ The main ideas of *Tanzimat* were formulated in the *Gülhane-i Hatt-i Hümayun* (Edict of the Rose Chamber), which was promulgated in 1839. The edict guaranteed the equality of all Ottoman subjects before the law, regardless of their religion. In this sense, the new administrative and legal structure, as it was envisioned by the reformist bureaucrats, undermined the traditional religious categorisation of Ottoman subjects. In addition to that, Ottoman bureaucrats tried to forge a supranational Ottoman identity that transcended ethnic and religious identities, which were bringing the Empire to the edge of disintegration. *Tanzimat* also had significant legal consequences, which proved to be transformative for Ottoman society. With modernisation and increasing administrative and bureaucratic centralisation, *Tanzimat* bureaucrats tried to standardise and secularise Ottoman law and administration.²⁵⁴

²⁵² Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma* [Modernisation in Turkey] (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayımları, 2003), pp. 171-178.

²⁵³ Hanoğlu, p. 73.

²⁵⁴ Şerif Mardin, *Türk Modernleşmesi: Makaleler IV* [Essays on Turkish Modernisation] (İstanbul: İletişim, 1991), pp. 138-141.

The establishment of modern Turkish bureaucracy can be traced back to *Tanzimat*.²⁵⁵ After this period the bureaucrat became a member of an anonymous network of interactions between various government institutions. The emergence of the bureaucracy as a new social class was one of the most important consequences of the *Tanzimat* reforms. The reforms also had visible repercussions. The Ottoman urban landscape was transformed with the appearance of an increasing number of buildings in European style as a result of European architectural influence. Reformers also tried to introduce municipal regulations to reorganise major Ottoman cities on European lines.²⁵⁶

The new Ottoman interest in ancient monuments can be analysed within the context of this modernisation trend.²⁵⁷ Ussama Makdisi defined Ottoman archaeological interest after *Tanzimat* as “one more step in the self-incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into a European-dominated modernity.”²⁵⁸ On the one hand, museum building, as a practice imported from Europe, implied the objective of Westernisation on the part of Ottoman bureaucracy.²⁵⁹ On the other hand, displaying ancient objects from all corners of the vast Empire indicated Ottoman sovereign rights over territories that were still under Ottoman political control. The careful surveillance of foreign archaeologists

²⁵⁵ İlber Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı* [The Longest Century of the Empire] (İstanbul: Alkım Yayınevi, 2006), p. 105.

²⁵⁶ Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Seattle, 1986), pp. xv-xviii.

²⁵⁷ İlber Ortaylı, “Tanzimat’ta Vilayetlerde Eski Eser Taraması” [Antiquities Survey in Provinces During Tanzimat], in *Tanzimat’tan Cumhuriyet’e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* 6 [Encyclopedia of Turkey from Tanzimat to the Republic], ed. by Feroz Ahmad (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1985): pp. 1599-1603.

²⁵⁸ Ussama Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 3 (June 2002), p. 783.

²⁵⁹ Mehmet Özdoğan, “Ideology and Archaeology in Turkey,” in *Archaeology Under Fire: Nationalism, Politics and Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East*, ed. Lynn Meskell (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 112.

by local authorities showed the eagerness of the burgeoning bureaucracy to carry out legal regulations and extend central rule to the provinces.

Tanzimat reforms were characterised by an Ottomanist identity beyond ethnic and religious denominations. *Tanzimat* reformers advocated the equality of all ethnic and religious groups within the Ottoman Empire and supported the equality of all citizens before the law.²⁶⁰ In this regard, Ottomanism of the *Tanzimat* era was an attempt to create a sense of political community which was rooted in territory and sought to integrate the heritage of all cultures that had ever existed on Ottoman territories, regardless of religion and ethnicity. In practice, the Ottomanist identity was mostly embraced by educated upper classes and failed to incorporate wider segments of the Ottoman society. Still, Ottomanist thought had an impact on literary and intellectual trends in the last century of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomanist idea received a revived support after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. Although Ottomanism lost its appeal after the Balkan Wars, it left a mark in Ottoman politics as an attempt to create a nation out of the cosmopolitan Ottoman society. The display of Greco-Roman antiquities in the Ottoman Imperial Museum can be regarded as an extension of Ottomanist thought behind *Tanzimat* reforms, because the founders of the Museum were perfect examples to upper classes who were born into the *Tanzimat* mindset.

In fact, Ottoman collection of ancient objects did not start in the 19th century. It is known that historical objects from the Byzantine era were preserved in the gardens of the Topkapı Palace long ago, as early as the 15th century, right after the conquest of

²⁶⁰ Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı*, pp. 236-237.

Constantinople.²⁶¹ Nevertheless, the new interest in antiquity collections that started in the second half of the 19th century was different in character, and was more related to the Empire's attempt at integration with Europe, than a continuation of an old Ottoman tradition. In 1846, Fethi Ahmed Pasha, Field Marshal of the Imperial Arsenal and former ambassador to Vienna and Paris, transformed the church of St. Irene, located in the gardens of the royal palace, into a museum under the name *Mecmua-i Âsâr-i Âtika* (Collection of Ancient Monuments), accompanied by *Mecmua-i Eslîha-i Âtika* (Collection of Ancient Weapons).²⁶² St. Irene was until then used as a depository to store military artefacts from the early Ottoman period. It is very likely that Fethi Ahmed Pasha was inspired by the museums he visited in Europe during his diplomatic service. During the organisation of the antiquities collection, Fethi Ahmed Pasha was supported by Sultan Abdulmecid. It is claimed that on a visit to Yalova, a town on the coast of the Marmara Sea, Abdulmecid saw gilded stones. Upon learning that the Byzantine Emperor Constantine's name was inscribed on them, the Sultan ordered to send these stones to Constantinople. These monuments were eventually sent to St. Irene for exhibition by Fethi Ahmed Pasha.²⁶³ The collection at St. Irene was divided in two parts: on one side, there were old weapons, jannissary costumes, and the armour collection

²⁶¹ İsmail Günay Paksoy, "Bazı Belgeler Işığında Osmanlı Devleti'nin Kültür Mirası Üzerine Düşünceler," *Osman Hamdi Bey ve Dönemi*, 17-18 Aralık 1992 (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayıncıları, 1993), pp. 202-208.

²⁶² Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, İstanbul; hereafter BOA); İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme (İ. MSM.), 17/387, 18 Safer 1262 (15 February 1846). For previous antiquities collections in the Ottoman Empire, see Selin Adile Atlıman, "Museological and Archaeological Studies in the Ottoman Empire During the Westernization Process in the 19th Century" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, 2008), pp. 16-19.

²⁶³ Mustafa Cezar, *Müzeci ve Ressam Osman Hamdi Bey* (İstanbul: Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı Sanat Yayıncıları, 1987), p. 13.

from earlier periods of Ottoman history, artefacts which had already been preserved in St. Irene. On the other side, the Hellenistic-Byzantine artefacts were displayed.²⁶⁴

Mecmua-i Âsâr-i Âtika was the first Ottoman attempt at creating a Western-style museum.²⁶⁵ The objects in the collection were exhibited in a rather disorganised manner, where old Ottoman military paraphernalia lay side by side with ancient Greek and Roman tombs. Still, this institution implied the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire over vast territories, some of which were only theoretically attached to the imperial centre. In a document dating to 1846, local officials in Tripoli, Libya were asked to send ancient objects to the collection in İstanbul. In this document, the antiquities collection was defined as a museum organised along the same lines as its counterparts in European countries. The document was accompanied by an order stating that ancient objects were henceforth to be sent to the collection in the imperial capital.²⁶⁶ Embracing the Greco-Roman heritage as well as the Ottoman past, the museum also reflected the supranational identity behind *Tanzimat* reforms.

Different from European museums where governments supported the educative role of national museums for their own public, the Ottoman Museum targeted not its own citizens (as the museum was opened to the public only in 1880) but a foreign audience, especially foreign government representatives and aristocrats.²⁶⁷ As early as the 1850s the museum became one of the major destinations where Ottoman officials

²⁶⁴ Théophile Gautier, *Constantinople* (Paris: 1856), pp. 287-288.

²⁶⁵ Semavi Eyice, “Arkeoloji Müzesi ve Kuruluşu” [The Establishment of the Archaeology Museum], in *Tanzimat’tan Cumhuriyet’e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* 6 [Encyclopedia of Turkey from Tanzimat to the Republic], ed. by Feroz Ahmad (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1985): pp. 1596-1599.

²⁶⁶ BOA, Sadaret Mektubî Kalemi (A. MKT.), 51/75, 17 Şevval 1262 (8 October 1846.)

²⁶⁷ Artun argues that Ottoman elites failed in projecting the Museum as an institution embodying the linear evolution of Ottoman society, and the Museum remained an elitist project to the end. Ali Artun, “İmkansız Müze” [The Impossible Museum], accessed February 21, 2011, <http://www.aliartun.com/content/detail/1>.

personally accompanied foreign visitors from various countries including Austria, Prussia, the United States, Britain, France, and Russia.²⁶⁸ The fact that museum visits were mentioned in the documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hinted at the symbolic meaning the Ottoman government assigned to its collection of antiquities. By establishing a European-style museum for a foreign audience, the Ottoman government implied not only the Western orientation of the Empire, but also visualised its territorial integrity for the Western visitors by displaying objects from different regions under its control. When the romantic poet Théophile Gautier visited the Ottoman capital, he saw *Mecmua-i Âsâr-i Âtika* as a sign of progress. Even though Gautier did not find the Ottoman weapon and armour collection interesting for a European visitor, he was quite impressed by the Hellenistic-Byzantine antiquities in *Mecmua-i Âsâr-i Âtika*. He asserted that the various objects on display, including ancient sculptures, reliefs, inscriptions and tombs, heralded the inception of a Byzantine museum, which could evolve into an interesting collection with the addition of new objects.²⁶⁹

Ottoman archaeological projects also reflected a centralizing tendency. In 1857, local authorities in various parts of the Empire were asked to identify ancient monuments in their localities and send them to İstanbul for the reorganisation of the museum.²⁷⁰ By bringing ancient objects and displaying them in the capital, the Ottoman government was stating the authority İstanbul exercised over the rest of the Empire. It is

²⁶⁸ BOA, Hariciye Mektubi Kalemi (HR. MKT.), 287/24, 11 Şevval 1275 (14 May 1859); HR. MKT., 293/92, 24 Zilkade 1275 (25 June 1859); HR. MKT., 198/64, 29 Zilkade 1273 (21 July 1857); HR. MKT., 300/90, 16 Muharrem 1276 (15 August 1859); HR. MKT., 301/48, 19 Muharrem 1276 (18 August 1859). Only in 1857-58, several Russian aristocrats paid visit to the Ottoman Museum. See, HR. MKT., 190/98, 06 Şevval 1273 (30 May 1857); HR. MKT., 238/35, 04 Şevval 1274 (18 May 1858); HR. MKT., 243/68, 17 Zilkade 1274 (29 June 1858); HR. MKT., 251/78, 09 Muharrem 1275 (19 August 1858).

²⁶⁹ Gautier, pp. 287-288.

²⁷⁰ BOA, Sadaret Mektubî Kalemi – Nezaret ve Devâir (A. MKT. NZD.), 223/73, 04 Şevval 1273 (28 May 1857).

noteworthy that right after the conflict between Maronites and Druzes in Lebanon in 1860, Ottoman officials regulated the access to the Baalbek ruins in the region, as if to reiterate authority over a contested territory.²⁷¹

The relocation of antiquities from periphery to the centre was a means of underlining the distinction between the modern and Europeanised centre and pre-modern periphery and thus legitimated central authority over provinces. Later in 1898, when Emperor Kaiser Wilhelm II visited the Baalbek ruins, the plaque erected in commemoration of his visit was inscribed in Ottoman Turkish and German, but not in Arabic, the local language. The tickets to the Baalbek ruins were written in three languages; Ottoman Turkish, the official language of the Empire, French, the lingua franca of foreign tourists, and Arabic, the local tongue; but only on the Arabic ticket was there a warning not to steal anything from the ruins. Therefore, Ottoman archaeologists viewed their task as not only to save ancient monuments from the greed of European archaeologists, but also from local inhabitants, whom Ottoman officials thought could easily be exploited by European treasure-hunters to pillage the ruins.²⁷² In fact, the museum-building practice in the Ottoman Empire assumed the impossible task of representing a Euro-centric discourse of modernity while resisting it; glorifying an Ottoman imperial past, while embodying an anti-imperialist soul.²⁷³

The collections of historical relics were reorganised with the transformation of *Mecmua-i Âsâr-ı Âтика* into a proper museum in 1869 under the administration of the

²⁷¹ Makdisi, p. 783.

²⁷² Ibid., pp. 784-785.

²⁷³ Artun, <http://www.aljartun.com/content/detail/1>, accessed 21 February 2011. Selim Deringil argues that for Ottoman elites, adopting European colonial discourse with regard to the periphery of the Empire was a survival tactic in an era when the Ottoman Empire itself was subject to the imperialist policies of European powers. He calls Ottoman imperial discourse in late 19th century as “borrowed imperialism.” Selim Deringil, “‘They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery’: The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 45, No: 2 (April 2003), p. 313.

Ministry of Education.²⁷⁴ The first director of the *Müze-i Hümâyün*, that is, the Imperial Museum, was Edward Goold, a teacher at Galatasaray High School, who also prepared the first catalogue of the museum exhibition in French. Goold served as the director of the Ottoman Imperial Museum from 1869 to 1871. In the same year that *Müze-i Hümâyün* was established, the first antiquities law was promulgated in the Ottoman Empire.²⁷⁵ Even though this was a very sketchy legal regulation, one of the seven articles in the 1869 act outlawed the transfer of antiquities abroad, without specifying what the term antiquity meant. Antiquities could be sold within the Ottoman Empire, but the Ottoman state had priority to buy ancient objects for its museum. Moreover, the act stated that permission from the Ministry of Education was compulsory for excavation and research. In case a foreign government wanted to remove an ancient object outside the borders of the Ottoman Empire, the Sultan had the responsibility to make the decision.²⁷⁶ This legal regulation is important as it was the first step towards the standardisation of procedures as regards antiquities. At the same time, it showed Ottoman bureaucracy's discomfort at the flow of ancient objects to foreign markets. Apparently, as early as 1869, antiquities acquired a meaning as a sign of sovereignty in the eyes of Ottoman bureaucrats. Nevertheless, the 1869 act still regarded antiquities as the property of the Sultan, not of the Ottoman state.

In 1871, the directorate of the Imperial Museum was abolished by Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Pasha, and was reinstated again by Ahmed Vefik Pasha in 1872.

²⁷⁴ BOA, İrade, Şura-yı Devlet (İ. SD.), 11/547, 04 Şevval 1285 (18 January 1869); Shaw, *Osmanlı Müzeciliği: Müzeler, Arkeoloji ve Tarihin Görüşmesi*, pp. 102-103.

²⁷⁵ Existing literature generally dates the first antiquities law to 1874. However, Halil Çal has brought the law of 1869 to the attention of researchers. See, Halil Çal, "Osmanlı Devletinde Asar-ı Atika Nizamnameleri" [Antiquities Regulations in the Ottoman Empire], *Vakıflar Dergisi*, No: XXVI, Ankara (1997), pp. 391-400; Ferruh Gerçek, *Türk Müzeciliği* [Turkish Museology] (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1999), pp. 91.

²⁷⁶ Çal, p. 395.

During this one-year break, the Austrian painter, Teranzio served in the capacity of custodian of the museum on the basis of a reference provided by the Austrian ambassador, also an antiquities collector, Anton von Prokesch-Osten.²⁷⁷ The second director of the Imperial Museum, Philipp Anton Dethier, the headmaster of the Austrian High School, was appointed in 1872 and remained in this office until 1881. Dethier planned the enlargement of the museum and was behind the 1874 antiquities legislation.²⁷⁸ Even though he envisioned the creation of a school of archaeology affiliated with the Imperial Museum that would train photographers and restorators in addition to archaeologists, this plan was never realised.²⁷⁹ In 1880, the Ottoman Imperial Museum became a fully-fledged museum comparable to museums in European countries. The increasing number of objects could no longer be stored in the existing facilities, and therefore were moved to larger premises known as the Tiled Pavilion (*Çinili Köşk*) in the gardens of the Topkapı Palace. In 1880, the collection was for the first time opened to the public.²⁸⁰ During Dethier's directorship, the number of objects in the museum nearly quadrupled.²⁸¹

The first instances of conflict between European archaeologists and Ottoman officials arose in the mid-19th century, but suspicions reached a peak with the scandalous excavation in Troy by the German antiquarian Heinrich Schliemann in 1871. Schliemann received a permit from Ottoman authorities on the condition that he would send half of the findings to the Imperial Museum in Constantinople. Nevertheless, he

²⁷⁷ Mustafa Cezar, *Sanatta Batı'ya Açılmış ve Osman Hamdi* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 1971), Volume 1, p. 168.

²⁷⁸ Gerçek, pp. 91-95.

²⁷⁹ Rezan Kocabas, "Müzecilik Hareketi ve İlk Müze Okulunun Açılmış" [Opening of the First School of Museology] *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi*, No. 21 (1969), pp. 76-77.

²⁸⁰ Shaw, *Osmanlı Müzeciliği: Müzeler, Arkeoloji ve Tarihin Görülsüleşmesi*, pp. 114-117.

²⁸¹ Mustafa Cezar, *Sanatta Batı'ya Açılmış ve Osman Hamdi*, p. 177.

did not comply with this arrangement and smuggled the infamous Priam's Treasure to Athens in 1874. The Ottoman government brought the issue to the Greek courts, but despite the legal decision to give the objects back to the Ottoman government, Schliemann refused to comply.²⁸² The Ottoman authorities punished those who assisted Schliemann in smuggling ancient objects. At the same time, the Ministry of Education issued an edict to suspend excavations in Troy. Objects that were left behind after the Schliemann expedition were placed in the Ottoman Imperial Museum.²⁸³ The issue became such an international scandal that eventually the Prussian government decided to dissuade amateur individuals from undertaking archaeological excavations abroad.²⁸⁴

From the Ottoman perspective, the Schliemann expedition was important because it triggered the enactment of a more extensive regulation about the ownership rights of antiquities compared to the 1869 act. According to the act issued in 1874, archaeological finds were to be equally divided among the landowner, the Ottoman government, and the archaeologists undertaking the excavation. This regulation also introduced uniform procedures for archaeological excavations and research. Researchers were required to ask for official permission from the Ministry of Education through local administrative offices. Nevertheless, the regulation also paved the way for the flow of ancient objects to foreign markets. The article outlawing the export of antiquities that existed in the 1869 act was replaced with a new article, which stated that antiquities could be exported with the permission of the Ministry of Education, but the Ottoman

²⁸² BOA, Maarif Mektubî Kalemi (MF. MKT.), 18/97, 23 Rebiûlahir 1291 (9 June 1874).

²⁸³ BOA, MF. MKT., 18/147, 09 Cemaziyelahir 1291 (24 July 1874).

²⁸⁴ Díaz-Andreu García, p. 113.

government had the privilege to retain the object for the Imperial Museum.²⁸⁵ The reason for this setback is obscure, but some researchers point to the possible influence of the foreign director of the Imperial Museum, Dethier, who might have acted as an intermediary between foreign archaeologists and the Ottoman Empire.²⁸⁶

In terms of the development of a consciousness about the protection of antiquities, there was a mutual interaction between the Ottoman Empire and European powers. While the Ottoman Empire felt threatened by European activities on its territories, Ottoman elites also looked upon Europe as an example for the protection of cultural heritage, and therefore countered European arguments with the very methods taken from Europe. The disagreement over the ownership of antiquities revealed the geopolitical difference between European powers and the Ottoman Empire. European archaeologists argued that antiquities belonged to humanity, rather than a single nation. The prevalent view in Western academia was that there was no serious archaeological and scientific interest in countries that were home to Greco-Roman artefacts, except for seeing ancient objects as a means of profit, therefore antiquities could not be sufficiently protected if they were left to the mercy of local governments.²⁸⁷ From an Ottoman perspective, defending ownership rights over ancient objects vis-à-vis Europeans was a means of indicating sovereignty. On the other hand, similar to Europeans, Ottomans displayed an imperial attitude with regard to exporting monuments from the periphery to its capital, in an attempt to display the objects but also to protect them from the “natives,” i. e. from local people.

²⁸⁵ Nurettin Can, *Eski Eserler ve Müzelerle İlgili Kanun, Nizamname ve Emirler* [Laws, Regulations, and Acts About Ancient Objects and Museums] (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1948), pp. 1-5.

²⁸⁶ Gerçek, pp. 91-93; Çal, pp. 391-392, Cezar, *Sanatta Batı'ya Açılmış ve Osman Hamdi*, p. 168.

²⁸⁷ Goode, pp. 12-13.

Political developments and the change of leadership after the 1870s help to explain increasing Ottoman emphasis on sovereignty. In 1876, pro-reform bureaucrats succeeded in forcing the regime to adopt a constitution. The first brief constitutional experiment came to a halt when Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1909) suspended parliament in 1878 using the Russo-Ottoman War as an excuse. Abdülhamid II came to the throne when the Ottoman Empire was economically bankrupt, and was politically threatened by imperialism. His reign was marked by a politically intolerant autocratic rule. However, this does not mean that he reversed the modernisation of the Empire. On the contrary, Abdülhamid II initiated reforms in administration, education, and military organisation after the example of Europe. Paradoxically, European ideologies profoundly influenced Ottoman intellectual movements during his rule.²⁸⁸ Administrative centralisation, aimed at by the reforms of Ottoman rulers from Mahmud II to *Tanzimat* elites, was effectively realised by Abdülhamid II.

Ottoman archaeology was institutionalised during the Hamidian regime. Yet, it was not simply Abdülhamid II's persona that was instrumental in this institutionalisation. More important was the bureaucracy, which was created as a result of a conscious state project since *Tanzimat*. The bureaucratic elite, who embraced European ideas, were eager to apply these ideas to an Ottoman context. The turning point for Ottoman archaeology came when Osman Hamdi Bey (1842-1910), the "founding father" of Turkish archaeology, was appointed to the directorship of the Imperial Museum in 1881.

Osman Hamdi Bey was a clear representation of an Ottoman elite with *Tanzimat* upbringing: born into a family of high-ranking officials, his father was a reformist

²⁸⁸ Zürcher, p. 119; Mardin, pp. 15-16.

bureaucrat who had served as a diplomat in several European cities as well as assuming ministerial positions. Osman Hamdi went to Paris to study law, where he developed an interest in painting. In Paris, he received lessons from Orientalist painters such as Jean-Léon Gerôme and Gustave Boulanger. Upon his return to İstanbul, Osman Hamdi assumed several positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1882, he established the first Academy of Fine Arts in İstanbul to train Ottoman artists in the European fashion.²⁸⁹ Yet, Osman Hamdi's vision was not based on an uncritical mimicry of European institutions, but a careful reconciliation of European science, art and techniques with Ottoman national culture.²⁹⁰

Osman Hamdi Bey started serving at the Imperial Museum in 1877, when he was one of the eight members of the Museum Commission affiliated with the Ministry of Education.²⁹¹ From 1881 until his death in 1910, he remained as the director of the Imperial Museum. Osman Hamdi's brother Halil Ethem (1861-1938) assumed the same post after his brother's death, and continued the policies initiated by Osman Hamdi. Osman Hamdi Bey initiated many changes in terms of archaeology: he introduced European exhibition methods, promoted the publication of a museum journal, and

²⁸⁹ For biographical information, see Shaw, *Osmanlı Müzeciliği: Müzeler, Arkeoloji ve Tarihin Görüşmesi*, pp. 122-126; Ahmet Cemil Tan, "Osman Hamdi Bey," *Ankara Sanat*, No: 10 (1 February 1967), pp. 8-9; Arif Müfid Mansel, *Osman Hamdi Bey* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi, 1959), pp. 189-193; *Osman Hamdi Bey* (İstanbul: Devlet Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi, 1967); Mustafa Cezar, *Müzeci ve Ressam Osman Hamdi Bey* (İstanbul: Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı Sanat Yayınları, 1987); Edhem Eldem, "An Ottoman Archaeologist Caught Between Two Worlds: Osman Hamdi Bey (1842-1910)," in *Archaeology, Anthropology, and Heritage in the Balkans and Anatolia: The Life and Times of F. W. Hasluck, 1878-1920*, ed. David Shankland, Vol. 1 (İstanbul: Isis Press, 2004), pp. 126-129.

²⁹⁰ Makdisi, pp. 785-786. In a costume catalogue Osman Hamdi Bey prepared for the Vienna International Exhibition of 1873, he praised the quality and beauty of Turkish fabric as opposed to those produced in Europe. Osman Hamdi Bey and Marie de Launay, *1873 Yılında Türkiye'de Halk Giysileri: Elbise-i Osmaniyye* [The Popular Costumes of Turkey in 1873] (İstanbul: Sabancı Üniversitesi, 1999), p. 261; pp. 223-225.

²⁹¹ Mustafa Cezar, *Müzeci ve Ressam Osman Hamdi Bey* (İstanbul: Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı Sanat Yayınları, 1987), p. 14.

undertook the first Ottoman archaeological excavations.²⁹² His strategy was to enrich the museum collection by unearthing ancient objects with aesthetic qualities. In this sense, the early Ottoman archaeological practice was marked by the art history-oriented approach, embraced by Osman Hamdi Bey and his colleagues.²⁹³ In addition to storing antiquities, Osman Hamdi organised the Ottoman Museum as a scientific institution that actively participated in archaeological scholarship. As Edhem Eldem stated, Osman Hamdi envisioned his role as part of his dream to realise a “*mission civilisatrice*” for his country, as a contribution to the integration of the Ottoman Empire into the Western cultural world.²⁹⁴

Osman Hamdi Bey did not have a formal archaeological education. For this reason, he tried to establish close connections with foreign scholars and benefited from their expertise. Most notable among these scholars was Theodor Reinach (1860-1928), with whom Osman Hamdi Bey organised numerous expeditions and made a number of publications.²⁹⁵ Yet, probably the most important achievement of Osman Hamdi Bey was that he pushed the Ottoman government to enact more extensive laws for the preservation of antiquities within the imperial borders.

The regulation of 1884 came into being in this context.²⁹⁶ According to this regulation, all foreign archaeological excavations in the Ottoman Empire were placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. For the first time, all ancient objects found within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire were considered the property of the

²⁹² Gerçek, pp. 320-325.

²⁹³ Banu Ahibay, “Theoretical Approaches in Turkish Archaeology” (Unpublished Master’s thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, 2007), pp. 12-13.

²⁹⁴ Edhem Eldem, “An Ottoman Archaeologist Caught Between Two Worlds: Osman Hamdi Bey (1842-1910),” p. 129.

²⁹⁵ Mustafa Cezar, *Müzeci ve Ressam Osman Hamdi Bey* (İstanbul: Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı Sanat Yayınları, 1987), pp. 17-18.

²⁹⁶ BOA, İrade, Meclis-i Mahsus (İ. MMS.), 78/3401, 23 Rebiülahir 1301 (21 February 1884).

state, not of the Sultan, and their export was outlawed. The term antiquity was defined in a detailed manner that encompassed the history of all peoples inhabiting the Ottoman Empire. This definition included all scientific, technical, artistic, and religious artefacts, movable and immovable, belonging to any culture that inhabited Ottoman territories at any time in history. Destruction of historical artefacts, trading or smuggling them was criminalised. Furthermore, all foreign archaeological expedition teams were required to submit specific maps, delineating their intended area of research clearly, to Ottoman authorities. This was a clear message about complete Ottoman legal, cultural, and political claims over all antiquities on Ottoman territory. While educated elites like Osman Hamdi Bey were motivated by a concern about the artistic and historical value of artefacts, in the end what prompted the Ottoman government to take a definite stand for archaeological preservation was the threat they felt against their sovereignty. There is no doubt that archaeology is by its very nature linked to territory, and control over territory is the essence of sovereignty. In this sense, archaeology implied a strong link between sovereignty and property rights of the state not only over ancient objects, but also over territories where these objects were found. On a side note, with minor revisions, the 1884 regulation remained in effect well into 1974.²⁹⁷

Foreign scholars followed the promulgation of the Ottoman antiquities regulation with dismay, to say the least. The regulation reflected the Ottoman demand to be seen as equals with Europeans, and this demand was met with suspicion. Ernest Renan's (1823-1892) report to the French Ministry of Public Instruction perfectly illustrated European perceptions of Ottoman antiquities regulation. The implicit message in Renan's report was that he did not see the Ottomans fit for a "European" scientific activity:

²⁹⁷ Çal, p. 393.

This law, a sad proof of the infantile ideas that are formed among the Turkish government in scientific matters, will be remembered as an ill-fated date in the history of archaeological research ... What, in effect, makes these measures particularly disastrous, is the immensity of the lands to which they apply, since Turkey's pretensions now reach out to regions over which it had previously had only nominal control. The concentration of antiquities in a national museum is conceivable (although it presents serious drawbacks) for a country of modest *espanse* and possessing, as it were, archaeological unity. Yet, what should one say of a museum housing a jumble of objects originating from Greece, from Asia Minor, from Syria, from Arabia, from Yemen, and from so many other lands over which the Porte believes it can claim some imaginary sovereignty?²⁹⁸

Despite European suspicions, the relationship between European scholars and the Ottoman government was not totally confrontational. Osman Hamdi Bey's strict observance of legal regulations did not mean that he was uncooperative with foreign scholars. Aware of the shortcomings of Ottoman archaeology, Osman Hamdi established careful diplomatic relations with foreign scholars. Although restrictions were imposed on foreign archaeologists, the Ottoman government also offered support within legal limits.²⁹⁹

While regulating and monitoring foreign archaeologists more strictly, the Ottoman government also funded archaeological expeditions by the staff of the Ottoman Imperial Museum. In 1883, the very first professional Ottoman archaeological excavation was carried out by Osman Hamdi Bey in Mount Nemrut in the Harput *Vilâyet*, in the ruins of the Kingdom of Commagene.³⁰⁰ Right after the Berlin Museum sent Karl Humann (1839-1896) to Nemrut in 1882, the Ottoman government commissioned Osman Hamdi Bey and Oskan Efendi to carry out excavations in the

²⁹⁸ Quoted in Edhem Eldem, "An Ottoman Archaeologist Caught Between Two Worlds: Osman Hamdi Bey (1842-1910)," p. 132.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.

³⁰⁰ Osman Hamdi Bey and Osgan Efendi, *Le Tumulus de Nemroud-Dagh* [The Tumulus of Mount Nemrud] (İstanbul: Archaeology and Art Publications, 1987), Osman Hamdi Bey and Osgan Efendi, *Le Voyage à Nemrud Dağı d'Osman Hamdi Bey et Osgan Efendi (1883): Récit de voyage et photographies* (Paris: Institut français d'études anatoliennes-Georges Dumézil, 2010).

same region, in an attempt to catch up with foreign archaeological activities.³⁰¹

However, the most significant excavation in Ottoman history was made in 1887 in the Sidon ruins in Lebanon, which bolstered Osman Hamdi Bey's international reputation as a respectable archaeologist. In the first excavation in Sidon, Osman Hamdi worked with Dimosten Baltacı Bey, while the second excavation was undertaken by Teodor Makridi Bey.³⁰² Of the eighteen sarcophagi found in the excavations, eleven were brought to Constantinople with the encouragement of Abdülhamid II, which placed the Ottoman Imperial Museum among the notable museums in the world. In 1892, Osman Hamdi Bey published a catalogue of his findings in Sidon with the French archaeologist Theodore Reinach in Paris.³⁰³ In the 1890s, Ottoman archaeologists also started to participate in international congresses. In August 1892, two Ottoman officials, Abdurrahman Süreyya Bey and Kamil Bey were sent to the Lisbon Archaeology Congress by the government to present photographs of the Imperial Museum collection.³⁰⁴ In the same year, Ottoman representatives participated in the Moscow Archaeology Congress.³⁰⁵ By 1894, the entire administrative committee of the Imperial Museum consisted of only Ottoman citizens.³⁰⁶

Abdülhamid II was so satisfied with the results of these expeditions that he asked Osman Hamdi Bey to continue his research in Sidon and ordered the construction of a

³⁰¹ Mustafa Cezar, *Sanatta Batı'ya Açılmış ve Osman Hamdi*, p. 273.

³⁰² Mustafa Cezar, *Sanatta Batı'ya Açılmış ve Osman Hamdi*, p. 275.

³⁰³ Osman Hamdi Bey and Theodore Reinach, *Une Nécropole Royale à Sidon: Fouilles de Hamdy Bey* [A Royal Necropolis in Sidon: Excavations of Hamdi Bey] (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1892).

³⁰⁴ BOA, İrade, Hususi (İ. HUS.), 1/1310-M-074, 10 Muharrem 1310 (04 August 1892).

³⁰⁵ BOA, Bab-ı Âli Evrak Odası (BEO.), 95/7104, 04 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).

³⁰⁶ Gerçek, p. 122.

new museum building in Constantinople to store objects brought from Lebanon.³⁰⁷ Consequently, in 1891, the Ottoman Museum moved to a new building, which was designed by the architect Alexandre Vallaury with a neo-classical façade. Despite Abdülhamid's support for the Imperial Museum, the relationship between the Sultan and Osman Hamdi Bey was not free of friction. For instance in 1905, Osman Hamdi suspected that his house might be searched by police and transferred some of his personal records to his friend Theodore Wiegand's house for protection. Next year in 1906, when Osman Hamdi was bombarded with over a hundred congratulatory telegrams from abroad for the 25th anniversary of his museum directorship, Abdülhamid suspected and sent an informer to inquire the reason of his correspondence with foreigners.³⁰⁸

It was not easy to find financial resources for archaeological expeditions, therefore Osman Hamdi looked for benefactors who would be supportive of his projects. The principal benefactor was Osman Hamdi's father Edhem Pasha, the Minister of the Interior from 1883 to 1885, who provided financial support for the first expeditions.³⁰⁹ In addition to providing monetary support, Edhem Pasha supported his son with his professional network, as well. In his correspondence with local authorities around the Ottoman Empire about ancient objects in their localities, Osman Hamdi Bey made use of his father's position as the Minister of the Interior.³¹⁰ In a note he wrote to the Ministry of Education, Osman Hamdi explained the symbolic importance of museums

³⁰⁷ Nezih Başgelen, *Ölümünün 100. Yılında Osman Hamdi Bey: Yaptığı Kazılar – Bulduğu Eserler* [Osman Hamdi Bey on the 100th Anniversary of His Death: His Excavations and Findings] (İstanbul: Arkeoloji ve Sanat Yayınları, 2010), pp. 15-25.

³⁰⁸ Nur Akin, "Osman Hamdi Bey, Asar-ı Atika Nizamnamesi ve Dönemin Koruma Anlayışı Üzerine" [Osman Hamdi Bey, Antiquities Regulations, and the Preservation of Antiquities in His Period], *Osman Hamdi Bey ve Dönemi, 17-18 Aralık 1992* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1993), pp. 237-238.

³⁰⁹ Mustafa Cezar, *Sanatta Batı'ya Açılmış ve Osman Hamdi*, p. 274.

