

The “Eastern Question” in the Russian Empire’s Western Provinces:

The Case of Kyiv between 1875-1878

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Abstract

The appearance of political concepts in history of the nineteenth century is usually tightly connected to the intellectual and political contexts of imperial metropolises, where the “Eastern Question” presents a complicated example. Scholars typically define it as a question of the fate of the Ottoman Empire, and such an understanding seems to be relevant because the Eastern Question was a part of European debates about the future of the so-called ‘sick man of Europe.’ However, the focus on a fixed definition produced in the public discourse of European imperial capitals obscures the complexities of the views on the question, especially in parts of the globe where it also appeared in the public space but was hardly ever studied by historians. I aim to partly fill this gap by giving a voice to the public debates in Kyiv, a multiethnic provincial city in the Russian Empire in the 1870s. In this thesis therefore, I focus primarily on local newspapers issued during the Great Eastern Crisis of 1875-1878 to uncover the local appearance of the “Eastern Question.” Drawing on approaches from media history and intellectual history, I argue that the authors presented interrelated, contested, and multiplied views on the question. I show the diversity of intertwined sources used by local news producers to cover the major international crisis of the 1870s and highlight the variety of approaches to put the information about the crisis on the pages of newspapers. Its multifaceted meanings also underlined the heteroglossia and agency of local actors in the discussions related to international affairs. Finally, I consider opinions about the solutions of the question expressed in the local media environment that presented the uncertain nature of the Eastern Question, which disappeared from the local discussion once the ongoing struggles in the “East” were settled. Ultimately, I prove that Kyiv-based authors appropriated the concept for their needs despite the restrictions related to the censored provincial press and access to information. These appropriations showed the Eastern Question not as a thing in itself but as an interdiscursive phenomenon, simultaneously elusive and ubiquitous.

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Note on Transliteration and Translation

The complex nature of intertwined imperial and national projects in Central Eastern Europe awaits everyone who would like to coherently spell the personal names as well as ethnonyms and toponyms appearing in the region. Different variations of spellings could be applied to the settlements and their inhabitants during the nineteenth century, depending on the time, space, and background of an author who decided to mention a particular name. To deal with this challenge, I introduce the key actors based on the context and their political stance, simultaneously placing Mykhailo (Drahomanov) and Mikhail (Iuzefovich) in the same space. When cities, towns, or villages are mentioned, I stick to contemporary English transliteration to avoid ambiguities that are difficult to trace due to the entangled contests and discourses on the pages of analyzed documents. Thus, I consistently use “Kyiv,” “Istanbul,” and “Lviv” instead of “Kiev,” “Lemberg,” and “Constantinople” if only specification is needed. At the same time, in the quotes and footnotes, all names appear transliterated from the language in which they were originally used. The original titles of the newspapers and periodicals are also preserved.

Transliteration from Russian and Ukrainian is according to the rules established by the Library of Congress was chosen for this thesis. Hard sign (Ѣ) is removed from the end of all transliterated words appearing in the main body of the text but preserved in all quotes from the original and in the footnotes.

All translations in the thesis are my unless otherwise specified.

Introduction

Recently, the long-condemned [...] law on the press about the strengthening of administrators' power was passed to the sound of the Eastern Question, allowing general-governors, governors, and town governors to issue explanations and additions to the laws that portrayed the Russian empire as a decentralized *pompaduria* of sorts as well as finally putting an end to the independence of regional shadow governments, boards's and city dumas' [...]. [A]s a repayment to the Balkan Muslims, the prohibition for Muslim women to serve as teachers [...] was issued, a measure which could only be issued by someone to scandalize the government in trying to achieve equality of Christians and Muslims in Turkey.¹

Whose Eastern Question?

This passage appeared in the letter-pamphlet *Turks Inner and Outer* by the Ukrainian intellectual, Mykhailo Drahomanov, sent from Geneva to Aleksandr Suvorin, the editor of the Petersburg-based daily newspaper *Novoe Vremia* in 1876. In his pamphlet, Drahomanov openly criticized the Russian imperial authorities for their contradictory domestic and foreign politics pointing out that the declared support of the freedom for the Balkan Slavs, who started their uprising against the Ottoman Empire a year before, did not correspond with the tightening control inside the Russian Empire. The letter was written after Drahomanov was forced to leave the Russian empire in accordance with the Ems Ukaz, issued by Aleksandr II in May 1876, the time when the uprising in Bulgaria was at its peak and when the Ottoman forces started suppressing unrest in the province. The audience in the Russian Empire was familiar with the violent actions in the Balkans, and expressed its willingness to support the Ottoman subject, marking the century-long positionality of their empire as a protector of the Christians on the peninsula.² Drahomanov was familiar with these contexts, and thus openly

¹ Mikhail Dragomanov, "Turki vneshnie i vnutrennie. Pismo k izdatel'yu novogo vremeni [Turks Internal and External. The Letter to Editor of Novoe Vremya]" In *Vybrane («...mii zadum zlozhyty ocherk istorii tsyvilizatsii na Ukraini»)*, Ed. R. S. Mishchuk (Kyiv: Lybid', 1991), 239.

² Barbara Jelavich frames this phenomenon using the metaphor of the specific ties with the Balkan Christians that often appeared in the Russian Empire (see Charles Jelavich, Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920* (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 2000), 145).

expressed his dissatisfaction with the politics of the Russian government using the familiar orientaling narrative about the Turks as the external oppressor to highlight the internal oppressor (“inner Turks”).³ At the same time, the quoted sentence contains one more metaphor that seems to be quite familiar for the author and his audience. “The sound of the Eastern Question” appears as self-evident reference to the recent events described by Drahomanov. It is loud enough to be mentioned, but not specific enough to be clarified even though it might be interpreted in multiple ways.

The concept of the “Eastern Question”⁴ (*Vostochnyi Vopros* in Russian) is a complicated subject in the history of diplomacy and the intellectual history of the nineteenth century. Scholars tend to define it as the question of the fate of the Ottoman Empire during the long 19th century.⁵ On the one hand, such an understanding seems to be relevant because the Eastern Question appeared in the context of European debates linked to the future of the so-called “sick man of Europe.” On the other hand, the concept circulated in very different geographical, political, and cultural contexts and, therefore, cannot be reduced to one particular, national perspective. In fact, the focus on a fixed definition partly germane to “Western” public discourse obscures the complexities of the Eastern Question, especially in the places where the Question was also negotiated and debated at the time but hardly ever studied by historians.⁶ The city of Kyiv located in the Western provinces of the Russian

³ On the peculiarities of the Orientalism in the Russian Empire see Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini, “Conclusion,” in *Russia's Orient: imperial borderlands and peoples, 1700-1917*, ed. Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 311-315; David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2010) (Chapter 4 in particular); Vera Tolz, *Russia's Own Orient: The Politics of Identity and Oriental Studies in the Late Imperial and Early Soviet Periods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) (Chapters 2 and 3).

⁴ Hereafter, I refer to the Eastern Question without quotation marks, except where it may be explicitly necessary to do so.

⁵ See, e.g., John A. R. Marriott, *The Eastern Question; an Historical Study in European Diplomacy* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1917), 1-3; Robert W. Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question: a Study in Diplomacy and Party Politics*. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1972), 1-2.

⁶ Even those historians who look for the nuanced approach in their studies on the Eastern Question, stick mostly to the “Western” intellectual contexts. For one of the visible examples see Huseyin Yilmaz, “The Eastern Question and the Ottoman Empire: The Genesis of the Near and Middle East in the Nineteenth

Empire in the long nineteenth century was one of such places during the Great Eastern crisis of 1875-1878.

The Great Eastern crisis of 1875-1878 is a particularly important moment in the conventional narrative of the Eastern Question because it brought dramatic challenges both to the international arena and the territory of the Ottoman Empire. The uprising in Bosnia in 1875 shook the relatively stable peace in Europe, and the violent actions of the Ottoman irregular troops against the Bulgarian population in 1876 brought a humanitarian aspect to the agenda.⁷ These challenges affected public discourse inside the Russian Empire, whose involvement in the war with the Ottoman Empire in 1877 only made the situation more complicated. The changes in the imperial centers, i.e., the capital, are discussed by scholars in the historiography because these developments are believed to represent the essence of the discourse, whilst the imperial borderlands remain a blind spot in the discussions around the Eastern Question. At the same time, actors in the provinces far from Moscow and Sankt Petersburg established their own communication ties and thus gave rise to specific information networks. The South-Western provinces of the Russian Empire preserved direct links with the Ottoman Empire, and the Balkans in particular. Additionally, being the center of competing political projects, Kyiv provided a good intellectual field for numerous contradictions built into public debate. These contradictions led to the creation of the public space where the different understandings of the Eastern Question could appear that also mirrored the complexities of an epoch-defining concept.

Drawing on the approaches of media history, intellectual history, and imperial history, the present thesis asks: What was the Eastern Question in the provinces of the Russian Empire

Century.” in *Is There a Middle East? The Evolution of a Geopolitical Concept*, ed. Michael E. Bonine, Abbas Amanat, and Michael Ezekiel Gasper (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 11-35.

⁷ See Alexis Heraclides and Ada Dialla, “The Balkan crisis of 1875–78 and Russia: between humanitarianism and pragmatism” in *Humanitarian Intervention in the Long Nineteenth Century: Setting the Precedent* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 170-196.

and what role did it play in public debates in provincial Kyiv in the 1870s? Local authors adopted, appropriated, and reflected on the Eastern Question in the provincial press despite the presence of censorship and challenges of accessing information. Following the information flows which entered the city during the Great Eastern Crisis during 1875-1878, I argue that the Eastern Question was ubiquitous and elusive at the same time: it was all-present in different contexts of public and media discourse in Kyiv and enmeshed with various local and regional issues, but it was also hard to pin down as a separate concept or analytical category as such. In other words, the Eastern Question reveals itself through all sorts of localized concerns and discussions in the press, but it hardly ever emerged as a self-standing intellectual discussion – or “Question” – in the way in which it arguably appeared in the contemporary diplomacy or media discourses created in the imperial capitals (acknowledging that the “Question” took on its own life as a historiographical concept). The Eastern Question – as raised by the contemporaries in Kyiv – was always embedded in other questions with a capital “Q”. I demonstrate that the locals operated with great ranges of sources which they adapted to the needs of their periodicals and placed the information about the international crisis based on personal understanding of what events and processes were worth to be covered. The crisis, which at first appeared on the margins of the newspaper’s last pages, eventually pervaded all parts of the local media column by column, peaking during the Russo-Turkish war. At the same time, I argue that the Eastern Question was not a self-evident choice to explain the ongoing events in the imagined “East,” and it was used both accidentally and on purpose by the local authors. Showing this irregularity of the concept’s appearance, I also highlight that the concept itself was never openly explained, made explicit, or separated out as a discrete topic of discussion.

Seeking ways to clarify the presence of the complicated Eastern Question in the imperial Kyiv, this thesis underlines that Kyiv-based authors utilized the concept for their needs to

present the local affairs as well as express their sentiments toward the imagined “East” in the Balkans whose population suffered from the “barbarous” Turks. At the same time, I point out that the variety of meanings of the concept was visible on the pages of the local press, mirroring the tendency of permanent changes caused by external factors, such as changes in the events abroad and particular decisions taken by the authors. These varieties and diversity led to the heterogeneous views on how the Eastern Question ought to be addressed and the prospects for its solution at the time of international tensions, uprisings, and war during 1875-1878.

The diverse perception of the Eastern Question is not historicized enough by scholars. Historians usually refer to the concept in order to explain the particularities of European diplomacy instead of understanding the various meanings that the contemporaries attached to the notion of the “Eastern Question” during the long 19th century, especially outside Western Europe. The parallel existence of a “historical” and a “historiographical” Eastern Question causes misinterpretations in different studies. Because of a unified definition of the concept scholars often omit the variety of possible meanings. Even those historians who indicate the differences in the interpretations that existed in the past usually summarize the ideas in rather general terms.⁸ At the same time, various people tried to conceptualize and problematize the question relying on their own understanding of global and local issues. For instance, the above-quoted passage by Drahomanov presents the example of how their reflections reached the all-imperial level of intellectual and political discussions, but it should not be interpreted as a sign of hierarchically established knowledge. Instead, it may help to highlight the local discourses in Kyiv, of which Drahomanov was an important part while being a professor in

⁸ Perhaps, the most vivid example is presented by Holly Case’s synthetic study on the question in 1750-1950 in which she recognizes the existing different interpretations of the Eastern Question but then seems to reduce it to the Balkans (See Holly Case, *The Age of Questions or, A First Attempt at an Aggregate History of the Eastern, Social, Woman, American, Jewish, Polish, Bullion, Tuberculosis, and Many Other Questions over the Nineteenth Century, and Beyond* (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018), 4-6, 76).

the university, where the urgent issue was interpreted in relation to the local specifics which are left almost unnoticed in the scholarship.

Context: Censorship and News Circulation

The 1870s demonstrated the significance of new informational channels that allowed public discussions about ongoing affairs even in the remote parts of the empires. The changes in communication made possible the relatively quick delivery of information about the current events in the Russian empire and abroad to the different audiences in Kyiv, which allowed local politicians and intellectuals to share the same knowledge with actors from other places and enter into the discussions about the Great Eastern Crisis when it came to be an urgent problem in 1875. The role of newspapers is of primary importance in this context. The newspaper market in the Russian Empire changed intensively after Aleksandr II came to power in 1855. Before that, the activities of all periodicals in the country were regulated by the censorship charter of 1828, according to which all printed materials had to pass through the preventive censorship, and the Main Directorate of Printing Affairs (an administrative unit within the imperial Ministry of National Education) was responsible for searching for any violations committed by the newsmen or publishers. However, during 1858-1865 a special commission developed a new law to regulate the circulation of printed word in the country that would better correspond with the interests of the monarchy.⁹ In 1862, the Main Directorate of Printing Affairs received the right to conduct preventive censorship of all periodicals, a function that previously also belonged to separate local censoring committees. A year later, the Directorate was subjected to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. When Petr Valuev became

⁹ Viktoriia G. Chernuha, *Pravitel'stvennaia politika v otnoshenii pechati 60-70-e gody XIX veka* [Governmental Politics toward the Press in the 1860s-1870s] (Leningrad: Nauka, 1989), 66.

a minister of internal affair, he created a Council of Book-Printing Affairs and increased the number of censors.¹⁰

The law on censorship passed in 1865 brought, however, the most important innovations for the imperial publishers of all sorts. According to the act, the scientific publications and periodicals published in both capitals, were realized from preventive censorship. Instead, newspapers from Moscow and Saint-Petersburg were censored *post factum*, and editors had to send a copy of every issue to the nearest censoring committee after all copies were printed. If censors defined any information as dangerous, all printed copies would be taken from the market, and the editors would be obliged to refute the questionable information in the next issue. In case of systematic violations, the newspaper could be warned, and three warnings could stop the activities of the newspaper for at least three months.¹¹ Thus, the immediate silencing of information was replaced by the threat to be punished afterwards, which also meant concrete financial losses for the publisher. However, these changes did not touch the local newspapers which still were censored preventively.¹² It meant not only stricter control from the side of local censors, but also the less speed of delivering information to the readers because it took at least one day to wait for an approval from the censor before the copies reached the local news market.

Some limitations were also put on the type of information that was allowed to be published. Special censorship was introduced to regulate the mention of the name of the tsar and tsar's family. Besides, in 1866, the authorities restored the ban to republish materials from

¹⁰ Chernuha, *Pravitel'stvennaia politika v otnoshenii pechati 60-70-e gody XIX veka*, 64.

¹¹ "O nekotoryh peremenah i dopolneniiakh v" deistvuiushchih" nyne cenzurnykh" postanovleniiakh," [About Some Changes and Additions to the Censorship Decrees Currently in Force]" in *Polnoe sobranie zakonov" Rossiiskoj imperii. Tsarstvovanie gosudaria imperatora Aleksandra vtorago* (Sankt-Peterburg, 1881) 40: 399-401.

¹² Daniel Balmuth, *Censorship in Russia, 1865-1905* (Washington: University Press of America, Inc., 1979), 59-79.

scientific journals or other scientific publications that was canceled a few years earlier.¹³ Finally, newspaper owners had to pay 2000-2500 rubles of deposit to confirm their “reliability,” while state actors preserved monopoly over all advertisements. To get the right to publish the advertisement, and thus turn the periodical into a more profitable, was still a privilege. At the same time, the mass industry and mass market of goods was still less developed in the Russian empire in comparison to the United Kingdom or France where newspaper owners relied on advertisement as their main source of income.¹⁴ Thus, local publishers had to balance in order to save profit that was especially important in the case of *Kievskii Telegraf*. In January 1875, its owner Avdotia Gogotska invited Mykhailo Drahomanov, who was a professor in Kyiv at that time, as well as his university colleague Volodymyr Antonovych, and other members of *hromada*, an informal union of Ukrainian activists, to contribute to the newspaper. Together they formed a core of the authors and, using their expertise, helped to increase the income of the newspaper. However, in already late summer of the same year, they decided to leave *Kievskii Telegraf* after the local censor started campaign against the published materials, and their decision immediately affected the newspaper. In her letter to the Kyiv general-governor written after the periodical was banned in June 1876, Gogotska argued that when 13 employees left the newspaper, the last could restore its normal activities only for at least four months.¹⁵ Thus, the question of cadres remained urgent for the local newsmen.

At the same time, the number of periodicals increased consistently in the Russian Empire. In 1860, there were 105 newspapers in the empire, and only 7 of them were daily,

¹³ V. G. Berezina “Gazety 1860-h godov [Newspapers of the 1860s],” in *Ocherki po istorii russkoi zhurnalistiki i kritiki*, ed. V. G. Berezina, N. P. Emel'yanov, N. I. Sokolov (Leningrad: Izdatelstvo Leningradskogo Universiteta, 1965), 2:34.

¹⁴ Prices per issues in the Russian empire were also higher than in the United Kingdom (Gennadiy V. Zhyrkov, *Zhurnalistika Rossii: ot zolotogo veka do tragedii. 1900 – 1918 gg. [Journalism of Russia: from the Golden Age to Tragedy]* (Izhevsk, 2014), 142).