³¹⁰ Refik Epikman, *Osman Hamdi* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1967), pp. 5-6.

for the cultural development of a country. Referring to the grandeur of European museums, he expressed his disappointment at the reluctance of the Ministry of Education to provide necessary tools to the Imperial Museum and to elevate it to the same level as its European counterparts.³¹¹ Despite these setbacks, the staff of the Imperial Museum undertook a number of archaeological expeditions around Asia Minor, Ottoman Macedonia, the Greek islands, Syria, and Iraq, often in cooperation with foreign scholars.³¹²

Since Ottoman archaeological practices started at the nexus of European competition over its ancient heritage, implying Ottoman rights over Greco-Roman antiquities was a message about Ottoman sovereignty over territories contested by European powers. It was also an attempt to incorporate Ottoman history to the broader framework of European history. In a way, classical antiquities in the Imperial Museum represented “an empire able both to reach into the past to set the stage for its own teleological evolution into modernity and at the same time to translate East for West, and, of course, West for East.”³¹³ By putting stress on Greco-Roman classical antiquities, which Europeans took as the origin of their civilisation and of civilisation as a whole, the development of Ottoman archaeology implied a desire to be accepted as a European empire.

Nevertheless, the antiquity regulations by no means prevented the flow of antiquities from the Ottoman Empire to foreign museums. There were numerous cases in which local officials reported smuggling of antiquities abroad, mostly with the help of diplomatic staff. This shortcoming proves that legal regulations did not have universal

³¹¹ Mustafa Cezar, *Sanatta Bati'ya Açılış ve Osman Hamdi*, p. 211.

³¹² Ibid., pp. 276-283.

³¹³ Makdisi, p. 784.

practical application. For instance, according to a report from 1902, when the Russian fleet, under the command of Admiral Grand Duke Aleksandr Mikhailovich, was cruising on the Black Sea, Russian naval officers carried “stones with figures” from the Amasra port. The Ministry of the Interior issued a strong warning that such incidents should not be repeated, and reminded that the smuggling of ancient objects was strictly outlawed.³¹⁴

It was not only foreigners who overlooked Ottoman regulations: the Ottoman government itself applied protective measures inconsistently and disregarded its own laws in certain instances.³¹⁵ Often, Abdülhamid II and European-educated bureaucrats like Osman Hamdi Bey had different agendas about the fate of ancient objects. While educated members of the bureaucracy had the European notion that ancient artefacts should be protected and kept within national boundaries, Abdülhamid II did not abstain from using cultural property as a political tool in diplomatic negotiations. With the decline of Ottoman political and economic power, Abdülhamid II used gifts to win foreign support, especially of Germany after the 1880s.³¹⁶ The historical and aesthetic value of the gift was parallel to the importance ascribed to political alliance with the given power. Abdülhamid II’s practice also implied that he regarded ancient objects, and in fact the territories of the Ottoman Empire, as his personal property that could be given as gifts upon his personal initiative. This notion contradicted the state-centred view of the burgeoning bureaucracy, whose ascendancy depended on the development of state as

³¹⁴ BOA, DH. MKT., 555/16, 02 Cemaziyelevvel 1320 (07 August 1902).

³¹⁵ For example, railroad concessions granted constructing countries the right of ownership of discoveries made along the right-of-way. Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft was granted the right to make excavations in Mesopotamia in 1898, one year before the Germans initiated the Berlin-Baghdad railway project. For further information, see Goode, p. 24; Bernhardsson, pp. 52-56.

³¹⁶ Goode, p. 25.

a body autonomous from the persona of the Sultan. In other words, the difference of opinion between the Sultan and bureaucrats was an example of a global pattern in which the state with objective laws replaced a monarch as the source of authority.

By far, the major recipient of ancient objects in the form of “gifts” was the German Empire, as Kaiser Wilhelm II was Abdülhamid II’s closest ally in international politics. There is less evidence about gifts received by Russian statesmen or diplomats. When the Porte allowed the Russian ship *Chornoe More* to anchor in the Black Sea harbour Ereğli in order to remove ancient objects, it was specifically stated that these objects were only some “stones” with figures on them.³¹⁷ In the same year, Abdülhamid II presented seven chests of “stone” removed from Tedmur ruins (Palmyra) in Syria to Grand Duke Serge Aleksandrovich, who was known to have a personal interest in history and archaeology.³¹⁸

The growing sensitivity about Ottoman property rights over Hellenistic and Roman antiquities is all the more interesting, considering Abdülhamid’s political allegiances. Abdülhamid laid a heavy emphasis on Islam as the uniting factor of the Ottoman Empire, because the loss of European territories changed the demographic structure of the Empire in favour of Muslims. In the Hamidian era, Turco-Islamic art also received attention as national symbols. Nonetheless, in the museums that were established in the last century of the Ottoman Empire, the bulk of attention was always devoted to Greco-Roman antiquities and Islamic objects received only little interest.³¹⁹ This was partly related to the fact that Ottoman archaeologists imported archaeological

³¹⁷ BOA, BEO., 1726/129384, 16 Cemaziylahir 1319 (30 September 1901).

³¹⁸ BOA, BEO., 1731/129825, 27 Cemaziylahir 1319 (11 October 1901).

³¹⁹ Wendy M. K. Shaw, “Islamic Arts in the Ottoman Imperial Museum, 1889-1923” *Ars Orientalis*, Vol. 30, Exhibiting the Middle East: Collections and Perceptions of Islamic Art (2000), p. 57.

methodology and paradigms from their European colleagues, who prioritised the study of classical archaeology.³²⁰ The Department of Islamic Arts was established within the Ottoman Imperial Museum only in 1889, but a full-scale museum for Islamic arts was established only in 1914. As interest in “exotic” works of Islamic art was growing in the European market, in 1906 the protective laws were extended to Islamic antiquities as well.³²¹ However, Islamic antiquities became a matter of serious public discussion only after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, as the Young Turks removed these objects from their religious context and transformed them into secular objects of national identity.³²² Different from Turco-Islamic antiquities, there was rivalry for the ownership of Greco-Roman heritage between European powers and the Ottoman Empire, a factor that encouraged Ottoman elites to put a special emphasis on the latter in Ottoman museums.

The final legal regulation concerning antiquities was promulgated in 1906.³²³ According to this amendment, all objects, regardless of their aesthetic quality, that reflected the art, culture, and technology of all civilisations that lived on Ottoman territories throughout history, including Islamic antiquities, were categorised as archaeologically valuable. Therefore, the new definition of antiquity reflected the wide range of cultures that made up parts of Ottoman identity. All archaeological objects were strictly considered as the property of the Ottoman state. Museums were authorised as the sole institutions responsible for the inspection, preservation, and exhibition of antiquities. Foreign archaeological societies could make excavations only on condition

³²⁰ Özdoğan, p. 115.

³²¹ Çal, p. 393.

³²² Shaw, “Islamic Arts in the Ottoman Imperial Museum, 1889-1923,” p. 60.

³²³ Can, pp. 67-77; Çal, p. 393.

that they received permission from the Ministry of Education through the administration of the Imperial Ottoman Museum. In 1907, along with Britain, France, and Germany, the Ottoman Empire ratified the Convention Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, known as the Hague Convention. This treaty, originally concerned the rules of land warfare, was also the first international treaty that codified the protection of cultural property and prohibited the seizure of historic monuments during wars. Unfortunately, later during World War I, the treaty fell short of fulfilling its mission.³²⁴

Even Abdülhamid's closest allies, the Germans, faced stronger Ottoman supervision in the early years of the 20th century. By 1905, German excavations in Babylon, Assur, and Pergamon were suspended, which made German archaeologists complain about the onerous restrictions posed by Ottoman bureaucracy, and especially about Osman Hamdi Bey's determined attitude as regards the execution of the antiquities law.³²⁵

In a couple of years, the Ottoman Empire went through a dramatic political change, which was also reflected in the politics of cultural property. In spite of the severe suppression of opposition, various clandestine political organisations were established under the Hamidian regime. The most prominent among them were the Committee of Union and Progress, who are often referred to as the Young Turks. Ideologically, Young Turks included liberal-minded pluralists, Turkish nationalists, and materialist positivist intellectuals, though occasionally these conflicting elements could be found within the same person.³²⁶ In 1908, these diverse political groups came together to overthrow Abdülhamid II, and engineered a coup d'état to reinstate the

³²⁴ Bernhardsson, pp. 73-74.

³²⁵ Marchand, pp. 212-215.

³²⁶ Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 17-18.

Constitution. After 1908, when the Committee of Union and Progress attained extensive authority in the Ottoman Empire, they carried out a reform program with a focus on centralisation and secularisation.

The Young Turk period was particularly significant for the development of public opinion in the Ottoman Empire and the flourishing of the press. For the first time, party politics, although many times shadowed by political intrigues and the inexperience of politicians, entered the political scene. Legitimacy for political action was sought in parliamentary procedures, albeit imperfectly.³²⁷ The Committee of Union and Progress intentionally nurtured a sense of populism among people, which replaced the charisma of the Sultan.³²⁸ The state was no longer seen as the Sultan's private domain, but was identified with the Ottoman nation, although there was no agreement on what Ottoman nation meant.

Therefore, the promulgation of the 1906 regulation was only one of the reasons for the strict observance of foreign archaeologists in this period. The major reason was that the Young Turks were more eager to apply Ottoman laws and to prevent the foreign acquisition of Ottoman cultural property than their predecessors. From this time onwards, ancient objects were recognised as the property not of the Sultan but of the Ottoman nation and the “antiquities question had become a highly sensitive matter of international as well as domestic Turkish politics.”³²⁹ On a side note, the recognition of antiquities as the property of the “Ottoman nation” further increased the ambiguity behind this term: transferring artefacts from the periphery, for instance from Arab lands to Constantinople and keeping them out of European hands was an act of imperialism

³²⁷ Mardin, pp. 97-101.

³²⁸ Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 46.

³²⁹ Marchand, p. 216.

and anti-imperialism at the same time. Offering ancient monuments to foreign governments in the form of gifts, as Abdülhamid had done various times, was unthinkable under the Young Turk regime. Even though foreign archaeologists continued to make archaeological investigations, the flow of antiquities from the Ottoman Empire slowed down. In 1911, the Ministry of the Interior issued a new order to preclude foreigners from undertaking unauthorised excavations.³³⁰

Only months before World War I, the Ministry of the Interior repeated its statement that unauthorised excavations should not be permitted across the Ottoman Empire, those smuggling antiquities should be punished and the objects should be confiscated.³³¹ Despite these official statements, with the outbreak of World War I, the Ottoman Empire, especially in Mesopotamia and Anatolia, became an open ground for the smuggling of antiquities. In the years to follow until the establishment of the Republic, Anatolian antiquities flowed to foreign markets in the absence of a government authority. In spite of this, the artefacts in the Ottoman Imperial Museum were protected as a result of the dedicated efforts of the museum staff.³³² After the establishment of the Turkish Republic, some of the archaeological material smuggled during the war was repatriated as a result of insistent government efforts.³³³ The Turkish archaeological tradition that started in the 19th century laid the groundwork for archaeological policies in the Republican years.

³³⁰ BOA, Dahiliye, Hukuk Müşavirliği (DH. HMŞ.), 9/8, 16 Recep 1329 (13 July 1911).

³³¹ BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti Muhaberât ve Tensîkât Müdüriyeti Belgeleri (DH. EUM. MTK.), 13/12, 22 Safer 1332 (20 January 1914).

³³² The director of the museum at that time, Halil Ethem moved to the museum with his family during the war. See, Ayşe Özdemir, “A History of Turkish Archaeology from the 19th Century to the End of the Single Party Period” (Unpublished Master’s thesis, Boğaziçi University, İstanbul, 2001), p. 62; Gerçek, pp. 331-332.

³³³ Özdoğan, pp. 115-116.

3.1 Conclusion

The development of archaeology in the Ottoman Empire was a reflection of various domestic and international trends. On the domestic level, the collection of artefacts in the capital showed the Ottoman government's willingness to project its central authority over the provinces. In this sense, Ottoman Imperial Museum was the cultural expression of centralisation policies that characterised 19th century Ottoman reforms. At the same time, by integrating Greco-Roman history into modern Ottoman identity, the Imperial Museum served as the visual representation of the Ottomanist idea behind the *Tanzimat* reforms that shaped the education of Osman Hamdi Bey and his generation. In fact, the patterns of Ottoman archaeology from the *Tanzimat* to the Young Turk period gave clues about the changes in identity politics in the Ottoman Empire throughout the 19th century.

Nonetheless, the Ottoman Imperial Museum failed to present a coherent discourse about the evolution of Ottoman society in a historical perspective. While universal survey museums like the British Museum or the Louvre displayed a positivist attitude to explain human history – exhibitions progressing from the ancient to the modern and geographically from East to West – the Ottoman Museum did not counter this argument by putting forward its own version of linear history. In fact, “Ottoman museums jumped from one autonomous collection to another, each of which displayed a single aspect of the new Ottoman identity but none of which promoted a model of cultural progress with its apogee in Ottoman modernity.”³³⁴

On an international level, the development of museum-building in the Ottoman Empire was a reaction against increasing foreign archaeological activity, which was

³³⁴ Shaw, “Islamic Arts in the Ottoman Imperial Museum, 1889-1923”, p. 58.

seen as an extension of foreign political influence. Ottoman elites, including Osman Hamdi Bey, embraced European ideas and practices and in fact, countered what they saw as infringement of Ottoman sovereignty by the very methods they adopted from their European colleagues. By making Greco-Roman antiquities native, Ottoman elites symbolically reiterated their right over the territories claimed by European powers. What characterised Ottoman attitude to foreign archaeologists was a mixture of mistrust and toleration within the confines of law. Foreign archaeologists were reminded of Ottoman sovereign rights through a set of laws and administrative supervision, although in practice, these laws were selectively and inconsistently applied.

Chapter 4

At the Intersection of Science and Politics: The Establishment of the Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople

Among imperial powers competing for archaeological glories on Ottoman territories, Russia was a very interesting case, both because of the hostile relations between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, and because of the scope of Russian archaeological interests. Different from other European scholars, Russian archaeologists in the Ottoman Empire focused nearly exclusively on Byzantine and Slavic antiquities. This was partly because their expertise lay in these fields, and partly because they felt more competitive in these areas vis-à-vis their European counterparts. Considering that academic archaeology had a longer history in British, French, and German universities than in Russia, it is understandable why Russian archaeologists did not see themselves fit for competition over classical Greco-Roman archaeology. Besides, there was also an ideological justification for Russian interest in Orthodox and Slavic antiquities. Official Russian policy projected an image of Russia as the protector of Orthodox and Slavic peoples of the Ottoman Empire, which was symbolically reiterated by a scientific interest in the archaeological remnants of these civilisations.

The idea of creating a scientific community in the Ottoman Empire first appeared in the early 1870s, during the diplomatic service of Count Nikolai Pavlovich

Ignatiev, who supported active Russian involvement in Balkan affairs.³³⁵ However, it was only in the late 1880s that Russian diplomats finalised their plans for the establishment of an archaeological institute and came into contact with Russian scholars to discuss possible proposals for the structure and academic orientation of the planned institute.

As for the location of the archaeological institute, Constantinople was not the only option on the table. There were also proposals to establish an institute in Athens, which could in fact be easier to implement than an institute in Constantinople. The first project for an Athens-based Russian institute came up in 1879.³³⁶ In the 1880s, Russian universities sent students to Athens, but not having a scientific base of their own, they worked in association with German and the French institutes. After the establishment of RAIK in 1894, the discussions for an institute in Athens continued. In 1900, the Athens institute was nearly established upon the initiative of the Russian minister to Athens, M. K. Onu. Onu's project was approved by the Ministry of Public Education and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the government even allocated a certain amount of money for the project. The Greek King George I (r. 1863-1913) promised to give Russian scholars a plot of land as gift for the projected institute. But after Onu's death in 1901, the money inflow decreased. In addition, RAIK's director Fyodor Uspenskii was unwilling to open a branch of RAIK in Athens. Due to a number of bureaucratic and financial obstacles, the project for an Athens institute failed. Another briefly discussed possibility in 1890-1891 was the establishment of a Byzantine studies branch within the Imperial Orthodox

³³⁵ Basargina, *Russkii Arkheologicheskii Institut v Konstantinopole*, p. 20.

³³⁶ Basargina, "Proekty Sozdaniia Russkikh Arkheologicheskikh Institutov za Rubezhom," *Vestnik Drevnej Istorii*, No. 4 (2008): pp. 206-208.

Palestinian Society, but this project was also shelved.³³⁷

The Russian government's decision to create an archaeological institute in Constantinople is better understood bearing in mind the international political conjuncture in the late 19th century. Throughout the second half of the 19th century, one of the key themes in European diplomacy was the Eastern Question, in other words, diplomatic complications aroused by the decline of the Ottoman Empire.³³⁸ Among other imperial powers, the Russian Empire pursued an active policy to establish political and military control over Ottoman territories after the possible collapse of the Sublime Porte. For strategic as well as historical reasons, the Russian Empire was particularly concerned with the fate of Constantinople, the Straits, and the Balkans. Strengthening mutual relations with the Southern Slavs and other Orthodox peoples of the Ottoman Empire constituted one of the most important pillars of imperial Russian foreign policy. In essence, academic study of Slavic antiquities and Eastern Christianity coincided with Russian political interests in the region.

1895, the year RAIK started to operate in the Ottoman Empire, was a particularly interesting turning point in the history of the Eastern Question. The large-scale Armenian massacres of 1895-1896 led European diplomats to exert pressure on Abdülhamid II to stop the violence.³³⁹ British Prime Minister Lord Salisbury considered several options to pressure the Sultan, including the occupation of Hejaz and forcing Abdülhamid II to abdicate. Austrian Foreign Minister Golucowski suggested a joint

³³⁷ *Sankt-Peterburgskii filial Arkhiva Rossiiskoi Akademii Nauk* (henceforth cited as PFA RAN), f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 4-5 (Uspenskii to Ambassador Nelidov, October 1890).

³³⁸ For a detailed analysis of the Eastern Question in the aftermath of the Berlin Congress of 1878 and Russia's role in this political context, see M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774-1923: A Study in International Relations* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1970), pp. 225-260.

³³⁹ Anderson, *The Eastern Question*, pp. 256-258.

European occupation of the Straits. Russia opposed this plan, seeing the possibility of international control over the Straits as a threat to its dreams of occupying the Bosphorus. Provoked by the possibility of British action, the Russian ambassador in Constantinople, Aleksandr Ivanovich Nelidov (1838-1910) suggested Russian occupation of the Bosphorus, which Britain and France opposed. France was uncomfortable about the possibility of either Russian or British ascendancy in the Bosphorus. In short, the period immediately after 1895 witnessed heightened international competition over the fate of the Straits, and Russia was an active participant in this struggle.

Macedonia was also the scene of heightened political tension at the time RAIK was established. The political conflict in Macedonia was partly linked to a religious one that went back to the schism in the Orthodox Church that started in the 1870s.³⁴⁰ In 1870, Sultan Abdülaziz issued a firman authorising the partial autonomy of the Bulgarian Exarchate from the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. According to this firman, the Bulgarian Exarchate would have ecclesiastical authority in Danubian Bulgaria, and would have the right to extend its authority to districts where at least two-thirds of the Orthodox Christian population agreed to join it. The latter clause led to a “scramble for dioceses”³⁴¹ in Macedonia between the Greek and Bulgarian churches in the coming decades, as rival ethnic claims manifested themselves in religious terms.

The Russian government found itself in a delicate situation in a conflict between its religious brethren – Greeks and Bulgarians. The Greco-Bulgarian conflict sparked the

³⁴⁰ Charles and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986), pp. 208-209.

³⁴¹ İpek Yosmaoğlu, “Counting Bodies, Shaping Souls: The 1903 Census and National Identity in Ottoman Macedonia,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (February 2006), p. 60.

tension between Pan-Orthodoxy and Pan-Slavism in Russia, although these two ideologies also shared a common ground for political action and the boundary between them was not always clear. While some voices from Russian bureaucratic, ecclesiastical, and intellectual circles sympathised with the Bulgarians and regarded the Greeks as tools of Western Europe, others embraced a Pan-Orthodox vision according to which Russia should lead all Orthodox believers regardless of their ethnicity.³⁴² At least in the Exarchate crisis, the Pan-Slavists had the upper hand. Despite mixed messages of the Holy Synod and the Russian government who tried to keep a careful distance with both Greeks and Bulgarians, the eventual Russian support went to Bulgarians. This crisis was an example of the fact that Slavdom and Orthodoxy, two pillars of Russian imperial identity, did not always overlap, but sometimes diverged and even came into conflict with each other.

The Macedonian Question arose as a hot issue in European diplomacy especially after the San Stefano Treaty of 1878, which was signed at the end of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878. The Great Bulgaria created with San Stefano included most of Ottoman Macedonia and stretched from the Black Sea to the Adriatic. San Stefano was regarded as a concession to Russia by other European powers, and consequently was revised with the Treaty of Berlin in 1878 to restore European balance of power.³⁴³ The Treaty of Berlin reassigned the Ottoman Empire most of the Macedonian territories it lost during the war and approved the establishment of a much smaller autonomous Bulgaria. Russian support for Bulgaria at the expense of Serbian interests in Macedonia

³⁴² Denis Vladimirovich Vovchenko, “Containing Balkan Nationalism: Imperial Russia and Ottoman Christians (1856-1912)” (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Minnesota, August 2008), pp. 136-140.

³⁴³ Yosmaoğlu, “Counting Bodies, Shaping Souls: The 1903 Census and National Identity in Ottoman Macedonia,” pp. 59-60.

estranged Serbian government from their Slavic “big brother” in the North, and eventually led to a Serbian-Austrian compromise.³⁴⁴

Nevertheless, Russo-Bulgarian relations were also not free of tension after the liberation of the latter. In 1885, autonomous Bulgaria under Prince Alexander I annexed Eastern Rumelia despite the protests of European powers. Among other European powers, Russia also opposed the unification, partly because any Bulgarian move could leave Russia in a difficult situation by destroying the status quo among the European powers in the Balkans.³⁴⁵ Another reason was Russia’s uneasy relations with Bulgaria’s prince, Alexander I and political elites, who resented Russian interference in Bulgarian politics. Russia called an ambassadorial conference for the restoration of the status quo, which averted an all-European diplomatic crisis for the time being, but after the 1885 unification, Bulgarian-Russian relations were seriously strained.

The Bulgarian unification movement triggered Serbian King Milan, who feared that unified Bulgaria would be disproportionately advantaged in the struggle over Macedonia, to declare war on Bulgaria. The Serbian-Bulgarian War of 1885 ended in Bulgarian victory, and the great powers had to accept Bulgarian union with Eastern Rumelia. However, in 1886, Prince Alexander of Bulgaria was ousted from power after a coup supported by Russia. Alexander’s rule was followed by Ferdinand I. Ferdinand’s first years on the throne were shaped by the policies of the Prime Minister Stefan Stamboulov, who was an opponent of Russian interference in Bulgarian politics.³⁴⁶ In fact, Stamboulov’s policies echoed the overall resentment among leading Bulgarian

³⁴⁴ Andrew Rossos, “Serbian-Bulgarian Relations, 1903-1914,” *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne des Slavistes*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (December 1981), pp. 398-399.

³⁴⁵ Jelavich and Jelavich, pp. 164-169.

³⁴⁶ Duncan M. Perry, *Stefan Stamboulov and the Emergence of Modern Bulgaria, 1870-1895* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), pp. 121-122.

nationalists against political plots engineered by Russia. Despite Stamboulov's scepticism against Russia, the newly crowned Prince Ferdinand looked for Russian approval to secure his position. In the early 1890s, the difference between Ferdinand and Stamboulov widened, and in 1894, the Prince accepted Stamboulov's resignation. The period after 1894 was marked by another Russo-Bulgarian rapprochement.

In a nutshell, the timing of RAIK was critical for a number of reasons. It was a period of intense rivalry between European powers over the fate of the Turkish Straits and a period of violent inter-communal conflict between Greeks, Bulgarians, and Serbs in Macedonia. In the midst of these international political crises, Russian foreign policy rested on avoiding direct confrontation with other European powers while protecting Russian interests in the Near East and the Balkans. However, despite its cautious attitude, Russian foreign office also attached great importance to forging ties with Orthodox and Slavic nations of the Balkans.

Transnational ethnic solidarity may be fictive and imagined, but the fact that many European politicians, diplomats and intellectuals clung to it in late 19th century is crucial for understanding international politics before 1914.³⁴⁷ Therefore, any analysis of Russia's Balkan policy at the turn of the century should take into account Pan-Slav and Pan-Orthodox sympathies in addition to more tangible factors, such as economic and geostrategic interests. In other words, Russian foreign policy in the period between 1894 and 1914 was driven by a mixture of *Realpolitik* and identity politics. The establishment of RAIK should be examined within this political context.

³⁴⁷ Dominic Lieven, *Towards the Flame: The End of Tsarist Russia* (London: Penguin Books, forthcoming), p. 5.

The idea to create a scientific community dedicated to the study of the ancient world was born among Russian diplomats against the above-mentioned political background. In 1884, a delegation of Byzantinist scholars, participants of the 6th Archaeological Congress in Odessa, visited Constantinople to inspect Byzantine monuments in the city. Among those visitors were Fyodor Ivanovich Uspenskii, Nikodim Pavlovich Kondakov (1844-1925), and Aleksandr Ivanovich Kirpichnikov (1845-1903). The communication with these scholars convinced Russian diplomats that a scientific society in the Ottoman capital would be useful.³⁴⁸

The first project for the establishment of a scholarly institution in the Ottoman capital was outlined in 1887 by the secretary of the Russian Embassy in Constantinople, Pavel Borisovich Mansurov (1828-1910).³⁴⁹ In this proposal, Mansurov pointed to the importance of the Balkan Peninsula for Russian foreign policy and argued that current political affairs inevitably led Russia to a power struggle with the great powers of Europe in the Balkans.³⁵⁰

Mansurov stated that it was not only great powers that created obstacles for stronger Russian influence in the region. Referring to the recent history of Greece, Romania, Serbia, and most lately Bulgaria, Mansurov observed that there were voices against Russia also within these nations. Therefore, Russia was in a delicate position in the Balkans. He noted, “Whoever will be our opponent in future, [whoever is] hostile towards us, will find a powerful instrument in the millions of inhabitants of the Balkan

³⁴⁸ Basargina, *Russkii Arkheologicheskii Institut v Konstantinopole*, pp. 21-22.

³⁴⁹ *Izvestiia Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole* (henceforth cited as IRAIK), “Otkrytie Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole 26-go Fevralia 1895 goda,” Vol. 1 (1896), p. 3.

³⁵⁰ *Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv* (henceforth cited as RGIA), f. 757, op. 1, d. 1, l. 2-14 (P. B. Mansurov to the Embassy in Constantinople, 30 March 1887).

Peninsula for their endeavours.”³⁵¹ He warned that in the absence of effective Russian cultural involvement, especially the educated segments of Balkan societies could gravitate towards Western culture, and this Western orientation often went hand in hand with mistrust towards Russia. Among lower classes of the Balkan societies, Mansurov observed that there was still sympathy towards Russia. He argued that this sympathy should be strengthened, considering that Russia had a historical mission as the protector of Balkan Christians. Among other reasons, the establishment of a Russian scientific community in the Ottoman Empire was a necessity to counter the expansion of Western European cultural and political influence in a region where the primary role should belong to Russia.

Mansurov had a reason to be concerned about the political allegiances of the Balkan Slavs. Although Balkan intellectuals maintained close relations with Russian intellectual circles, on the whole, they looked up to Paris, London, Berlin, and Vienna as much as St. Petersburg for intellectual stimulation.³⁵² Even among Russian intellectuals they mostly followed the radical critics of the Russian government, which paradoxically meant that Russian cultural infiltration in the Balkans had mixed results for Russian foreign policy. The European orientation of Balkan intellectuals would have significant geopolitical implications at the turn of the century.

Among other fields of arts and sciences, Balkan scholars were exposed to European influence in archaeological scholarship, too. As a matter of fact, Russian archaeologists were not free of competition in the area of Balkan archaeology. Although Byzantine and Slavic history received considerably less attention than classical Greco-

³⁵¹ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 1, l. 3 (P. B. Mansurov to the Embassy in Constantinople, 30 March 1887).

³⁵² Michael Boro Petrovich, *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918*, Vol. II (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), pp. 511-515.

Roman history in European academia, there were still respectable studies by European scholars in these fields. One scholar, Joseph Strzygowski, is worthy of mention at this point – both for his ground breaking theories and for the political implications of his studies. Born in the Polish borderlands of the Habsburg Empire to a German-speaking family, Strzygowski's political sympathies lay in pan-Germanism, while his academic work was characterised by an anti-classicist approach.³⁵³ He taught at the University of Vienna from 1909 to 1934. Strzygowski particularly made pioneering contributions to the study of Byzantine, Islamic, Armenian, and Balkan art and architecture. Overall, he rejected the Euro-centric (or rather Mediterranean-centric) approach of most classicists and downplayed the cultural continuity between classical Greco-Roman civilisation and medieval Europe. Instead, Strzygowski emphasised the influence of Near Eastern and North European cultures on late antiquity culture in Europe. This perspective was not very different from the paradigm supported by many Russian Byzantinists, who emphasised the Slavic influence on Roman – or Byzantine – culture.

In a sense, Strzygowski's studies liberated individual national cultures on the periphery of the Habsburg Empire by suggesting a course of cultural and artistic development independent from the imperial Roman – later Holy Roman and Habsburg – influence. Not surprisingly, this approach was welcomed by nationalists on the Habsburg periphery. As a result of his good relations with the Serbian King Peter I, in 1909, Strzygowski was appointed to a jury to decide the design of the mausoleum of

³⁵³ Suzanne L. Marchand, "The Rhetoric of Artifacts and the Decline of Classical Humanism: The Case of Josef Strzygowski," *History and Theory*, Vol. 33, No. 4, Theme Issue 33: Proof and Persuasion in History (December 1994), p. 110.

Karadjordjevic kings.³⁵⁴ He was also invited by the Serbian Academy of Sciences for scientific collaboration. Strzygowski's reputation in Serbian academia and his popularity with the Serbian king meant that Russian archaeologists and diplomats had a reason to be concerned about competition with European scholars in the Balkans. Not only in terms of intellectual stimulation but also in terms of scholarship many Balkan intellectuals turned their faces towards Europe as much as towards Russia.

Therefore, the concerns of Russian diplomats about the possibility of losing the spiritual and intellectual leadership in the Balkans was not far from reality. In his proposal about the establishment of a scholarly institute, Mansurov argued that Russia's role in the Balkans should be strengthened not only through military and political means, but more importantly, through science, and particularly through a scientific study of the history of the Orient. He claimed that even though Orthodoxy was definitely the most important spiritual force linking Russia to the Balkan Peninsula, in the late 19th century, "it [is] dangerous to neglect science, the impact of which unconsciously sprawls to very distant spheres."³⁵⁵ Mansurov's project was vaguely defined, and projected the study of Turco-Islamic as well as Byzantino-Christian history. When Mansurov's project was realised 10 years later with the establishment of RAIK, the aim of the Institute was more clearly and narrowly defined.

What stood out in Mansurov's proposal was the emphasis he put on the importance of cultural influence, and Russia's weakness in this respect. While other European empires reinforced their military and political capabilities with cultural

³⁵⁴ Suzanne L. Marchand, "The View from the Land: Austrian Art Historians and the Interpretation of Croatian Art," in *Dalmatia and the Mediterranean: Portable Archaeology and the Poetics of Influence*, ed. Alina Payne (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 41-45.

³⁵⁵ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 1, l. 14 (P. B. Mansurov to the Embassy in Constantinople, 30 March 1887).

institutions, Russia, as it appeared in the above proposal, was lagging behind its political rivals in the cultural realm. Mansurov feared that Russia's inadequacy risked leaving the arena to other European powers. At the juncture of science and politics, above all other possible scientific activities, archaeology was seen as a legitimate tool for extending cultural, and eventually political influence. Study of antiquities linked the past with the present, gave a solid basis to contemporary political projects, and provided a scientific explanation for Russia's claim to be the protector of Orthodoxy and Slavdom.

Among other prominent statesmen, the Russian ambassador in Constantinople, Aleksandr Ivanovich Nelidov especially promoted the project of creating an archaeological institute in Constantinople.³⁵⁶ Politically, Nelidov was in favour of expansionist policies towards the Ottoman Empire, which in the end compelled the Foreign Service to send him away from Constantinople. M. S. Anderson defined Nelidov as "the ambitious and rather unrealistic Russian ambassador," who suggested the seizure of the Bosphorus in 1882, 1892, and 1895, a suggestion that failed in view of strong French and British opposition. Nelidov's ambitious plan was not approved by more pragmatic statesmen in the Russian government, who did not want to alienate European powers.³⁵⁷ Eventually, Nelidov's passionate support for the Russian seizure of the Bosphorus risked breaking the fragile balance of power between the European empires, which accounted for his appointment to Rome in 1897.³⁵⁸

Nelidov developed the initial proposal put forward by Mansurov. In November 1887, Nelidov sent letters to Uspenskii, Kirpichnikov, and Kondakov, all Byzantinist

³⁵⁶ Anderson, *The Eastern Question*, pp. 256-257.

³⁵⁷ Barbara Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements, 1806-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 205-206.

³⁵⁸ Komandorova, 263.

professors at the Imperial Novorossiya University, explaining Mansurov's project and asking the scholars to share their opinions on this issue.³⁵⁹ Nelidov's letters echoed Mansurov's basic premises. The ambassador explained that an idea had arisen in the Russian Embassy in Constantinople about the establishment of a scientific institution in the Ottoman capital that would study ethnographical, archaeological, theological, and artistic materials of the Christian East from a scientific perspective. Nelidov argued that such an institute would definitely have political uses. It would prepare suitable ground for Russian influence, and help develop self-consciousness among the Orthodox population (*edinovertsy*). Serious and independent study of the history of Orthodox peoples, according to Nelidov, would facilitate their cooperation with Russia, and consequently would strengthen Russia's influence in the Balkans and the Near East. In the same year, Uspenskii, along with Kondakov and Kirpichnikov, started the preparations for the creation of an archaeological community in Constantinople.

Uspenskii, Kondakov, and Kirpichnikov were not the only scholars who submitted a proposal to the Russian Embassy. Russian diplomats were also attracted to another proposal submitted by the Eastern Commission of the Imperial Moscow Archaeological Society. The proposal of the Imperial Moscow Archaeological Society abounded with messages that called for Russia's special mission in the Balkans.³⁶⁰ The scholars from the Moscow Archaeological Society emphasised that there were intangible ties connecting Russia to Ottoman Christians, who viewed Russia as their protector. The history of the Balkan Slavs could be considered part of their own national

³⁵⁹ PFA RAN, f. 1, op. 1a, d. 175, l. 133-134 (from the Meeting Protocol of the USSR Academy of Sciences, 1926).