¹⁵ Fedir Savchenko, *Zaborona ukraiinstva 1876 roku [The Prohibition of Ukrainess in 1876]* (Kharkiv-Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Ukrainy, 1930), 157.

but already in 1880, the total number increased to 253, of which 53 were daily.¹⁶ The new periodicals were either privately owned or rented by private persons from the state actors. The practice of renting was popular in the capital cities, where different institutions had a right to have their own newspaper. For instance, in 1863, conservative journalists Mikhail Katkov and Pavel Leontiev were leased the publication license the newspaper *Moskovskiiia vedomosti* owned by the Moscow University. Several year later, they transformed the periodical into one of the biggest and the most influential in the country.¹⁷ Such a scheme was not possible for Kyiv situated on the imperial periphery where the only newspaper owned by state-related actor in the 1870s – *Kievskiiia gubernskiiia vedomosti* – could not be lent out due to its official status. However, it could itself change its editorial policy, as it happened in at the beginning of 1878, when the recently appointed editor Shtam added new sections to the unofficial part of the newspaper.¹⁸

The number of readers also increased consistently in the Russian empire during the second half of the 19th century, but they still were in minority even in the cities. Looking at the ways information circulated in the imperial cities, Lidia Koshman concluded that “city dwellers’ understanding about the events in the country was based on the gossips because the newspaper was a rare guest in the dwellers’ houses.”¹⁹ The average level of education was still low in the country, where 2,5 per cent of population living in the cities had secondary education and slightly more than a half – primary.²⁰ In Kyiv, with its university, theological academy, and several smaller institutions, the debate about internal or foreign affairs were indeed limited to several circles of intellectuals, but some of them tried also to reach broader audience. In 1867, Ivan Andriiashev, local teacher and scientist, established the newspaper

¹⁶ Neither of newspapers based in Kyiv in 1870s was daily.

¹⁷ Viktoriia G. Chernuha, *Pravitel'stvennaya politika v otmoshenii pechati 60-70-e gody XIX veka*, 27, 85, 201.

¹⁸ Privately owned newspapers were even more free to change the editorial policy.

¹⁹ LidiaV. Koshman, *Gorod i gorodskaiia zhizn' v Rossii XIX stoletiiia: Social'nye i kul'turnye aspekty [City and City Life in the 19th-century Russia: Social and Cultural Aspects]* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2008), 278.

²⁰ Koshman, *Gorod i gorodskaya zhizn'*, 123-124.

Drug Naroda aiming to share the useful knowledge predominantly among the local population. Together with the topics related to agriculture and local affairs, the owner-editor also added columns on curiosities, book reviews, and imperial and foreign news.²¹ Thus, the newspaper combined the educational with an entertainment function to inspire more people to engage with the written word.

The changes in the market structure and newspaper content were possible due to the progress in the development of new communication tools. The spread of the telegraph was one of the most visible marks of such development. In 1851 the cable under the English Channel connected the United Kingdom with the continent. A year later, the telegraph connection for private use was established between Moscow and Sankt-Petersburg, while in the 1860s, all major centers in the Russian empire were connected via telegraph. The total length of cable laid in the empire reached 30 000 km² in 1860, and the number of stations rose from 79 in 1857 to 338 in 1866²².

The development of the telegraph was important for newsmen who tried to provide readers with interesting and up-to-date information. The availability of the message about an event at the same day it happened increased the quality of news produced by newspaper that, accordingly, could attract more potential readers. The market of information became globalized while the costs for news production decreased.²³ The advantages of a new tool – less time for receiving needed information and the greater availability of information from all over the world made it an important source for news for all local newspapers in Kyiv in the 1870s. Moreover, even though the imperial authorities wanted to restrict the capacity, they actively used the information provided by international telegraph agencies. Paul Reuter was

²¹ See, e.g., “Ob isdanii gazety Drug” Naroda [About the Publication of the Newspaper *Drug Naroda*],” *Drug Naroda*, January 1, 1875, 1.

²² Koshman, *Gorod i gorodskaya zhizn'*, 418.

²³ Irving Fang, *A History of Mass Communication: Six Information Revolutions* (London & New York: Routledge, 2016), 80.

the first person who successfully managed to conquer new market of information with telegraph. In 1851, he reached an agreement with the London Stock Exchange to transfer information to the various customers, and since that time his agency had quickly expanded its operations, and in 1862, even Petr Valuev, Russian minister of internal affair, started negotiations with Reuter's to "transfer various information, the most accurate and categorically explained, via telegraph."²⁴ The negotiations conducted by the official failed, but at the same time, various newspapers in the empire, both state and privately owned, managed to establish the cooperation with the agency. During the 1870s, Kyiv-based newspapers *Kievlianin* and *Kievskii Telegraf* also received news from Reuter's agency.

How does this development affect the discussion of the Eastern Question in the Western provinces of the Russian Empire? In several important ways. The positive changes in the tools of communication and transfer of information allowed even the local newspapers of the Russian Empire to cover broadly the events related to the Great Eastern Crisis since the Bosnian uprising that started in 1875. This news found fertile soil in the domestic audience because, as Russian imperial history Vasilii Bogucharskii suggested already at the beginning of the 20th century, the image of the Ottoman empire and the Balkans had already been established, not only among the intellectuals or politicians in the Russian Empire, but also within the peasant community due to the long history of contestations between the two empires. Additionally, he argued that the question of Balkan Slavs appeared as "fashionable" and relatively "safe" for those who wanted to criticize the authorities.²⁵ For Slavophiles, the Balkan politics of the government seemed to be undecisive, for monarchists, the perspectives

²⁴ Petr Valuev, "Valuev i provoloka [Valuev and the Wire]," *Kolokol*, no. 130 (1862): 1083-1084. See also Irving Fang, *A History of Mass Communication: Six Information Revolutions*, 81; Marsha Siefert, "The Russian Empire and the International Telegraph Union, 1856–1875," In *History of the International Telecommunication Union: Transnational techno-diplomacy from the telegraph to the Internet*, ed. Gabriele Balbi and Andreas Fickers (Berlin & Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2020), 18.

²⁵ Vasilii Bogucharskii, *Aktivnoe narodnichestvo semidesyatyh godov* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo M. i S. Sbashnikovyh", 1912), 263, 270-271.

of intervention seemed to be dangerous because it might have deepened the social tensions inside the country, while, for anarchists, as we have observed above, any intervention of the Russian Empire would not lead to any positive changes for the Balkans people. Thus, different actors had enough motivation to engage with the information from the Balkan peninsula on both imperial and local levels.

At the same time, several obstacles made the news coverage less effective in comparison with other European states. Firstly, the underdeveloped news market and the presence of repressive censorship delayed the development of professional journalism and, what is more, created obstacles for the war correspondence. Due to special restrictions for newspapers during the war time, journalists in the Russian empire had almost no experience in covering the events similar to the Great Eastern Crisis and the Russian-Turkish war of 1875-1878.²⁶

The beginning of the war in April 1877 also uncovered several important challenges that all correspondents faced. Journalists from the leading newspapers were able to send their correspondents to the war zone, but at first, they had to receive a special permission from the military commanders. This process was more difficult than for their colleagues from abroad, who could be accredited in the Russian Embassies.²⁷ However, correspondents on site struggled to file timely reports to their editors thanks to major postal delays.²⁸ Despite these challenges, *Kievlianin* managed to send its correspondent close enough to the frontline that the newspaper could receive updates of the ongoing battles via telegraph. At the same time,

²⁶ S. A. Kochukov, "K voprosu formirovaniia korpusa voennykh korrespondentov v russko-turetskoi voine 1877-1878 godov [To the Question of Forming the Corpus of War Correspondents during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878]" *Izvestiia Saratovskogo universiteta. Serii Istorii. Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia* 11, Issue 2 (2011): 64-72.

²⁷ See Alina V. Manakhova, "Problema dopuska korrespondentov na Balkanskii teatr russko-turetskij voiny 1877-78 gg.," *Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta. Serii 10. Zhurnalistika*, no. 3 (2018), 31-46.

²⁸ Elena M. Muminova, "Pochtova sluzhba Rossiiskoi armii v period russko-tureckoi voiny 1877-1878 gg.," *Izvestiia Rossijskogo gosudarstvennogo pedagogicheskogo universiteta im. A. I. Gercena*. No. 37 (80) (2008): 252.

Vasily Shulgin's, *Kievlianin*'s editor-in-chief's, political views influenced the particular interpretations of the ongoing events in the Balkans which were not only in favor of Slavs, but also against the political opponents on the local stage. A similar tendency might have been visible in other Kyiv-based newspapers at the time. However, the information about those events did not appear with the same regularity on the pages of those newspapers during the Great Eastern Crisis and changed under the influence of external factors, first and foremost the developments in international scale, or particular editorial decisions taken in the imperial Kyiv.

The Historiography: The Eastern Question in the History of Diplomacy

The Eastern Question has been in the focus of studies for a long time. From the first half of the twentieth century, historians of diplomacy have paid much attention to its development during the long nineteenth century. As early as in 1917, James Marriott wrote a general history of the Eastern Question identifying six main components of the question. In particular, it included the role of the Ottoman Empire in European history, the positions of newly established Balkan states, the Black Sea straits, the Russian Empire's presence in Europe, the relations between the Habsburg monarchy and the Slavic population, and the attitudes of the other European powers to all the above-mentioned components.²⁹ Clearly, the book needs to be read in the context of its time. Marriott put the Eastern Question within the broader history of European diplomacy while ignoring the meanings of the question that circulated in the different contexts during its long history. For him, the Eastern Question was a useful analytical category that would help to explain the complex relations between the European powers.

²⁹ Marriott, *The Eastern Question*, 1-3.

The focus on the Eastern Question as a tool for historical analysis prevailed also in other studies in history of diplomacy. In his double-volume study, Robert Seton-Watson touched upon the question in the context of British foreign policy during the long nineteenth century. In 1935, he published the book *Disraeli, Gladstone, and the Eastern Question: A Study in Diplomacy and Party Politics* in which he analyzed the complexities of the political situation in the United Kingdom during the peak of the Eastern Question in the 1870s. In the preface, Seton-Watson distinguished primarily political (actual) and historical (analytical) aspects of the question, but the somewhat providential character of the narrative blurred the difference between the two. At the same time, the author recognized the existence of different phases of the Eastern Question and claimed that there existed the “whole Eastern Question” with its separate components.³⁰ Thus, although Seton-Watson also mostly referred to the question as an analytical category, he nevertheless recognized its changeability during the 19th century.

In the Russian contexts the changeability of the Eastern Question was also noticed by scholars although it remained mostly as a tool for analysis rather than subject of inquiry. Mikhail Pokrovskii in his study about the Russian imperial diplomacy and wars in the 19th century identified the different components of the question during the Napoleonic wars, the Russian conquest of the Caucasus and the decades after the Crimean War.³¹ However, he does not mention any precise definition of the Eastern Question. Similar limitations appear in a collective volume dedicated to the history of diplomacy published by Soviet historians in 1945. Vladimir Khvostov, whose essay about the Eastern Crisis of 1875-1877 was included in the volume, characterized the Eastern Question as a fundamental problem of international politics but did not define the essence of the problem.³² In contrast to them, the authors of the

³⁰ Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, ix, 113, 479.

³¹ Mikhail N. Pokrovskii, *Diplomatia i Voyny Tsarskoi Rossii v XIX Stoletii* (London: Overseas Publications Interchange, 1991), 24, 179, 230.

³² Vladimir M. Khvostov, “Vostochnyi Krizis (1875-1877),” in *Istoriia Dimlomatii. Tom Vtoroi. Dimlomatia v Novoe Vremia (1872-1919)*, ed. by Vladimir P. Potëmkin (Moskva-Leningrad: OGIZ Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1945), 29.

edited volume *Vostochnyi Vopros vo Vneshnej Politike Rossii: Konets XVIII – Nachalo XX v.* provided different definitions of the question based on the context in which it appeared. From the authors' point of view, for the Russian Empire the Eastern Question was connected to the question of the Ottoman European possessions.³³ Although it again remained only an analytical tool, this volume remains one of the most successful attempts to understand the specifics of the Eastern Question in the context of European diplomacy during the long 19th century.

The Eastern Question in the Studies of Imperial Public Discourse

Until recently, the study of media and intellectual history practically ignored the Eastern Question. A few scholars tried to contextualize the question within the political debates inside the empires. Gerald D. Clayton's study presents such an exception. Focusing on the political history of the Eastern Question, he nevertheless points out that every prominent Victorian politician in the 1870s had his own visions on the issue.³⁴ However, in general, the focus was still restricted to political and diplomatic spheres. An article by Paul Auchterlonie was the first attempt to study the Eastern Question from the perspective of periodical press. Studying the materials from ten important Victorian periodicals that were published from 1876 to 1885, he identified the common features of the images related to the Eastern Question that appeared on the pages.³⁵ Michelle Tusan also paid attention to the British periodical press in the context of the Eastern Question. The last was identified simultaneously as a "problem" and the "crisis", but the difference between two was not clarified. Apart from that, Tusan concludes

³³ Nina S. Kinyapkina, "Vvedenie," in *Vostochnyi Vopros vo Vneshnej Politike Rossii: Konets XVIII – Nachalo XX v.*, [The Eastern Question in the Russian External Politics: The End of the 18th – the Beginning of 20th centuries] Otvetstvennyi Redaktor Nina Stepanovna Kinyapkina (Moskva: «Nauka», 1978), 3-10.

³⁴ Gerald D. Clayton, *Britain and Eastern Question: Missolonghi to Gallipoli*. (London: University of London Press, Ltd, 1971), 153.

³⁵ Paul Auchterlonie, "From the Eastern Question to the Death of General Gordon: Representations of the Middle East in the Victorian Periodical Press, 1876-1885." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 28. no. 1 (2001): 5-24.

that the British public pursued the question as unresolvable, but does not explain the multiplicity of meanings that could be used to characterize the question itself.³⁶

There are also precise attempts to escape determinism in relation to the Eastern Question, such as in a synthetic study about the history of various ‘questions’ by Holly Case. Attempting to combine the Eastern question with social, women, American and many others, the author brings multiple views on all of them into the discussion. However, for her, all of them appear either as problems to be resolved or questions to give opinions on.³⁷ She rejects explicitly Koselleck’s approach to the questions as those existed below the level of the basic concepts that seems to limit the variety of possible meanings produced by contemporaries.

As for the Russian context, the only available material regarding the question and its public appearance can be found in Sergey Kosarev’s dissertation. He tried to compare the British and Russian press during the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-1878. However, the dissertation discussed the press as an objective source of information by its definition and thus criticized British and Russian journalists for their suspicious texts.³⁸

Another attempt to put the Eastern Question within the intellectual discussions in the Russian Empire was made by Rafael Arslanov and Elena Linkova who focus on the Russian liberals’ views on the question during the second half of the 19th century. Studying the pamphlets and journal articles written by the liberals, the authors argue that the understanding of the Eastern Question as an “object of abstract reasoning” shifted to the perception of being an urgent problem at the time. However, while pointing out these important changes, Arslanov and Linkova do not clarify what categories of the Russian imperial society may be marked as

³⁶ Michelle Tusan, *Smyrna's Ashes: Humanitarianism, Genocide and the Birth of the Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 1, 16-17.

³⁷ Case, *The Age of Questions*, 4.

³⁸ Sergei I. Kosarev, “Russko-Tureckaia vojna 1877-1878 gg. v otsenkakh rossiiskoi i angliiskoi periodicheskoi pechati” [The Russian-Turkish War of 1877-1878 in the Evaluations of the Russian and English Periodical Press] PhD diss., FGBOUVPO “Bryanskii Gosudarstvennyi Universitet Imeni Akad. I. G. Petrovskogo,” 2009.

liberal. They thoroughly analyze a couple of actors who were engaged in public discussion in different decades but do not explain whether their views were representative for the whole group. Moreover, the authors reduce the meanings of the Eastern Question to the dispute over the ‘Turkish inheritance’ that also exclude the possible multiplicity of interpretations. At the same time, they argue that the ‘national interests’ of Russia were seen as connected to the Eastern Question that is not a completely correct term for the imperial context, leaving a few gaps for the further research.³⁹

Ritta Grishyna, Yekaterina Muminova, and Sergei Arkhipov also touched upon the Russian press during the Russian-Turkish war, but their research was limited to more or less general questions about the issue while the views on the Eastern Question were completely absent in the narratives.⁴⁰ The present thesis offers to consider the broader regional dimension of the discussions about the Eastern Question, drawing on conceptual history to capture the Question’s own history.

Approaching the Eastern Question: Concepts, Theory, and Methodology

The primarily theoretical challenge of this thesis is related to how characterize the “Eastern Question” itself. On the one hand, as Holly Case points out in her research, all the ‘questions’ of the 19th century should be understood as questions that require answers and as problems that needed to be solved. This coexistence is a cornerstone for understanding the phenomenon

³⁹ Rafael A. Arslanov, Elena V. Linkova, “Evolution of the perception of the eastern question by Russian liberals in the second half of the 19th century” *The International History Review* (2021): doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2020.1864656.

⁴⁰ See Ritta P. Grishyna, “Rossiiskoe Obshchestvennoe Mnenie i Balkany (1870-e gg.) [Russian Public Opinion and Balkans],” in *Chelovek na Balkanakh Glazami Russkikh*, ed. Ritta P. Grishyna i Andrej Shemyakin, (Sankt-Peterburg: Aletejya, 2011), 149-160. Ekaterina M. Muminova, “Deyatel'nost' Rossijskikh i Inostrannykh Korrespondentov na Balkanakh v Gody Russko-Turetskoj Vojny 1877-1878,” [The Russian and Foreign Correspondents Activities on the Balkans during the Russian Turkish War of 1877-1878] *Izvestiia Rossiiskogo Gosudarstvennogo Pedagogicheskogo Universiteta im. A. I. Gertsena*, no. 38 (82): 243-249. Sergei V. Arkhipov, *Russko-Turetskaia Voina 1877-1878 gg. v Tserkovnoi Periodicheskoi Pechati (po Materialam Gazety "Moskovskie Eparkhialnie Vedomosti")* [Russian-Turkish War of 1877-1878 in the Russian Church Periodical Press (on the Base of the Newspaper *The Moscow Eparchial News*)], *Vestnik MGOU. Seriya: Istorii i Politicheskie Nauki*, no. 4 (2015): 86-94.

of the Age of Questions – the period of simultaneous coexistence of various unresolvable questions that lasted from 1750 to 1950.⁴¹ On the other hand, authors as well scholars invoke the “Eastern Question” in order to explain the events that went far beyond the long nineteenth century. Moreover, the reference to the phases of the Eastern Question and its long-term relevance that can be found in different sources also complicate the situation. In this case, the ideas of conceptual history presented by Reinhart Koselleck seem to be relevant. Although Koselleck is criticized for putting questions below the level of basic concepts and focuses primarily on the German intellectual contexts, his thoughts about the space of experience and horizon of expectations may help to explain the existence and even coexistence of various phases of the Eastern Question. Moreover, the changes in the meanings may correlate with Koselleck’s notions about the temporalization of the concepts.⁴²

Besides, Holly Case’s suggestions to apply Michael Foucault’s vision of questions that required opinions and problems that should be solved is essential. However, even these references do not help to solve the issue regarding the definition of the Eastern Question as an analytical and historical category. As its methodological point of departure, the thesis will explore the possibilities and limits of *Begriffsgeschichte* applied to the appearance of the Eastern Question in the context of imperial Kyiv during 1875-1878. Additionally, it also explores the potential of Koselleck’s notions on the “*Vergangene Zukunft*” in the writings of local authors and their expectations regarding the future of the Eastern Question.