³⁶⁰ PFA RAN, f. 1, op. 1a, d. 175, l. 132-143 (from the Meeting Protocol of the USSR Academy of Sciences, 1926).

history for Russians. Similarly, Moscow's status as the third Rome gave Russian scholars the responsibility to learn the history of Orthodox Christianity, which was the basis of Russian culture. The Moscow Society considered Russia so closely connected to Byzantine history that they claimed, "[M]onuments from the glorious past of the Byzantine Empire, in many ways, speak about us more eloquently than our own monuments."³⁶¹ Therefore, the establishment of a scholarly institution to study Byzantine antiquities, not in Russia but in the very heart of the Byzantine Empire, would "strongly influence the spiritual and political life of Eastern Christians."³⁶² The proposal acknowledged that European scholarship was ahead of Russia in terms of knowledge of the Orient, which gave European nations greater leverage to have a cultural impact on Eastern peoples. The proposal of the Moscow Archaeological Society called for the establishment of an institute for the study of Slavic, Hellenistic-Byzantine, and Islamic antiquities. This proposal was considered impractical because of the range of expertise and the institutional complexity it required. However, the Moscow Archaeological Society and its chairman Countess Praskovya Sergeevna Uvarova (1840-1924) actively supported the creation of RAIK in later years, and her effort was praised by Nelidov.³⁶³ Uspenskii, Kondakov, and Kirpichnikov's proposal was oriented specifically towards Byzantine studies. Uspenskii's expertise in medieval Balkan, Slavic, and Byzantine history shaped the academic framework of the projected institute in Constantinople. In their proposal, the Odessa professors emphasised Russia's

³⁶¹ PFA RAN, f. 1, op. 1a, d. 175, l. 137 (from the Meeting Protocol of the USSR Academy of Sciences, 1926).

³⁶² PFA RAN, f. 1, op. 1a, d. 175, l. 137 (from the Meeting Protocol of the USSR Academy of Sciences, 1926).

³⁶³ IRAIK, "Otkrytie Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole 26-go Fevralia 1895 goda," Vol. 1 (1896), p. 4.

educational mission among the Orthodox and Slavic population of the Ottoman Empire (“*edinoplemennoye i edinovernye naseleñii*”).³⁶⁴ In fact, before the RAIK project appeared as a possibility, Uspenskii was in constant communication with the Governor-General of Novorossiya, K. K. Roop, for the establishment of a Byzantine Society in Odessa, within the Imperial Novorossiya University. Roop even contacted Count Delianov, the Minister of Public Education, to request support for the Byzantine Society. However, when RAIK appeared as a serious option, Delianov responded that it would be impossible to get approval from the Ministry of Finance for two institutes with similar missions.³⁶⁵ In the end, the proposed Byzantine Society in Odessa was shelved on behalf of RAIK.

In a letter he wrote to the Governor-General of Novorossiya in June 1888, Uspenskii underlined the necessity of Byzantine studies for Russia, and explained the reasons for his desire to create a scientific Byzantine Society and a special journal dedicated to Byzantine studies.³⁶⁶ Uspenskii pointed out that the influence of the Byzantine Empire on the formation of the Russian state and church structure was indisputable. In addition, he argued that not only history but also contemporary political and moral obligations tied Russia to the Christian East. Uspenskii stated that Russian national interests, and therefore the fate of Russian historical scholarship lay in the study of the Byzantine Empire and Orthodox Christianity. Uspenskii argued that religious principles strongly promoted Russian influence among Ottoman Christians. This role ascribed an important responsibility to Russia to learn the history of the Byzantine

³⁶⁴ Uspenskii, “Iz Istorii Vizantinovedeniia v Rossii,” p. 119.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 124-125.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 119-120.

Empire and Orthodoxy, because without knowing their past it was impossible to restore ties with Russia's Slavic and Orthodox brethren in the Ottoman Empire.

According to the project laid down by Kondakov, Uspenskii, and Kirpichnikov, the mission of the institute was described as follows:³⁶⁷

1) Organisation and direction of Russian scholars in the region, who would conduct research about the ancient history of Greece, the Byzantine Empire, and the Near East. These scholars would be responsible to the director of the institute and would submit reports of their studies. The plan also included accommodating interns who studied at the theological seminaries in Russia.

2) Study of monuments, geography, topography, laws, mode of life (*byt'*), epigraphy, and art in the region that corresponded to the former realm of the Byzantine Empire.

3) Organisation of scientific expeditions and excavations upon the agreement of the Russian ambassador with Turkish and Greek authorities.

Uspenskii's support for the Archaeological Institute in Constantinople implied that he anticipated a “war of cultures” between the great powers of Europe in the Near East. Therefore, he considered other European powers as rivals of the Russian Empire in this cultural competition. In his memoirs, Uspenskii argued that future wars over the Near East would be fought through creating spheres of cultural influence.³⁶⁸ He stated that in Western Europe, university chairs dedicated to the study of Byzantine history had been established long ago and they were ahead of Russia in terms of academic study of Byzantine history. This situation necessitated more effort on the part of Russia to catch

³⁶⁷ Musin, *Imperatorskaia Arkheologicheskia Komissiia, 1859-1917*, p. 204.

³⁶⁸ Uspenskii, “Iz Istorii Vizantinovedeniia v Rossii,” pp. 119-120.

up with the rest of Europe. Uspenskii argued that Greek and South Slav academia could not afford to study Byzantine question extensively as a result of their meagre means, therefore the responsibility to explore Byzantine history fell on Russia's shoulders. For all these reasons, Uspenskii underlined the need for a specialised scientific society dedicated to the study of Byzantine art and history. He emphasised that this task should be assumed by Russian scholars not only because Russia had strong historical and geographical links to the Byzantine Empire, but also because through their knowledge of Slavic history, Russian scholars could complete the missing links in the history of Eastern Rome, links that could not be sufficiently understood by Western European scholars.

Uspenskii later pointed out that despite the diplomatic and governmental support he received, some academics and bureaucrats had doubts about the projected Byzantine Institute. He referred to his correspondence with the important Byzantinist scholar V. G. Vasilevskii, who was sceptical about the creation of a specialised Byzantine Institute, at a time when there were already a number of archaeological institutions and societies in Russia.³⁶⁹ The Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod, Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev (1827-1907) was another influential figure who expressed negative opinions on the matter. Pobedonostsev had doubts about Russian scientific capacity, arguing that Russia did not have enough academic strength to afford an overseas institute, neither was Constantinople an appropriate location for such a project.³⁷⁰ Pobedonostsev argued that Constantinople did not have libraries or universities to facilitate scholarly activities, and Russian scholars would be academically isolated in this city.

³⁶⁹ Uspenskii, "Iz Istorii Vizantinovedeniia v Rossii," pp. 121-122.

³⁷⁰ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1909 godu," Vol. 15 (1911), p. 246.

In November 1888, ambassador Nelidov sent a letter to the Minister of Public Education, Count Ivan Davydovich Delianov (1818-1898), in which he advocated the establishment of a scientific institution in the Ottoman capital.³⁷¹ Nelidov argued that Byzantine history was a very important, if not the most important, source of Russian national consciousness (*grazhdanstvennost'*), therefore, it was necessary for Russian scholars to familiarise themselves with the Byzantine civilisation and deepen their knowledge of Byzantine history and culture. A scholarly institute in Constantinople would channel individual scholarly activities through an institutional structure. In recent years, increasing numbers of Russian scholars were visiting the Ottoman Empire for research. However, without coordination, these individual scientific enterprises did not produce fruitful results, particularly due to the lack of scientific facilities, libraries and scholarly societies in Constantinople. This insufficiency caused loss of time and money for researchers. A scholarly institution in Constantinople to coordinate Russian scholarly activities in the region would make a significant contribution to Russian historical scholarship.

Nelidov added that the establishment of a “Russian scholarly institution in Constantinople would be a bridge between us and significant parts of the local community and would strengthen the feeling of respect and trust of the local community towards Russia.”³⁷² One common theme in Nelidov’s, Mansurov’s, and Uspenskii’s letters was the emphasis on the role of science and scholarship as a way to gain respect among the Orthodox Christian Ottoman population. Comparing their international

³⁷¹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 50 (Ministry of Public Education to the State Council, 25 October 1893).

³⁷² PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 50 (Ministry of Public Education to the State Council, 25 October 1893).

standing with other European empires, Russian diplomats recognised the importance of “soft power,” as well as military power, and science was seen as a powerful instrument of the former. However, with its autocratic political system and the state’s conflict with much of the intelligentsia, it was difficult for Russia to represent a positive example for the Balkan nations. As it will be seen in more detail in the next chapter, the attempts of Russian diplomats to create a basis for solidarity through an archaeological study of Orthodox and Slavic civilisations did not produce the expected outcomes.

In addition to the Ministry of Public Education, Nelidob also forwarded the project prepared by Kondakov, Kirpichnikov, and Uspenskii to the Holy Synod in December 1888 and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in February 1889.³⁷³ Despite Pobedonostsev’s earlier reservations, it seems that he was persuaded about the usefulness of the project, probably because his advisor in Eastern affairs, Ivan E. Troitskii, was a supporter of the project.³⁷⁴ Both the Holy Synod and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed their sympathy for the proposed institution. In the same year, a commission, made up of professors from the Imperial St. Petersburg University upon the recommendation of the Ministry of Education, was organised to discuss the details regarding the institute. The commission concluded that an annual allotment of 12.000 roubles was necessary to maintain the institute. However, despite their approval of the project, it took a few years to convince the Ministry of Finance about the allocation of resources for an overseas institute. In a letter from 4 July 1889, Uspenskii wrote to Nelidob that the Ministry of Finance refused to allocate the 12.000 roubles that was

³⁷³ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 50-50.5 (Ministry of Public Education to the State Council, 25 October 1893).

³⁷⁴ N. I. Komandorova, *Russkii Stambul* (Moskva: Veche, 2009), p. 262.

requested for the project, and asked the Embassy to make a renewed application on behalf of RAIK.³⁷⁵

RAIK was designed as a centre for the historical and archaeological study of the Christian East, in particular for the study of Byzantine monuments. The project was also seen as a way of strengthening Russia's influence over Christian peoples of the Ottoman Empire. This political message was explicitly stated nearly in every memorandum and official letter that was penned in the process of RAIK's establishment. A very clear correlation between successful scientific achievements and political influence permeated the discourse of Russian diplomats, bureaucrats, and scholars that supported the project. The idea particularly received support from the Holy Synod and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but the 12,000 roubles requested for its realisation created perplexity on the part of the Ministry of Finance.³⁷⁶

From 1889 up to the official approval of the Institute by Emperor Alexander III in 1894, there was a constant exchange of letters between Uspenskii, the Embassy in Constantinople, the Ministry of Public Education, and the Ministry of Finance; the first three trying to convince the latter. In December 1890, Delianov wrote to Nelidov that he personally communicated with the Minister of Finance, Ivan Alekseevich Vyshnegradskii (1832-1895), about the annual allocation of 12,000 roubles from the State Treasury starting from 1891. Minister Vyshnegradskii responded that although he sympathised with the establishment of a scholarly institute in Constantinople, considering the current high government spending and budget deficit, it would not be

³⁷⁵ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 1-3 (Uspenskii to Ambassador Nelidov, 4 July 1889).

³⁷⁶ Musin, p. 203.

possible to allocate the requested amount from the State Treasury in the coming year.³⁷⁷

Vyshnegradskii repeated his cautious support in his letter to ambassador Nelidov in January 1891: he noted that he found a scholarly institute in Constantinople useful, especially because this institute would be the centre of scholarly research in the East, as well serving as a political centre. Nevertheless, he explained the difficulty of securing sufficient funds for such a project considering financial difficulties. Rather than totally rejecting the proposal, Vyshnegradskii offered a middle way: he suggested that in the coming year, the project proposed by professors Kondakov, Kirpichnikov, and Uspenskii could be discussed in detail and the Ministry of Public Education could bring the subject to the State Council next year.³⁷⁸ Apparently, the early 1890s was not an appropriate time to be asking for financial support for a costly archaeological institute, given that the famine on the Volga basin seriously restrained financial capabilities of the Russian Empire.³⁷⁹

Between 1891 and 1894, the draft charter of the project was reviewed by a number of government bodies. Count Delianov submitted the draft to the director of the Imperial Public Library and Imperial Moscow Archaeological Society for suggestions. In March 1892, Delianov introduced the project to the State Council, and once again the project was turned down due to financial constraints. The State Council decided to postpone the project until favourable economic conditions, and suggested sending the

³⁷⁷ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 5-5.5 (Ministry of Public Education to the Ambassador in Constantinople, 12 December 1890).

³⁷⁸ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 6-7 (Ministry of Finance to the Ambassador in Constantinople, 9 January 1891).

³⁷⁹ J. Y. Simms, "The Economic Impact of the Russian Famine of 1891-92," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (January 1982), p. 63.

draft charter to the Imperial Academy of Sciences in the meantime for examination.³⁸⁰

In 1892, the Imperial Academy of Sciences established a commission to examine the project, which eventually expressed support for the creation of a scholarly institute in Constantinople.

Finally, in 1893, the Ministry of Public Education managed to get verbal approval from the Ministry of Finance and secured the necessary funds for the institute. It seems that the political views of Tertii Ivanovich Filippov (1826-1899), the director of the State Comptroller's Office, played a role in this approval. Filippov regarded RAIK as a political instrument that would provide a scientific basis for Russian claims to assume leadership in the Orthodox world.³⁸¹ After learning about the institute project, Filippov wrote to Nelidov:

Union with the Byzantine Empire determined our highest mission in the world. With this union, we are a people chosen by God, entrusted with the protection of the true church... Having such a perspective on the importance of Byzantium for us and professing it publicly for decades, can I ever be indifferent to the project you proposed?³⁸²

In the coming decades, Filippov's support for RAIK proved invaluable, because in addition to securing financial support for the institute, Filippov also put his contacts within the Greek Patriarchate at the disposal of Russian archaeologists, thus opening the gates of the libraries and archives of Mount Athos to Russian scholars.³⁸³

³⁸⁰ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 52-52.5 (Ministry of Public Education to the State Council, 25 October 1893).

³⁸¹ Vovchenko, p. 261.

³⁸² PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 8 (P. B. Mansurov to Uspenskii, 20 September 1893).

³⁸³ Komandorova, p. 264.

In 25 October 1893, the Ministry of Public Education again presented its proposal about the institute to the State Council. In this report, Minister Delianov stated the importance of Byzantine civilisation for the development of Russian culture and its consequent significance for Russian historical scholarship. This historical links with the Byzantine Empire made a scholarly institution in Constantinople desirable. Delianov stated that he agreed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that a scholarly institution in the Ottoman Empire would strengthen Russia's ties with the local population and contribute to Russia's influence over Orthodox Christians, especially in the Balkans.³⁸⁴ Delianov also outlined the agreement he reached with the new Minister of Finance, Sergei Witte (1849-1915) on the financial question. The two ministers agreed for the allocation of 6.000 roubles from the 1894 budget, and 12.000 roubles starting from 1895. Therefore, the institute would start to function not in January, but in July 1894. Furthermore, Delianov added that the institute should have an imperial status and should be directly attached to the court.³⁸⁵ This last proposal meant that Delianov wanted RAIK to come under the Ministry of the Imperial Court, which could be secured only with the approval of Alexander III.

On 4 December 1893, the State Council discussed Delianov's proposal and consulted ministries and government bodies to hear their opinions on the issue. On behalf of the Ministry of the Imperial Court, Count Aleksey Aleksandrovich Bobrinskii (1852-1927), a member of the Imperial Archaeological Commission, expressed negative

³⁸⁴ Unfortunately, the closure of AVPRI made it impossible to track the documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Therefore, we are unable to know the exact nature of discussions within the Ministry. Especially, the exchange of letters between Nelidov and the Foreign Minister Nikolai Girs, who was in office from 1882 to 1895, would be interesting in this respect.

³⁸⁵ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 54-54.5 (Ministry of Public Education to the State Council, 25 October 1893).

opinions about the creation of an archaeological institute in Constantinople. First of all, he drew attention to the fact that the project bypassed the Imperial Archaeological Commission, which was the foremost archaeological institution in Russia at the time. Bobrinskii gave the example of the Russian archaeological commission in Rome, which ended up being a short-lived experience. Considering the amount of financial resources the institute in Constantinople required, Bobrinskii argued that if the government had necessary funds, they better should allocate it to the Imperial Archaeological Commission for its work on Byzantine antiquities. Instead of a separate institute in Constantinople, Bobrinskii proposed the strengthening of a Byzantinist Institute in southern Russia.³⁸⁶ Bobrinskii's ideas reflected his correspondence with the Minister of the Imperial Court, Illarion Ivanovich Vorontsov-Dashkov (1837-1916), who also argued that the planned institute in Constantinople would be unproductive and costly.

Vorontsov-Dashkov argued that it was unlikely that RAIK would achieve fruitful results in Constantinople, especially if it would be established in the proposed form.³⁸⁷ He argued that the aims and duties of the institute, as well as the responsibilities of its director and secretaries were so extensively defined that they would be impossible to realise. Vorontsov-Dashkov instead suggested the organisation of the institute into several specialised departments that would more effectively direct scholars in different fields. He warned that without a sufficient number of experts and material resources, the institution would fall short of becoming a “bridge between us [Russia] and a significant part of the local population,” and could not rightfully carry the flag of Russian science abroad. All in all, instead of establishing a separate institute in Constantinople,

³⁸⁶ Musin, p. 204.

³⁸⁷ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 24-24.5 (Vorontsov-Dashkov to the State Council, 15 March 1894).

Vorontsov-Dashkov suggested the allocation of the government funds to the Imperial Academy of Sciences or one of the existing societies – like the Odessa Society of History and Antiquities.

In a report submitted to the State Council in February 1894, the Ministry of Public Education responded to criticisms and elucidated the reasons for their insistent support for a separate institution in Constantinople. Overall, the concerns boiled down to three major themes. From a practical point of view, the variety and extent of the institute's duties were difficult to fulfil considering the insufficiency of its staff and annual budget. From a political perspective, if the mentioned institute proved a failure because of lack of support on the part of the Russian government, it would bring loss of prestige, an undesirable outcome. There were also concerns about whether Constantinople was a proper location – critics pointed to lack of scientific institutions, little local sympathy for scholars, and particularly negative attitudes towards Russians in the Ottoman capital.³⁸⁸ Consequently, there were suggestions to opt for an institute in Athens, where there were already scientific institutions and archaeological societies, and where the Queen was a Russian Grand Duchess. Besides, Russians would be more welcome in the Greek capital.³⁸⁹ Another option was opening a Byzantine studies branch under one of the existing societies in Russia and allocating the funds in this direction instead of a separate institution.

In response to such criticisms, ambassador Nelidov explained that the idea to create a scholarly institution in Constantinople was born out of practical necessity: every year, increasing numbers of Russian scholars visited the Ottoman Empire for research,

³⁸⁸ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 66-66.5 (Report by Ministry of Public Education to the State Council, 24 February 1894).

³⁸⁹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 16-17 (P. B. Mansurov to Uspenskii, 20 September 1893).

but without coordination and unaware of each other's studies, they sometimes worked on the same subject in vain. Being unfamiliar with local conditions, these scholars asked for support from the Embassy, although the Embassy was not capable of providing scientific guidance. This situation required an institution that would serve as a hub for Russian scholars. The task of the institute would be the coordination and guidance of Russian scholars visiting the East, rather than large-scale archaeological research, meaning that the institute could survive on the allocated amount of funds. In short, there were already Russian scholars interested in Byzantine antiquities, but they needed subsidies and on-site guidance. With regard to questions about the suitability of Constantinople, Nelidov argued that if the interests of Russian scientists lay in classical antiquities, then the establishment of an institute in Athens could be discussed as an option. However, considering that Russian scholars were more interested in Byzantine history, Constantinople would be an appropriate choice. He further argued that the institute might find more local support than it was assumed in the Ottoman Empire.³⁹⁰

Finally, on 24 February 1894, the State Council formally approved the establishment of RAIK with a unanimous decision.³⁹¹ The final resolution of the Council concluded that a separate scientific institution in Constantinople would be preferable. Administratively, the institute would be under the Ministry of Public Education and the Russian Embassy in Constantinople at the same time. To enhance its scientific activities, it should be in constant communication with universities, academies and other institutions in Russia. Finding Nelidov's arguments satisfactory, the State

³⁹⁰ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 66.5-67 (Report by Ministry of Public Education to the State Council, 24 February 1894).

³⁹¹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 67.5-70 (Report by Ministry of Public Education to the State Council, 24 February 1894).

Council deemed that the approval of the Imperial Academy of Sciences was convincing enough to support the project. The resolution explained that there was no need to be concerned about finances: the Russian government would not cease to support RAIK in future years. According to the agreement reached between Delianov and Witte, 6000 roubles would be allocated to the institute starting from July 1894, and 12,000 roubles would be allocated for coming years. However, responding to Delianov's request to give an imperial status to the institute and placing it under the direct patronage of the Emperor, the State Council was reluctant; stating that only after the institute proved itself could this question be considered again.

It seems that Uspenskii wanted to postpone the establishment of the institute until the necessary funds were secured, or at least until a sufficient amount was secured to create a good library. He was also informed by Nelidov that an earthquake in Constantinople in July 1894 made most houses uninhabitable and it was difficult to find accommodation.³⁹² However, Delianov wanted to accelerate the process, and wanted the institute to be established no later than 1 July 1894.³⁹³

Final revisions to the RAIK charter were made by the director of the Imperial Public Library, the Imperial Moscow Archaeological Society, the Imperial Academy of Sciences, and ambassador Nelidov. It seems that Uspenskii and Nelidov were not in agreement about the authority of the ambassador over the institute. While Uspenskii expected more autonomy from the Embassy, Nelidov seemed to prefer keeping the institute under his command. In a letter written by the Embassy secretary Mansurov to Uspenskii in 1893, Mansurov explained that Nelidov was offended at Uspenskii's draft

³⁹² PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 90-91 (Uspenskii to Delianov, 29 September 1894).

³⁹³ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 27 (Delianov to Uspenskii, 1894).

charter because the changes Nelidov deemed necessary to place the institute more closely within the administrative structure of the Embassy were left out.³⁹⁴ Nelidov envisaged the institute as a headquarters affiliated with the Embassy that would provide assistance and guidance to Russian scholars visiting the East. When the State Council finally approved the establishment of the institute, Nelidov's role was authorised as he demanded. The State Council emphasised the ambassador's role in appointing the director, as well as honorary members and fellow researchers of the institute.

When the charter of the institute was officially confirmed, the objectives were defined in a way to embrace the history of ancient Greece, Asia Minor, and the territories that had been under Byzantine rule. The charter did not openly refer to the history of the Balkan Peninsula and its Slavic inhabitants, so as not to create suspicions on the part of Ottoman authorities as well as European powers that Russia was trying to expand its sphere of influence among South Slavs under the pretext of archaeological activities. Russian scholars were concerned about persuading both Turks and Europeans in Turkey that RAIK was nothing more than a pure scientific enterprise, because there were suspicions that RAIK was in fact a political club posing as a scientific institution.³⁹⁵ Uspenskii recalled that in the first years when RAIK was established, Russian scholars had to “dispel the opinion that originally formed among foreigners that Russia had other than scholarly intentions in establishing what would be in fact a political Slavic club under the name of the Institute.”³⁹⁶ However, Uspenskii noted that

³⁹⁴ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 8.5 (P. B. Mansurov to Uspenskii, 20 September 1893).

³⁹⁵ IRAIK, “Otchet v 1909 godu,” Vol. 15 (1911), p. 246.

³⁹⁶ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 162-163 (Uspenskii to Department of Science in the People's Commissariat for Education, 13 August 1918).

in time RAIK acquired a respectable position among similar institutions in the West, thanks to its archaeological discoveries, publications, and the quality of its scholarship.

The charter set out the following points:³⁹⁷

1) The Russian Archaeological Institute at the Imperial Embassy in Constantinople (its full name – *Russkii Arkheologicheskii Institut pri Imperatorskom Posol'stve v Konstantinopole*) aimed to guide the on-site scientific activities of Russian scholars working on the history of ancient Greece, Asia Minor, and the territories that once constituted the Byzantine Empire, with a particular emphasis on the history of Christian antiquities. Consequently, the institute intended to promote the development of Russian archaeology by studying architectural and literary artefacts in the mentioned territories. Universities, academies, and institutes in Russia could send their staff to RAIK for on-site research. The director and secretaries of the institute would provide academic guidance to visiting scholars as regards their area of study. Visiting scholars could also conduct research together with the permanent RAIK staff.

2) The scientific duties of the institute included; in line with the first article, the study of monumental art and antiquities, ancient geography and topography, manuscripts, numismatics, epigraphy, languages, and oral literature of the countries and peoples that constituted the Byzantine Empire (contemporary Greek Kingdom and the Ottoman Empire). In this article, the Balkans, particularly Bulgaria was intentionally excluded from the areas of interest to avoid suspicions on the part of the Ottomans. In practice, as will be seen in the next chapter, the autonomous Bulgarian Principality was one of the most frequent destinations of the RAIK staff.

3) The institute would undertake archaeological excavations and organise

³⁹⁷ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 272-275 (Charter of RAIK, 1894).

expeditions in line with special agreements concluded between Russian diplomatic posts in Constantinople and Athens and the Turkish and Greek governments.

4) The institute would publish meeting protocols and annual reports about its activities. The report would be submitted to the Ministry of Public Education, and a copy would be sent to the Imperial Academy of Sciences to be published at the discretion of the Academy.

5) The institute was administratively and academically under the direct control of the Ministry of Public Education. At the same time, because it operated outside Russia, it was dependent on the Russian ambassador in Constantinople and was under his immediate protection. The ambassador also acted in the capacity of honorary chairman of the institute.

6) The institute staff included; a director, secretary (the number of secretaries depended on the need and increased in time), and members.

7) The director was entrusted with the administrative, academic, and economic management of the institute. He was selected among candidates with a doctoral degree from Russian universities, and with a scholarly reputation in the field in which the institute operates.

8) The director was appointed and dismissed by the Minister of Public Education, who made the decision upon consulting the Honorary Chairman (the ambassador to Constantinople) and the President of the Academy of Sciences.

9) The responsibilities of the director included:

a) Guiding institute members as regards their scientific projects.

b) Promoting and supporting visiting scholars from Russian universities,

academies, and institutes, collaborating with them in archaeological projects.

- c) Organizing archaeological excavations and excursions.
- d) Providing guidance to members to familiarise them with ancient monuments in the locality.
- e) Preparing an annual report about the activities of the institute.
- f) Collecting information about discoveries and scholarly activities with regard to regions that fall within the scope of the institute's interest.
- g) Establishing contacts with consular services, institutions, and individuals whose assistance would be useful to the institute.

10) The scientific secretary was the immediate assistant to the director in his responsibilities and acted in accordance with his instructions. He was also responsible for the maintenance of the collection and the library, as well as for office duties.

11) The scientific secretary was selected among candidates, who completed a degree relevant to the institute's scholarly interests. He was appointed by the Minister of Public Education upon the proposal of the director.

12) In the absence of the director, the scientific secretary would act on his behalf.

13) Members of the institute were appointed by the Minister of Public Education upon consulting the Honorary Chairman of the institute. The members would be drawn from the following groups:

- a) Members of scholarly societies in Russia,
- b) Officials at the Russian Embassy in Constantinople and Russian diplomatic mission in Athens.

In addition, members included the following groups of scholars who visited

Constantinople:

c) Recent graduates of the Historical-Philological, Law, and Oriental Studies

Faculties, who were commissioned by the Ministry of Public Education upon the recommendation by their home university.

d) Recent graduates of the Imperial Academy of Arts who were commissioned by the Academy.

14) All persons referred to in the above articles were required, upon arrival at Constantinople, to present the research instructions provided by their home organisations to the director of RAIK. They also had to submit progress reports to the director about their studies.

15) For visiting scholars sent by academic institutions in Russia to RAIK, the period of their stay in Constantinople or other towns was determined in the instructions provided by their home institution.

16) Throughout their stay at RAIK, candidates from theological academies were responsible to the Holy Synod. During their studies at the institute they were guided by special programmes, provided by the academy of which they were members.

17) When the tenure of visiting scholars expired, they should send reports to their home institutions in Russia about the state of their research.

18) Members could make use of the RAIK library and antiquities collection and upon the approval of the director, could take part in scientific activities and publish their works in the institute publications. When they travelled in the East, they would receive recommendation letters from the Russian ambassadors in Constantinople and in Athens.

19) During their study at RAIK, expenses of the members were not covered by

the institute. However, if the members participated in the archaeological expeditions undertaken by RAIK, the director could assign them an appropriate allowance from the expedition budget.

20) In addition to members explained above, RAIK also had honorary members (*pochetnye chleny*) and associate members (*chleny sotrudnikov*), who were proposed by the director and approved by the Minister of Public Education in consultation with the ambassador to the Porte. Honorary members and associate members would be selected among foreigners who were specialists in relevant subjects.

21) The director could summon non-members as well as members to meetings about expeditions, excavations, and other scientific matters.

22) RAIK would hold open lectures and seminars. Foreigners could participate when the lectures and seminars were held in foreign languages.

23) RAIK would have a library and an antiquities collection.

24) RAIK would have a seal with the national emblem and with its full name below.

25) The funds allocated for the institute came from: a) the amount allocated from the State Treasury b) other sources.

The director and secretaries of the institute would not retain their former positions at Russian universities, but the charter stipulated that they could enjoy the same benefits and privileges as professors at Russian universities. The 12.000 rouble allowance was distributed as follows: 4000 roubles and 2000 roubles respectively for the salaries of the director and the secretary (or secretaries); 2500 roubles for the rent, 100 roubles for the maintenance of the library and the museum, 1000 roubles for scientific

excursions and excavations, and 500 roubles for other expenses. On 23 May 1894, Tsar Alexander III approved the charter of RAIK,³⁹⁸ and on 11 July 1894, the Tsar appointed Uspenskii as RAIK's director, upon Delianov's proposal.³⁹⁹ The first scientific secretary of RAIK was P. D. Pogodin, suggested by Minister Delianov and approved by Uspenskii.⁴⁰⁰

According to the charter, archaeological expeditions of RAIK were funded by the government, but the charter left the door open for contributions by private donors. In addition, the Ministry of Public Education and the Holy Synod sent scholars from Russian universities and theological academies to undertake research at RAIK and subsidised them. In the charter, the object of RAIK was defined as coordinating and accommodating Russian scholars conducting historical and archaeological research in Greece, Asia Minor, and the territories that fell under Byzantine rule. Despite this broad description, RAIK mainly specialised in Byzantine archaeology and the history of the Orthodox Church, to the extent that the activities of the institute may well be described as church archaeology. Although it was not specified in the charter, the second major theme that appeared frequently in the studies of RAIK was the history and archaeology of the South Slavs – either Bulgarian or Serbian – and their relations with the Byzantine Empire.

A clarification as regards the geographical scope of RAIK's activities should be made at this point. Certainly, within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire, RAIK was supposed to receive excavation and expedition permits from relevant Ottoman

³⁹⁸ IRAIK, “Otkrytie Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole 26-go Fevralia 1895 goda,” Vol. 1 (1896), p. 3.

³⁹⁹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 26 (Delianov to Uspenskii, 1894).

⁴⁰⁰ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 36, l. 46-47 (Delianov to Uspenskii, 1894; Uspenskii to Delianov, 1894).

governmental institutions. In the independent Serbian Kingdom, Russian archaeologists asked for permission from Serbian authorities. The situation in Bulgaria was a little complicated. After the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878, the Principality of Bulgaria became autonomous from the Ottoman Empire. In 1885, the Principality annexed Eastern Rumelia. Although the Principality – including Eastern Rumelia after the annexation – was theoretically under Ottoman suzerainty until 1908, it had its own constitution and even independent foreign policy. Therefore, within the borders of the autonomous Bulgarian Principality, Russian archaeologists asked for permission from Bulgarian, not Ottoman, authorities. The rest of Macedonia, which remained part of the Ottoman Empire until the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, was under full Ottoman sovereignty. Consequently, archaeological studies in Macedonia were subject to Ottoman approval.

Fyodor Uspenskii happened to be the first and the last director of RAIK. In order to facilitate their communication with Ottoman authorities, both the Ministry of Public Education and the State Council found it practical to place the institute under the protectorate of the Russian Embassy in Constantinople. Administratively, the ambassador was also the chairman of RAIK. In the course of nearly twenty years of its existence, there were five different Russian ambassadors to the Ottoman Empire, the most active supporter of RAIK being Nelidov, who served in the Ottoman capital between 1894 and 1897.

There was definitely a certain degree of religious and nationalist sensitivity behind the establishment of a Russian archaeological institute in the Ottoman Empire. Both Russian diplomats who proposed the project and bureaucrats at the Ministry of

Public Education and other government bodies legitimised RAIK through historical references about Russia's – real or imaginary – links with the Byzantine Empire. In this discourse, Russia emerged as the spiritual heir to the Byzantine heritage. A multi-faceted and systematic study of Byzantine history was regarded as a step for the development of Russian national consciousness, and a useful tool for furthering contemporary political interests of the Russian Empire. The establishment of RAIK was also an assertion of Russian primacy when it came to claiming the Byzantine inheritance.

After its authorisation by the Tsar in 1894, RAIK's office in Constantinople was officially opened with a religious ceremony on 26 February 1885, with the participation and prayers of Archimandrite Boris.⁴⁰¹ 26 February was also the birthday of the late Tsar Alexander III, who passed away in the autumn of 1894, shortly after approving the establishment of RAIK. The opening ceremony intentionally coincided with his birthday. In the opening ceremony, both ambassador Neligov and director Uspenskii delivered speeches emphasizing Russia's political role in the Near East and the importance of learning history to develop a solid foreign policy in the region.⁴⁰² Neligov indicated that studying the history of the Byzantine Empire was the chief responsibility of Russian historical scholarship.⁴⁰³ He argued that the foreign policy of a great nation should be guided by moral and spiritual principles, and Russia could find these principles in the study of the Byzantine Empire.

⁴⁰¹ IRAIK, "Otkrytie Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole 26-go Fevralia 1895 goda," Vol. 1 (1896), p. 1.

⁴⁰² PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 14 (P. B. Mansurov to Uspenskii, 20 September 1893).

⁴⁰³ IRAIK, "Otkrytie Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole 26-go Fevralia 1895 goda," Vol. 1 (1896), pp. 5-6.

After Nelidov, Uspenskii took on the stage to explain the cultural and political significance of the establishment of RAIK. In his talk, the director stated that the second half of the 19th century was significant for the Russian nation for various historical reasons: the 1000th anniversary of the establishment of the Russian state was celebrated in 1862, and the 900th anniversary of the Christianisation of Rus' was celebrated in 1888. Such historical incidents tied Russia closely to the Christian Near East, the former realm of the Byzantine Empire, historically, culturally, and politically.⁴⁰⁴ Therefore, Uspenskii pointed to a correlation between Russia's contemporary political interests in Asia Minor and the Balkans and its historical ties with the region.

Both Nelidov and Uspenskii legitimised the establishment of RAIK by making reference to European political rivalry over the Near East, which reflected itself in archaeology. Years later, in a report he wrote in 1918 to the Department of Science in the People's Commissariat for Education, Uspenskii outlined the founding principles of RAIK with reference to Europe-wide political competition. He stated that Constantinople stood at the centre of international competition, which made the Russian position in this city all the more important. He lamented that if the Russians were not respected in the East as much as the French, it was because Russia did not try to penetrate Turkey through cultural institutions, i.e. schools, religious missions, charitable organisations, commercial and industrial initiatives, in the same manner as the French, British and Germans operated. Uspenskii noted, “[I]n general, the weakest side of our situation is the insufficiency of our cultural initiatives in Tsargrad, in which we are far

⁴⁰⁴ IRAIK, “Otkrytie Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole 26-go Fevralia 1895 goda,” Vol. 1 (1896), pp. 7-9.

behind our competitors.”⁴⁰⁵ Only one institution, he claimed, RAIK was an exception to this shortcoming. However, Uspenskii noted, even in this unique institution, which acquired a respectable reputation among German and French scholars, Russia could not fully make use of its position because of financial difficulties.