Another methodological issue is related to the idea about Russian imperial public discourse. The famous notion of “*Öffentlichkeit*” presented by Jürgen Habermas in the context of the Western Europe was based on the relative liberty of press created the conditions for the dialogue and competition between various political ideas. However, once we apply these ideas

⁴¹ Case, *The Age of Questions*, 1.

⁴² See Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

to the Russian context, it may cause significant issues that have been discussed in the scholarship at great length.⁴³ The censorship did not allow to create the same space for discussion between the intellectuals, politicians, and other actors traditionally involved into the public sphere. Of course, neither was this space the same across *Sattelzeit* Europe, but the question is to what extent Habermas' core ideas apply to the Russian Empire. It is safe to say that these discussions existed inside the empire and sometimes could even influence the foreign politics of the empire. One need not call it "public sphere" to study public discourse.

The same obstacles posed by state regulations were visible in the context of the press that circulated in the Russian Empire, especially in its provinces. The provincial press was censored, and the debates around foreign and domestic politics received particular attention from the side of local censors.⁴⁴ However, despite the censorship, various actors tried to present their views to the local communities of literate people. Many such attempts were banned, but the press continued to be developed. Its commercialization was also an important sign of the epoch, and thus a closer studying of media theory can help to understand the precise features of the development. Thus, it is possible to identify the complicated and even contradictory public discourses both in the imperial centers and in the provincial urban centers, of which Kyiv presents a great example.

The concept of 'flows' has recently entered social sciences and humanities. Reflecting on the changes in the studies of history, Jürgen Osterhammel points out that the idea of 'flows' became significant for Global History that tries to go beyond the borders of social structures

⁴³ The concept of 'public sphere' as well as the concept of 'civil society' that are usually applied in the studies of public activities in the empires during the 19th century is problematic in the contexts of the Russian empire due to its foreign origin. Instead, the scholars propose to apply the concept of *obshchestvennost' / hromadskist* that was used by the contemporaries in order to preserve the peculiarities of non-state actors. See, e.g., A.S. Tumanova, "Vvedenie [Introduction]," in *Samoorganizatsiya rossijskoj obshchestvennosti v poslednej treti XVIII- nachale XX v.*, otv. red. A. S. Tumanova (Moskva: Rossijskaya politicheskaya entsiklopediya (ROSSPEN), 2011), 3-27.

⁴⁴ Balmuth, *Censorship in Russia*, 38.

and aims to study the past considering the instability of social development.⁴⁵ However, Osterhammel stays clear of a definition of the term and instead highlights its problematic nature, referring to the article by anthropologist Stuart Alexander Rockefeller in which the evolution and complexity of the concept are discussed. Rockefeller argues that a single definition of the ‘flow’ would be difficult to be provided because of the multiplicity of contexts in which it is used by scholars, but nevertheless points out that the flow cannot be seen as “agentless movement with no starting point and no telos.”⁴⁶ For the author, the flows always have agency beyond them and because of that may be shaped in different, almost unexpected directions.⁴⁷ I consider these notions while discussing the information flows, the ways in which information was spread, adopted and interpreted in the provincial city of the Russian Empire during the Great Eastern Crisis and what potential impact it might have had on the information which appeared on the pages of Kyiv newspapers.

Sources:

Publications from the Kyiv newspapers form a core of sources for the present thesis. I will focus on the articles published in the newspapers *Kievlianin*, *Kievskii Telegraf*, *Drug Naroda*, *Kievskia gubernskia vedomosti*, and *Kievskii listok* in 1875-1878.⁴⁸ *Kievskii Telegraf* was the first non-governmental Kyiv newspaper founded by Alfred von Junk in 1859. After Junk’s death, the newspaper was sold to Avdotia Gogotskaia, a member of local intelligentsia. Apart from the local news and reports, cross-imperial and international news were also published in the newspaper. In the 1875, the newspaper offered its pages to the members of local Ukrainophile movements, but was banned according to the Ems Ukaz in May 1876. On the

⁴⁵ Jürgen Osterhammel, “Global History and Historical Sociology,” In *The Prospect of Global History*, ed. James Belich, John Darwin, Margret Frenz, and Chris Wickham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 38-39.

⁴⁶ Stuart Alexander Rockefeller, “Flow,” *Current Anthropology* 52, no. 4 (August 2011): 558.

⁴⁷ Rockefeller, “Flow,” 567.

⁴⁸ I found their copies in the Slavonic Library in Helsinki, where I spent a couple of weeks in August 2022.

contrary, *Kievlianin* was a newspaper founded by Vitaliy Shulgin, a professor at the local university, in 1864. It was issued three times per week, and only in 1879 was transformed into a daily newspaper. At first, *Kievlianin* was a moderate liberal periodical, but soon switched to the conservative positions. The newspaper became one of the most popular newspapers in the Russian imperial provinces and published broad accounts about the international affairs and the Russian foreign policy. Because of the greater presence of “political issues” discussed in the newspaper and its more regular appearance, I am paying closer attention to its content.

Drug Naroda was a double-monthly newspaper founded by Aleksey Andriiashev, a Kyiv teacher and activist. The newspaper was oriented to the wider audience, and people outside the intellectual circles were able to send their thoughts there. International issues were addressed there together with the recommendations for householders and peasants. Apart from that, Andriiashev was a famous beekeeper, so the materials related to this occupation were often published in the newspaper.

Kievskia gubernskia vedomosti was an official governmental newspaper founded in 1838. Since 1866, it was issued three times per week. The newspaper had two parts – an official and unofficial, of which the last contained information about the inner and international events. The materials from the foreign and domestic press were published in the unofficial part. Those notes presented the official position of the Russian local government, but also provide additional ideas about the issue, especially after the shift in the editorial board in 1877. Similar shift happened with the privately-owned newspapers as well. *Kievskii Listok* was a free-of-charge newspaper for travelers issued two times per week in 1875-1877, but in 1878 the owner of newspaper at first change it to a “literary and economic newspaper” and later – to a “political and literary newspaper.”⁴⁹

⁴⁹ See *Kievskii Listok*, August 5, 1878, 1; *Kievskii Listok*, August 9, 1878, 1.

Thesis Outline

The present thesis consists of four chapters, each of which deals with a particular aspect of the Eastern Question in the public space established in Kyiv in the 1870s. The first chapter asks how the information related the Great Eastern Crisis appeared in the Kyiv newspapers during 1875-1878. It presents a close examination of the sources of information available to the local newsproducers and highlights how the diversity of those sources posed a challenge for the local authors when the information flows related to the crisis intensified. Dealing with these challenges, the authors managed to constantly combine the references to the sources, creating separate news articles on the basis of opinions grasped from outside.

The second chapter shows how and where the news was placed on the pages of Kyiv-based newspapers. By analyzing the places in the newspapers where the information appeared, I argue that with time, the information about the new international crisis moved from the bottom of the last pages to the front pages of the local press which showed the shift in priorities for the newspaper authors and editors. This shift was visible also in the context of the Eastern Question, which was completely absent at the very beginning of the crisis, but later appeared in various parts of the local newspapers, a sign which will be analyzed in the last part of the chapter.

The third chapter is dedicated to the usage of the Eastern question by local actors in Kyiv during 1875-1878. It starts with the analysis of primary discussions about the question and positionality of the newspaper authors and slightly moves to the debate about explicit and implicit references to the Eastern Questions in the articles which concerned the local politics. Its final part presents the reflection on the meaning of the Eastern Question assigned by the local actors. In this case, I argue that the Eastern Question was interpreted differently by different authors, but the same authors almost never clarified the meanings of the concept presuming that their audience was familiar enough with it. Besides, I show how the borrowed

interpretations of the Eastern Question were combined with the locally produced ones which created a ground for a multidimensional debate in the provincial city of Kyiv.

The final chapter touches on the expectations about the development of the Eastern Question. Starting with the question about possible answers to the question presented by the local intellectuals and newspaper authors, I also pay attention to their reflections on its possible future. Thus, I highlight the possible horizon of expectations presented to the local public by those who were involved in meaning-making process at the time when international crisis was appearing closer and closer to the streets of imperial Kyiv.

1 – Entering the Provinces: Information Flows and Kyiv newspapers between 1875-1878

The intensified speed of information was widely felt in Kyiv in the 1870s when various newspaper owners brought news to the readers from various sources. Every newspaper had its own approach to target the audience, and thus the basic understanding of what kind of news their audiences should read could be different. *Drug Naroda* looked for local priests and teachers from the provinces as well as literate villagers, while *Kievljanin* reached city dwellers who could not afford the subscription of a capital newspaper.⁵⁰ *Kievskii Telegraf* aimed to be read by liberal-minded intelligentsia in Kyiv. *Kievskii Listok* was at first distributed only to the travelers who went to Kyiv by train, and *Kievskii gubernskii Vedomosti* were the voice of local authorities.⁵¹ The audience was diverse, but due to the low rate of literacy in the provinces, the newspapers were still operating within a relatively small group of readers. At the same time, the sources of information that these readers consumed was more diverse, and reached places far beyond the Yugo-Zapadny Kray. For the purposes of this thesis, in this chapter, I will classify those that helped editors to bring information about the Great Eastern Crisis to Kyiv, and then – to other places in the Krai, thus mixing the information flows in the Western part of the Russian Empire.

Grasping the crisis: Approaches of Kyiv-Based Newspaper Authors

Newspaper editors were the first persons who appear behind the creation of information, its placing on the pages, and distribution to the audience. Apart from making decisions about particular texts to be placed in the paper, they also created news by mediatizing the local

⁵⁰ See, e.g. “Ob isdanii gazety Drug” Naroda [About the Publication of the newspaper Drug Naroda],” *Drug Naroda*, January 1, 1875, 1.

⁵¹ Fedir Savchenko, *Zaborona ukraiinstva 1876*, 157; “Gazeta Kievskii Listok razdaetsia... [Newspaper Kievskii Listok is distributed...],” *Kievskii Listok*, January 1, 1875, 1.

events and put their thoughts in an editorial (*peredovaia statia*) or added a comment to the articles written by other authors. Vasily Shulgin, the editor-in-chief of *Kievlianin*, was also a member of the Kyiv branch of the Slavic Charitable Committee, which became a separate committee in late summer 1877, so he communicated information about its operations and made advertisements of the next meetings by himself.⁵² Other newspaper authors could also present their opinions in the articles, thus transforming their thoughts into news, as was, for instance, in the case of Mykhailo Drahomanov, whose article *Hopes and Disappointments in the Western Slavdom* appeared on the front page of *Kievskii Telegraf* in June 1875 and was later referred to by the author in his political pamphlet about the changes in the Russian Empire in the 1870s.⁵³ The appearance of these articles mirrored the tendency when separate opinions were considered as news, which became an inevitable part of the growing news market worldwide in the nineteenth century.⁵⁴ These articles were quoted or received responses from other newspapers, thus creating a particular information flow, which happened in the case of debates between the authors of *Kievskii Telegraf* and *Kievlianin* in Spring 1875, before the international crisis started.

At the same time, editorials could present the official view of the local authorities, even though they were always published in the “unofficial” section. On September 4, 1876, *Kievskii gubernskii vedomosti* presented an editorial informing about the departure of the mobile hospital from Kyiv to Serbia. The authors informed about the number of people

⁵² “Zasedaniie Kievskago otdela slavianskago blagotvaritel'nogo obshchestva [The Session of the Kiev Branch of Slavic Charitable Society],” *Kievlianin*, May 12, 1877, 2; “Ustav kievskago slavianskago blagotvaritel'nogo obshchestva [The Charter of the Kiev Slavic Charitable Society],” *Kievlianin*, September 8, 1877, 1; “Ustav kievskago slavianskago blagotvaritel'nogo obshchestva [The Charter of the Kiev Slavic Charitable Society],” *Kievlianin*, September 10, 1877, 1; “Predsedatel kievskago slavianskago blagotvaritel'nogo obshchestva... [The Chief of the Kiev Slavic Charitable Society...],” *Kievlianin*, October 1, 1877, 4.

⁵³ “Nadezhdy i Razocharovaniia v Zapadnom Slaviansstve [Hopes and Disappointments among the Western Slavs],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 11, 1875, 1; Mikhail Drahomanov, *Do chego dovoevalis'? [To what we have fought?]* (Zheneva: Georg, Libraire-éditeur, 1878), 4-5.

⁵⁴ Andrew Griffiths, *The New Journalism, the New Imperialism and the Fiction of Empire, 1870–1900* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 38; see also Niklas Luhmann, *The Reality of Mass-Media*, transl. Kathleen Cross. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000) 33-35.

involved in the enterprise and funds for its operations and summarized that “by organization of medical aid for suffering Slavs [...] our city is not lower than both capitals and, of course, left behind less rich towns.”⁵⁵ However, once the hospital staff departed, its fate could not be directly clarified by the editor, who, thus, needed to look for other sources to tell the readers more about the place of their donations and the role of doctors from Kyiv in the ongoing Eastern crisis.

Correspondents

A great part of information available for Kyiv-based newspaper subscribers in the 1870s was supplied by correspondents. The presence of a correspondent was an expensive enterprise for a newspaper even in the imperial capital, and journalism as a professional practice was still underdeveloped in the Russian Empire in the late 1870s. During the Russo-Ottoman war of 1877-1878, the newspapers were interested in sending their people to the war zone, but only a few of them received specific training beforehand, but even those were strictly controlled by the military censorship.⁵⁶ The means of communication also presented an additional challenge because the post in the war zone was overloaded, and the telegraph lines were broken from time to time.⁵⁷ Still, *Kievlianin* managed to have their correspondent close to the frontline.⁵⁸ *Kievskii Telegraf* had a correspondent in the Balkans in the time when the new international crisis started. On August 3, 1875, they published an anonymous letter from Serbia about the political situation there, a first instance of news sent directly from abroad.⁵⁹ The discourse of anonymity, however, was prevalent in the media throughout the Russian

⁵⁵ “Kiev”, 3-go Sentyabrya 1876 goda [Kiev, 3rd September 1876],” *Kievskii gubernskii vedomosti*, September 4, 1876, 4.

⁵⁶ See S. A. Kochukov, “K voprosu formirovaniia korpusa voennykh korrespondentov v russko-tureckoi vojne 1877-1878 godov,” 64-72.

⁵⁷ E. M. Muminova, “Pochtovaya sluzhba Rossijskoi armii v period russko-tureckoi vojny 1877-1878 gg. [Postal Service of the Russian Army during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878]” *Izvestiia Rossiiskogo gosudarstvennogo pedagogicheskogo universiteta im. A. I. Gercena*, no. 37 (80) (2008): 250-257.

⁵⁸ “Ot redaktsii [From the Editors],” *Kievlianin*, June 23, 1877, 1.

⁵⁹ A., “Pismo iz Serbii [A Letter from Serbia],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, August 8, 1875, 3.

Empire, which was a common pattern of the media history at the time, when the role of a single correspondent was only becoming important enough to place the full name on the pages.⁶⁰ Therefore, most of the articles were left unsigned, which makes it difficult to identify their authors, but in the case of *Kievskii Telegraf*, a person with the same initials appeared at the end of the article “Political Sketches of Serbia” published in March 1876, which presents a sign of continuing connections between the author and the newspaper.⁶¹

Internal correspondents who collected information outside Kyiv (but within the borders of the Russian Empire) were also anonymous and dealt primarily with local life. Their presence may be identified only by the regularity of information published in the newspapers and special remarks added to the text, but their status was undefined. For instance, the editors of *Kievlianin* placed correspondence from Poltava regularly on the pages of their newspaper. A series of such letters were published in early 1877 and signed as N. Kustovdkii, and Vnikaiushchii (a person who is delving into something), who appeared as experts of local affairs.⁶² Later in the year, correspondence from the two also appeared in *Kievlianin*, bringing among others, information about the aid for soldiers wounded in the Russo-Turkish war organized in the city.⁶³ Similar articles appeared in other newspapers as well. On August 2, *Drug Naroda* published a letter from Kharyton Latka, a dweller of Volochysk, a small town in Podolskaia gubernia, about the locals’ responses to the war, underlining the willingness of the community to help wounded and sick soldiers and support “the affair of liberating Slavs

⁶⁰ See Alberto Gabriele’s reflections about this in the context of the British press development: Alberto Gabriele, *Reading Popular Culture in Victorian Print: Belgravia and Sensationalism*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 69-75.

⁶¹ A. D., “Politicheskii Ocherki Serbii [Political Sketches of Serbia],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, March 12, 1875, 1.

⁶² Vnikaiushchii, “Poltavskoe zhyt’e-byt’e [Poltava’s Life],” *Kievlianin*, January 27, 1877, 2; Kustodskii, “Iz Poltava (Korrespondetsiya Kievlianina) [From Poltava (Kievlianin’s Correspondence)],” *Kievlianin*, February 17, 1877, 2. N. Kustodskii, “Iz Poltava (Korrespondetsiya Kievlianina) [From Poltava (Kievlianin’s Correspondence)],” *Kievlianin*, February 19, 1877, 2; Kustodskii, “Iz Poltava (Korrespondetsiya Kievlianina) [From Poltava (Kievlianin’s Correspondence)],” *Kievlianin*, March 19, 1877, 2.

⁶³ Vnikaiushchii, “Iz Poltava (Korrespondetsiya Kievlianina) [From Poltava (Kievlianin’s Correspondence)],” *Kievlianin*, September 15, 1877, 2.

from the Balkan peninsula from the Turkish slavery.”⁶⁴ Therefore, they showed the dynamic of changes and its implications on the local life, which, mediatized through the pages of Kyiv-based newspapers, reached the wider audience of the region and brought the understanding of common practices related to the international crisis or the ongoing war.

Local correspondence also helped to mark the geography the newspapers covered. Poltava, a capital of Poltavskaia gubernia, did not belong to Yugo-zapadnyi krai, a region marked in the Kievlianin's title, which included the Kievskaia, Podolskaia, and Volynskaia gubernias, but the correspondence from the city frequently crossed the Dnipro and reached readers of the Kray. At the same time, Kyiv newspapers received letters from sites as far as Konotop and Kharkiv in the East, Pinsk and Mensk in the North, Chelm in the West, and Odesa and Mariupol in the South. Such wide geography shows the space reached by the newspapers issued in one imperial peripheral center, but there still were particularities among the newspapers. *Kievskii Listok* almost did not publish any letters, but its orientation toward travelers made it possible to be distributed even among outsiders who accidentally came to the buffet at the train stations in Nizhyn or Koziatyn. Letters from the sites to the north of Kyiv almost never appeared in *Kievskii Telegraf*, while *Drug Naroda* did not receive much correspondence from bigger cities. However, the first newspaper published letters from volunteers who joined the Bosnian uprising, such as the one that appeared in November 1875 and was written in Ukrainian.⁶⁵ At the same time, *Drug Naroda* received and then distributed information from small settlements which were not likely to be reached by other newspapers.