Even though financially and politically it was expedient to have the support of the Russian Embassy, director Fyodor Uspenskii was by no means willing to surrender his professional autonomy to his political superiors in the diplomatic service. Uspenskii noted that until 1897 the Ottoman government did not recognise RAIK as a separate institution. Until then, there was not a special agreement with the Turkish government, stipulating RAIK as an institution independent of the Russian Embassy and having the right to communicate with the Turkish government separately. In the first years the Ottoman government referred to RAIK staff as Embassy officials, and the institute was regarded as an inherent part of the Russian Embassy. Even after its authorisation by the Ottoman government, RAIK had to communicate with the Turkish government through the Embassy every time they needed a permit to carry out excavations or other scholarly activities. Uspenskii seemed to be uncomfortable about his dependence on diplomats. He stated, “... our scientific institution had to endure the burden of depending on coincidental circumstances and other people’s failures or reluctance.” The dependence on the Embassy meant that RAIK would be vulnerable to political relations between the two empires. Especially when they launched large-scale projects, RAIK would be sent from one Ottoman Ministry to another, and the future of its studies would remain insecure. Uspenskii considered diplomatic interference offensive: “[E]liminating direct,

⁴⁰⁵ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 162-163 (Uspenskii to Department of Science in the People’s Commissariat for Education, 13 august 1918).

sometimes humiliating ... interference in purely scientific work, legalizing our institution in Turkey by a special agreement with the Ottoman government remains a matter of the future. Without that, we cannot expect reliable, permanent success; we cannot set out plans that require long-term systematic work.”⁴⁰⁶

Despite some opposition and reservation in the process of its establishment, after 1894 there was constant Russian governmental support for RAIK. To ensure constant scholar mobility between Russia and Constantinople, on 12 February 1901 Uspenskii requested the allocation of scholarships for young scholars wishing to undertake research at RAIK from the Ministry of Public Education.⁴⁰⁷ Following the example of the German Archaeological Institute in Rome and the French School in Athens, the Ministry of Public Education agreed to grant scholarships every year to two scholars for a duration of two years.

There was especially a very close cooperation between RAIK and the Holy Synod. In 1901 Uspenskii requested the Holy Synod to send scholars from the four theological academies to Constantinople. In September 1902, the Holy Synod agreed upon a resolution to send one scholar every year for a yearly term to study at RAIK. After 1902, scholars from theological academies visited RAIK on a more regular basis than scholars from Russian universities. This constant flow of scholars made the Holy Synod one of the most active supporters of RAIK. In addition to its academic and bureaucratic links with the Holy Synod and the Ministry of Public Education, RAIK was also administratively connected to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Embassy in Constantinople. These links with three major governmental institutions made it safe

⁴⁰⁶ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 3, l. 2-3.5 (Uspenskii to Ambassador Zinoviev, 1905).

⁴⁰⁷ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 40, l. 9-11 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 20 March 1915).

to argue that RAIK was a governmental project, reflecting the ideology of the bureaucracy in the last decades of the Russian Empire.

Alexander III could not survive long enough to appreciate the activities of the institute he approved in 1894, but his successor Nicholas II showed a personal interest in the activities of RAIK, which was manifested by his private donations to acquire antiquities several times.⁴⁰⁸ Actually, the last Tsar of the Russian Empire had been a history enthusiast since his childhood. Among the subjects Nicholas II was privately tutored when he was a young Grand Duke, he was attracted to history the most. He was also an honorary member of the Imperial Historical Society from the age of 16.⁴⁰⁹ Uspenskii's direct communication with Nicholas II implies the Emperor's personal support for RAIK. In his notes from September 1897, Uspenskii recounted that he appeared before the Emperor to request a raise in RAIK's budget. Uspenskii justified his demand by explaining that RAIK was a "tool for Russia's cultural influence over the East, among Slavs and Greeks."⁴¹⁰ Nicholas II agreed with this argument, saying, "[t]his is very much desirable." However, Uspenskii added, with such modest means, it was difficult to fulfil this historical responsibility. The Emperor agreed to make a raise in RAIK's budget, and also praised the achievements of Uspenskii as the director of RAIK.

Despite its constant financial shortcomings, RAIK managed to become a hub for Russian scholars visiting the Ottoman Empire. In 1895, immediately after its establishment, the institute established links with Russian consulates around the Ottoman Empire, as well as Greek, Serbian, and Bulgarian diplomats. A large number of diplomats, Russian as well as foreign, were accepted as honorary members. As soon as

⁴⁰⁸ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1909 godu," Vol. 15 (1911), p. 247.

⁴⁰⁹ Dominic Lieven, *Nicholas II: Twilight of the Empire* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p. 34.

⁴¹⁰ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 1, d. 269 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 26 September 1897).

RAIK was established, letters were sent to Russian diplomatic missions around the Ottoman Empire and diplomats in independent Balkan nations, informing them about RAIK's mission and asking them to provide information about antiquities and monuments in their area of jurisdiction.⁴¹¹ In particular, the diplomats were requested to inform RAIK about the feasibility of research and information about local conditions, if antiquities were on sale or not, and if they were on sale, information about potential sellers and buyers. The letters produced positive results. Shortly afterwards Russian diplomats sent letters expressing their support and readiness to help RAIK.⁴¹²

In his exchange with the Serbian and Bulgarian missions in the Ottoman Empire, Uspenskii referred to historical ties between these nations and Russia, the study of which was the reason why RAIK was established.⁴¹³ In addition, Serbian and Bulgarian diplomats were asked to be honorary members of the institute. RAIK not only established connections with the Balkan Slavs but also fostered connections with Athens. Already in 1900, RAIK secured a permanent building in the Greek capital. Rooms in the Petraki Monastery were offered to the Russian Embassy for the use of RAIK.⁴¹⁴

In addition to its diplomatic contacts, RAIK established relations with the Greek Patriarchate too. In 1896 a letter was sent to the Greek Patriarchate, asking information about ancient monuments, manuscripts or any other ancient objects worthy

⁴¹¹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 32, l. 4-5 (RAIK to Russian diplomatic corpus in the Ottoman Empire, June 1895).

⁴¹² PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 32, l. 9 (Russian General Consulate in Beirut to Uspenskii, 3 April 1895); PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 32, l. 11 (Russian General Consulate in Jerusalem to Uspenskii, 6 September 1895); PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 32, l. 8 (Imperial Mission in Greece to Uspenskii, 18 March 1895).

⁴¹³ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 2, l. 56 (Uspenskii to Greek Ambassador in Constantinople, 30 December 1895); PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 2, l. 61 (Serbian Ambassador in Constantinople to Uspenskii, December 1895).

⁴¹⁴ Harold N. Fowler, "Archaeological News," *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (January – March 1901), p. 94; Vol. 6, No. 1 (January – March 1902), p. 66.

of interest. In exchange, Patriarch Anthimus VII (1895-1896) asked clergymen in his jurisdiction about ancient religious buildings in their locality, any libraries or archives, or oral traditions that needed to be recorded.⁴¹⁵ Therefore, archaeology formed a basis for cooperation between RAIK, Russian diplomatic posts across the Ottoman Empire, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and its local representatives.

RAIK also had scientific contacts with numerous prestigious universities and societies, and institutes in Britain, the USA, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Austria, Greece, Romania, Switzerland, and France. Its library was enriched through book exchange agreements with various academic institutions. The desire to catch up with European scholarship prompted Russian archaeologists to cooperate, if possible, with European scholars, and participate in international congresses and meetings. In its very first year, in 1895, Uspenskii and Pogodin visited Athens to familiarise themselves with archaeological methods used by foreign archaeologists in this city.⁴¹⁶ Another example of academic cooperation was R. K. Leper's participation in a German-led expedition in 1905 in the Aegean islands and the Aegean coast of Asia Minor, which was led by Professor Wilhelm Dörpfeld from the German Archaeological Institute in Athens.⁴¹⁷

Archaeological cooperation was extended to other foreigners in the Ottoman Empire who had an interest in antiquities. For instance, Paul Gaudin, a Levantine engineer from İzmir, an ardent art and antiquities collector and amateur archaeologist, was one of the most frequent donors, and also an associate member of RAIK. Gaudin

⁴¹⁵ Arkhimandrit Avgustin, "Russkii Arkheologicheskii Institut v Konstantinopole," *Bogoslovskie Trudy*, Vol. 27 (1986), p. 273.

⁴¹⁶ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 40, l. 14 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 20 March 1915).

⁴¹⁷ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1905 godu," Vol. 13 (1908), p. 333.

sent many ancient objects as gifts to the institute.⁴¹⁸ However, the closest relationship was established with the French Assumptionist Church in Kadıköy, Constantinople. This French Church also functioned as a research centre with a focus on the history of the Eastern Churches and the Byzantine Empire, and therefore had shared interests with RAIK. The Assumptionist Church published an academic periodical named *Les Echos d'Orient*.⁴¹⁹ While Uspenskii and other RAIK members frequently wrote articles for *Les Echos d'Orient*, the articles of clergy-scholars of the French Church appeared in the official periodical of RAIK, the Bulletin of the Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople. The two institutions made an agreement and shared the study of Constantinople's history and archaeology. While the French Assumptionist Church was responsible for the expeditions and surveys on the Asian side of the city, RAIK was responsible for the study of the European side.⁴²⁰

In addition to Europeans, American scholars followed the establishment of RAIK with interest. In the first months of 1895, *The American Journal of Archaeology and of the History of the Fine Arts* reported the establishment of RAIK and described the bureaucratic structure and scientific objects of the Institute.⁴²¹ In the coming years, this journal continued to regularly publicise the scientific activities of RAIK to its readers.

What emerges from this picture is the contrast between the explicitly stated political intentions of Russian bureaucrats, diplomats, and scholars to justify

⁴¹⁸ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 86, l. 1-3, 7-8 (Paul Gaudin to Uspenskii, 1902 and 31 January 1905).

⁴¹⁹ Ludwik Biskupski, "L'Historique de L'Institut Français d'Études Byzantines," *Slavic and East European Studies*, Vol. 4, No. ½ (Spring-Summer 1959), p. 89.

⁴²⁰ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 148, l. 6-7 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1907).

⁴²¹ A. L. Frothingham, Jr, "Archaeological News," *The American Journal of Archaeology and of the History of the Fine Arts*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Jan – Mar 1895), p. 132.

archaeological studies and the international scientific collaboration that transcended political intentions. Scholars looking for financial support from governments usually find it convenient to make a political case for support. On the other side of the coin, governments are seldom interested in “pure” research in the humanities. However, despite the obvious and openly stated political agenda, RAIK’s activities prove that there was also academic cooperation between intellectual elites, a cooperation that went beyond imperial, national, and religious boundaries. If archaeological discoveries were a distinctive sign of imperial prestige, scientific collaboration was a means of being integrated into the “civilised” and cultured international community. National and imperial rivalries were expressed only within the confines of this code of behaviour. RAIK’s relations with the Ottoman authorities and especially the Ottoman Museum will be examined more closely in the next chapter, but suffice it to say that even with the Ottoman Museum, despite all the mutual suspicions, the relationship was formed on the basis of this code that governed the relations of cultured cosmopolitan intellectuals.

This brings us to the initial question that triggered this research; the complicity of scholars, in this case archaeologists, in political projects. Why certain questions are asked and why governments prefer to support one field of research over others shed light on the identity and the priorities that are promoted by the state. In the case of RAIK, the emphasis of a number of diplomats and Byzantinist scholars on shared identity with Balkan nations found support from government bodies and the Tsar himself. The importance given to shared ethnic and religious identity reflected the mind-set of the imperial bureaucracy in the last decades of the Russian Empire. However, the conjunction of interests between scholarship and politics does not invalidate the

academic value of RAIK's archaeological studies; neither does it mean that scholars who participated in these projects were mere tools in the hands of policy-makers. It was not the scientists who set the political agenda, but existing political circumstances facilitated the emergence of certain modes of scholarship.

The Russian Empire's discovery of soft power was another theme that could be detected in the discussions that led to the creation of RAIK. Both diplomats and scholars frequently evoked the example of the French to point to the importance of cultural influence. Russian diplomats discovered that being a great power required more than mere military power, and realised the importance of cultural institutions. They were also aware of the fact that Russia was behind European powers in this respect. At this point, RAIK was designed as an institution that would facilitate academic and cultural contacts between Russia and the Balkan nations. If RAIK succeeded in this target, then it would reveal that Russian foreign policy was not solely based on military power and would hence contribute to Russia's prestige. However, as will be outlined in the next chapter, political realities were not compatible with these hopes. Sharing Orthodox faith or Slavic background had little practical value in the late 19th century, considering the Macedonian dispute between the Greeks, Bulgarians, and Serbians. Being ethnic or religious kinsmen (*edinovertsy i edinoplemmeniki*) did not keep the Balkan peoples together, therefore the image Russia tried to create, the protector of Slavs and the Orthodox, was gradually losing its meaning. Ideas emanating from Western Europe, like nationalism, liberal values, and parliamentary democracy were becoming more attractive to educated segments of Balkan societies, rather than Slavdom and Orthodoxy.

Chapter 5

Expeditions of the Russian Archaeological Institute and Contacts with Ottoman Authorities

Russian archaeological activities in the Ottoman Empire started when the Ottoman Empire was already in the process of standardizing procedures to deal with foreign archaeologists. We know that there were unsystematic individual Russian expeditions in the late 1880s, conducted mainly by diplomats. The correspondence between Abdülhamid II's court and local military authorities reveal that these individual activities were perceived as suspicious and were immediately reported to the Sultan. For instance, in 1889 the Russian consul in Edirne made archaeological investigations in the countryside and local authorities immediately prepared a report stating that the consul was not accompanied by an Ottoman official.⁴²² On another occasion, Ambassador A. I. Nelidov's visit to ruins in Çanakkale was reported to Abdülhamid II.⁴²³ In addition to such sporadic investigations by diplomats, the Imperial Orthodox Palestinian Society, established in 1882 upon the initiative of Grand Duke Serge Aleksandrovich, carried out the first professional Russian archaeological expeditions in the Ottoman Empire. In addition to its theological work, the Palestinian Society undertook archaeological excavations on an unsystematic basis. Documents reveal that the Ottoman government permitted investigations of a scientific nature as long as the excavation team obeyed

⁴²² BOA, Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Askeri Maruzat (Y. PRK. ASK.), 56/20, 13 Zilkade 1306 (11 July 1889).

⁴²³ BOA, Y. PRK. ASK., 91/105, 09 Zilhicce 1310 (24 June 1893).

Ottoman laws. In 1891, upon the Grand Duke's request to make archaeological investigations about Christian and Byzantine monuments in Syria, Palestine, and the Sinai Mountain, the Ottoman government issued a permit on the condition that the excavation team acted in accordance with Ottoman laws and that the gendarmerie accompanied them.⁴²⁴

RAIK was not only the first Russian scientific community abroad, but also the first foreign archaeological institute in the Ottoman Empire. At first, Abdülhamid II and bureaucrats at the Sublime Porte displayed a reluctant attitude to RAIK's establishment, which bordered on outright suspicion. In 1894, Russian ambassador Nelidov communicated his desire to create a school of archaeology in Constantinople that was planned to be under the administration of the Russian Embassy. The Sublime Porte responded to this request with an official note trying to dissuade the Russian Embassy but ambassador Nelidov insisted on his plan.⁴²⁵ Eventually, RAIK opened its offices in the Ottoman capital in 1895. In April 1895, Osman Hamdi Bey, the director of the Ottoman Museum, sent a gift to RAIK, a photographic album of the antiquities collection of the Ottoman Museum as gesture of support. In exchange, RAIK sent four fragments from bronze statues to the Ottoman Museum.⁴²⁶ Finally in September 1897, two years after the opening of its offices, RAIK was officially authorised by the Ottoman government to make scientific investigations, surveys, and excavations.⁴²⁷

Abdülhamid II's authorisation of RAIK in September 1897 was communicated to the Russian Embassy by the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmed Tevfik

⁴²⁴ BOA, Meclis-i Vükelâ (MV.), 66/65, 30 Zilhicce 1308 (06 August 1891).

⁴²⁵ BOA, Yıldız Hususi Maruzat (Y. A. HUS.), 307/84, 27 Safer 1312 (30 August 1894).

⁴²⁶ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 147, l. 3 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1900).

⁴²⁷ BOA, BEO., 1006/75417, 09 Rebiülahir 1315 (07 September 1897); PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 128 (Delianov to Uspenskii, October 1897).

Pasha.⁴²⁸ According to the *irade* issued by the Sultan, members of RAIK could carry out archaeological studies in the Ottoman Empire, provided that they acted in accordance with existing Ottoman antiquities regulations. These rules included officially notifying local administrative authorities before expeditions and not undertaking research without proper permits.⁴²⁹ Russian archaeologists were expected to give half of their findings to the Ottoman Imperial Museum. Officials from the Ottoman Ministry of Education were responsible for deciding which objects Russian and Ottoman sides would retain. At the same time, Russian archaeologists could enjoy some privileges; the books and pamphlets they brought from Russia were to be exempt from the customs tax and subject to only procedural examination at the custom.⁴³⁰

The note, sent by the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, meant that both the Sultan and the Ministry recognised RAIK as an institution separate from the Russian Embassy. More importantly, the Ottoman government granted rights to RAIK that had never been granted to foreigners before. Since RAIK was the first and only permanent foreign archaeological institution in the Ottoman Empire, the 1897 *irade* that formed the basis for RAIK's activities in the Ottoman Empire did not have a precedent. Considering the initial Ottoman reluctance to accept RAIK's establishment, the rights granted in the *irade* looked very generous. It is possible that the Ottomans did not want to be regarded as uncooperative in the sphere of science and scholarship, as it would make the Ottoman government look "uncultured" and therefore would be a blow to Ottoman prestige.

⁴²⁸ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 32, l. 48 (Tevfik Pasha to M. Jadovski, 29 September 1897).

⁴²⁹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 3, l. 7-8 (Uspenskii to Ambassador Zinoviev, 1905).

⁴³⁰ BOA, İ. HUS., 57/1315-Ca-004, 01 Cemâziyelevvel 1315 (28 September 1897).

In 1897, a month after the authorisation of RAIK by Abdülhamid II, Fyodor Uspenskii received an Imperial Order from the Sultan.⁴³¹ Next year, in 1898, Osman Hamdi Bey became an honorary member of RAIK. Therefore, a basis for scientific collaboration was established between Ottoman and Russian archaeologists in the highly politicised world of archaeology. Nevertheless, it is difficult to say that there was a genuine cooperation between Russian archaeologists and their Ottoman colleagues. On the contrary, Uspenskii frequently complained about Osman Hamdi Bey's lack of interest as regards RAIK's activities. Uspenskii recalled that although he tried to establish cordial relations with Osman Hamdi Bey, even visited his house twice, and offered to take Osman Hamdi's paintings to St. Petersburg for an exhibition (his paintings were known to be Osman Hamdi's soft spot), Osman Hamdi's response to these gestures were cool, to say the least. Uspenskii noted, "It is difficult to say if the director is our friend."⁴³² The director of RAIK wrote to the Russian ambassador in 1906 that Osman Hamdi Bey ignored Russian archaeologists: he visited RAIK only once, and although he was the first person to whom Uspenskii always sent invitations for academic meetings and lectures held at RAIK, Osman Hamdi Bey never once visited any of the scholarly meetings. On top of that, the Sublime Porte was not totally free of suspicions vis-à-vis the Russians: Russian governmental emblems and signs with the name of RAIK could not be displaced on the institute building. What bothered Uspenskii the most, however, was the strict surveillance of their scientific activities by the Ottoman government.⁴³³

⁴³¹ BOA, İrade, Taltifat (İ. TAL.), 121/1315-Ca-066, 19 Cemâziyelevvel 1315 (16 October 1897).

⁴³² RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 27, l. 1-3 (Uspenskii to Ambassador Zinoviev, 1906.).

⁴³³ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 3, l. 2 (Uspenskii to Ambassador Nelidov, 4 July 1889).

For their part, Russian archaeologists respected Osman Hamdi's life-long effort that manifested itself in the Ottoman Imperial Museum – Uspenskii stated that the Ottoman Museum was one of the most important museums in Europe in terms of the richness and importance of its collection.⁴³⁴ However, he complained that besides the Ottoman Museum, there was not a serious interest in the scientific study of antiquities amongst the population of the Ottoman Empire.⁴³⁵ Uspenskii argued that only some predominantly Greek educational societies and some Greek individuals had an interest in archaeology, but their studies lacked a scholarly methodology.

In order to familiarise themselves with the surviving historical monuments from the Byzantine era, RAIK undertook numerous expeditions between 1895 and 1914. The relations between Russian archaeologists and the Ottoman government were sometimes smooth, but sometimes there were disagreements as regards the scope of RAIK's archaeological research. Even though RAIK's charter encompassed the study of pre-Christian Hellenistic antiquities, Uspenskii and his colleagues directed their attention primarily to the study of Byzantine history, theology, art, and ancient Slavic history. Their expeditions targeted regions which were under Byzantine political or cultural influence; primarily, Macedonia, Mount Athos, Bulgaria, Serbia, Asia Minor, Greece, Syria, and Palestine. During these expeditions Russian archaeologists gathered manuscripts from monasteries and made sketches of monuments, photographed buildings, made excavations, and collected valuable monuments and objects, some of which were brought to Russia after the closure of RAIK. Consequently, the institute acquired a rich material base for scientific study. Throughout its existence, RAIK spent

⁴³⁴ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 40, l. 3-4 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 9 December 1914).

⁴³⁵ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 100 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 1914).

considerable effort on researching and preserving valuable manuscripts and earned a well-deserved reputation in international scientific circles for that effort. Uspenskii participated in most expeditions undertaken by RAIK and was responsible for most of the scientific work. In nearly all volumes of the *Izvestiia*, Uspenskii had an article. Even as regards articles written by his colleagues, he either supervised them or helped with the materials needed for the study.⁴³⁶

Even before the official recognition of RAIK by the Sultan, Uspenskii was given permission in May 1895 by the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior to make excavations on the Black Sea littoral, around the cities of Trabzon, Sinop, and Samsun.⁴³⁷ While local officials were requested to provide the necessary help to Uspenskii and his colleagues, on the other hand they were asked to keep an eye on his behaviour.⁴³⁸ A few months later, when Uspenskii wanted to make investigations in Constantinople, the same caution was repeated. Local officials were asked to offer Uspenskii any kind of help he needed, while keeping him under surveillance “without making this evident to him.”⁴³⁹

These first excursions were not systematic, rather they were intended to familiarise Russian archaeologists with Byzantine antiquities in the Ottoman Empire, and they laid the ground for more systematic archaeological studies in future. Both the Black Sea coast and Constantinople would be RAIK’s favourite spots for research in the coming years. During the first Trabzon expedition in 1895, Russian scholars collected objects of Christian art, including ancient manuscripts and icons with Slavic inscriptions, which were thought to be made by the medieval Rus’, from the period

⁴³⁶ Popruzhenko, p. 25.

⁴³⁷ All three cities are important ports on the Turkish coasts of the Black Sea. BOA, BEO., 628/47089, 29 Zilkade 1312 (24 May 1895).

⁴³⁸ BOA, Dahiliye Mektubî Kalemi (DH. MKT.), 379/80, 04 Zilhicce 1312 (29 May 1895).

⁴³⁹ BOA, DH. MKT., 428/21, 24 Rebiülevvel 1313 (14 September 1895).

when Byzantine rule extended over to the northern shores of the Black Sea.⁴⁴⁰ They also conducted research in the monasteries of Sumela, Vazelon, Perister in Trabzon, where they would carry out more systematic studies in later years.

In 1897, Ivan Alekseevich Zinoviev (1839-1917), who was the former head of the Asiatic Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the leading expert of the Ministry on the Near East, replaced Nelidov as the ambassador in Constantinople. The same year Zinoviev was appointed, RAIK made its first important acquisition: the discovery of the *Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus*, also known as Codex N, Purple Codex or the Sarmisaklı Codex. The Codex was found in 1896 in the Sarmisaklı village near Kayseri, in the middle of Anatolia.⁴⁴¹ This ancient Bible, which dated back to the 6th century, was written in silver and gold letters. Before the Russians arrived at Sarmisaklı, the Americans and the British bargained with villagers for the acquisition of this ancient Bible. Russian archaeologist Ia. I. Smirnov coincidentally learned about this manuscript on his trip around Asia Minor and informed Uspenskii about it.⁴⁴² Uspenskii immediately asked the ambassador to find the means for the purchase of the Sarmisaklı Codex. Finally, the Codex was bought for 10,000 roubles through the personal donation of Tsar Nicholas II (r. 1894-1917), who presented it to the Imperial Public Library in St. Petersburg.⁴⁴³ The Emperor's personal donation is proof of his personal interest in RAIK's activities in the Ottoman Empire.

Encouraged by the Tsar's donation, Uspenskii made a request for monetary support in a letter to the Ministry of Public Education in August 1898. He reminded the

⁴⁴⁰ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1895 godu," Vol. 1 (1896), pp. 24-28.

⁴⁴¹ IRAIK, "Vnov Naydennyi Purpurovy Kodeks Evangeliya," Vol. 1 (1896), pp. 138-139.

⁴⁴² PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 139, l. 20-25 (Brochure, "33 Days in Asia Minor" by secretary of Russian Consulate in Konya, T. Nikolaev, 1896).

⁴⁴³ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1897 godu," Vol. 3 (1898), p. 197.

Ministry that despite its very modest means, RAIK had achieved a lot in a short period of time: an impressive library, a valuable manuscript collection, a numismatics collection, numerous expeditions, and a significant number of members in different parts of the Ottoman Empire. Uspenskii stated that RAIK's primary responsibility was to study Christian antiquities and prevent them from being smuggled abroad, "and hence fulfil its scientific and political role in the East."⁴⁴⁴ However, given financial constraints, this duty was very hard to accomplish. Uspenskii stated that if RAIK did not acquire the Sarmisaklı Codex, it would end up abroad, too. In fact, being transported from Asia Minor to Russia, the Codex was indeed sent abroad. Obviously, what Uspenskii meant by "abroad" was either Europe or the USA. The acquisition of a Christian antiquity, when there were rival Western collectors, was considered a success for RAIK and for Russia in the international competition over antiquities, and Russia's primary responsibility was defined as successfully competing with other foreigners in this race. Eventually, Uspenskii's repeated requests became successful. In 1898, RAIK's budget was raised by 7,500 roubles, upon the Emperor's approval.⁴⁴⁵

After a series of preliminary expeditions and investigations, Russian archaeologists asked for an excavation permit from the Ottoman authorities for the first time in 1898, during an expedition to Ottoman Macedonia. Although it was easier to obtain permissions for research trips, when trips involved excavations, the Ottoman government applied stricter regulations. In the summer and fall of 1898, there were two excursions to Ottoman Macedonia, to the Pateli village near the town of Sorovich⁴⁴⁶ between Selânik (Thessaloniki) and Manastır (Bitola). Along the Selânik-Manastır

⁴⁴⁴ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 5, l. 7 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 26 August 1898).

⁴⁴⁵ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1898 godu," Vol. 4, Issue 3 (1899), p. 109.

⁴⁴⁶ Today, Sorovich is in Greece, known as Amyntiao.

railway, near Pateli, a necropolis from the late Bronze Age was discovered during the construction of the railway. Engineers working on the site informed RAIK about the discovery. One of the members of RAIK, Z. E. Ashkenazi donated 3000 francs for the trial excavation.

This was the first instance when the relations between RAIK and the Ottoman Museum cooled. The major problem, according to Russian archaeologists, was that the privileges of the two institutions were doomed to come into conflict with each other.⁴⁴⁷ On the one hand, the Ottoman Museum was the major governmental institution concerning antiquities and had a monopoly over archaeological activities in the Ottoman Empire since the 1884 antiquities regulation. On the other hand, RAIK demanded full and uninterrupted rights to make excavations and research in Ottoman territories based on the *irade* issued by the Sultan in 1897. In practice, RAIK wanted to bypass the authority of the Ottoman Museum by relying on the privileges granted by Abdülhamid II.

In the summer of 1898, Uspenskii addressed the Governor of Manastır, Abdülkerim Pasha, through the Russian consul in the city, A. A. Rostkovskii. The Governor stated that he had to submit the question both to Constantinople and to the Administrative Council of the Manastır Vilayet (*Vilayet Meclis-i İdaresi*) for further discussion.⁴⁴⁸ The Council, uninformed about the Sultan's *irade*, submitted an inquiry to the Porte about the legality of Russian archaeological activities in Pateli. Abdülkerim Pasha promised that as soon as he received an official note from the Porte, the question would be discussed at the Administrative Council and the response would be

⁴⁴⁷ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 147, l. 3 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1900).

⁴⁴⁸ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 150, l. 3-5 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1899).

immediately communicated to the Russians. Abdülkerim Pasha also confidentially told Uspenskii that the Administrative Council was unlikely to risk giving a permit for excavation without formal approval from Constantinople because the village Pateli and the area lying around it was considered *emlâk*, that is, private land belonging to the Sultan. Finally in September 1898 Russian archaeologists received permission from the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior to start diggings in the area, but their excavation was strictly overseen by local representatives of the Ottoman government.⁴⁴⁹ When Uspenskii and his colleagues initiated investigations in Pateli, the authorities gave a permit on the condition that their findings were to be exhibited at the Imperial Ottoman Museum in Constantinople.⁴⁵⁰

In Pateli, an interesting coincidence crossed RAIK's path with the famous liberal politician Pavel N. Miliukov (1859-1943). Before engaging in politics, Miliukov was a historian, who served as assistant professor at the Department of History and Philology at Moscow University from 1886 to 1895. Miliukov was fired from Moscow University in 1895 for the political messages of his public lectures.⁴⁵¹ He was first exiled to Ryazan. While in exile, he received an invitation from the University of Sofia to take the chair of History.⁴⁵² He spent the period between 1897 and 1899 abroad, travelling around the Balkans and lecturing at Bulgarian institutions. In Sofia, he briefly gave lectures on Roman, medieval, and Slavic history, as well as philosophy of history. However, Miliukov had to leave the University of Sofia in a few months. One reason for

⁴⁴⁹ BOA, İ. HUS., 67/1316-R-103, 27 Rebiülahir 1316 (14 September 1898).

⁴⁵⁰ BOA, DH. MKT., 2147/110, 29 Recep 1316 (13 December 1898).

⁴⁵¹ In his public lectures, he dealt with critics of Russian autocracy, such as Nikolai Novikov, Aleksandr Radishchev, the Decembrists, etc. For Miliukov's career as a historian, see Thomas Riha, *A Russian European: Paul Miliukov in Russian Politics* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1969), pp. 20-28.

⁴⁵² Leo Wiener, "A Victim of Autocracy: Prof. Milyukov, Lowell Lecturer 'The Russian Crisis,'" *Boston Evening Transcript*, 29 November 1904, p. 9.

this hasty leave might be his acquaintance with several Bulgarian opposition figures. In addition, the Bulgarian government could not withstand the pressure from the Russian diplomatic representative in Sofia to dismiss him from the university. Until 1899, Miliukov mostly spent his time travelling around Macedonia and dedicated himself to archaeological studies. In later years, Miliukov left his mark on Russian politics as the founder of the Constitutional Democratic (Kadet) Party, as a member of the Duma from 1907 to 1912, and as the Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Provisional Government after the February Revolution in 1917.

When RAIK undertook the expedition to Macedonia, Miliukov had already left his position at the University of Sofia, but he was still travelling in the Balkans. In 1897, he made a brief visit to Constantinople and was acquainted with Uspenskii. While in Bulgaria, Miliukov was already interested in international politics, especially the Macedonian Question. RAIK's archaeological expedition proved to be a useful excuse for him to travel around Macedonia without arousing suspicion on the part of Ottoman authorities. As a result of this expedition, Miliukov published an atlas of Macedonian ethnography in 1900.⁴⁵³ The excavation in Pateli, the very first excavation of RAIK, was initiated by Miliukov in the autumn of 1898. The RAIK secretary Farmakovskii took over the excavation from 14 October to 14 November 1898. The excavation team discovered numerous ceramic, bronze, and iron objects from the late Bronze Age, as well as bones and skulls.⁴⁵⁴ However, they had to stop excavations in mid-November 1898 due to the start of the cold and rainy season. Uspenskii transmitted his desire to

⁴⁵³ Riha, *A Russian European: Paul Miliukov in Russian Politics*, pp. 35-36.

⁴⁵⁴ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1898 godu," Vol. 4, Issue 3 (1898), pp. 150-151.

continue more systematic excavations next autumn in 1899 to the Governor of Manastır, Abdülkerim Pasha.⁴⁵⁵

A few months later, in March 1899, the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs warned RAIK through the Russian Embassy that it was not legal to undertake excavations without receiving necessary permits beforehand from the Ottoman Ministry of Education, the Ministry with which the Ottoman Museum was affiliated.⁴⁵⁶ This warning meant that Abdülhamid II's *irade* was not sufficient on its own for RAIK to freely start archaeological activities, but the Russians should also consult the Ottoman Museum. The note also stated that the Ottoman Museum had not yet received any objects from the Pateli expedition, even though it was reported that sixteen chests of objects were brought to the Russian Embassy in Constantinople.⁴⁵⁷ The Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs required RAIK to comply with the previous agreement and send the findings to the Ottoman Museum for partitioning.

Secretary Farmakovskii and director Uspenskii responded to this note by citing the rights accorded to them by the Sultan.⁴⁵⁸ The Russian archaeologists stated that the Sultan's *irade* gave them the right to carry out research anywhere in the Ottoman Empire. On top of that special permit from the Sultan, Russian archaeologists also noted that in October 1898 they had informed local authorities, including the Governor of Manastır, Abdülkerim Pasha, about their expedition. Apparently, Uspenskii assumed that he could bypass the Ottoman Museum by referring to the *irade*, and that RAIK

⁴⁵⁵ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 147, l. 10-10.5 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1900).

⁴⁵⁶ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 11, l. 5 (Russian Embassy in Constantinople to Uspenskii, 5 April 1899).

⁴⁵⁷ BOA, DH. MKT., 2210/21, 3 Safer 1317 (13 June 1899); DH.MKT., 2191/63, 06 Zilhicce 1316 (17 April 1899).

⁴⁵⁸ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 147, l. 7 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1900).

could engage in dialogue with local administrative authorities on its own, without the interference of the Russian Embassy.

In his defence against the Ottoman government, Uspenskii stated that RAIK operated totally openly and legally, using all sorts of assistance from central and local authorities: the Minister of the Interior communicated with the Governors in Selânik and Manastır about providing excavation permits to the Russian Institute. The Governor of Manastır Abdülkerim Pasha commanded a police officer to help the director, dispatched an official to oversee the excavation and to keep an inventory of found items. Uspenskii claimed that this official had never told them to send half of the items to the Ottoman Museum, either during the excavation or during the shipment of the items to Constantinople.⁴⁵⁹ In view of the fact that the items found did not have a special monetary value, Uspenskii concluded that the Ottoman government was not interested and did not want to keep half of them. Besides, having a permit for excavation from the Sultan, he did not consider it a legal obligation to ask for a permit again from the Ottoman Ministry of Education, especially because excavations were carried out on the Sultan's private land. Uspenskii complained that he could not even understand how he could be seen to have violated existing regulations.⁴⁶⁰ The director of RAIK presumed that the Ottoman Ministry of Education had been notified through administrative channels about RAIK's permission to undertake excavations in Pateli. The presence of a police officer detached to the excavation area, who closely followed the excavation, supported Uspenskii's view that this officer was a representative of the Ottoman

⁴⁵⁹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 147, l. 7-9, 10.5-11 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1900).