The diversity of sources was important at a time when the demand for information grew sharply in the Russian Empire. It became particularly evident during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878, when “every literate and half-literate peasant tried to get a newspaper issue,

⁶⁴ Khar. Latka, “V Redaktsiiu gazety «Drug” Naroda» [To the Editors of Drug Naroda],” *Drug Naroda*, August 2 (17), 1877, 237.

⁶⁵ “Izvestiia iz” slavyanskikh” zemel’ [News from Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, November 23, 1875, 3.

even an old one, and read it in the circle of family and friends.”⁶⁶ Even though the literacy rate among peasants was even smaller than among other social groups in the Russian Empire, the practice of reading out loud could partly compensate this disadvantage.⁶⁷ Newspaper editors in Kyiv perfectly understood this feature of the readership, and, for this purpose, *Drug Naroda* offered a lower price for year subscription for local teachers and priests.⁶⁸ At the same time, as the quote shows, the growing demand for information did not mean the growing demand for the speed with which the information should have reached its readers. The audience could wait for further details about the events of the crisis or the war, and those details could still be considered as news at the time when they reached the eyes or ears of people from the circle of Kyiv-based newspapers. This understanding was for the news creators. Kharyton Latka sent his letter from Volochysk on June 28, and *Drug Naroda* published it a month later, on August 2, 1877.

Telegraph and Telegrams

Information flows outside the Western provinces of the Russian Empire circulated more and more rapidly, making it almost impossible catch them in letters delivered by regular mail, which made the presence of telegraph crucial for media in Kyiv to report information from remote places. The telegrams gave direct access to the “events,” so their presence in a newspaper could become an advantage, which was the case with *Kievlianin*, who sent separate telegrams in advance to its subscribers. They could provide readers with direct access to the event happening at the moment in a remote place. On February 22, 1876, *Kievskii Telegraf* editors placed a bunch of telegrams without credits on the front page, one of which was

⁶⁶ “Iz” Zvenigorodskogo uezda... [From Zvenigorodka Uyezd],” *Kievlianin*, September 15, 1877, 2.

⁶⁷ The literate part of population was expected to read aloud, which was one of “secular cultural uses” of literary in the Russian Empire, as Jeffrey Brooks illustrates (see Jeffrey Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Culture, 1861-1917* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1985), 27-34).

⁶⁸ “Ob” isdanii gazety Drug” Naroda [About the Publication of the Newspaper Drug Naroda],” *Drug Naroda*, January 1, 1875, 1.

delivered from Ragusa (today Dubrovnik) and told a story of insurgents in Bosnia, who refused to accept the reforms offered by the sultan and proclaimed that they would “lay down arms only if they are free or dead.”⁶⁹ The telegram was dated “February 20,” which allowed the newspaper to publish quickly the information about a particular moment or the ongoing contestations in the Balkans.

However, the growing speed of information presented its own challenges to the Kyiv newspapers’ editors. Several days after the *Kievskii Telegraf* readers saw the telegram from Ragusa, the *Kievlianin* observer, commenting on the recent events in the Ottoman Empire, concluded that “the news we receive from the theater of uprising, while contradicting each other, until this moment are removing the possibility to judge explicitly about the true state of affairs in the Balkan peninsula.”⁷⁰ For the newspaper, which aimed to present the “facts” to its readers, such an uncertainty was challenging, and the authors recognized this challenges. The remarks followed by the presentation of contradictory news the newspaper had gathered about the ongoing uprising in Bosnia, with a brief explanation about each of them. This approach had to show the “objective” character of the piece, an ideal which was often declared by *Kievlianin*. However, the author’s position in this case was clear and mentioned at the very beginning of the article: “In the past two weeks, events in **Turkey** were not reassuring” (bold in original).⁷¹ This remark provided the frame for the presented uncertainties.

While pointing out the contradictory news, the observer referred to “official and officious sources”, which helped him to draw particular conclusions, omitting a reference to the fact that all information was transferred to Kyiv via telegraph with the mediation of telegraph agencies. With the growing necessity to circulate news without clashing the business interests of big players, the four biggest telegraph agencies – the Associated Press,

⁶⁹ “Telegrammy «Kievskago Telegrafa» [Telegrams of Kievskii Telegraf],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, February 22, 1876, 1.

⁷⁰ “Inostrannia Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, February 28, 1876, 3.

⁷¹ “Inostrannia Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, February 28, 1876, 3.

Reuter's, Agence Havas, and Wolffs Telegraphisches Büro agreed on dividing the spheres of their influence according to the geographical zones.⁷² New players who entered the news market later had to deal with this challenge because only the biggest newspapers, such as London-based dailies, could afford direct correspondence with different parts of the globe.⁷³ *Kievlianin* and *Kievskii Telegraf* published the information provided by three out of four agencies because they paid attention primarily to the European or Asian continents in their foreign news sections, which was out of the Associated Press control.⁷⁴

At the same time, the Russian telegraph agencies, including the private *Mezhdunarodnoe Telegrafnoe Aгенstvo* (International Telegraph Agency, MTA), founded in 1872,⁷⁵ managed to organize its own information network, which was also important for provincial newspapers throughout the empire. In particular, *Kievlianin* subscribed to the telegraphs from MTA and shared them regularly with readers by putting them directly on the pages or mailing them to subscribers from Kyiv separately.⁷⁶ When the Russo-Turkish war started, the newspaper owners decided to enlarge its stream of telegrams and added telegrams from the theater of war. For example, on May 3, the editors informed the audience that these telegrams would be supplied by the Kyiv authorities who “worry about the fastest familiarization of the local population with the true news about the military operations.”⁷⁷ The authors also added that they managed to send their own correspondent to the army to supply

⁷² See Esperança Bielsa, “The Pivotal Role of News Agencies in the Context of Globalization: A Historical Approach,” *Global Networks*, 8 (2008): 350-355, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-0374.2008.00199.x>.

⁷³ See Jonathan Silberstein-Loeb, “The Structure of the News Market in Britain, 1870-1914,” *The Business History Review* 83, no. 4 (Winter 2009): 759-788.

⁷⁴ The only direct reference to the Associated Press during the Great Eastern Crisis was made by the *Kievlianin* authors on December 2, 1875, when they shared news about Egyptian khedive's intention to sell sugar refineries (“Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, December 2, 1875, 1).

⁷⁵ See “Ukaz 50127.” In *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii: sobranie vtoroe. 1871 i dopolnenie. Tom XLVI, otdelenie vtoroe* [Complete Code of Laws of the Russian Empire: Second Code. 1871 and Addition. Volume XLVI, second section] (Sankt-Peterburg: Pechatano v tipografii II otdeleniya sobstvennoj e. i. v. kancelarii, 1874), 466.

⁷⁶ See, e.g., “Telegrammy «Kievlianina» [The Telegrams of *Kievlianin*],” *Kievlianin*, April 14, 1877, 1; “Telegrammy «Kievlianina» [The Telegrams of *Kievlianin*],” *Kievlianin*, April 16, 1877, 1; “Telegrammy «Kievlianina» [The Telegrams of *Kievlianin*],” *Kievlianin*, April 28, 1877, 1.

⁷⁷ “Nezavisimo ot telegram... [Separately from telegrams...],” *Kievlianin*, May 3, 1877, 1.

the news to inform readers about the events “on time and with details.”⁷⁸ Therefore, the newspaper adapted quickly to the changing information flows in order to keep visible its objective to provide news close to the event, while receiving additional advantage over its competitors.

This adaptivity went hand-in-hand with new difficulties related to the usage of the telegraph as a means for receiving news. Despite some improvement in communication, such as the establishment of a direct mailing service in Romania in April 1877, newspapers still reported on the interruptions on telegraph lines.⁷⁹ These interruptions did not allow Kyiv-based media to send information further across the Russian Empire, which was a commitment they had to make for other market players.⁸⁰ Moreover, the changing nature of events abroad presented a risk of false information to be spread in Kyiv, where many actors were interested in sharing news. On June 23, 1877, *Kievlianin* published a note about the falsified telegram from *Pravitelstvennyi vestnik*, an official imperial newspaper, which was put on the pillars around the city. The last practice had been recently introduced by the local government, so the presence of false information could undermine the position of the authorities, and the government decided to put an official stamp on each of the telegrams it spread around the city.⁸¹ Additionally, on the very same day when the falsification was reported, *Kievlianin* introduced a special section with telegrams from *Pravitelstvennyi vestnik* which aimed to be published “simultaneously with them being stuck on the pillars” around the city.⁸² In such a way, the newspaper decided to fight disinformation and, at the same time, brought a part of official media discourse to its readers.

⁷⁸ “Nezavisimo ot telegram... Separately from telegrams...,” *Kievlianin*, May 3, 1877, 1.

⁷⁹ See “Ot pochtovago departamenta ob”yavleno... [The Postal Department has announced...],” *Kievlianin*, April 16, 1877, 2.

⁸⁰ See “Gazeta «Nedelya», so slov” kievskago korrespondenta... [Newspaper *Nedelia*, according to the Kiev correspondent],” *Kievlianin*, June 4, 1877, 2.

⁸¹ “Ot redaktsii «Kievlianina» [From the Editors of *Kievlianin*],” *Kievlianin*, June 21, 1877, 1.

⁸² “Ot redaktsii [From the Editors],” *Kievlianin*, June 23, 1877, 1.