⁴⁶⁰ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 147, l. 10-15 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1900).

Ministry of Education, while in fact he was commissioned by the local governor.⁴⁶¹ The misunderstanding stemmed from the fact that despite the Ottoman Museum's claim to full monopoly over archaeological activities in the Ottoman Empire, Russian archaeologists only notified the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior, not the Ottoman Museum and hence violated the bureaucratic chain.

With regard to the Ottoman Museum's demand to receive half of the findings from the expedition, Uspenskii claimed that out of the sixteen boxes sent to the Russian Embassy in Constantinople, only three had antiquities found during the excavations, of which two boxes contained pottery and only one box contained bronze and iron materials. The remaining boxes had not yet been opened and they only contained bones and skulls from the necropolis. He invited Osman Hamdi Bey, who was also an honorary member of RAIK, to personally visit and inspect the contents of the boxes whenever he wanted. Uspenskii stated that the excavations in Pateli were not carried out for commercial ends, but only for the sake of archaeological and “pure scientific objectives.” This scientific concern was obvious, considering that the findings did not have any material value. Uspenskii asked to keep the objects until they were thoroughly investigated in their entirety. He stated, “I dare to hope that the enlightened Ottoman government would consider it beneath their dignity to insist on the surrender of half of the materials, before they were researched and published by the Institute.”⁴⁶²

Next year, in August 1899, Uspenskii this time requested permission to continue the excavation in the same area through Ambassador Zinoviev. The director asked for all possible precautions to avoid any sign of suspicion on the part of the Ottoman

⁴⁶¹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 147, l. 11.5-12 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1900).

⁴⁶² PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 147, l. 13.5-14 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1900).

government after the last year's crisis, and especially requested Zinoviev to consult the Ottoman Museum to prevent any misunderstanding.⁴⁶³ During this second expedition, RAIK confirmed that they would send the objects after completing their investigation.⁴⁶⁴ In spite of this assurance, the Porte sent Tevhid Bey, an official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and specialist in antiquities, to Manastır to oversee the excavation, in addition to sending a note to the Russian Embassy to specify the share of the Ottoman Imperial Museum.⁴⁶⁵ On top of that, the Ministry of the Interior warned local officials in Manastır to ensure that Russian archaeologists acted within the confines of Ottoman laws.⁴⁶⁶ Finally, the question was brought to a resolution thanks to the direct communication between Uspenskii and the director of the Ottoman Museum, Osman Hamdi Bey. Boxes full of objects discovered at the Pateli expedition were opened at the Ottoman Museum and the contents were equally divided.⁴⁶⁷ Nevertheless, RAIK had to submit the materials to the staff of the Ottoman Museum before they were extensively studied at the Institute.⁴⁶⁸

The Macedonia expedition of 1898-1899 showed the sensitivity of the Ottoman government about exercising its authority vis-à-vis Russian archaeologists within its boundaries. The Ottoman government, through its various ministries and state institutions, was reminding foreign archaeologists of its sovereign rights. The sensitivity of the Ottoman government, especially of the Ottoman Museum is worthy of attention, given the insignificance of the findings at the Pateli excavation – remnants from the

⁴⁶³ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 150, l. 5-7 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1899).

⁴⁶⁴ BOA, DH. MKT., 2264/88, 27 Cemaziyah 1317 (02 November 1899).

⁴⁶⁵ BOA, DH. MKT., 2273/76, 16 Recep 1317 (20 November 1899).

⁴⁶⁶ BOA, DH. MKT., 2288/87, 21 Şaban 1317 (25 December 1899).

⁴⁶⁷ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 147, l. 15 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1900).

⁴⁶⁸ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 34, l. 6-7 (Uspenskii to Ambassador Girs, 19 June 1913).

Bronze Age without any contemporary political or religious connotation. This incident showed that the Ottoman government was not concerned with ownership rights over antiquities only because of the symbolic meaning attached to them, but that the very act of monitoring foreign archaeologists and compelling them to obey Ottoman laws was a political message in itself. In this context, even politically insignificant Bronze Age materials could turn into a sign of sovereignty.

In fact, the site at Pateli was only a coincidental discovery in the Macedonian expedition of 1898-1899. The major intention of this expedition was the study of Christian antiquities – especially Slavic monuments of Ottoman Macedonia.⁴⁶⁹ During the expedition, Uspenskii was accompanied by A. A. Rostkovskii, the Russian consul in Manastir, Miliukov, and M. I. Rostovtsev. Like Miliukov, Rostovtsev was a world-famous historian, specialising in the history of southern Russia.⁴⁷⁰ From a historical perspective this expedition was especially important to understand the history of medieval Bulgarian – Byzantine relations. Throughout the expedition, Russian historians gathered important information about the history of Ottoman Macedonia.⁴⁷¹ The most important discovery of the expedition was an inscription from the late 10th century, from the period of Tsar Samuil of medieval Bulgaria, which was the oldest

⁴⁶⁹ IRAIK, P. N. Miliukov, “Khristiyanskaia Drevnosti Zapadnoi Makedonii,” Vol. 4, Issue 1 (1899), pp. 21-22.

⁴⁷⁰ Mikhail Ivanovich Rostovtsev (1870-1952) was an important historian of the ancient world, whose career stretched from pre-Revolutionary Russia to the 20th century USA. In 1918, Rostovtsev emigrated first to Europe, and then to the USA. He taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (1920-1925) and later at Yale (1925-1944) and continued to lecture on Roman and ancient Greek history. Most of his academic works are available in English. For biographical information, see C. Bradford Welles, “Michael Ivanovich Rostovtzeff (1870-1952),” *Russian Review*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (April 1953), pp. 128-133.

⁴⁷¹ IRAIK, M. I. Rostovtsev, “Nadpisi iz Makedonii,” Vol. 4, Issue 3 (1899), p. 166.

known example of Slavic letters. Another important achievement was the discovery of an inscription delineating the Bulgarian-Byzantine border in the early 10th century.⁴⁷²

More interesting than archaeological discoveries, however, were the observations of archaeologists about the contemporary political situation in Macedonia, reflected in the institute report for 1898. The report was written by the archaeologists who participated in the Macedonia expedition, including Miliukov. Russian scholars stated that the most important part of Macedonia for Slavic history was the region around Selânik, Ohrid Lake, and Prespa, a region which was the setting for inter-communal fighting at the turn of the century.⁴⁷³ Until then, little archaeological study was conducted in this area because of political instability.

Referring to the conflict between the Bulgarians and Serbs, Russian archaeologists deemed it necessary to make a correction with regard to a misunderstanding in Russian public opinion.⁴⁷⁴ The Russian public, the report remarked, falsely blamed Greeks for destroying ancient Bulgarian and Serbian monuments that gave evidence to historical rights of the Slavs in Macedonia. “Our observation in Macedonia did not confirm these complaints,” Russian archaeologists claimed. Ancient Slavic inscriptions were not smeared, scraped, and replaced with Greek inscriptions. Likewise, there was no evidence proving the intentional destruction of frescoes and icons in Bulgarian churches by the Greeks. On the contrary, the report described the mutual treatment of Bulgarians and Serbs as “barbarian” (*v varvarskom obrashchenii*), and claimed that the current war between Serbs and Bulgarians threatened Slavic

⁴⁷² IRAIK, “Otchet v 1898 godu,” Vol. 4, Issue 3 (1899), p. 125.

⁴⁷³ For further information on the Macedonian conflict, see İpek Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties: Religion, Violence, and the Politics of Nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878-1908* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), pp. 19-47.

⁴⁷⁴ IRAIK, “Otchet v 1898 godu,” Vol. 4, Issue 3 (1899), pp. 124-125.

antiquities more than Turkish intolerance (*neterpimost'*) or Greek phyletism.⁴⁷⁵ Russian archaeologists noted that many times they had witnessed Bulgarians destroy Greek or Serbian monuments, and scrape or seriously damage frescoes with the images of Serbian tsars. The report argued that the only motivation for such behaviour could be political. There was serious danger for Slavic monuments if Bulgarian ecclesiastical authorities did not curb the intolerance of their representatives in Macedonia. Some examples of such intentional destruction were Treskavets Monastery near Pirlepe (Prilep) and Markov Monastery near Üsküp (Skopje). Given the Bulgarian-Russian political rapprochement at the time and considering that one of the writers of the report was Miliukov, who had strong pro-Bulgarian sentiments, the report was interesting for pointing to inter-communal struggles between Bulgarians and Serbs and for blaming the Bulgarians for the destruction of antiquities.

In fact, these observations indicated why Russia's self-inflicted role as the protector of Ottoman Christians, or more specifically, Balkan Slavs was a dead end. The primordial ties between Russia and the Balkan nations, which were frequently evoked to legitimise RAIK's establishment, did not have a practical meaning in an age when nationalism challenged supra-national, imperial identities in the Balkans.⁴⁷⁶ As the expedition report documented, Orthodoxy or common Slavic heritage was far from being a uniting factor in the Balkans at the turn of the century. Exploring the past of Balkan nations to foster stronger ties with them in future – RAIK's primary goal – was easier said than done. The report hints at the fact that ancient monuments were regarded

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 125.

⁴⁷⁶ Lieven, *Towards the Flame: The End of Tsarist Russia*, p. 3.

as solid evidence for territorial claims over Macedonia – therefore, were targeted and destroyed by rival groups.

RAIK's studies in Macedonia were not the only ones of its kind; archaeological and historical studies were conducted by scholars from different ethnic backgrounds, as the struggle over Macedonia reflected itself in the scientific realm. Especially after the Congress of Berlin in 1878, anthropologists, linguists, and other scholars came up with theories and scientific studies to claim Macedonia for their respective ethnic groups. Bulgarian linguists indicated linguistic proximity with the Macedonian Slavs, as did the Serbs. On the other hand, Greek scholars emphasised the importance of the religious authority of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the formation of national identity.⁴⁷⁷

A very interesting aspect of RAIK's Macedonia expedition was the involvement of Pavel Miliukov. It is surprising to see a reformist politician, a critic of pre-1905 Russia, a staunch opponent of the Russian government, who was even jailed for his political views, as part of an archaeological project about Orthodox churches in Macedonia. Considering that the expedition was supported by the Russian Embassy in Constantinople and the Ministry of Public Education at the same time, we can conclude that the Russian government did not object to incorporating a political opponent in a government-sponsored scientific project, as long as he did not openly engage in political activities. Essentially, RAIK's collaboration with a well-known government critic further confirms that academic concerns of RAIK staff went beyond political considerations. Academic cooperation with such world-famous scholars like Miliukov and Rostovtsev also indicates the quality of RAIK's archaeological research.

⁴⁷⁷ Jelavich and Jelavich, p. 208.

Although Miliukov's involvement in a scholarly activity does not necessarily give an idea about his political perspective, it is thought-provoking to examine his archaeological-historical interests against the background of his ideas on Russian foreign policy. In his memoirs, Miliukov noted that his experience in Macedonia shaped his opinions on the Balkan question during the crisis of 1908, when he became a vocal supporter of the Bulgarian cause in the Third Duma.⁴⁷⁸ Miliukov was no less a supporter of active Russian involvement in the Balkan affairs than his right wing opponents in the Duma, but different from his political adversaries, Miliukov was inspired by democratic movements in the Balkan Peninsula.⁴⁷⁹

One should be cautious when reaching a conclusion about the relationship between the state and intelligentsia in late imperial Russia only by looking at Miliukov's statements, but the fact that RAIK's archaeological projects received support from Nicholas II on the one hand and Miliukov on the other, people at the opposite ends of the political spectrum in domestic affairs, deserves attention. It is possible to argue that despite their different attitudes in domestic issues, there was a certain degree of consensus between intellectuals with different political inclinations as regards Russia's position and identity in international politics. If the political programme of conservative politicians and intellectuals as regards the Balkan question was characterised by Pan-Orthodoxy or Pan-Slavism, Miliukov was attracted by the democratic tendencies of young Balkan nationalists. Consistent in his democratic priorities, Miliukov was at first hopeful about reformist capacity of the Young Turks.⁴⁸⁰ Despite these very different

⁴⁷⁸ Paul N. Miliukov, *Political Memoirs, 1905-1917* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967), pp. 174-175.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 181.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 184.

starting points, eventually, Russian intellectuals from different walks of life shared the belief that Russia should be actively involved in the affairs of its ethnic and religious brethren. Especially during World War I Miliukov came closer to the right-wing, and supported Russian seizure of the Straits.⁴⁸¹

The 1898 Macedonia expedition was an example of RAIK's interest in Slavic antiquities, and it was not the only one. The second excavation of RAIK was conducted in autonomous Bulgaria, near Shumen. The excavations in Aboba,⁴⁸² the ancient Bulgarian capital in the 7th-9th centuries, in 1899-1900 was the outcome of Russian – Bulgarian archaeological collaboration. During this excavation Uspenskii worked with Karel Škorpil, lecturer at Varna Gymnasium, M. IU. Popruzhenko from the Imperial Novorossiya University and V. N. Zlatarskii from Sofia High School.⁴⁸³

After the first preliminary expedition to Bulgaria in 1896, director Uspenskii wrote a letter to the Princess of Bulgaria, Marie Louise:

[Y]our Royal Highness so deeply and correctly evaluates the meaning of archaeological science for national identity and for the development of respect for antiquities. Having before us the experience of European states, I have the firm conviction that only with the initiative of enlightened governments, can archaeological scholarship have a solid scientific basis... I would be grateful if you had the opportunity to take archaeological study in Bulgaria under the protection of Your Royal Highness.⁴⁸⁴

In this letter, archaeological scholarship was seen both as an indicator of being enlightened and civilised, and as an indispensable part of national consciousness. Just

⁴⁸¹ Riha, *A Russian European*, p. 250.

⁴⁸² Aboba is today known as Pliska.

⁴⁸³ IRAIK, Uspenskii, "Istoriko-Arkheologicheskoe Znachenie Aboby i ee Okrestnosti. Raskopki. Naimenovanie Drevnogo Poselenii," Vol. 10 (1905), pp. 1-9.

⁴⁸⁴ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 151, l. 6-7 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1898).

like it was for the Ottoman elites, Europe was taken as an example that should be followed. It is particularly interesting that the director of a Russian national project such as RAIK should stress the role of Europe, not Russia, as a role model for Bulgarian scholarship. As a matter of fact, Europe was an example for Russian archaeologists as well, and increasing level of involvement in archaeological activities was an assertion of Russian equality with Europe in cultural terms. Taking the lead in an area closest to Russian history and identity – the history of Orthodoxy and Slavdom – would affirm that Russia had succeeded in catching up with its European role model in science.

In his letter to the Princess of Bulgaria, Uspenskii emphasised the importance of ancient history for the development of national consciousness with these words: “Love for [their] antiquities characterises all cultured nations. [This love] stimulates a sense of national identity, which develops with the learning of national history and literature.”⁴⁸⁵ Uspenskii stated that individual efforts to study ancient history were insufficient and measures for the preservation and collection of antiquities should be undertaken by the Bulgarian government.⁴⁸⁶ He drew a road map for Bulgarian archaeology: he proposed the establishment of central organisations to study antiquities, the preservation and publication of manuscripts, and systematic excavations in ancient sites.⁴⁸⁷

Throughout 1898 Uspenskii tried to establish contact with the Bulgarian Ministry of Education to undertake expeditions in Bulgaria. Not receiving any response, he wrote directly to Prince Ferdinand I of Bulgaria for permission to undertake expeditions and excavations.⁴⁸⁸ Upon receiving this letter, Ferdinand I, who was also an

⁴⁸⁵ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 151, l. 14-15 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1898).

⁴⁸⁶ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 151, l. 8-9 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1898).

⁴⁸⁷ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 151, l. 17 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1898).

⁴⁸⁸ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 151, l. 19-24 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1898).

honorary member of RAIK,⁴⁸⁹ sent a response assuring Uspenskii that he would inquire of the Bulgarian Ministry of Education. Finally, RAIK received permission for archaeological research with the following conditions:

- 1) RAIK would receive half of the discovered materials.
- 2) A commission formed by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education would assess the value of monuments.
- 3) RAIK should clearly delineate its area of excavation.
- 4) The excavation permit was given only for two years.
- 5) The Bulgarian Ministry of Education would employ officials from the National Museum in Sofia to help RAIK.
- 6) If the discovered objects were distinctive in terms of their aesthetic value and historical importance, RAIK had to turn them over to the National Museum in Sofia after the completion of studies. The commission from the Bulgarian Ministry of Education was responsible for determining the value of discovered objects.⁴⁹⁰

Obviously, it was not only the Ottoman government that was sensitive about ownership rights over antiquities, but the autonomous Bulgarian government also expressed its sovereign rights to Russian archaeologists in clear terms. This was after all a logical corollary to Uspenskii's own letter to the princess saying that archaeology was essential to Bulgarian national identity.

The RAIK report from the 1899 expedition to Aboba and Preslav recalled that Bulgarian nationalists blamed the Russians for smuggling Bulgarian antiquities to

⁴⁸⁹ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1900 godu," Vol. 7, Issue 2-3 (1902), p. 246.

⁴⁹⁰ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 151, l. 26-27 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1898).

Russia following the 1878 Russian occupation.⁴⁹¹ The report found this thesis difficult to prove and claimed that Preslav was looted long ago, in addition to being destroyed by the Turks recently in the 19th century. In any case, the disagreement between Russian archaeologists and Bulgarian nationalists showed that the “liberation” of Bulgaria by the Russian army in 1878 was remembered with mixed feelings by the Bulgarians.

The question of Bulgarian antiquities went back to the Russian occupation of Bulgaria during the 1877-1878 Russo-Turkish War. After the retreat of the Russian armies at the end of the war, a large number of senior Russian officers and administrative personnel were left behind to ease the transition of the recently established state, but essentially with an intention to keep the Principality as a Russian dependency.⁴⁹² The Russian imperial attitude caused discontent among nationalist Bulgarian leaders, and the bitterness in Russian-Bulgarian relations continued in the next decades. Although by 1898 the relationship was ameliorating, it was still fragile. Whether the Bulgarian antiquities were really smuggled to Russia or not, in any case, the presence of a rumour against Russia among Bulgarian nationalists implied that despite the Russian Empire’s self-perception as the saviour of Slavdom and Orthodoxy, the practical reality on the ground was different. Actually, as Uspenskii recalled in his letter to Princess Marie Louise, the love for antiquities indeed stimulated a sense of national identity for Bulgarian patriots. This national identity, however, was specifically marked by “Bulgarianness,” and could turn against Russia too, as the Bulgarian identity was not necessarily expressed within the framework of a broader Slavic and Orthodox identity.

⁴⁹¹ IRAIK, “Otchet v 1899 godu,” Vol. 6, Issue 2-3 (1901), p. 449.

⁴⁹² Perry, *Stefan Stamboulov*, p. 45.

After the preliminary studies in 1896 and 1899⁴⁹³ and after the securing of permits from the Bulgarian government, excavations in Aboba started in 1900. The excavation team identified the oldest Bulgarian churches and revealed that the first capital of the first Bulgarian Kingdom was Aboba, not Preslav as had previously been assumed.⁴⁹⁴ Among the findings in Aboba was the palace from the early 9th century attributed to the medieval Bulgarian Khan Omurtag, which had an alley of columns with the names of cities Omurtag conquered in Thrace.⁴⁹⁵ Part of these columns were brought to the National Museum in Sofia before Russians started excavations. The materials discovered in this expedition were important not only for Bulgarian history but also for the overall history of the Balkan Peninsula.

Amongst their excursions to the centres of Byzantine-Slavic heritage, RAIK's expedition to Syria in 1900 stood apart in terms of the geographical focus of interest. However, the Syria expedition reflected the same feeling of competition with European archaeologists. In this excursion that took place between April and June 1900, the painter Nikolai Karlovich Kluge (1869-1947) and the dragoman of the Russian consulate in Jerusalem, I. Huri accompanied Uspenskii. Financial support for the expedition came from the Imperial Orthodox Palestinian Society, which donated 5000 roubles to RAIK for the expedition to ancient Palmyra in Syria.⁴⁹⁶ This was a brave undertaking, considering that Syria was also at the centre of European scholarly attention and Russian archaeology was still behind European scholars in methodological and material terms. In fact, the acknowledgement of this shortcoming prompted Russian

⁴⁹³ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1899 godu," Vol. 6, Issue 2-3 (1901), pp. 437-439.

⁴⁹⁴ Gorianov, pp. 91-92.

⁴⁹⁵ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1900 godu," Vol. 7, Issue 2-3 (1902), pp. 232-236.

⁴⁹⁶ IRAIK, Uspenskii, "Arkheologicheskie Pamyatniki Sirii," Vol. 7, Issue 2-3 (1902), p. 94.

scholars to focus on Slavic and Byzantine archaeology, fields which were relatively less studied by Europeans, and fields in which Russia had comparative advantage.

The Palmyra expedition was originally motivated by the discovery of the Palmyra Customs Tariff in 1882 by the Russian archaeologist Prince Semyon Semyonovich Abamelek-Lazarev (1857-1916). This important monument, dated from 137 BC, outlined an ancient tax law. It was particularly important from a linguistic perspective, as the text was written in both Aramaic and Greek. In 1884, Abamelek-Lazarev published an article entitled “Palmyra” about the importance of this monument. After this publication, an idea was born among Russian specialists to acquire the monument for a Russian museum.⁴⁹⁷ In 4 May 1899, at a meeting of the Imperial Russian Archaeological Society P. K. Kokovtsev, a professor from the Department of Hebrew and Assyrian Languages at the Imperial St. Petersburg University, strongly supported this opinion. Shortly afterwards, the chairman of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich, wrote a letter to the Russian ambassador in Constantinople, Ivan Zinoviev, inquiring about the possible means for the acquisition of the Palmyra Tariff. Zinoviev showed great interest in this cause, and personally entered into dialogue with Abdülhamid II to acquire the Tariff.

RAIK assumed responsibility for the practical questions surrounding the transfer of the monument. After Uspenskii’s preliminary analysis in Palmyra in May 1900, Zinoviev fulfilled the necessary procedures and on 13 October 1900, Abdülhamid II announced that he gave the Palmyra Tariff – seven chests of “stone” as it was described in the original document – to Grand Duke Serge Aleksandrovich, who was known to be

⁴⁹⁷ IRAIK, Uspenskii, “O Perevozke iz Palmiry v S. Peterburg Plity s Nadpisiu,” Vol. 13 (1908), p. 363.

interested in archaeology.⁴⁹⁸ In 1901, Uspenskii visited Syria again to arrange the export of the monument, together with the dragoman, Huri. The stone plates were sent from Palmyra to Damascus, then to Beirut by railway, from Beirut to Odessa, and finally to the Imperial Hermitage in St. Petersburg.⁴⁹⁹

While Uspenskii, Kluge, and Huri were busy with the transfer of the monument from Palmyra, they heard rumours circulating in St. Petersburg.⁵⁰⁰ In the imperial capital, there were concerns among scholars that the dragoman Huri, an incompetent person, was in charge of the transfer. They also feared that Arabs or the Turkish authorities could fool Huri and sell the original Palmyra Tariff to Europeans. Although this fear proved to be ungrounded, the anxiety was caused by the possibility of losing an archaeological trophy to European competitors.

Apparently, European competition was one of the motivations for the Palmyra expedition. Professor Kokovtsev, who worked on the tombstones acquired from Palmyra in 1901, proudly expressed the important achievement by Russian archaeologists in a field where Europeans took the lead.⁵⁰¹ The painter Kluge, who extended his trip to Palestine and Transjordan and made studies in Madeba (in modern Jordan), made a comparison with Catholic missionaries, and remarked that Catholics were very good at publishing and publicizing their studies. Russia, he claimed, could use its links with the Orthodox Arab population to make archaeological discoveries, as well.⁵⁰² Archaeological success was identified with imperial prestige and Russian civilisational

⁴⁹⁸ BOA, BEO., 1731/129825, 27 Cemaziyelahir 1319 (11 October 1901).

⁴⁹⁹ IRAIK, Uspenskii, "O Perevozke iz Palmiry v S. Peterburg Plity s Nadpisu," Vol. 13 (1908), pp. 369-370.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 366.

⁵⁰¹ IRAIK, P. K. Kokovtsev, "Novaia Arameiskaia Nadpisi iz Palmiry," Vol. 8, Issue 3 (1903), pp. 302-303.

⁵⁰² IRAIK, A. A. Pavlovskii and N. K. Kluge, "Madeba," Vol. 8, Issue 1-2 (1902), pp. 82-83, 114.

status. Consequently, the ability to compete with European scholars had a particular importance for Russian archaeologists.

Acquisition of the Palmyra Tariff was definitely one of the most important achievements in RAIK's history, and a sign of increasing self-confidence vis-à-vis their European rivals. On the other hand, by offering the monument as a gift to the Russians, Abdülhamid II actually disregarded the antiquities law of 1884 that the Ottoman Imperial Museum was so sensitive about, since the law very clearly outlawed the transfer of antiquities abroad. Although the transfer of the Palmyra Tariff to Russia contradicted existing regulations, Abdülhamid II's authorisation made the deal legal.

Nevertheless, it seems that in addition to such legal acquisitions, RAIK might have acquired antiquities through illegal means as well, although not on a large scale. Russian archaeologists were definitely not the only foreigners who attempted to smuggle antiquities outside Ottoman territories. In fact, with their very limited financial resources, they were less capable of doing so than their European and American competitors. The Russians also started archaeological studies in the Ottoman Empire at a time when the Ottomans had already grown sensitive about cultural property, another factor restricting the possibility of antiquities smuggling.

The exchange between Russian diplomatic representatives in Samsun, an important city on the Black Sea coast, and Uspenskii hint at the possibility of their involvement in a small-scale illegal antiquities trade. In November 1902 the Russian vice-consul in Samsun, Viktor Fedorovich Kal', sent epitaphs to RAIK from the ancient city of Amisos near modern Samsun and asked Uspenskii to determine a price for these

ancient objects.⁵⁰³ The conversation about the prices of antiquities implied that Kal' probably received antiquities from a local dealer and acted as intermediary between RAIK and the dealer. In fact, a similar letter from Kal' to Uspenskii written a month later clarified this network a little more. In December 1902 Kal' sent artefacts, which he personally bought from a local resident, as gifts to RAIK. These artefacts included silver and bronze objects, necklaces, earrings, rings, and pieces from an Apollo statue. However, he stated, these were not all the objects. In this letter Kal' explained that a certain Uzun Mihal, whom he described as the only person interested in archaeology in Samsun, conducted secret excavations around Amisos, especially in the ancient necropolis from the Roman period.⁵⁰⁴ According to Mihal's testimony, professional excavations in the nearby theatre and temple could produce promising results.

Kal' continued to send ancient objects to RAIK throughout 1903. In February 1903, he sent three bronze Byzantine crosses, found near Vona, Ordu on the Black Sea coast.⁵⁰⁵ Kal' wrote that he bought these objects very cheap, and asked for the amount from Uspenskii. It is understood from the letter that Uspenskii specifically wanted these pieces. Kal' also promised that he would let Uspenskii know if there would be secret excavations around Samsun. In June 1903, he further sent two packages full of antiquities, including bronze plaques to RAIK. Some of these artefacts were Kal's gifts but for some he asked Uspenskii to pay an amount he deemed sufficient.⁵⁰⁶

Upon the information provided by Kal', it appeared that Samsun was a promising location for archaeological research. In 1904, Uspenskii sent RAIK member

⁵⁰³ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 152, l. 1-1.5 (Viktor F. Kal' to Uspenskii, 26 November 1902).

⁵⁰⁴ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 152, l. 5-6 (Viktor F. Kal' to Uspenskii, 22 December 1902).

⁵⁰⁵ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 152, l. 11-12 (Viktor F. Kal' to Uspenskii, 15 February 1903).

⁵⁰⁶ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 152, l. 13-14.5 (Viktor F. Kal' to Uspenskii, 17 June 1903).

Leper to Samsun for preliminary research. On this trip, Leper did not encounter any obstacles from the Ottoman authorities. In addition to Samsun, Leper visited Sinop, Giresun, Inebolu, and Ordu on the Turkish Black Sea coast. He investigated the cultural links between Amisos near Samsun and Panticapaeum near Kerch, and the overall connection between the Turkish Black Sea coast and southern Russia, which were linked by the common Pontic heritage.⁵⁰⁷

In June 1904 Uspenskii asked Ambassador Zinoviev to help him secure a permit to make excavations in Samsun in the autumn of 1904, explaining that there were already illegal excavations in the region and proper excavations would save antiquities from being plundered.⁵⁰⁸ After Pateli, this was the second time RAIK asked to undertake excavations in the jurisdiction area of the Ottoman Imperial Museum. This time, the excavation request failed from the start and the Ottoman government did not allow the Russians to undertake excavations in Samsun. Nearly a year later, in May 1905, Zinoviev notified Uspenskii that the Ottoman government was in the process of promulgating a new antiquities law and would not allow excavations until its finalisation.⁵⁰⁹ In his letter to Zinoviev from May 1905, Uspenskii complained that the promulgation of the new law did not prevent the Ottoman government from granting excavation permits to the Berlin Museum in Didyma; even the German ambassador was present at the excavation site.⁵¹⁰ Uspenskii stressed that RAIK was different from such individual projects – RAIK had a permanent status and a permanently valid permit received from the Sultan in 1897. He stated that the privileges granted by the Sultan

⁵⁰⁷ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1904 godu," Vol. 13 (1908), pp. 312-314.

⁵⁰⁸ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 3, l. 9-10 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1905).

⁵⁰⁹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 3, l. 10.5-11 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1905).

⁵¹⁰ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 3, l. 11-16 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1905).

could not be abrogated by another institution, even in case of the promulgation of a new antiquities law. Only the Sultan himself, Uspenskii noted, could change the legal basis on which RAIK operated in the Ottoman Empire.

Uspenskii asked Zinoviev to bring the issue to the attention of the Porte again. After examining Uspenskii's objection, the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior stated that the right to make excavations on Ottoman territories belonged only to the Ottoman Imperial Museum, hence foreign scientific societies and foreign researchers could excavate only exceptionally and with a special permission from the Ottoman Imperial Museum. In case of a second appeal by the Russians, the Ministry of the Interior suggested to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs to notify the Russian Embassy about this situation in an appropriate manner.⁵¹¹ In the end, Uspenskii could not get permission for the planned excavation in Samsun.

The general discontent about Ottoman antiquities regulations prompted foreign scholars to solve the issue through diplomatic and political channels. In 1906 the director of the Royal Museum in Berlin, Theodor Wiegand (1864-1936) visited RAIK, where he discussed the issue of Ottoman surveillance with Uspenskii.⁵¹² Uspenskii adamantly argued that the question regarding the new Ottoman antiquities regulation of 1906 should be brought before the embassies, since the rights of foreigners in the Ottoman Empire were at stake. Wiegand, in response, assured Uspenskii that he would inform relevant German institutions and the German government would join every step taken by the Russian Embassy in the desired direction.

⁵¹¹ BOA, BEO., 2885/216333, 15 Cemâziyelahir 1324 (06 August 1906).

⁵¹² RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 34, l. 17-18 (Uspenskii to Ambassador Girs, 19 June 1913).

Nevertheless, to the dismay of Uspenskii and other foreign archaeologists, the new antiquities regulation had a clause restricting the possibility of an appeal through diplomatic action in cases of conflict with the existing law. Article no. 33 of the new regulation had a clear clause about that matter: “Conflicts with the existing law are within the responsibility of civil courts.”⁵¹³ Uspenskii particularly expressed his disappointment about this article.⁵¹⁴

Criticizing the response of the Ottoman government, Uspenskii referred to the 1897 *irade* of the Sultan, which provided a legal basis for the studies of Russian archaeologists.⁵¹⁵ He concluded that it was clearly expressed in the text of the *irade* that RAIK was recognised as a special foreign institution operating in the Ottoman Empire. Although the *irade* contained a provision about the necessity of compliance with Ottoman regulations, like asking for permission from the Ottoman Ministry of Education and notifying them about the exact time and location of research, the privileges bestowed upon RAIK were granted permanently. Nelidov viewed this *irade* as a special kindness on the part of the Sultan and thought that it would permit RAIK to engage in archaeological activities without obstacle. The recognition of RAIK as a scholarly institution receiving special privileges should not only liberate it from the proposed regulations concerning archaeological excavations, but should also create a special legal basis for its activities.

Uspenskii complained that the Ottoman government unilaterally changed the laws regarding antiquities, and with the promulgation of this new law RAIK’s interests

⁵¹³ Nurettin Can, *Eski Eserler ve Müzelerle İlgili Kanun Nizamname ve Emirler* (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1948), p. 77.

⁵¹⁴ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 34, l. 7 (Uspenskii to Ambassador Girs, 19 June 1913).

⁵¹⁵ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 34, l. 4-5 (Uspenskii to Ambassador Girs, 19 June 1913).

were disregarded. In fact, it was only natural for the Ottoman government to issue the mentioned law without consulting foreigners, because the antiquities question was undoubtedly a domestic matter. However, since the name of RAIK was not openly mentioned in the law, Uspenskii felt that RAIK was being ignored. He stated, “[N]ot having the opportunity to negotiate, [RAIK] was put face to face with the already approved and issued law.” The 1906 law included an article that practically abolished the privileges granted by the Sultan to RAIK: “provisions regarding antiquities that are contrary to this law will be repealed.”⁵¹⁶ In fact, as previous excavation in Pateli proved, RAIK’s privileges were largely non-functional and it is difficult to say that Russian archaeologists enjoyed any real advantages derived from the Sultan’s earlier decree.

Despite Uspenskii’s complaints about Ottoman double standards against Russians, not only Russians but all foreign archaeologists were compelled to obey Ottoman antiquities regulations. By mid-1905 even Germans, Abdülhamid II’s allies, were at an all-time low in their relations with Osman Hamdi Bey. The reluctance of some German archaeologists to comply with Ottoman regulations brought excavations at Babylon, Assur, and Pergamon to a halt, while the future of digs at Baalbek, Miletus, and Didyma was uncertain. The German archaeologist Robert Koldewey (1855-1925) expressed his dissatisfaction about the strict order from the German Embassy in Constantinople asking German archaeologists to obey Ottoman regulations. Koldewey complained, “[I]f I take the communications from Constantinople seriously, we would do well here, when his Excellence Hamdi Bey slaps us on the left cheek, not only to offer him the right cheek, but to thank him most politely.”⁵¹⁷ The letters of the Russian

⁵¹⁶ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 34, l. 7 (Uspenskii to Ambassador Girs, 19 June 1913).

⁵¹⁷ Marchand, p. 214.

consul in Baghdad to Uspenskii from 1911 recounted that the failure to comply with regulations brought German archaeologists into conflict with Ottoman authorities and that the Ottomans were very unlikely to give ancient objects to the Germans.⁵¹⁸

Particularly after 1906 the Ottoman government monitored foreign archaeologists more seriously. Suspicion of Russian archaeologists was especially evident, if the expeditions were made in strategic locations. For instance, when local authorities noticed that one of the members of RAIK and his interpreter were drawing maps around the Sakarya River, which ran from the east of Constantinople before reaching the Black Sea, it was seen as a highly dubious act and the Ministry of the Interior warned local authorities not to allow map-drawing in this region.⁵¹⁹

Uspenskii and his colleagues received permission to make scientific investigations from 1908 to 1914, mostly examining Byzantine monuments around Constantinople, but there is no document from this period complaining either about suspicious activities on the part of Russian archaeologists or about the failure to enforce Ottoman regulations.⁵²⁰ After 1906, there are significantly fewer documents about Russian archaeological activities in the Ottoman archives. Right after the new regulation was promulgated, the Russian Embassy requested an official permit for the continuation of archaeological investigations by RAIK.⁵²¹ Uspenskii received permission to make

⁵¹⁸ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 254, l. 8, 14 (Arkadii A. Orlov to Uspenskii, 14 February 1911 and 22 December 1911).

⁵¹⁹ BOA, DH. MKT., 2641/39, 03 Şevval 1326 (29 October 1908).

⁵²⁰ BOA, MF. MKT., 1158/47, 05 Şevval 1328 (10 October 1910); Dahiliye İdari, (DH.İD.), 28-2/9, 19 Şevval 1330 (01 October 1912).

⁵²¹ BOA, BEO., 2868/215062, 18 Cemâziyelevvel 1324 (10 July 1906).

some investigations, take photographs, and make drawings of ancient monuments in the Edirne province and around Constantinople.⁵²²

Unable to receive permission for excavations and seriously restricted in their scientific studies both by Ottoman regulations and financial constraints, Russian archaeologists turned their attention to areas they could more easily handle. Receiving permits for surveys was easier to obtain than excavations in Ottoman territories. Therefore, after 1906 RAIK devoted its energy to make surveys of Byzantine monuments, mostly in regions within close proximity to Constantinople. One of the most successful examples of such a survey was their study in the Kasımiye Mosque in Selânik.

In late 1907 and early 1908 the Turks started to restore the Kasımiye Mosque in Selânik. This monument was originally a Byzantine church from the 5th century, the Church of Hagios Demetrios, before being converted into a mosque by the Ottomans in the late 15th century. In January 1908, N. V. Kokhmanskii from the Russian Consulate-General in Selânik sent a letter to Uspenskii to inform him about the repairs.⁵²³ The Russian consulate-general engaged in dialogue with the governor of Selânik, Mehmed Şerif Rauf Pasha, to facilitate studies in the church-converted-mosque. Kokhmanskii said that the governor of Selânik was especially amiable and concerned with the “benefits of science,” which should be used as an advantage.⁵²⁴ The Governor Mehmed Şerif Rauf Pasha inquired if an album would be published about the mosaics after the scientific work was completed.

⁵²² BOA, Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Mabeyn Başkitabeti (Y. PRK. BŞK.), 76/28, 03 Cemâziyelevvel 1324 (25 June 1906); BEO., 2879/215895, 04 Cemâziyelahir 1324 (26 July 1906).

⁵²³ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 173, l. 1 (Nikolay V. Kokhmanskii to Uspenskii, 29 January 1908).

⁵²⁴ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 173, l. 2 (Nikolay V. Kokhmanskii to Uspenskii, 27 March 1908).

As a result of the restoration, the plaster covering the frescoes and mosaics was removed from the walls and magnificent works of art were revealed. Hearing this, Uspenskii went to Selânik in the winter of 1908, but when he arrived at the city the refurbishment of the mosque was nearly done. Most parts of the walls were again covered with plaster and workers started drawing Muslim signs on the walls. Because the apse was totally covered with Muslim signs and it was not possible to touch them after they were made, Uspenskii restricted his analysis to other parts of the church.⁵²⁵ The painter Kluge copied the mosaics and frescoes that were not yet covered. The mosaics of the church-mosque were mostly about the life and miracles of St. Demetrius, the patron saint of Thessaloniki, and were important for the history of Orthodox Christianity and Byzantine iconography.⁵²⁶

5.1 Studies in Constantinople

Of course, as the former capital of the Byzantine Empire and cradle of Orthodoxy, Constantinople was the focus of RAIK's scholarly attention from the start, and deserves to be analysed under a separate heading. In the course of the twenty years of its existence, RAIK made numerous studies around Constantinople and regularly published them in the *Izvestiia*. As soon as RAIK's office in Constantinople was established in 1895, the archaeologists undertook a preliminary expedition to familiarise themselves with the monuments of the city. The capital of the Byzantine emperors received the lion's share in terms of the numbers of articles and lectures RAIK produced. The archaeological interest in Constantinople echoed the political sensitivities of significant

⁵²⁵ IRAIK, Uspenskii, "O Vnov Otkrytykh Mozaikah v Tserkvi Sv. Dmitriya v Soluni," Vol. 14 (1909), p. 1.

⁵²⁶ Ibid., p. 2.

numbers of influential Russian intellectuals, who dreamed that one day Constantinople would be “liberated” from the Turkish rule, and might indeed be governed by Russia.⁵²⁷

The first remarkable study of RAIK in Constantinople was carried out in Kariye Mosque, or the Chora Church before its transformation into a mosque by the Ottomans. Built as part of a monastic complex in the 5th century, Chora Church was transformed into a mosque by the Ottomans in the early 16th century. The mosaics and frescoes in the interior were examples of the Palaeologian Renaissance of the 14th century. In March 1899 Uspenskii asked permission through Ambassador Zinoviev to make architectural plans, take photographs and make sketches of mosaics and frescoes inside Kariye.⁵²⁸ He pointed to the danger posed for the monument, whose art treasures were threatened by neglect. Uspenskii was already in communication with the President of the Imperial Academy of Arts, Count I. I. Tolstoy to commission a painter and photographer to help prepare the reproductions of mosaics. The Imperial Academy entrusted N. K. Kluge with this task.⁵²⁹ Shortly after Uspenskii’s request, the Ministry of Religious Foundations granted a permit for the study of the monument.⁵³⁰ The Minister notified the Russian ambassador that he would provide any necessary help in case need arose.⁵³¹ The work in Kariye was completed in 1904 and results of the study were published as an album. Tsar Nicholas II made a personal donation of 10,000 roubles for the publication

⁵²⁷ This was discussed earlier in Chapter II.

⁵²⁸ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 149, l. 1-2 (Uspenskii to Imperial Orthodox Palestinian Society, 1905).

⁵²⁹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 105.5 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 1914).

⁵³⁰ In the Ottoman Empire, functioning mosques, even if they had a historical and artistic value, were under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Religious Foundations. Therefore, the study permit for Chora or Kariye was not requested from the Ottoman Museum.

⁵³¹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 149, l. 4-5 (Uspenskii to Imperial Orthodox Palestinian Society, 1905).

of Kariye mosaics.⁵³² This donation was another instance showing the Tsar's sympathy for the RAIK enterprise.

RAIK started the systematic study of the topography of Constantinople in 1902. Even though the investigations of Russian archaeologists in this period were closely followed by Ottoman officials, the Russians were allowed to take photographs, draw sketches of monuments, and were provided with assistance when necessary.⁵³³ In 1903, after much difficulty, Uspenskii managed to receive a permit to do research in the library of the Topkapı Palace, which he continued with intermittently until 1914. In addition to a large collection of Islamic manuscripts, this library also contained books and manuscripts that the Ottomans inherited from the Byzantine emperors.⁵³⁴ Here Uspenskii discovered the famous Topkapı Octateuch Bible from the 12th century, also known as the Seraglio Octateuch.⁵³⁵ Important both for its artwork and for its content, the Topkapı Octateuch was an important literary monument from the Comnenos dynasty. The foreword of the Topkapı Octateuch was written by Isaak Comnenos, son of Alexios I Comnenos.⁵³⁶ In 1903, RAIK received an additional permit to take photographs of the miniatures in the manuscript. The Imperial Russian Archaeological Society gave Uspenskii an award for his work on the Topkapı Octateuch.⁵³⁷ Uspenskii recalled that he could not see all parts of the Topkapı library due to the suspicious attitudes of the Ottomans, who monitored him closely during his study at the Palace.⁵³⁸

⁵³² PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 110 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 1914).

⁵³³ BOA, DH. MKT., 564/73, 19 Cemâziyelevvel 1320 (24 August 1902).

⁵³⁴ PFA RAN f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 104-105 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 1914).

⁵³⁵ John Lowden, "Illustrated Octateuch Manuscripts: A Byzantine Phenomenon," in *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, ed. Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson, 2010, pp. 111-115.

⁵³⁶ IRAIK, Uspenskii, "Seral'skii Kodeks," Vol. 12 (1907), pp. 1, 19-21.

⁵³⁷ Popruchenko, p. 27.

⁵³⁸ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1909 godu," Vol. 15 (1911), p. 248.

RAIK undertook important studies at the İmrahor Mosque, or the Monastery of Stoudios in the years 1906-1909. Historically, the Monastery of Stoudios was the most important Byzantine monastery in Constantinople. The only remaining part of the original monastic complex in the 19th - 20th century was the remnants of a 5th century basilica, which was converted into a mosque by the Ottomans in the late 15th century. Until 1906 RAIK could not receive a permit to make studies in the interior of İmrahor, as it was closed after the 1894 earthquake. After two years of struggle, the Russians finally secured a permit in late 1906 from the Ministry of Religious Foundations to make a survey, at a time when there was a restoration going on at the building. However, this permit was short-lived and Russian archaeologists were not allowed to continue their studies in 1907.⁵³⁹ Uspenskii recalled that in 1907 the Ottoman government created obstacles to foreigners who wanted to visit mosques converted from churches, even Hagia Sophia.⁵⁴⁰

In 1909, thanks to repeated requests of the Russian ambassador to the Grand Vizier Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha and the Minister of Religious Foundations Halil Hamdi Hamada Pasha, RAIK finally received a permit to remove the plaster on the walls and to make excavation in the interior of the half ruined mosque.⁵⁴¹ Until then there had been a number of Europeans who made topographic and architectural studies in Constantinople, but receiving excavation permits in the Ottoman capital was nearly impossible. The only exception was the British archaeologist Charles Newton's excavation in the Hippodrome in 1855, when Britain and the Ottoman Empire were

⁵³⁹ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1907 godu," Vol. 14 (1909), p. 155.

⁵⁴⁰ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 148, l. 3-4 (RAIK Report to Ministry of Public Education, 1907).

⁵⁴¹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 105-106 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 1914).

allies during the Crimean War.⁵⁴² The Russian excavation in İmrahor was important in the sense that it was the first excavation linked to Constantinople's Christian past. The excavations continued from September to December 1909.⁵⁴³ Although it was inferior to Kariye in artistic terms, historically, the Monastery of Stoudios had a particular importance for Russian religious history. The monastic charter of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra was based on the example of the Monastery of Stoudios.⁵⁴⁴

At the end of July 1912 a great fire in Constantinople destroyed the Turkish quarters of the city from the east of Hagia Sophia and Hippodrome nearly up to the sea. The Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors, constructed in the 4th century during the reign of Constantine the Great, was believed to be in this area. After the fire, among the burnt stones of Turkish houses, the terraces, foundation and even the lower floors of the imperial palace were revealed. Before the reconstruction of the burnt quarters started, it would be very convenient to study the topography of the imperial palace. RAIK secured permission from the Ottoman government to make plans, drawings, and take photographs, and started topographical studies in spring 1913.⁵⁴⁵ Before 1914, Russian archaeologists were in preparation of a large-scale excavation in this part of the city, but the outbreak of World War I interfered in this first systematic study of Constantinople's Byzantine past.

5.2 Conclusion

The Balkans and Constantinople received by far the lion's share in RAIK's expeditions and excavations. The archaeological projects of RAIK reflected Russia's Slavic and

⁵⁴² Ousterhout, "The Rediscovery of Constantinople and the Beginning of Byzantine Archaeology: A Historiographical Survey," p. 191.

⁵⁴³ RAIK, "Otchet v 1909 godu," Vol. 15 (1911), p. 250.

⁵⁴⁴ RAIK, "Otchet v 1906 godu," Vol. 14 (1909), p. 132.

⁵⁴⁵ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 107-108 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 1914).

Orthodox identity. RAIK not only contributed to the study of Byzantine and Slavic history and archaeology, but also to the study of Orthodox theology, as was exemplified by the close collaboration between RAIK and the Holy Synod. Sometimes by its own staff and sometimes in collaboration with fellows from the Holy Synod, RAIK made extensive research in the churches, monasteries, and monastic libraries in Bulgaria, Ottoman Macedonia, Mount Athos, Mount Sinai, as well as in the archives of the Greek Patriarchate in Constantinople.⁵⁴⁶ These clergy-scholars delved into the history of the Orthodox Church, as well as examining theological, liturgical, and canonical questions. The confluence of religion and archaeology hints at the motivation behind Russian archaeological activities and imperial Russian policy in the Ottoman Empire.

In addition to scholars from theological academies, RAIK cooperated with world-wide famous historians such as Mikhail Rostovtsev, Pavel Miliukov, A. A. Vasiliev and Pavel Kokovtsev. Foreign scholars such as Joseph Strzygowski, Theodor Wiegand, Karel Škorpil, and Konstantin Jireček also made contributions to RAIK's studies. Notwithstanding the obvious political motivations of diplomats and bureaucrats for supporting archaeological studies in the Ottoman Empire, the existence of an academic network that divided across ideological, national, and imperial lines indicated a genuine scientific concern on the part of scholars.

As was the case for the Ottoman Empire, Russians learnt archaeological methodology from European scholars. Europe was both taken as an example and seen as a rival. In the expedition reports, in private correspondence, and in other documents, Russian archaeologists and diplomats explained the necessity of establishing an

⁵⁴⁶ Konstantin Papoulidis, “The Russian Archaeological Institute of Constantinople (1894-1914): From Its Establishment until Today,” in *Perceptions of the Past in the Turkish Republic: Classical and Byzantine Periods*, ed. Scott Redford and Nina Ergin (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), p. 188.

archaeological institute with reference to rivalry with European powers but they also expressed themselves in the context of values and objectives defined by Europe. Acquisition of ancient monuments in Ottoman territories, when European collectors were competing for the same antiquities, was seen as a victory, as was exemplified by the acquisition of the Palmyra Tariff and the Sarmisakli Codex. If archaeological glories reflected imperial prestige and if the Louvre, the British Museum, and later the Pergamon Museum competed with each other to visualise the grandeur of their respective empires, then the Imperial Hermitage had to be a part of this competition, too.

In the discourse of Russian archaeologists and diplomats, being a great power was identified with investment in the academic study of history. Certainly, linking historical studies to imperial status was not limited to Russian scholars, as European governments were also supporting historical studies with similar motivations and European scholars were also competing with each other in academic terms. Actually, Russian scholars' allegiance to an initially Western concept of academic excellence and value showed the internalisation of these values by Russian elites. In their legitimisation of RAIK's activities, Russian diplomats and scholars regarded historical consciousness and interest in antiquities as a sign of being enlightened. Therefore, falling behind Europe would be detrimental to the international prestige of the Russian Empire. The establishment of an archaeological institute in Constantinople was partly an attempt to prove Russia's imperial standing. Archaeological studies, the very act of bringing a monument to Russia, were regarded as a sign of imperial glory.

A very often and explicitly repeated reason for supporting RAIK's activities was extending influence over the Near East through science and cultural institutions. Both

Russian diplomats and scholars cited examples from European powers, most notably France, to point to the importance of cultural influence. “Soft power,” in modern parlance, was Russia’s weak side and Russian diplomats who came up with the RAIK project were aware of this shortfall. Nevertheless, they tried to infiltrate Ottoman territories and the Balkans through an archaic identity and used slogans from another century, like Orthodoxy and Slavdom. Although in the late 19th century some intellectuals in the imperial centres propagated pan-nationalist programmes, the intellectuals of the newly emerging nation-states prioritised local identities over pan-national identities. In the age of rising micro-nationalism in the Balkans, ancient monuments were not defined as “Slavic” or “Orthodox,” but as the remnants of particular nations. Strict Bulgarian surveillance of Russian archaeologists proved that the “Orthodox and Slavic” brethren of Russia were not any less likely to monitor foreign archaeological activities than the Ottomans.

The Ottoman government, on the other hand, was on the defensive in its relationship with Russian archaeologists, as the provider of antiquities. Russian archaeologists arrived in the Ottoman Empire relatively late, compared to the French, the British or Germans. As long as their activities remained scientific and they acted within the confines of Ottoman laws, members of RAIK received permission for archaeological expeditions. Nevertheless, even in this case, their activities were closely supervised by the authorities both in the provinces and in the centre, and Russian archaeologists were frequently reminded of the procedures they should follow. Actually, RAIK’s relationship with the Ottoman government was characterised by a combination of cooperation and conflict. On the one hand, Ottomans were suspicious of Russian

archaeological activities, and very strictly monitored Russian archaeologists. The openly stated political agenda of RAIK shows that this suspicion was not totally baseless. Also, the Russians were frequently seeking study permits in politically unstable regions that were at the forefront of international interest, such as Macedonia, which further increased Ottoman suspicions. On the other hand, Ottoman sensitivity about ownership rights over antiquities was part of a broader Ottoman policy, and was not exercised peculiarly vis-à-vis the Russians.

In addition to suspicions, however, there was also a certain degree of cooperation between the Ottoman government and RAIK. Although the director of the Ottoman Museum Osman Hamdi Bey was described as very distant by Russians, in the end, the Ottoman legal framework made RAIK's studies possible. RAIK even found the opportunity to make excavations in Constantinople, a very rare opportunity for foreign scholars. Despite their reservations, the Ottoman government provided necessary conditions for archaeological research. In this context, being supportive of science was a sign of being part of the "enlightened" and "civilised" world, and the Ottoman Empire could not risk being perceived as backward and unsupportive of scientific activities by foreigners. Ottoman sensitivity made sense in the context of the highly fluid international political atmosphere of the late 19th - early 20th century and of the dominant values of the era. In an attempt to survive as a viable political entity and reinforce its vulnerable sovereignty, the Ottoman Empire launched its project of modernity, and archaeology was a symbolic manifestation of this endeavour.

There was a radical transformation in both countries after World War I and the patterns of relationship fundamentally changed. The contrast between the periods before

and after World War I further proved the political nature of RAIK's activities. The radical political change and the new identity promoted by the Bolsheviks indicated why Byzantine studies lost their appeal for the Soviet regime.

Chapter 6

On the Eve of the Balkan Wars:

Archaeology in the Midst of Political Unrest

As repeatedly noted in this dissertation, the Balkans, along with Constantinople and the Black Sea littoral were the key regions that attracted RAIK's scholarly interest.

However, amidst the growing political tensions in the first decade of the 20th century, it became more and more difficult for RAIK to undertake expeditions in the Balkan region, especially in Macedonia. The story of RAIK's expeditions in the Balkans illustrated why the ideological background that characterised the establishment of RAIK, was not a viable political project. Since the Russian Empire based its foreign policy to a certain extent on religious and ethnic principles like Orthodoxy and Slavdom the rise of micro-nationalism caused Russian foreign policy many problems. When the Orthodox believers and Slavs fought with each other, Russia found itself in a delicate position. Therefore, the primary motivation behind RAIK, extending influence over the Balkan Peninsula through studying the history of Orthodoxy and Slavdom was problematic, because ancient monuments were no longer defined broadly as remnants of Orthodox or Slavic civilisation. Instead, they were seen as symbols of particular national histories. The causes of conflict in the Balkans were so complicated and multi-faceted that it would be a crude simplification to assume that the only obstacles on Russia's path were other European powers and the Ottoman Empire. In fact, shortly before the Balkan Wars, ethnic tensions in the Balkans reached a level beyond the control of any imperial entity, including Russia.

The political background of RAIK's expeditions in the Balkans testified to the complications Russia faced in the region at the turn of the century. One example was RAIK member Fyodor Ivanovich Shmit's (1877-1956) visit to Selânik in 1903 for a brief observation of Byzantine monuments of the city.⁵⁴⁷ 1903 was a very tense year for Russian-Ottoman relations, especially in Macedonia. After the failed Ilinden Uprising precipitated by the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (IMRO), Austria-Hungary and Russia compelled the Ottoman Empire to follow the Mürzsteg reform program to consolidate order in the region. Very unwillingly, the Sultan accepted the Austro-Russian terms; however this made things only worse: an article in the program called for the redrawing of districts according to ethnic lines once order was restored, which brought more nationalistic propaganda and violence as rival Balkan states and nationalist bands struggled to create "facts on the ground" in Macedonia.⁵⁴⁸

On an international scale, Russian rapprochement with Austria after the Mürzsteg talks secured the status quo on the Balkan front, as Russia turned its face towards Asia in the very first years of the 20th century. After the Russian defeat at the Russo-Japanese War of 1904, Russia redirected its attention back to the Balkans, which automatically brought Austria and Russia against each other. In fact, Mürzsteg happened to be the last instance of cooperation between Russia and Austria-Hungary in Balkan affairs.⁵⁴⁹ The events that followed the last decade before World War I antagonised

⁵⁴⁷ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 427, l. 5 (F. I. Shmit to Uspenskii, 29 July 1903).

⁵⁴⁸ L. S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans, 1815-1914* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1963), pp. 103-104; Yosmaoğlu, "Counting Bodies, Shaping Souls: The 1903 Census and National Identity in Ottoman Macedonia," pp. 69-72.

⁵⁴⁹ Mark Mazower, *The Balkans: A Short History* (New York: Modern Library, 2000), p. 100.

Russia's relations with Austria and Germany, while bringing the former closer first to France, and then to Britain.⁵⁵⁰

During Shmit's Selânik expedition, inter-ethnic violence in Macedonia resulted in the murder of a Russian diplomat. In a letter to Uspenskii, Shmit expressed his sadness about the recent murder of the Russian consul in Manastrî (Bitola), Aleksandr Arkadievich Rostkovskii, who had always been a supporter of RAIK's activities in Ottoman Macedonia.⁵⁵¹ On 8 August 1903, Rostkovskii was shot dead by an Ottoman soldier of Albanian origin.⁵⁵² The Russian government responded strongly: although Abdülhamid II and ministers of the Ottoman government sent condolences, Russia sent part of its Black Sea fleet to Ottoman territorial waters and demanded a reform program for Macedonia. Abdülhamid II accepted Russia's terms and a more serious diplomatic crisis was avoided. In fact, this was not the first time a Russian diplomat was murdered in Ottoman Macedonia. Earlier in 1903, the Russian consul in Mitrovitsa, G. Shcherbin was also murdered by an Albanian, who protested against the opening of a Russian consulate in the city.⁵⁵³

Shmit reported that as was the case of the previously murdered Russian consul, Shcherbin, the murderer of Rostkovskii was sentenced to paying 10.000 roubles to the family of the victim.⁵⁵⁴ Although the Sultan gave condolences to Zinoviev, Shmit criticised the decision of the Turkish government to take the murder to a civil court

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 97-98.

⁵⁵¹ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 427, l. 5 (F. I. Shmit to Uspenskii, 29 July 1903).

⁵⁵² Duncan M. Perry, "Death of a Russian Consul: Macedonia 1903," *Russian History*, Vol. 7, Issue 1 (1980), pp. 201-212.

⁵⁵³ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1908 godu," Vol. 14 (1909), p. 179.

⁵⁵⁴ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 427, l. 5 (F. I. Shmit to Uspenskii, 29 July 1903).

instead of a military court, and commented that the murderers had no reason to fear, when they knew they would be pardoned.

From 1904 to 1908, the breakdown of the Ottoman authority increased lawlessness in Macedonia. Not only Macedonian Christians but also Muslims were uneasy about great power intervention, and the murder of Russian consuls were only two instances reflecting the resentment of the Muslim population at the interference of European powers. The violent conflicts between Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian bands in Macedonia forced local populations to identify themselves with one of these national groups, thereby legitimising the nationalists' territorial claims for Macedonia's future "liberation." As Mark Mazower commented, "Ethnicity was as much the consequence as the cause of this unrest; revolutionary violence produced national affiliations as well as being produced by them."⁵⁵⁵

For a short time, it seemed that at least the Bulgarian and Serbian governments could come to an agreement. After the failed Ilinden Uprising, Serbian and Bulgarian nationalists realised that the support of European powers, including Russia, was inconsistent, unreliable and depended on power politics. The disillusionment with imperial powers brought Serbian and Bulgarian nationalists together against foreign intervention, although the Serbo-Bulgarian cooperation did not last long.⁵⁵⁶ The two Balkan governments signed two treaties – a treaty of friendship and a treaty of political alliance in 1904. Despite this brief rapprochement, the Macedonian Question continued to be a bone of contention between the two Balkan countries. In fact, the 1904

⁵⁵⁵ Mazower, *The Balkans*, p. 99.

⁵⁵⁶ Miliukov, *Political Memoirs, 1905-1917*, p. 181; Rossos, pp. 399-400.

agreement between Serbia and Bulgaria proved to be short-lived and fell short of sorting out differences between the two governments.

The Macedonian Crisis reached a climax in 1908, when a number of factors combined to create a crisis both in the international and in domestic levels. The 1908 crisis also paved the way for future alliances and antagonisms that eventually led to the Balkan Wars and World War I. The 1908 Young Turk Revolution originated in the crisis-ridden Macedonia. The Young Turks gave utmost importance to preserving the integrity of the Ottoman Empire through centralising the administration. They were uncomfortable both about European breach of Ottoman sovereignty and the expansion of young nation-states in their vicinity. The Young Turks were more heterogeneous in their political outlook than is generally argued and the overall orientation of their foreign policy fluctuated over time.⁵⁵⁷ Until the outbreak of World War I, different political figures from the Young Turk government sought alliances with Britain, France, Germany, and Austria. Although they generally maintained a suspicious attitude towards the Russians for their involvement in Balkan affairs, it would be incorrect to say that the Young Turks had a consistently anti-Russian policy line. The eventual alliance with the Germans, who had significant economic interests in the Ottoman Empire, was a contextual outcome, rather than the result of a systematic policy.

1908 was stage to other important developments of international scale, as immediately after the Young Turk Revolution, Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia, Greece annexed Crete, and Bulgaria declared independence. In the meantime, the balance of power in European diplomacy changed from the late 19th century to the first

⁵⁵⁷ William M. Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy Since 1774* (New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 24-26; Hasan Ünal, "Young Turk Assessments of International Politics, 1906-9," in *Turkey: Identity, Democracy, Politics*, ed. Sylvia Kedourie (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 40.

decade of the 20th century. After the Austrian annexation of Bosnia, Russia actively worked to create a Serbian-Bulgarian alliance to contain Austro-Hungarian influence in the Balkans, although in time it was revealed that Serbia, Bulgaria, and Russia had contradicting motivations for entering into this alliance.⁵⁵⁸ Not surprisingly, Austria-Hungary was also worried about the expansion of Russian influence in the Balkans and the spread of nationalist propaganda within its borders.

In this political atmosphere, Russia came closer to France and Britain, its former rivals over the Eastern Question. Although the traditional British anxiety about Russian control of the Straits did not calm down, the nature of Russian-British relations changed in the first decade of the 20th century. For one reason, Russia's agreement with the French meant that any conflict with Russia would automatically bring Britain into a conflict with France, which was a deterrent factor for the British.⁵⁵⁹ Moreover, Britain's strengthened position in Egypt and sophisticated naval methods made the Royal Navy less concerned about Russia's position in the Straits than it was in the past.⁵⁶⁰ At the same time, Russian diplomats were aware that protecting the balance of power was crucial until Russia was strong enough to capture the Straits. After a series of talks between Russian and British diplomats from 1904 to 1907, the two countries ironed out their differences and signed the Anglo-Russian Convention in August 1907, which brought Russia closer to fulfilling its desires over the Straits Question.⁵⁶¹ Eventually, by

⁵⁵⁸ Rossos, p. 403.

⁵⁵⁹ George F. Kennan, *The Fateful Alliance: France, Russia, and the Coming of the First World War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), pp. 249-258.

⁵⁶⁰ Ronald Bobroff, "Behind the Balkan Wars: Russian Policy toward Bulgaria and the Turkish Straits, 1912-1913," *Russian Review*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (January 2000), p. 81.

⁵⁶¹ Edward C. Thaden, *Russia and the Balkan Alliance of 1912* (University Park, PA.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965), p. 17.

1908 Austria-Hungary and Germany grouped on one side, while Russia, Britain, and France grouped on the other side.

Although the Austro-Russian reform programme of 1903 was intended to reduce violence in Macedonia, in fact the tension never decreased in the province between then and the outbreak of the Balkan Wars in 1912. To the already existing conflicts between Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, and the Ottoman government, Albanian discontent was added as a new element in the early 20th century, a development that would impact the future of Macedonia. Originally, Albanian elites were not interested in total independence from Ottoman rule, they rather sought moderate reform. Many educated Albanians, either Christian or Muslim, sided with the Young Turk Revolution because they saw a promise of liberty in the Young Turk regime.⁵⁶² However, the relations between Albanians and the Young Turks soon got sourer as the new regime pursued a policy of centralisation and Turkish nationalism.

The agitation among Muslim Albanians caused anxiety on the part of the Slav population of Macedonia, who feared an independent Albania might be detrimental to their interests. On the other hand, the Ottoman government was also uneasy about Albanian demands, because increasing political instability meant weakening of effective Ottoman rule.⁵⁶³ Albanian demands for autonomy coincided both with the overall Macedonian crisis and with a reaction against the Young Turk regime.⁵⁶⁴ The lands demanded by the Albanians were contested both by Greeks and Serbians, and the situation only resulted in the further escalation of violence.

⁵⁶² Owen Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, Vol. 1 of *Albania in the Twentieth Century Series* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004), pp. 1-3.

⁵⁶³ Nicola Guy, *The Birth of Albania: Ethnic Nationalism, the Great Powers of World War I, and the Emergence of Albanian Independence* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012), pp. 28-38.

⁵⁶⁴ Jelavich and Jelavich, pp. 219-220.

RAIK's expedition to Old Serbia in 1908 was carried out under the shadow of the Albanian crisis and the above-mentioned political background. The aim of the expedition was to investigate the Decani Monastery near the town İpek (Pecs), which was built in the 14th century by the Serbian King Stefan Uroš III. The Decani Monastery had a significant place in Serbian nationalist imagination, as it was the patriarchal seat of the medieval Serbian Kingdom. Uspenskii recalled that in the midst of anarchy, he managed to collect valuable ancient materials in Decani that were until then unknown in the scientific world. In the expedition report, in addition to making scientific analyses about ancient monasteries in Old Serbia, Uspenskii gave information about the socio-political conditions in the region and the relations between the Albanians, Bulgarians and Serbs. He made remarks about the level of welfare of the region's inhabitants and the inappropriate conditions in which he made the expedition.

The Inspector General of the Three Macedonian *Vilayets*, Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha, offered help to Uspenskii on his expedition to Decani, provided the Russian archaeologists with a military escort, and suggested the least dangerous routes.⁵⁶⁵ In the expedition report, Uspenskii explained that "limitless arbitrariness" ruled over Old Serbia and Macedonia: there was intense animosity between Muslims and Christians, Albanians and Slavs, and even among different Albanian tribes. The Serbian Patriarchate and monasteries were threatened by armed Albanian bands. In Decani, the monastery was protected by the Turkish garrison stationed inside the monastery but as soon as the Ottoman forces left, the monastery faced destruction.⁵⁶⁶ Ottoman authority was practically non-existent in the region. In their correspondence, the Russian consul in

⁵⁶⁵ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 247, l. 1 (Dragoman Nusret Efendi to Uspenskii, 16 February 1909).

⁵⁶⁶ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1908 godu," Vol. 14 (1909), pp. 172.

Skopje, Arkadii Aleksandrovich Orlov explained to Uspenskii that the major reason behind the conflict was economic but in the absence of an authority to resolve economic problems, the question evolved into an ethnic conflict.⁵⁶⁷

In the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, shortly before the closure of RAIK, Uspenskii made a plea for financial support from the Russian government to undertake a second expedition to Old Serbia.⁵⁶⁸ He pointed out that in the changing political climate after the war, the most historically important regions passed into Serbian possession, which therefore opened up new scientific opportunities for RAIK. Since the systematic study of Serbian antiquities exceeded the financial means of Serbian archaeologists, the burden, Uspenskii claimed, fell on Russia's shoulders. However, the outbreak of World War I in 1914 made this plan impossible.

6.1 The Establishment of the Slavic Department within RAIK

No other project reflected the ideological motivation of RAIK as clearly as the efforts at creating a Slavic Department within the institute in 1911. Despite being a failed project, the circumstances in which it failed indicates the complexities and limits of Russian foreign policy in the Balkans at the turn of the century. In fact, the failure to create a Slavic Department in RAIK shows the discrepancy between the political realities of the Balkans and the ambiguous Pan-Slav sympathies of Russian diplomats and scholars. Russia's religious and ethnic brethren – *edinovertsy i edinoplemenniki* – did not necessarily define themselves on the grounds of being Slav or Orthodox. The umbrella identity of which Russia saw itself as the protector, was already crumbling on the eve of

⁵⁶⁷ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 254, l. 1-2 (Arkadii A. Orlov to Uspenskii, 8 June 1908).

⁵⁶⁸ PFA RAN, f. 6, op. 1, d. 37, l. 2-3 (Uspenskii to President of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1914).

the Balkan Wars.

Russian foreign policy in the Macedonian crisis – creating Pan-Slavic solidarity with mixed messages about Slavdom and Orthodoxy – accorded with RAIK’s academic interests. In the practical world of politics, the Russian government viewed itself as the “big brother” of the Orthodox Slavs of the Balkan Peninsula. In this regard, the focus of RAIK’s studies suited the government’s direction: Russian archaeologists studied the history of Byzantium, but emphasised the influence of Slavs on Byzantine institutions, and collaborated with Serbian and Bulgarian, rather than Greek scholars. It was explained in Chapter II that Russian Byzantine studies was very much linked to Slavic studies and many Russian Byzantinists studied the relations between the Byzantine Empire and the Slavic world. Ideologically, academic interest in Slavic studies was shared by both liberal and conservative intellectuals, as was exemplified by the works of Miliukov on the one, and Lamanskii on the other end of the political spectrum.

From early on, RAIK served as a meeting place for young archaeologists from Balkan countries, meaning Bulgaria and Serbia. Russian archaeologists tried to establish close contacts with Serbian and Bulgarian archaeologists and museums. Article 13 of the RAIK Charter gave the opportunity to foreign scholars to become members and conduct research within RAIK facilities. In the course of RAIK’s existence the Serbian government sent three students: I. Radonich and S. Stanoevich were commissioned in 1898-1899 and M. Vukchevich in 1902. In 1899-1900 the Bulgarian government sent G. Balashev to Constantinople to continue his studies under the guidance of Uspenskii.⁵⁶⁹ These students completed their studies under the supervision of Uspenskii and returned to their countries as experts in their fields. All of them worked on the history of relations

⁵⁶⁹ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 40, l. 12-13 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 20 March 1915).

between South Slavs and the Byzantine Empire. Even after they left, the cooperation between RAIK and these scholars continued.

RAIK also financed and jointly directed archaeological field trips with Bulgarian colleagues. One example was the excavation at Aboba in Bulgaria in 1899-1900, which was conducted by Uspenskii and Karel Škorpil.⁵⁷⁰ As another sign of scientific collaboration, the bulletin of RAIK was published in Sofia from 1898 to 1912, the remaining issues being published in Odessa.

In early 1910 Uspenskii submitted a note to the Ministry of Public Education and to the Russian ambassador in Constantinople outlining the importance of Balkan history for Russia, as well as pointing to important archaeological discoveries made by RAIK in this region.⁵⁷¹ Uspenskii recalled the discovery of the Tsar Samuil inscription, the excavations in Aboba, extensive research in Macedonia and Old Serbia. Comparing them to RAIK's activities in Asia Minor, Syria, and Palestine, Uspenskii concluded that the strength of RAIK, especially considering its material capabilities and the competence of its staff, lay in the Balkans. However, article 3 of the Charter left the Balkans out of RAIK's geographical scope and did not provide a basis for scientific studies in this region. Considering the successful studies carried out in the Balkans, Uspenskii proposed the enlargement of RAIK's programme. He stated that there were also demands from Bulgarian and Serbian scholars in this direction. He cited a Serbian archaeological journal, *Starinar*, from 1907, which had an article by Dr. M. Vasich, the director of the National Museum in Belgrade, arguing that RAIK should enlarge its scope and incorporate pre-historical archaeology to reveal ethnographical and cultural

⁵⁷⁰ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1900 godu," Vol. 7, Issue 2-3 (1902), p. 232.

⁵⁷¹ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1911 godu," Vol. 16 (1912), p. 366.

questions. Dr. Vasich proposed to divide RAIK into specialised units with secretariats in Serbia, Bulgaria, and southern Russia with its centre being in Constantinople.

In November 1909 Vasich and Uspenskii discussed the possible enlargement of RAIK. Vasich reminded Uspenskii of Russia's cultural mission among the Slavs and the "threatening danger" posed by the West.⁵⁷² In order to combine the demands of Balkan scholars with RAIK's activities, Uspenskii proposed the following measures:⁵⁷³

- 1) A department would be established within RAIK for the study of the pre-historical archaeology of the Balkans.
- 2) A body with representatives from Serbia and Bulgaria would be responsible for the administration of the Slavic Department. A committee of six scholars would be selected; two from Bulgaria, two from Serbia, and two from Russia, and the committee would be chaired by the director of RAIK.
- 3) The committee would be responsible for planning and organising the activities of the Slavic Department, for securing financial resources, and establishing contacts with relevant institutions to carry out projects, especially with regard to pre-historical study.
- 4) In order to guarantee that the Slavic Department would not be a financial burden on the RAIK budget, the costs would be split between Bulgaria, Serbia, and Russia; that is, each government would allocate 5000 francs for the Slavic Department.
- 5) The publication organ of the Slavic Department would be RAIK's *Izvestiia*. Articles would be chosen by the above-mentioned committee and would be published

⁵⁷² Ibid., p. 367.

⁵⁷³ Ibid., pp. 368-369.

either in Slavic languages or in their Russian translation. Excerpts from specialised research articles from local journals might also appear in *Izvestiia*.

6) Bulgarian, Serbian, and Russian scholars should undertake collaborative research in Turkish Thrace and Macedonia. In order to eliminate any pretext for suspicion on the part of the Ottoman administration – Uspenskii noted that the Ottomans had many reasons to have suspicions about their closest neighbours, Russia – it would be helpful to integrate the Ottoman Ministry of Education into the Slavic Department. Uspenskii thought that the presence of a Turkish member in the committee might facilitate excursion and research permits for politically unstable regions of the Ottoman Empire. The Turkish member would not make a financial contribution to the budget of the Slavic Department.

7) In order to guarantee that the Slavic Department would not go against the RAIK Charter, it would be sufficient to enlarge the first article, which explained the founding principles of RAIK, and to provide it with the features of an international scholarly institution. The Slavic Department would be subordinate to RAIK in its activities.

Ambassador N. V. Charykov, totally sharing the opinions outlined in the above note, recognised the timeliness and desirability of the project proposed by Uspenskii. Upon the ambassador's approval, the note was sent to the Bulgarian, Serbian, and Russian Ministries of Education, with a request of annual 5000 francs allowance from the Bulgarian and Serbian Ministries and 3000 roubles for two years from the Russian Ministry.⁵⁷⁴ To develop the project and put it into practice, Uspenskii visited Belgrade and Sofia in the summer of 1910, and exchanged opinions with local scholars on the

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 369.

subject. On 11 March 1910, Nicholas II approved the allocation of 3000 roubles from the treasury from the 1910 budget to cover the expenses of collaborative archaeological research by Russian and South Slavic scholars in the Balkan Peninsula. The Serbian Ministry of Education and Church Affairs and the Royal Serbian Academy of Sciences also approved the project. The Serbian government allocated 5000 dinars from the 1911 budget for this end.

It is no coincidence that the efforts to create a Slavic Department within RAIK occurred at a time when Russia was working hard to create a Serbo-Bulgarian military and diplomatic alliance, i.e., the later Balkan League. In other words, Russia's "soft power" symbolised by RAIK reflected the political agenda set by the Russian "hard power." Russia's role in forging alliances between Bulgarians and Serbs was an expression of Pan-Slavic sympathies of certain segments of the Russian Foreign Service. In addition, with the 1905 Revolution in Russia, the Balkan Question became a public concern the Russian government could not neglect.⁵⁷⁵ No doubt that the Russian government used Balkan Christians as foreign policy instruments various times throughout the 19th century, but on the other side of the coin, independent Balkan states also used Russian military power to their advantage. The Balkan alliance of 1911 was articulated by the Balkan nations more than by Russian diplomats.

In February 1911, Uspenskii invited the representatives of Serbia, Bulgaria, and Russia to a meeting to discuss the details of the Slavic Department. The Serbian government sent academician A. Stefanovich and the director of the Belgrade National Museum, Dr. M. Vasich. The Bulgarian government sent G. Katsarov, a professor at Sofia University, the director of National Museum in Sofia, B. Filov, and a former

⁵⁷⁵ Thaden, p. 28.

researcher at RAIK and a teacher at Varna Gymnasium, K. Škorpil. From Russia, the director of the Kiev Museum of Art and Antiquities, V. V. Hvoyko participated in the meeting, in addition to Uspenskii and RAIK secretary F. Shmit. The meeting protocol for the discussion of a pre-historical archaeology department was signed on 21 February 1911 by the Russian and Serbian delegates.⁵⁷⁶ In this meeting, the status of the Slavic Department within RAIK was discussed and a work plan for 1911 was laid down. The Bulgarian delegates did not agree with the resolutions and left the meeting because of a difference of opinion with the Serbian delegates. In other words, the Slavic Department came to life as incomplete from the start. Unfortunately, RAIK's report from 1911 and the reports sent to the Ministry of Public Education did not reveal the nature of the quarrel between Bulgarian and Serbian delegates, but it is interesting that the two governments could not cooperate in a seemingly less political matter when they could enter into a military alliance, although the military alliance was also not free of friction. Actually, the territoriality of archaeological scholarship added a political element to it, and it is this territorial aspect that can explain the sensitivity of Bulgarian and Serbian government representatives, especially on the eve of a war that changed the boundaries of the states in question.

As a result of the meeting, the Russian and Serbian delegates agreed upon conducting pre-historical research together, especially in the Vardar and Maritsa Valleys. Necessary permits from the Ottoman government would be requested through the director of RAIK. Planned expeditions for 1911 were determined as follows: an expedition would be carried out in Strandzha, Sakar-Planina and Eastern Rhodopes under the guidance of K. Škorpil; and in Eastern Serbia under the guidance of Dr.

⁵⁷⁶ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 132-132.5 (Charter of the Slavic Department, 2 March 1911).

Vasich.⁵⁷⁷ Despite the possible obstacles the Bulgarian government could create, the Russian and Serbian members of the Slavic Department decided to proceed with the studies planned in the protocol.

On 2 March 1911, the charter of the Slavic Department was authorised by the Serbian and Russian delegates.⁵⁷⁸ The charter laid out the following points:

- 1) A department dedicated primarily to the study of the pre-history of the Balkan Peninsula would be established with the intention to create a common academic platform for Slavic scholars, its chairman being the director of RAIK.
- 2) The Slavic Department would be composed of the director and secretaries of RAIK and representatives from Slav countries.
- 3) Scholars from Balkan nations with an interest in archaeology would first be appointed as members of RAIK before becoming members of the Slavic Department.
- 4) The director of RAIK would choose two representatives for each country from the members mentioned above.
- 5) One member from each country would serve as secretary. The secretary would be appointed by the relevant government upon preliminary agreement with the director of RAIK.
- 6) The responsibilities of the secretary would be the organisation of scientific capabilities in his country and channelling them in a fashion that would enable the Slavic Department to achieve its goals.
- 7) Upon the invitation of the director of RAIK, the Slavic Department would meet once every year with the intention of:

⁵⁷⁷ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 139 (Charter of the Slavic Department, 2 March 1911).

⁵⁷⁸ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 130-131 (Charter of the Slavic Department, 2 March 1911).

- a) Discussing work already undertaken the previous year,
 - b) Preparing plans for the next year,
 - c) Appointing staff for these projects.
- 8) The Slavic Department could recommend new members to RAIK.
- 9) The Slavic Department would have financial resources at its disposal allocated by the Russian government and the governments of other representatives, the latter contributing evenly to the budget.
- 10) The Slavic Department would submit annual budget reports to each government, signed by the chairman and secretaries in charge.
- 11) The results of the studies and annual reports would be published as an addendum to *Izvestiia*.
- 12) The Slavic Department would publish its studies primarily in Russian but publications in Bulgarian and Serbian were also allowed.
- 13) As for excavations, the Slavic Department was bound by the legal regulations of the country where the studies were be conducted.
- 14) In case of need, the Slavic Department could make additions to these provisions.
- 15) This charter would come into force after its approval by the relevant governments.

The Serbian government immediately approved these provisions and appointed Dr. Vasich, the director of the National Museum in Belgrade, to the Slavic Department upon the recommendation of Uspenskii. The work plan for 1911 presented by Vasich was approved by Uspenskii. In the summer of 1910, from 21 July to 17 September,

Vasich undertook excavation in Vinci in Serbia, on the coast of Danube.⁵⁷⁹ The excavations in this region continued until World War I.

Because of the interruption of the Balkan Wars and World War I, the Slavic Department could not succeed in leading extensive fieldwork. Yet, the establishment of such a department suggests the ideological orientation of RAIK. The reluctance of the Bulgarian delegates to undertake archaeological studies in collaboration with the Serbs hinted at the difficulty of the Russian desire to create a Pan-Slav solidarity.

Eventually, Russian effort at creating a Balkan alliance not only failed in the sphere of archaeology. In fact, Russia's role in fostering the Balkan League ended up being paradoxical in itself. The Russian government encouraged the Balkan alliance as a bulwark against Austria-Hungary in the Balkans, not as a step towards anti-Ottoman mobilisation, because the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire would bring complications Russia did not want to cope with at that point. However, Russian support gave Balkan nations, especially Bulgaria, sufficient self-confidence to drive the Ottomans out of the European continent.⁵⁸⁰ At the end of the Balkan Wars, the Ottoman presence in the Balkans nearly came to an end. Arguments over the division of the spoils as a result of the First Balkan War triggered Greece and Serbia to turn against Bulgaria, which initiated the Second Balkan War. Romania and the Ottoman Empire also took advantage of the conflict between Serbs, Greeks and Bulgarians, and seized lands acquired by Bulgaria in the first war. As a result of the Second Balkan War Bulgaria had to cede most of the territories it gained in the first war.

⁵⁷⁹ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1911 godu," Vol. 16 (1912), p. 371.

⁵⁸⁰ Mazower, *The Balkans*, p. 105.

Expansionist Bulgarian dreams also contradicted Russian military, economic, and political interests in the Balkans. Although Russia was instrumental in the Bulgarian independence and had been a supporter of the Serbo-Bulgarian alliance of 1912, the economic, military, and political confrontation over the issue of the Straits brought Bulgaria and Russia against each other. In 1912, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei D. Sazonov warned the Bulgarian government that Russia would not tolerate any Bulgarian pretensions over Constantinople.⁵⁸¹ Bulgarian government on its part turned against Russia because they believed that the Russian government backed Serbia in the Second Balkan War. This was yet another instance where Pan-Slavic and Pan-Orthodox ideas came into conflict with pragmatic foreign policy principles. Until the ultimate capture of Constantinople by the Russian armies, Russian Foreign Service preferred to see the imperial city at the hands of the Turks and were not likely to make concessions even to Bulgarians, their Slavic and Orthodox brethren, in this regard. If Byzantium had to be re-enacted, it would be Russia who should take the lead, not Bulgaria or any other Balkan nation.

6.2 Conclusion

The archaeological study of Byzantine monuments in the Balkans offered a perfect example of the intersection of ancient history with contemporary Russian imperial identity and political interests. Between 1895 and 1914, and especially right before the Balkan Wars, the areas that attracted RAIK's scholarly interests were ridden with a violent inter-ethnic conflict. In addition to Russian archaeologists, scholars from Balkan nations also tried to legitimise the territorial claims of their nations with archaeological

⁵⁸¹ Bobroff, pp. 80-83.

evidence. Therefore, archaeological research was more divisive than unifying amongst the Orthodox nations of the Balkans. The establishment of the Slavic Department coincided with the last time the Russian Empire sponsored an alliance between Bulgarians and Serbians, but eventually both the Slavic Department and the Balkan Alliance failed, although for different reasons. Despite its failure, the Slavic Department was the ultimate showcase of RAIK's *raison d'être*: fostering ties between Russia and the Balkan Slavs, exactly what ambassador Nelimov and other advocates of RAIK's establishment had in mind in the early 1890s.

Although in a general sense Russian foreign policy was driven by issues of security and national interest, Russian policy-makers often had illusions about Orthodox and Slavic solidarity. In fact, the basis of Russian imperial identity, Orthodoxy and Slavdom, were out of touch with the political realities of the day. By the time RAIK was established in 1894, neither Orthodoxy nor Slavdom were viable political appeals in the Balkans, as the inter-communal conflict in Macedonia exemplified. The failed project to create a Slavic Department and the Bulgarian reluctance to join it was a reflected the limits of Russian foreign policy.

Chapter 7

The Doom of Empires:

The Fate of the Russian Archaeological Institute After 1914

With the outbreak of World War I, the Russian diplomatic corps in Constantinople left the city on 16 October 1914. On the same day RAIK staff joined diplomats and closed down their office, leaving the library, antiquities collection, and museum behind, as well as the personal property of the director, Fyodor Uspenskii. In a report sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Public Education, Uspenskii blamed ambassador Mikhail Nikolaevich Girs for the situation.⁵⁸² Recalling the institute charter which placed RAIK under the protection of the Russian Embassy, Uspenskii claimed that before the outbreak of hostilities he was in constant communication with Ambassador Girs. Although the general atmosphere in the Russian Embassy “left no doubt that [we] were on the eve of great events,” Girs recommended Uspenskii not to give reason to the Turks to suspect that the Russians were preparing to evacuate the city. As a result, the ambassador did not recommend taking precautions for the preservation of RAIK’s property. Until October 1914 RAIK functioned as usual, continuing its lectures and studies. After the hostilities started, Uspenskii and his wife left Constantinople with the Russian diplomats in a hurry, leaving their personal belongings behind, taking only the most important things. Uspenskii noted that none of the Russian

⁵⁸² PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 146-149 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 22 February 1916).

institutions had taken any precautions regarding the protection of their property in Constantinople.

At first the war gave Uspenskii hope that Russia might indeed capture the capital of the Byzantine emperors. In a memorandum from December 1914 entitled “On the Arrangements Connected to the Expected Occupation of Constantinople by Russia,” Uspenskii wrote that the possible occupation of Constantinople would bestow responsibilities upon Russia.⁵⁸³ He repeated the argument that Russian military power should be accompanied by moral and cultural influence over Orthodox people. Uspenskii deemed Orthodoxy as a very efficient tool to strengthen Russia’s cultural influence, therefore he pointed to the appeal of a Russian patriarch for Orthodox Slavs once Constantinople was captured. Uspenskii stated that in terms of the wealth of its antiquities and its historical importance, Constantinople, the “last Rome,” was one of the most important historical cities in the world. Even though ancient Byzantine monuments were not directly related to Russian national history, Uspenskii claimed that religious and historical ties between Russia and the Byzantine Empire gave a historic mission to Russia. In anticipation of a Russian victory at the end of the war, Uspenskii called for the establishment of a commission to oversee the systematic investigation and preservation of Byzantine monuments in Constantinople to fulfil this mission. He particularly suggested the conversion of the Hagia Sophia back into a church after the expected Russian victory. Uspenskii hoped that the first service in the historic cathedral after the conquest of Constantinople would be held in Russian.

In fact, a committee was established during the war to survey, record, and preserve archaeological monuments in Constantinople and its environs, although it

⁵⁸³ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 40, l. 1-4 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 9 December 1914).

never functioned.⁵⁸⁴ The mission of the committee was described as studying the monuments in Constantinople from a scholarly perspective, taking necessary precautions for their preservation, and collecting ancient materials and manuscripts. After the monuments and archaeological artefacts were categorised, the committee would undertake excavations. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was supposed to provide financial support. The chairman of the committee was the President of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich. Other members included Count S. D. Sheremetev, Count Aleksey Aleksandrovich Bobrinskii, Prince A. A. Shirinskii-Shihmatov, Countess P. S. Uvarova, F. I. Uspenskii, N. I. Pokrovskii and two unnamed representatives from the Holy Synod and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Russian preparations for ruling Constantinople after the war were actually grounded on a reasonable expectation. The secret Straits Agreement of March 1915 between Britain, France, and Russia granted Constantinople and the Straits to Russia as a war prize.⁵⁸⁵ Had it not been for the Russian Revolutions of 1917, it was possible that Constantinople and the Straits would have been given to Russia at the end of the war.⁵⁸⁶ Therefore, Russian plans for reshaping the urban landscape of Constantinople through archaeological preservation after the expected victory accorded with the political context.

However, Uspenskii's hopes were dashed soon when it became obvious that Russia was going through a revolutionary period, let alone not capturing Constantinople. After the Revolution, Uspenskii decided to devote his attention to the repatriation of the

⁵⁸⁴ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 40, l. 9 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 9 December 1914).

⁵⁸⁵ Riha, *A Russian European*, p. 249.

⁵⁸⁶ Thaden, p. 136.

RAIK property that remained in Constantinople. Shortly after leaving Constantinople, he wrote a letter to the Ministry of Public Education about the need to reclaim RAIK property, to which the Ministry responded positively.⁵⁸⁷

By the time RAIK ceased to operate in 1914, it possessed a rich museum and library collection, especially noteworthy for the wealth of manuscripts it held. Both the library and the antiquities collection were acquired mostly through donations, but also through the funds allocated to RAIK by the Russian government. In total, the materials in the library had a value of 134,000 roubles by Uspenskii's estimate, with 22,622 books under 8,909 titles, including books, journals, maps, and brochures. The museum collection was partly moved to the Russian Embassy and partly brought to Russia during evacuation. The museum collection included pieces of Byzantine, Greco-Roman, and Slavic art, a large numismatics collection, documents and manuscripts in Greek and Slavic languages, church paraphernalia, and other ancient objects. In total, the value of RAIK property was estimated to be nearly 200,000 roubles.⁵⁸⁸ In addition to RAIK property, Uspenskii estimated that the value of his personal property that remained in Constantinople was about 20,000 roubles.⁵⁸⁹ The status of RAIK property was determined by war conditions and changing governments in both countries, and was solved only by agreement between Republican Turkey and the Soviet Union in 1929.

Already in 1901, part of the collection was moved to the Russian Embassy, both for preservation and because there was not enough space at the RAIK building.⁵⁹⁰ After the Russians evacuated Constantinople on 16 October 1914, the Italian Embassy took

⁵⁸⁷ RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 38, l. 2-4 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 11 December 1914).

⁵⁸⁸ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 40, l. 3-8 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 20 March 1915).

⁵⁸⁹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 163-164 (Uspenskii to Department of Science in the People's Commissariat for Education, 13 August 1918).

⁵⁹⁰ IRAIK, "Otchet v 1901 godu," Vol. 8, Issue 3 (1903), p. 338.

over the property of the Russian Embassy. Uspenskii entered into direct communication with the Italian ambassador, who agreed to take necessary measures for the protection of RAIK's property left at the Embassy building.⁵⁹¹ During the war, one of the members of RAIK, B. A. Panchenko delivered certain objects of Christian art, coins, seals and mostly golden materials from the RAIK building to the Russian Consulate-General in Constantinople in early 1915.⁵⁹² In addition, part of the RAIK archives and materials were brought to Odessa after the evacuation.⁵⁹³

According to the information received by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the Italian Embassy in Constantinople in December 1914, the Turkish government sequestered RAIK's library that remained at the institute building, and sent the contents to the Imperial Ottoman Museum.⁵⁹⁴ Furthermore, two plots of land purchased for the construction of a Russian Commercial High School were taken over by the Turks and the RAIK building was transformed into a military hospital. In later years, RAIK's remaining property in the Ottoman Museum would constitute a diplomatic problem in the relations between the Turkish and Soviet governments.

The Sèvres Peace Treaty, signed in 1920 between the Ottoman Empire and the Allies, stipulated that the Turkish authorities were responsible for the protection of

⁵⁹¹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 146-149 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 22 February 1916).

⁵⁹² RGIA, f. 757, op. 1, d. 38, l. 6 (Uspenskii to Ministry of Public Education, 11 December 1914).

⁵⁹³ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 170-171 (Uspenskii to Commissariat of National Education, 20 May 1918). There were some rumours that the archives were plundered in Odessa, but in 1926, the archive of RAIK was reclaimed by Byzantine Commission from the Odessa Central Scientific Library.

PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 268 (Uspenskii to the Russian Academy of the History of Material Culture); PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 218, 235 (Odessa Central Scientific Library to Uspenskii, 23 September 1926 and 6 October 1926).

⁵⁹⁴ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 163-164 (Uspenskii to Department of Science in the People's Commissariat for Education, 13 August 1918).

RAIK's property and must return it to the Allied powers, when requested.⁵⁹⁵ Halil Ethem Bey (1861-1938), who became the director of the Ottoman Museum after Osman Hamdi Bey died in 1910, claimed that with the outbreak of World War I, the Russians brought the most valuable manuscripts, coin collections and other ancient objects to Russia. In a book that was published in 1937, Halil Ethem claimed that the library of RAIK, which remained in Constantinople, was on the point of being distributed, when the Ottoman Museum intervened and took care of the books and the few remaining artefacts with an intention to preserve them.⁵⁹⁶

The final expedition of RAIK was made to Trabzon on the south-eastern coast of the Black Sea in 1916-1917, when the region was under Russian occupation. In fact, RAIK's Trabzon expedition was only one of the many archaeological and ethnographical studies conducted in the Russian-occupied regions in Eastern Turkey. There were a number of scholarly expeditions mainly in Van, Erzurum, Trabzon, and neighbouring towns. Among them, Nikolai Marr's expedition to Van and his studies on Armenian antiquities stood out.⁵⁹⁷ There was also a unit responsible for archaeological preservation within the Russian military administration of Trabzon.⁵⁹⁸ Russia's war-time scientific activities fall outside the scope of this project but suffice it to say that the Russian occupation of the Ottoman Empire was much more than a military invasion: Russian armies were accompanied by ethnographers, geographers, archaeologists and architects who devised projects to reconstruct the landscape of the occupied regions. In

⁵⁹⁵ The National Archives, Public Records Office, FO 608/277/8, pp. 305-306, 1920.

⁵⁹⁶ Halil Etem, *İstanbul'da İki İrfan Evi: Alman ve Fransız Arkeoloji Enstitüleri ve Bunların Nesriyatı* (İstanbul: İstanbul Müzeleri Neşriyatı, 1937), pp. 7-8.

⁵⁹⁷ Nikolai Yakovlevich Marr and Josif Abgarovich Orbeli, *Arkheologicheskaya Ekspeditsiya 1916 goda v Van: Doklady* (S. Peterburg: 1922).

⁵⁹⁸ PFA RAN, f. 169, op. 1, d. 1, l. 2-45 (I. Y. Stelletskii to Military General Governorate of Occupied Territories, 6 May 1917).

this context, Russian archaeologists projected themselves as the saviours of antiquities. As Austin Jersild pointed out, Russian archaeologists constructed a contrast between the sacred antiquity of the Orient and its contemporary deplorable condition. The “original,” “authentic,” “glorious” Orient had to be made known by the scholars so that the Russian Empire could legitimise its role as the restorer of this once-glorious past.⁵⁹⁹

The decree issued by Nikolai Yudenich, the Commander-in-Chief of the Caucasian Armies in March 1916 testified to the saviour mission the Russian Empire embraced. Yudenich stated, “[W]hile our forces enter deep into Turkey, a rich variety of monuments from the earliest times of human culture are coming into our hands, the necessity of whose preservation has been brought to my attention several times by leading people.”⁶⁰⁰ The commander regretfully acknowledged that he received information about Russian citizens, some of them from the ranks of the army, who thoughtlessly caused the destruction of the monuments and even secretly engaged in antiquities trade. Yudenich declared that this was totally unacceptable and stated that ancient monuments, without exception, were under state protection. Churches, monasteries, mosques, both secular and religious buildings, archives, libraries, museums, ancient manuscripts, books in any languages, inscriptions were all counted in this list. Yudenich commanded that destruction, plundering, sale, purchase, unauthorised collection of ancient books, manuscripts, and other ancient objects were strictly forbidden in the areas occupied by the Russian army. People who held old manuscripts

⁵⁹⁹ Jersild, p. 6. Russians were not alone in conducting wartime archaeological activities. For instance, in the parts of Macedonia claimed by Greece, French archaeologists carried out excavations. Not to be left behind in the competition with the French, the British army also commanded their men to report archaeological findings to headquarters. Despite the disappointment of Greeks, these artefacts were transported to the British Museum and the Louvre after the war. Mark Mazower, *Salonica: City of Ghosts, Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430-1950* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), pp. 296-297.

⁶⁰⁰ PFA RAN, f. 169, op. 1, d. 4, l. 1 (Decree by Commander in Chief of the Caucasian Armies, 17 March 1916).

and books, inscriptions and religious-historical materials were ordered to hand them to military superiors in their districts. These objects would be exhibited in the Caucasian Museum in Tbilisi. Excavations were allowed only for people with appropriate certificates from district headquarters. Archaeological research and excavations were strictly forbidden for people who failed to produce necessary documents, even if they had legitimate scientific grounds.

Trabzon had a particular historical significance for Byzantinists. The Empire of Trebizond, its centre being modern-day Trabzon, was one of the three successor states to the Byzantine throne along with the Nicaean Empire and the Despotate of Epirus after the fall of Constantinople to the Latins following the Fourth Crusade in 1202-1204.⁶⁰¹ The Trebizond Empire was founded by Alexios I Comnenos (r. 1204-1214) with the help of the Georgian Kingdom in the early 13th century. Culturally, the Trebizond Empire brought together various elements – Georgian, Armenian, Greek, Caucasian, and Seljukid. It was the longest surviving Byzantine successor-state; Trabzon was captured by the Turks only in 1461, 8 years after Constantinople.

RAIK undertook two expeditions to Trabzon during the war, in the summer of 1916 and in the summer of 1917 respectively.⁶⁰² The major aim of the Trabzon expedition was, making a detailed architectural and archaeological study of Christian monuments, taking necessary precautions for their preservation, as well as the protection of Muslim monuments from plundering and destruction. Valuable objects in mosques would be brought from the war zone to safer locations, and Greek antiquities would be

⁶⁰¹ William Miller, *Trebizond: The Last Greek Empire* (London: S.P.C.K., 1926), pp. 14-19; Antony Eastmond, *Art and Identity in 13th Century Byzantium: Hagia Sophia and the Empire of Trebizond* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 1-3.

⁶⁰² Papoulidis, “The Russian Archaeological Institute of Constantinople (1894-1914): From Its Establishment until Today,” p. 190.

placed under the protection of the Trabzon Metropolitan.⁶⁰³ The report particularly laid emphasis on the preservation of mosques built by the Turks, thereby supporting Russia's self-ascribed role as the saviour of antiquities from different cultures.⁶⁰⁴

F. I. Shmit and N. K. Kluge accompanied Uspenskii on the Trabzon expedition. Russian archaeologists especially devoted their attention to the monasteries around Trabzon, and focused not only on their archaeological study but also their preservation. Upon Uspenskii's petition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs made generous donations for the benefit of monasteries in the city of Trabzon in 1917.⁶⁰⁵ In line with Uspenskii's demand, the Ministry sent 6,000 roubles; 2,000 roubles was donated to each of the metropolitan seats of Trabzon and Rodopolis (today known as Maçka), and 2,000 roubles was divided between the monasteries of Sumela, Peristera, and Vazelon.⁶⁰⁶ Upon the withdrawal of Russian forces from the region in 1917, Uspenskii made copies of manuscripts he found in these monasteries. He published these findings in 1927 with V. N. Beneshevich under the title *Vazelonskie Akty*.⁶⁰⁷ Uspenskii's *Ocherki iz Istorii Trapezuntskoy Imperii* (Essays from the History of Trabzon Empire) was also based on his research in Trabzon during the war. In addition to Trabzon, Uspenskii made studies in the Batum oblast' as well.⁶⁰⁸ With the defeat of the Turks in parts of Eastern Turkey, there were plans to organise a new expedition to the south of Trabzon in autumn 1917

⁶⁰³ Uspenskii, "Soobsheniya i otchet akademika F. I. Uspenskogo o Komandirovke v Trapezunt," *Izvestiia Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk*, Serial 6, Vol. 10, No. 11-18 (June-December 1916), pp. 1464-1465.

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1468.

⁶⁰⁵ PFA RAN, f. 169, op. 1, d. 4, l. 21 (Decree by Commander in Chief of the Caucasian Armies, 17 March 1916).

⁶⁰⁶ PFA RAN, f. 169, op. 1, d. 4, l. 24-25 (Decree by Commander in Chief of the Caucasian Armies, 17 March 1916).

⁶⁰⁷ Avgustin, pp. 274-275.

⁶⁰⁸ PFA RAN, f. 169, op. 1, d. 4, l. 20 (Decree by Commander in Chief of the Caucasian Armies, 17 March 1916).

but this plan was not realised given war-time conditions and domestic turmoil in Russia.⁶⁰⁹

In Trabzon city centre, the most important archaeological studies were made in the churches of Hagia Sophia, Panagia Chrysocephalos Church (Ortahisar Mosque) and St. Eugene Church (Yeni Cuma Mosque). All three monuments were Byzantine churches which were converted into mosques after the Ottoman conquest. In early 1916 the Commission for the Preservation and Registration of Ancient Monuments, affiliated with the Russian military administration, issued a resolution about these monuments. The resolution ordered that these mosques, all of which were converted from churches, would not hold Muslim services any longer. The fate of the monuments would be decided after a comprehensive archaeological study and removal of plasters on their walls.⁶¹⁰ A decree by the Russian military administration, issued in 30 June 1916, extended the scope of archaeological research about converted Byzantine churches in the Trabzon area. According to this decree, all churches that were converted into mosques by the Ottomans would be first examined by archaeologists and, later, Muslim service would be prohibited in these churches. The report counted seven such churches in Trabzon. In addition, the decree concluded that all mosques constructed by the Turks should continue Muslim services as usual.⁶¹¹

An interesting conjunction of archaeology, religious practices, and daily life was staged with the discovery of the burial ground of the Emperor of Trebizond, Alexios Comnenos III (r. 1349-1390). After the discovery, the Russian military administration of

⁶⁰⁹ Uspenskii, “Soobsheniya i otchet akademika F. I. Uspenskogo o Komandirovke v Trapezunt,” p. 1466.

⁶¹⁰ Uspenskii, “Soobsheniya i otchet akademika F. I. Uspenskogo o Komandirovke v Trapezunt,” p. 1466.

⁶¹¹ Ibid., p. 1480.

Trabzon organised a church service in the Emperor's honour.⁶¹² In this example, the Russian administration in Trabzon not only acted as the saviour of antiquities but also linked ancient history to daily religious practice. This tribute, paid to a medieval Byzantine emperor, projected Russia as the representative of Byzantine emperors in the modern world.

During the war-time expeditions to Trabzon and environs, Uspenskii collected over 400 manuscripts from churches, mosques, and private residences. Among them, there were several Quran copies and Turkish-Arabic manuscripts. In a report, Uspenskii acknowledged that he found these books in houses and mosques abandoned by residents during the Russian occupation.⁶¹³ Particularly valuable Islamic manuscripts were found in the Panagia Chrysocephalos Church, or the Ortahisar Mosque. Uspenskii, in consultation with the Transcaucasian Committee Interim Administration, decided to send these valuable manuscripts to Batum.⁶¹⁴ While some manuscripts were kept in Batum, others were sent to Petrograd before the end of the war. One reason Uspenskii collected the Islamic manuscripts was because he wanted to use these objects as leverage against the Turks. He hoped that "in future negotiations with the Turks [the books] could be used in exchange for the transfer of the Institute's books and manuscripts."⁶¹⁵

Not only Turkish-Islamic manuscripts but also Greek antiquities were brought to Russia during the occupation. Konstantin Papoulidis brought to light a local Greek view

⁶¹² PFA RAN, f. 169, op. 1, d. 4, l. 23 (Decree by Commander in Chief of the Caucasian Armies, 17 March 1916).

⁶¹³ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 164-165 (Uspenskii to Department of Science in the People's Commissariat for Education, 13 August 1918).

⁶¹⁴ PFA RAN, f. 169, op. 1, d. 4, l. 22 (Decree by Commander in Chief of the Caucasian Armies, 17 March 1916).

⁶¹⁵ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 164-165 (Uspenskii to Department of Science in the People's Commissariat for Education, 13 August 1918).

about Russian archaeological activities in Trabzon. In June 1917 a Greek journalist from Trabzon, N. A. Leontidis, accused Russian scholars of smuggling four trunks of objects with religious and artistic value to Russia.⁶¹⁶ The discontent of local Greeks about the smuggling of antiquities by Russian archaeologists echoed some previous examples, such as the Bulgarian nationalists who blamed Russians for smuggling Bulgarian antiquities after the 1877-1878 Russo-Ottoman War. In an age of nationalism, Russian appropriation of either Orthodox or Slavic symbols was met with local resistance from other groups that shared the same cultural heritage.

World War I was followed by dramatic regime changes in both the Russian and the Ottoman Empires. After the Bolshevik Revolution Byzantine studies lost the ideological justification and popularity it enjoyed under the Tsarist regime. At the same time, the nature of relations between Russia and Turkey was very different from the pre-war years. In May 1920, the communist regime officially abolished RAIK and established a bureau within the Academy of Material Culture that was responsible for overseeing RAIK's affairs and negotiating with the young Republican regime in Turkey for the repatriation of RAIK's property. Although at first the Academy of Material Culture appointed someone else as the chairman of the bureau, in 1924 Uspenskii was appointed as the chairman, upon his repeated requests.⁶¹⁷ Uspenskii's appointment to the bureau, although it took a few years, suggested that his political views were not regarded as seriously threatening by the Soviet regime.

⁶¹⁶ Papoulidis, "The Russian Archaeological Institute of Constantinople (1894-1914): From Its Establishment until Today," p. 190.

⁶¹⁷ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 180-181, 210 (Uspenskii to the Bureau for RAIK's Affairs, 1 September 1920).

In the first years after the Revolution, Fyodor Uspenskii did not give up his hope that RAIK would resume its activities after the war. He even submitted a petition to the Soviet government in 1918 for the enlargement of RAIK. This petition was the exact copy of a proposal that had been submitted to the Ministry of Public Education before the outbreak of the war. Despite the radical ideological change in the country, Uspenskii used the same arguments as he had used vis-à-vis the Imperial government. He argued that a country which “claim[s] to have an important role in history should not refrain from taking part in a noble competition in the scientific sphere.”⁶¹⁸ He requested financial support and an increase in the number of staff, and proposed to create subdivisions for Balkan, Asia Minor, Western European, pre-historical, Roman-Byzantine, Slavic and Oriental studies within RAIK. Not surprisingly in 1918, this proposal did not receive a positive response.

In the tumultuous years of the Civil War discussion about an archaeological institute was too much of a luxury and questions about RAIK were shelved for a few years. Nevertheless, Uspenskii never gave up his hope that RAIK might be re-established once the political situation consolidated. In 1918 the Imperial Archaeological Commission was transformed into the Academy for the History of Material Culture, which was dedicated to the study of art, archaeology and ethnography of ancient cultures. Within this Academy the section of Early Christian and Byzantine Archaeology continued research and publication about Byzantine history, art, and archaeology, albeit at a slower pace compared to the Imperial period.⁶¹⁹ In August 1924 the Board of the Russian Academy of the History of Material Culture convened to

⁶¹⁸ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 165-166 (Uspenskii to Department of Science in the People’s Commissariat for Education, 13 August 1918).

⁶¹⁹ Alexander A. Vasiliev, “Byzantine Studies in Russia, Past and Present,” pp. 543-545.

discuss Uspenskii's request to reopen RAIK.⁶²⁰ The meeting was chaired by Nikolai Marr, and attended by Vasilii V. Bartold, S. A. Yasebelev and the former RAIK secretary, B. V. Farmakovskii among others. Discussions continued for more than a year. In a report to the USSR Academy of Sciences on 21 December 1925, Uspenskii, as the chair of the newly established Russian-Byzantine Commission, outlined the principles that would shape the regenerated institute.⁶²¹

1) The report argued that a research-based institution was necessary for a scientific and in-depth study of the Near East and especially the neighbouring Turkey, especially in order to cultivate strong cultural relations with the Turkish government. Uspenskii's report especially emphasised the political nature of the proposed institute, stating that the institute would serve a "scientifically and politically important task" with its studies.⁶²² The proposed institution would have two branches, one being humanities-oriented and the other with a focus on natural sciences, their centres being in İstanbul and Ankara respectively. The humanities branch would be the successor of RAIK and would specialise in the literature, history, linguistics, ethnography and archaeology of Turkey. The institution would carry out expeditions, excavations and research with the permission of Turkish authorities. Both departments were planned to be under the same administrative structure.

2) Considering that RAIK had a library and antiquities collection, which were seized by the Turkish government in November 1914 and kept in the Ottoman Museum

⁶²⁰ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 209 (Meeting Resolution of the Board of the Russian Academy for the History of Material Culture, 11 August 1924).

⁶²¹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 140-141 (Uspenskii to the Presidium of the Academy of USSR, 21 December 1925).

⁶²² PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 213-214 (Permanent Secretary of Academy of Sciences to Glavnauk, 15 December 1926).

until the time of the report, the return of this property would be requested from the Turkish government. Together with the property of RAIK, Uspenskii's personal property should also be demanded. On his part, Uspenskii reminded that he seized Islamic manuscripts during the occupation of Trabzon in 1914-1917 from the Ortahisar Mosque, which were kept in Batum and Leningrad. Uspenskii proposed their return to Turkish authorities in exchange for RAIK's property.

3) If the negotiations between the USSR and Turkey resulted positively, the legal basis for the proposed Scientific Research Institute would be laid down.

Apparently, the reestablishment of RAIK, or rather the establishment of a new scientific institute with a new scientific policy looked like a close possibility, as information to this effect appeared even in Soviet newspapers. An unidentified newspaper from 17 July 1927 announced that the USSR Academy of Sciences would establish a scholarly institute in İstanbul.⁶²³ The newspaper article stated that upon the proposal of the Ankara government, the Academy was also planning to create an institute in Ankara to study natural resources around the new capital city of Turkey, for which the Soviet Academy of Sciences would provide the necessary scientific support. In August 1927 the draft principles of the Research Institute were elaborated once again by Uspenskii. The former RAIK director stressed that the establishment of a research-based institution required a detailed discussion of technical requirements but also careful choice of words "so as not to cause foreigners to reach wrong conclusions."⁶²⁴

However, Uspenskii's ardent attempts at the recreation of RAIK or a substitute institution in the end failed. In April 1928 the Department of Scientific Institutions

⁶²³ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 250-250.5 (Unidentified newspaper, 17 July 1927).

⁶²⁴ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 253-255 (Uspenskii to USSR Academy of Sciences, 15 August 1927).

within the Council of Peoples Commissars (Sovnarkom) notified the Permanent Secretary of the USSR Academy of Sciences that the Department had decided to postpone the establishment of the planned Research Institute in Turkey until the resolution of the property question. Nevertheless, the basic principles of the institute were laid down, in case a future opportunity arose for its creation.⁶²⁵

- 1) The institute would be a Turkish-Soviet institution; its staff would be made up equally of Turkish and Soviet scholars.
- 2) The focus of the institute would be the study of Turkey from a variety of academic perspectives.
- 3) The institute would only function within the borders of Turkey.

In response to Sovnarkom's above-mentioned proposal, the Byzantine Commission, including Uspenskii and V. Bartold, wrote a report to the Academy of Sciences.⁶²⁶ Contrary to Sovnarkom's opinion, the Commission raised doubts about the first article of the memorandum. Uspenskii and Bartold claimed that even though there were some Turkish scholars who produced valuable studies, like the member of the USSR Academy of Sciences Köprülüzade Mehmed Fuad, overall, they believed that the level of science in Turkey was far from meeting European standards. Therefore, the Byzantine Commission advised the establishment of an institute staffed by Soviet scholars, rather than a collaborative Turco-Soviet enterprise.

In the meantime, the question over RAIK property was still being discussed between the two governments. A secret resolution from the Main Scientific Directorate

⁶²⁵ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l.256-256.5 (Administrative Department of the People's Commissars to the USSR Academy of Sciences, 6 April 1928).

⁶²⁶ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 259 (Uspenskii, Beneshevich, Zhebelev, Bartold to USSR Academy of Sciences, May 1928).

(Glavnauk) to the USSR Academy of Sciences, written in 14 July 1927, stated that agreement had been reached with the Ankara government about bartering RAIK property for Islamic manuscripts from Trabzon.⁶²⁷ Apparently, it was the Ankara government that pursued Islamic manuscripts because Glavnauk did not know of the Trabzon manuscripts, let alone their whereabouts, and was asking the opinion of the USSR Academy of Sciences on the subject. The Academy of Sciences informed Glavnauk that the manuscripts were partly in the Batumi Gymnasium and partly in the Asiatic Section of the Academy of Sciences Library in Leningrad. After consulting Uspenskii, the Academy of Sciences agreed to give them back to the Turkish government.⁶²⁸

Finally on 17 August 1928 the USSR Academy of Sciences formally announced that agreement had been reached with the Turkish government over the years-long property dispute.⁶²⁹ However, there was no mention of Islamic manuscripts in the memorandum sent to Uspenskii. In 1929 the Soviet government officially demanded RAIK's property from the Turkish government through the Soviet Embassy in Turkey. That year Turkey returned the remaining property and library of RAIK to the Soviet Union. In addition to the materials at the İstanbul Archaeological Museum, – the previous Ottoman Imperial Museum – antiquities were found in the attic of the old Russian Embassy building.⁶³⁰ Although the first exchange of letters between the two governments implied that the RAIK's property would be exchanged with Islamic manuscripts Uspenskii brought from Trabzon, the final agreement did not have a clause

⁶²⁷ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 248 (USSR Academy of Sciences to Uspenskii, 19 July 1927).

⁶²⁸ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 251 (USSR Academy of Sciences to Uspenskii, 27 July 1927).

⁶²⁹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 266 (USSR Academy of Sciences to Uspenskii, 4 September 1928).

⁶³⁰ S. A. Ershov, IU. A. Piatnitskii, K. N. Iuzbashian, "Russkii Arkheologicheskii Institut v Konstantinopole," *Palestinskii Sbornik*, 29 (92) (1987), p. 7.

about this barter. On his part, the director of the Istanbul Archaeological Museum Halil Ethem Bey displayed a stubborn attitude, and insisted that the library of RAIK could be returned only on the condition that the historical treasures taken by Uspenskii from Turkey were returned, too.⁶³¹ However, in the end, on 16 July 1929, the library of RAIK, consisting of 26,703 books and manuscripts, was handed by the Turkish authorities to their Soviet colleagues with an inventory of the objects submitted.⁶³²

The objects and books delivered by the Turkish authorities were shared between the Hermitage, the USSR Academy of Sciences, and the Academy of Material Culture, after their preliminary analysis by the Academy of Sciences. While manuscripts and books were sent to the Academy of Sciences Library in Leningrad, the museum collection was sent to the Hermitage in 1930.⁶³³ Following the Revolution, in the early 1920s, smaller museums, palace museums, and private collections were dismembered and museums were centralised. In this process the Hermitage was given the lion's share.⁶³⁴

However, most of the materials that were previously delivered to Russian diplomatic posts for preservation were either damaged or lost. Briefly after 1917 the building of the former Russian Embassy in Constantinople served as an émigré diplomatic mission. According to the 1921 Moscow Agreement between the USSR and Turkey both parties agreed not to tolerate each other's political opponents. In line with this, the Turkish authorities displayed an uncooperative attitude towards anti-Bolshevik

⁶³¹ *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, Vol. XI (Moskva: Izd-vo Polit. Lit-ry, 1966), pp. 617-618.

⁶³² Etem, p. 8.

⁶³³ E. V. Stepanova, "Iubileinoe Zaselenie, Posviashchennoe Deiatel'nosti Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole (23 Ianvaria 1985 g.), *Vizantiiskii Vremennik*, Vol. 46 (1985), p. 276.

⁶³⁴ Geraldine Norman, *The Hermitage: The Biography of a Great Museum* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1997), pp. 168-169.

representatives.⁶³⁵ After 1921 émigré groups had to move from the Embassy building, which was taken over by the Americans.⁶³⁶ Most of the materials that remained from RAIK were lost in the process.

The Bolshevik Revolution brought destruction to Russian Byzantinology. The publication of scholarly journals and books significantly decreased and many proposed multi-volume books produced only their first volumes. Uspenskii's *Istoriia Vizantiiskoi Imperii* (History of the Byzantine Empire) shared the same fate.⁶³⁷ Bolsheviks viewed the field of Byzantine studies as an ideological vestige of the old regime, a field promoted by the Tsarist regime for political reasons.⁶³⁸

Uspenskii's letters to the USSR Academy of Sciences indicated that he was in a difficult position under the new regime. For instance, he was not allowed to travel to Constantinople to settle the property question with the Turkish government, even though he was the most competent person to deal with this issue.⁶³⁹ In a letter from August 1928, Uspenskii complained to the Permanent Secretary of the Academy of Sciences that in addition to the government's reluctance to send him to Constantinople, he was not allowed to participate in the international congress of Byzantinists in Belgrade in 1927. Uspenskii was concerned that European scholars would assume he was out of favour with the Soviet government.⁶⁴⁰

After the Revolution, RAIK members scattered to different places, and only Uspenskii and Farmakovskii continued their academic career as archaeologists in the

⁶³⁵ Avgustin, p. 288.

⁶³⁶ PFA RAN, f. 116, op. 2, d. 164, l. 11-12 (N. K. Kluge to Uspenskii, 12 April 1923).

⁶³⁷ Medvedev, p. 192.

⁶³⁸ Ibid., pp. 194-203.

⁶³⁹ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 260 (USSR Academy of Sciences to Uspenskii, 22 June 1928).

⁶⁴⁰ PFA RAN, f. 127, op. 1, d. 1, l. 265 (Uspenskii to USSR Academy of Sciences, August 1928).

Soviet Union.⁶⁴¹ The painter N. K. Kluge left for Constantinople in 1920, and lived there until the end of his life. B. A. Panchenko died from typhus in 1920 somewhere in Ukraine, even the exact place of his death was unknown. R. H. Leper died in Petrograd in 1918. F. I. Shmit, Uspenskii's former colleague and member of RAIK, converted to Marxism and identified “institutionalised” Byzantinism of the Tsarist period as the extension of an aggressive foreign policy vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁴² Nevertheless, Shmit fell into conflict with the Soviet regime after the 1930s. He was arrested in 1933 and was executed in 1937.

Many prominent archaeologists and Byzantinists who collaborated with RAIK preferred to leave Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution. Among them, M. I. Rostovtsev left for Oxford in 1920, and finally ended up in Yale. From abroad, Rostovtsev wrote articles against the new Bolshevik regime. N. P. Kondakov left first for Bulgaria and then for Prague, where he continued to give lectures on Byzantine art.⁶⁴³ A. A. Vasiliev, one of the most prolific names among émigré Byzantinist scholars, left Russia in 1925 for the University of Wisconsin, and finally accepted a position at the Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Institute of Harvard University. Therefore, Russian Byzantinism was seriously damaged within the USSR but the academic tradition born in the Russian Empire continued to thrive elsewhere in Europe and the USA, although at a slower pace.

Uspenskii's death in 1928 was followed by the interruption of Byzantine studies in the USSR. A relative revival began in 1940s. *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* reappeared in 1947 after years of suspension, a department was re-established within the Academy of Sciences dedicated to Byzantine studies, and a number of scholarly works on Byzantine

⁶⁴¹ Basargina, *Russkii Arkheologicheskii Institut v Konstantinopole*, pp. 97, 100, 108, 118.

⁶⁴² Medvedev, pp. 201-202.

⁶⁴³ Vernadsky, pp. 450-455, 225-228.

history were published.⁶⁴⁴ Like their predecessors, the Soviet Byzantinists focused on social-economic history of the Byzantine Empire and Byzantine-Russian relations, but of course within the confines of a Marxist framework.

On the Turkish side, foreign archaeological activities, conducted mainly by the French, British, German and American archaeologists, resumed in the first years of the Republic. In Republican Turkey, archaeological policies were determined by the legal framework laid out by Osman Hamdi Bey in the 19th century. As in the Ottoman period, the main policy was to maintain scholarly cooperation with Western institutions, while strictly regulating and overseeing their activities. Antiquities smuggling was seen as a breach of sovereignty more than ever. In the Republican period Turkish scholars demanded to be seen on an equal footing with their Western counterparts, and this demand was much more pronounced than it had been in the Ottoman Empire. As part of Republican reforms, academic archaeology was institutionalised in Turkey especially after the 1930s. The Turkish Historical Society was established in 1930, a Turkish Archaeology Institute was established at Istanbul University in 1934, and the first Department of Archaeology was opened at Ankara University in 1936.⁶⁴⁵ Different from archaeologists in the Ottoman period, archaeologists of the Republican Turkey made studies on Anatolian civilisations, especially on the Hittites, in an attempt to promote Anatolia as the historical Turkish *patria*.

In his memoirs, the Italian Ambassador in Ankara, Giulio Cesare Montagna (1874-1953), referred to French attempts at creating an institute of Byzantine Studies in İstanbul in the first years of the Republic. The project was not realised, according to

⁶⁴⁴ Obolensky, pp. 70-71.

⁶⁴⁵ Tuğba Tanyeri-Erdemir, "Archaeology as a Source of National Pride in the Early Years of the Turkish Republic," *Journal of Field Archaeology*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (Winter, 2006), pp. 382-383.

Montagna, because “in the face of Turkish hostility towards everything concerning research and study which recalls the charm of Byzantium, the French government had to change tack.”⁶⁴⁶ Consequently, the French government decided to transform the project into a Turkish Oriental Institute. Montagna suggested the establishment of an Italian Research Institute in Turkey considering the political role of foreign scientific institutes and the rivalry between European powers in the scientific field.⁶⁴⁷

Referring to discussions between the Turkish and Russian authorities about the fate of the RAIK library, the Italian ambassador argued that Soviet academic activities in Turkey were linked to their desire to create a sphere of influence over the young Republican regime. Montagna argued, “It is known that in Moscow studies of the Orient, particularly its economics and politics, have for some time experienced a lively revival – as another weapon serving the renewed and transformed but still present Russian activity in these regions.”⁶⁴⁸ Especially from 1929 until 1935 Soviet-Turkish relations were characterised by strong political, economic and cultural cooperation. The first Turkish Five-Year Plan was realised thanks to financial support from the Soviet Union, and the two countries shared a common antagonism to the Western political order.⁶⁴⁹ Close economic relations had repercussions in other spheres, most notably in culture. Although eventually Soviet plans to establish a research institute in Turkey failed due to economic reasons, the proposal to create an institute should be seen in the context of Turco-Soviet rapprochement.

⁶⁴⁶ Matthew Elliot, “European Archaeological And Historical Institutes in Turkey: An Italian Ambassador’s View in 1925,” in *Archaeology, Anthropology, and Heritage in the Balkans and Anatolia: The Life and Times of F. W. Hasluck, 1878-1920*, ed. David Shankland, Vol. 1 (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2004), p. 284.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 281.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 286.

⁶⁴⁹ Samuel J. Hirst, “Anti-Westernism on the European Periphery: The Meaning of Soviet-Turkish Convergence in the 1930s,” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 72, No. 1 (Spring 2013), pp. 37-38.

The final discussion about RAIK in Soviet academia took place in April 1945, when the Department of History and Philosophy within the USSR Academy of Sciences organised a meeting dedicated to the memory of Uspenskii, for the 100th anniversary of his birthday.⁶⁵⁰ As a result of the meeting, the Department reached a decision about the reestablishment of RAIK but like other previous reestablishment efforts, this project also ended without a result.

7.1 Conclusion

The outbreak of World War I and the Revolution in its aftermath was an unexpected blow to RAIK. In fact, briefly with the occupation of Trabzon, RAIK found the opportunity to apply its academic studies to the practical realm. The symbolic funeral service for Emperor Alexios Comnenos III illustrated the image the Russian imperial administration evoked with the help of archaeological studies. Moreover, reconversion of Byzantine churches, which had been converted by the Ottomans into mosques was a step towards reshaping the landscape of the city. In this sense, the occupation of Trabzon was a showcase of what RAIK stood for: linking ancient past to present, and the Byzantine Empire to Russia.

The transformation in the nature of relations between Russia and Turkey in the aftermath of World War I and the internal transformation of both countries created a contrast with the imperial period. The fall of Byzantine studies from favour in the Soviet era makes it clearer that RAIK was a political project, and reflected Russian imperial identity. There were discussions about the reestablishment of RAIK in the Soviet period

⁶⁵⁰ “Sessiya Otdeleniya Istorii i Filosofii Akademii Nauk SSSR, Posvyashchennaya Pamyati F. I. Uspenskogo,” *Vizantiiskii Vremennik*, Vol. 1 (26) (1947), pp. 370-371.

but the institute the USSR Academy of Sciences had in mind was quite different than RAIK. It was planned as a two-branched institute with a focus on natural sciences, in addition to humanities. Even within the humanities branch, Byzantine studies were regarded as a minor subfield. With the disintegration of the Russian Empire, the conditions that brought RAIK to life disappeared, as therefore did its reason for existence.

Conclusion

Broadly, this research was motivated by a curiosity about the relationship between academic scholarship and politics in the late 19th century and the early 20th century, right before World War I. Among other academic fields, archaeology was especially useful in linking past to present, and legitimising contemporary political projects with historical references. On the one hand, European empires projected themselves as the spiritual inheritors of classical civilisations and competed with each other for this role. Imperial rivalries were echoed in the museum halls and excavation fields. On the other hand, local nationalists contested this imperial vision by claiming ancient heritage for themselves. Each actor used archaeology to found their competing visions on a supposedly “objective” and scientific basis.

The political use of ancient objects and monuments proves that cultural heritage does not have a fixed meaning, rather, “... heritage should be understood as a process, related to human action and agency, and as an instrument of cultural power in whatever period of time one chooses to examine.”⁶⁵¹ The meaning of cultural heritage is dynamic; constructed and reconstructed by individuals, groups, or states. New and sometimes contradictory meanings may be attributed to the same monument by different groups across time and space. The way cultural heritage is interpreted reflects the social, cultural, and political context in which it is created. In the words of Cornelius Holtorf, “Cultural memory is hence not about giving testimony *of* past events, accurately or truthful, but about making meaningful statements *about* the past in a given present.

⁶⁵¹ Harvey, p. 475.

Ancient monuments represent the past in the landscape and cultural memory gives them meaning and cultural significance.”⁶⁵²

In terms of their appreciation of ancient monuments, especially Byzantine monuments, the Russian and Ottoman empires embraced competing identities. On the one hand, Russian archaeologists emphasised Russia’s cultural and historical links with the Byzantine Empire, and deemed themselves responsible for unearthing Byzantine history. Through their archaeological studies, Russian scholars created an imaginary link between the Byzantine Empire and Russia. They viewed Russia as the protector of Orthodoxy and thus the rightful heir to the Byzantine legacy. On the other hand, Ottoman archaeologists did not make such historical claims, neither did they embrace ancient Byzantine or Greco-Roman monuments as part of their national identity. Apart from a handful of intellectuals in the last years of the Empire, most Ottoman intellectuals did not integrate Byzantine history into the overall narrative of Ottoman history. Different from European empires, the Ottoman Empire failed to present a clear ideological basis to legitimise its claim over antiquities. The Islamic identity of the Ottomans as interpreted at the time made it hard to mobilise a Hellenistic-Roman past as part of its own and claim a European identity.

Ottoman interest in antiquities and cultural property rights was more linked to contemporary concerns than historical sensitivities. The Ottoman Empire was on the defensive in its relations with foreign archaeologists not because Ottomans were protecting monuments they saw as linking them to their ancestors, but because they were sensitive about protecting territories on which these monuments were found.

⁶⁵² Cornelius J. Holtorf, “The Life-Histories of Megaliths in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Germany),” *World Archaeology*, Vol. 30, No. 1, The Past in the Past: The Reuse of Ancient Monuments (June 1998), p. 24.

Ottoman intellectuals adopted archaeological methods from Europe only in their external form, as a practice of collecting valuable ancient objects, but could not create a coherent discourse for integrating ancient monuments into their national identity. While Greek, Italian, Iranian, and Egyptian archaeologists – legitimately or not – established historical links with their modern nations and ancient heritage on their “historic” lands, Ottomans did not even attempt to do so, except for a few intellectuals. Only a handful of Ottoman intellectuals claimed an Ottoman identity on the basis of the Roman-Byzantine heritage. Clearly, the Byzantine Empire was destroyed by the Ottomans themselves, therefore the Ottoman Empire had a complicated relationship with the history of territories under its jurisdiction. Under these conditions, Ottoman claims over Byzantine and Greco-Roman antiquities remained only territorial – Ottomans claimed ownership rights over Byzantine antiquities only because these objects were found within the borders of the Ottoman Empire. There was definitely a political dimension behind Ottoman archaeological activities, but it was not a nationalist one. In a sense, what characterised Ottoman archaeology was a disconnect with ancient past.

Ottoman archaeology developed primarily as a reaction to foreign scholarly activities. Ottoman attitudes to foreign archaeologists was shaped by a mixture of mistrust and toleration within legal limits. Actually, Ottomans laid claims over antiquities only because Europeans also did so. For Osman Hamdi Bey and the first generation of Ottoman archaeologists, archaeology was a means of proving that the Ottoman Empire was on the same cultural level with European powers. If making archaeological discoveries was a sign of being enlightened, then the Ottoman Empire should also be a part of this cultural activity. Archaeological activities and the exhibition

of findings in the Ottoman Imperial Museum displayed the European face of the Ottoman Empire – European because of the Sultan's and the Sublime Porte's official support for archaeology, not because of descent from ancient Greek or Roman civilisation. Compelling foreign archaeologists to abide by a set of laws implied that the Ottoman Empire was capable of inducing foreigners to respect its sovereign rights within its borders. In a sense, Ottoman elites tried to protect the sovereignty of the Empire by becoming a part of the European world. To achieve this, it was necessary to compel foreigners to obey Ottoman laws, instead of being subject to extra-territorial rights.

When RAIK was established, the Ottoman Empire had already developed standard methods to monitor and regulate foreign archaeological activities. The 1884 antiquities regulation laid the groundwork for archaeological policies of the Ottoman Empire for the years to come. Similar to other foreign archaeologists, the Ottomans approached RAIK members with caution. Scholarly activities were permitted within legal limits but also strictly regulated. Considering the political background and RAIK's openly stated mission to extend Russian influence among Russia's ethnic and religious kinsmen, this suspicion was not completely baseless.

Although at first Ottoman government was reluctant to authorise RAIK and raised difficulties for their studies from time to time, it would be wrong to say that Ottoman attitudes towards Russian archaeologists were totally obstructive. On the contrary, RAIK received permits that no other foreign archaeologists had received until then. For instance, Russian excavations in the interior of the Imrahor Mosque was the first archaeological excavation in a functioning mosque in Constantinople. When

Russian scholars justified their archaeological studies with scientific premises, the Ottoman government provided support, on the condition that Russian archaeologists respected Ottoman laws. For the Ottoman government, archaeology was a means of projecting its image as a modern empire and scholarly cooperation with foreigners was a display of modernity. Therefore, the Ottomans did not demonstrate a totally uncooperative attitude. At the same time, enforcing Ottoman laws was a message about complete Ottoman sovereignty within its borders.

RAIK was established at a time when there was increasing political tension in Europe with regard to the fate of Ottoman territories. Especially the Balkans were the boiling cauldron of international politics. It does not come as a surprise that the idea to create a scholarly institute in Constantinople was born in Russian diplomatic circles. In this political context, Russian diplomats saw RAIK as a means of furthering political influence in the Ottoman Empire, especially in the Balkans. Archaeological research was regarded as an opportunity to facilitate closer academic and cultural contact between Russian and Balkan scholars. This mission was stated very openly and frequently in official ceremonies, letters, and RAIK reports. Establishment of a scientific institute was regarded as a supplement to political influence. Russian diplomats and scholars realised that being a great power required more than military power, and emphasised the importance of cultural institutions. They made comparisons with European powers, especially with the French and concluded that Russia lagged behind European governments as regards extending influence through cultural institutions.

In fact, Russian scholars and bureaucrats had similar concerns to their Ottoman counterparts. Both Russia and the Ottoman Empire adopted museum-building practices

and archaeological scholarship from Europe, and for both empires archaeology was a means of asserting their place in an all-European competition for status and respectability. For Russian archaeologists, bringing historical monuments to Russian museums was a victory vis-à-vis Europeans, whereas for the Ottomans, keeping monuments at home was a success. The archaeological rivalry between empires started first between the British Museum and the Louvre. The Hermitage and the Ottoman Imperial Museum made a late, but ambitious start. In this competitive atmosphere, falling behind Europe was considered negative for the imperial prestige of both Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Sharing similar concerns with the Ottomans, Russians did not want to be left outside the scramble for ancient glories. Russian scholars often expressed the necessity to catch up with Europe in terms of the quality of scholarship, if Russia sought to be respected as a great power.

RAIK's scholarly activities centred mostly in the Balkans, Constantinople and the Black Sea coast. Partly as a result of the expertise of RAIK staff and partly because of the political mission of the institute, the major focus of RAIK's archaeological projects was Slavic and Orthodox monuments. On a side note, RAIK did not undertake any systematic study of Armenian antiquities, although there were a number of imperial Russian scholars producing valuable studies in this field, most notably Nikolai Marr, whose academic career stretched from the imperial to the Soviet period.

RAIK made detailed research in the monastic libraries around the Ottoman Empire, Greece, and the Balkans, and made significant contributions to the study of Orthodox theology, liturgy, and history. While undertaking studies on the history of the Orthodox Church, RAIK collaborated with the Imperial Orthodox Palestinian Society

and the Holy Synod. Russian archaeologists also concentrated on the study of Slavic history, and made excavations in cooperation with Bulgarian and Serbian archaeologists. These collaborative studies resulted in the establishment of a Slavic Department in 1911 to enhance cultural and academic cooperation between South Slavs and Russia, although the Slavic Department failed to produce important studies because of the outbreak of the Balkan Wars and World War I. The convergence of religion, ethnicity, and archaeology reflected the motivation behind Russian archaeological activities in the Ottoman Empire.

The fact that the leading Russian scholars collaborated with RAIK, an institute supported by the Russian government with political motivations, indicated that the relationship between the state and intellectuals was not always conflictual in Tsarist Russia, but there were different possibilities of cooperation. RAIK first and foremost symbolised Russia's Pan-Orthodox orientation with its emphasis on the shared Byzantine-Orthodox tradition, but RAIK's activities opened up different possible avenues for Russian involvement in the Balkans and Ottoman territories as well. In addition to Byzantine studies, RAIK also served as a centre for Slavic studies. Miliukov's cooperation proved that liberal intellectuals, who were not quite likely enchanted with the Byzantine civilisation, could be attracted to RAIK for different reasons. The Miliukov case further proved that there was a combination of cooperation and conflict between the state and intellectuals. Despite different attitudes as regards not only domestic policy but also Russia's Balkan policy, a certain degree of cooperation was more likely outside of Russia's borders.

Since RAIK prioritised the study of Byzantine antiquities, RAIK's activities shed light into Russian appropriation of the Byzantine legacy and how this legacy was moulded according to contemporary political concerns. The image of Byzantium had a very complicated meaning for Russian statesmen, clergy, and intellectuals, ranging from admiration and critical reception to total repudiation. However, from Miliukov to Nicholas II, there was a shared belief that Russia should be politically active in Balkan politics and in other regions that were once Byzantine strongholds, although the sources of their inspiration and the conclusions they derived as regards the Balkan and Near East affairs were different. RAIK's activities suggested that both the regime's and the intellectuals' perceptions of the Eastern Question was very much influenced by religious and cultural concerns, in addition to economic and strategic considerations.

Although the establishment of RAIK was first proposed by a handful of diplomats at the Russian Embassy in Constantinople, the idea received support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Public Education, the Holy Synod, and Imperial Academy of Sciences. Nicholas II showed personal interest in RAIK and made generous donations for the acquisition of valuable antiquities. The motivations of Russian diplomats, bureaucrats at the Ministry of Public Education, the Holy Synod, and the Tsar for supporting RAIK's studies give insight about political priorities of the Russian government.

However, the governmental support did not undermine the value of RAIK's academic studies. Despite the often stated political motivations, scholars affiliated with RAIK followed universal academic principles, which made their studies noteworthy outside the political context. As a result of its studies, RAIK maintained a respectable

reputation in international academic circles, engaged in a scholarly dialogue and cooperation with prominent universities, institutions, and societies in Europe and the USA. Russian archaeologists also established links with other foreign scholars in the Ottoman Empire.

Looking at the political rivalry between European empires on the one side of the coin and international scholarly cooperation on the other, there seems to be two opposing dynamics with regard to archaeologists' academic independence from politics. On the one hand, Russian diplomats, bureaucrats, and scholars vocally expressed political motivations for the establishment of RAIK. On the other hand, even in this highly sensitive political atmosphere, and despite national and imperial rivalries, there were also scholarly contacts that transcended imperial and national boundaries. Common scientific concerns shared by scholars from different ideological and national backgrounds made scholarly collaboration possible. Therefore, what I intended to question throughout the dissertation was not whether RAIK's studies were distorted by political considerations or not, but why the Russian government preferred to support an archaeological institute with a proclaimed intention to study Byzantine antiquities.

Director Uspenskii, consecutive Russian ambassadors in Constantinople, and bureaucrats who supported the creation of RAIK all hoped that studies on Orthodox and Slavic antiquities would facilitate the infiltration of Russian cultural influence in the Balkans. Russian imperial identity as expressed in relations with the Ottoman Empire rested on shared faith and history with Balkan nations. RAIK reflected both Slavic and Orthodox images of Russia, melting them in the same pot. However, by the late 19th century, this supra-national identity was contested by rising nationalism in the Balkans

and was therefore far from being a unifying factor. On the one hand, the late 19th - early 20th century was an era of dreams about supra-national ethno-civilisational blocs, such as Pan-Germanism, Pan-Slavism and Pan-Turkism. On the other hand, these supra-national identities were contested by micro-nationalism. For the Russian Empire, reaching the Balkan nations with messages about Orthodoxy and Slavdom in the midst of the Macedonian crisis was not a very strong weapon. In an age of violent micro-nationalism, for the Balkan nations ancient monuments did not signify the “historic” lands of Orthodox and Slavic peoples, but were manipulated by particular ethnic groups – either Bulgarians, Serbs or Greeks – to delineate the territories each perceived to be its own legitimate historic land.

In the first months of World War I, there were dreams about conquering Constantinople and regenerating Byzantine monuments in the city. These hopes were not unrealistic at all, on the contrary, Russian designs over Constantinople were grounded on the secret alliances concluded with the Allies during World War I. According to the agreement between the Allies, Constantinople was promised to the Russians in case of an Allied victory. Although Russian armies fell short of capturing Constantinople, they briefly occupied eastern coasts of the Black Sea. Russian archaeological activities in Trabzon give insight about possible practical applications of RAIK’s scholarly activities. Immediately after military occupation, Russian archaeologists started investigations in the most important Byzantine churches in the city, most of which were converted into mosques by the Ottomans. The interim Russian military administration of the city issued decrees to reconvert these monuments back into churches after archaeological surveys were completed. In a sense, Russian

archaeologists' perceived role as the saviours of Byzantine heritage was taken to a practical level. With its archaeological studies and rehabilitation of churches to their original purpose, RAIK linked the Byzantine past to the Russian present.

In his study on monuments and collective memory, Pierre Nora argued that the physical transformation of places of memory (*lieux de mémoire*) during critical junctures of history reflects the struggle among different political groups for the symbolic capital represented by these sites.⁶⁵³ Therefore, the meanings attributed to such objects of memory may change and fluctuate. For the Ottomans in the 15th century, transforming the largest cathedral of a conquered city into a mosque signified the triumph of Islam over Christianity, and marked a break with the Byzantine past.⁶⁵⁴ On the contrary, for Russians during World War I, reconversion of these churches meant the triumph of Orthodoxy, and heralded that Russia would repair the severed links with the Byzantine Empire.

Both Russia and the Ottoman Empire went through radical transformations following World War I. In the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution, Byzantine studies no longer reflected the identity of the new regime, and consequentially lost official support. Throughout the 1920s and later in the 1940s the Soviet government formulated several projects for the establishment of a scholarly institute in Turkey. Despite close economic and cultural collaboration between Turkey and the Soviet Union in the 1930s, this project was never realised. Besides, the institute Soviet government intended to create was very different from RAIK. It was designed as a research centre with a focus

⁶⁵³ Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations*, No. 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring 1989), p. 19.

⁶⁵⁴ Robert Ousterhout, "Ethnic Identity and Cultural Appropriation in Early Ottoman Architecture," *Muqarnas*, Vol. 12 (1995), p. 60.

on the study of the natural resources of Turkey, reflecting the industrialisation drive that characterised the economic policies of both countries. A humanities branch was also planned within this institute but Byzantine studies was only regarded as a minor subfield among the many interests of this branch. The Bolshevik Revolution severed the mythical links between the Byzantine Empire and Russia. Consequently, RAIK remained anachronistic and a thing of the past after 1917.

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