The Kyiv newspaper authors also had different attitudes to the reliability of information received from international telegraph agencies. On the one hand, they usually simply put the telegrams from big agencies to the pages of newspapers with minimum comment from their side and thus duplicated the discourses produced by Russian MTA or Agence Général Russe, the above-mentioned big telegraph agencies, and sometimes Berlin-based Louis Hirsch's Telegraphisches Bureau, as was the case of *Kievskii Telegraf* in the last months of the newspaper's operations.⁸³ Additionally, *Kievskii gubernskii vedomosti* started publishing official telegrams "from the army commander-in-chief" in January 1878, thus bringing officially approved, i.e., provisionally censored, news to Kyiv.⁸⁴

On the other hand, newspaper editors were suspicious about the information they received from particular places. On December 9, 1876, *Kievlianin* published a telegram from "Zemlin" (currently Zemun, part of Belgrade) about the Serbian commanders' attitudes to Russian volunteers in the Serbian army. The telegram put a shadow on the volunteers and highlighted the internal dissatisfaction about their capacities, which was followed by a remark from the editorial board who asked readers to "keep in mind that this telegram is from Zemun, i.e., of Anglo-Magyar origin and thus raises little trust."⁸⁵ In two days, however, the newspaper readers could see the telegram from Zemun published without any notes.⁸⁶ The following issues also contained telegrams from the same place, but no comments were placed until in late February, 1877, when the editors put the news from Sarajevo about the Ottoman expectations of the Austrian troops' invasion into Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the sentence that followed the news, the author mentioned that the telegram "came from Zemlin, i.e., the route which does not inspire confidence," doubting the reliability of the information, but then

⁸³ See "Izvestiia iz slavianskikh zemel' [News from Slavic Lands]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, April 25, 1876, 3; "Izvestiia iz slavianskikh zemel'," *Kievskii Telegraf*, May 21, 1876, 3.

⁸⁴ See "Ofitsial'nyiia telegrammy Glavnokomanduyushchago deystvuyushchei armiei," *Kievskii gubernskii vedomosti*, January 10, 1878, 6.

⁸⁵ "Zemlin, 6 (18) dekabria [Zemlin, 6 (18) December]," *Kievlianin*, December 9, 1876, 1.

⁸⁶ "Zemlin, 8 (20) dekabria [Zemlin, 8 (20) December]," *Kievlianin*, December 11, 1876, 1.

continued commenting on it.⁸⁷ Such hostile tone in relation to English or Hungarian sources highlighted by the provincial monarchist newspaper framed the news for the readers in a particular way. Simultaneously, editors kept publishing the telegrams from “unreliable” places which showed that they were nevertheless considered important. Therefore, the newspaper, following Martin Conboy’s observations, produced a specific heteroglossia, which was not primarily the result of the market situation but rather a consequence of intertwined editors’ decisions of placing telegrams and reminding readers about their problematic nature.⁸⁸

Transferring Information from the Russian Imperial Press

The heteroglossia of and within Kyiv-based newspapers was also highlighted by the ways in which they introduced the information from other newspapers on their pages. Various periodicals became sources for the provincial press during the Great Eastern Crisis, but there were still differences between the ways what and how they reached local readers. On the very basic level, newspapers referred directly one to another if they found information useful, but it happened only in the case when local news was to be published. Thus, *Kievlianin* referred to *Kieyevskii listok* to provide details about a flood in April 1877 or cited the article from *Kiyevskiiia gubernskiiia vedomoski* about the clothes of dead people which were being sold on a flea market and caused diseases in Kyiv at the end of the year.⁸⁹ However, both articles dealt with extraordinary events, rather than everyday life activities, which were covered by the newspapers themselves. Thus, *Kievskii listok* could publish an article about the departure of

⁸⁷ “Vostochnyi vopros” i Turtsiia[The Eastern Question and Turkey],” *Kievlianin*, February 26, 1876, 3.

⁸⁸ Martin Conboy, *The Language of Newspapers* (London: SAGE, 2010), 5-6

⁸⁹ See “«Kievskii List. O.» peredaet... [Kievskii List. O. is conveying...],” *Kievlianin*, April 23, 1877, 2; “Kak odnu iz prichin” paprostoneniia...[As one of the reasons for the spread...],” *Kievlianin*, December 22, 1877, 2.

volunteers to Serbia, and ordinary phenomenon in Kyiv in the second half of 1876, without referring to any other local sources.⁹⁰

Local newspapers from other urban centers had more chances to be cited by Kyiv-based newspapers, and editors often chose to include the information to them in the issues. However, these references dealt primarily about important developments of local affairs, while for international agenda they preferred to use other sources. The local media usually could not afford to pay for exclusive access to information, so they had to use the service of bigger players on the market. Only when international events touched the life of city dwellers throughout the empire, did the local newspapers become invaluable sources for almost every editor. Therefore, the only reference to local media which appeared in *Kievskii Telegraf* before it was closed by the authorities was news about people of Russian origin who came from Istanbul to Odesa in early May 1876.⁹¹ This news originally appeared in the Odesa-based newspaper *Novorossiyskii Telegraf*, which for a moment became an important source for authors in Kyiv. When the presence of the international events became more and more evident on the local level, the references to the local newspapers also became more important for the editors. The last not only published correspondence they received from locals, but also republished the letters which appeared in other newspapers, which was the case of a report about the peasants from Zvenygorodka uyezd (Kievskaiia guberniia) and their reactions to the ongoing Russo-Ottoman war, placed in *Kievlianin* in September 1877.⁹² The letter originally was sent to *Odesskii Vestnik* and then travelled to Kyiv, connecting the two local media discourses.

At the same time, capital-based Russian newspapers had a larger coverage of events from abroad than Kyiv-based newspapers, and official periodicals were the first to which

⁹⁰ "Ot"ezd v Serbiu [The Departure to Serbia]," *Kieevskii listok ob"yavlenii*, September 18, 1876, 2.

⁹¹ "Vnutrenniia Izvestiia [Internal News]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, May 7, 1876, 2.

⁹² "Iz Zvenigorodskago uezda... [From Zvenigorodka Uyezd...]," *Kievlianin*, September 15, 1877, 2.

editors referred in their approaches to receiving information. *Pravitel'stvennyi vestnik* played a key role in this regard. Founded in 1869 with the aim to share official messages from the imperial government, it was later transformed into an influential periodical during the editorship of Sergei Sushkov (1874-1882) and Grigorii Danilevskiy (1882-1890), when a big unofficial part was introduced.⁹³ It supplied local authorities and newspapers with telegrams approved by the imperial censorship, as in the above-discussed case of *Kievl'ianin*. Apart from that, its section about international affairs was also safe to be republished because it was always checked by censors after the issues appeared. Thus, when the editors of *Kievskii listok* decided to introduce the section about international news in August 1878, they chose information from the official newspaper to fill it with the stories they found important.⁹⁴

Privately owned media from Sankt-Petersburg and Moscow were also important sources for editors in Kyiv to look for the recent developments in time of the Great Eastern Crisis. On May 7, 1876, *Kievskii Telegraf* published news about Russian general Mikhail Cherniaev and his departure to Serbia, citing Sankt-Peterburg newspaper *Birzha* as their source.⁹⁵ In one week they cited *Russii Mir*, another Sankt-Peterburg-based periodical, to inform their readers about the general's arrival to the country in the Western Balkans.⁹⁶ In the next issue, they referred to *Moskovskiiia vedomosti*, a newspaper edited by Mikhail Katkov, a prominent conservative figure of the empire.⁹⁷ Thus, readers who could not afford the subscription of the expensive capital dailies, could still familiarize themselves with the materials published there.⁹⁸

⁹³ Marina Apon, "Formirovanie redakcionnogo sostava gazety «Pravitel'stvennyi vestnik» [Forming the Editorial Board of the Newspaper «Pravitel'stvennyi vestnik»],” *Vlast'*, no. 10 (2010): 125-127.

⁹⁴ See “Innostrannaya Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievskii listok*, August 9, 1878, 3.

⁹⁵ “Vnutrenniia Izvestiia [Internal News],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, May 7, 1876, 3.

⁹⁶ “Izvestiia iz slavyanskikh zemel' [News from Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, May 14, 1875, 3.

⁹⁷ “Izvestiia iz slavyanskikh zemel' [News from Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, May 16, 1875, 3.

⁹⁸ Yearly subscription of *Russii Mir* in 1872 costed 12 rubles with delivery (“Podpiska prinimayetsya... [Subscription is being accepted...]”, *Russkii mir*, December 31, 1871, 1), while the subscription of *Moskovskiiia vedomosti* for the same year costed 15-17 rubles (“Tsena za gazetu [Price for the newspaper],” *Moskovskiiia vedomosti*, January 1, 1872, 1). In contrast to them, *Kievskii Telegraf* offered subscription for 6-8 rubles per

At the same time, the media discourses produced in the imperial centers were retranslated in the periphery. On October 3, 1877, *Drug Naroda* published an article “Otgoloski voiny” (“Echo of war”), which originally appeared in *Golos*, a liberal newspaper from Sankt-Peterburg. This article covered the “image of the present mood of the Russian nation (Russkago naroda)”, and presented the overview of typical reactions of the population to the war.⁹⁹ *Golos*, which aimed to highlight the positive sides of the Russian side, became an important element of the war-time propaganda in the empire.¹⁰⁰ Although this aspect was also evident in the above-cited text, in this case, the whole reference to the “Russian people” became more important. It allowed Ivan Andriiashev, an editor of *Drug Naroda*, to bring a sense of commonality of the Russian people to the province with the mediation of his newspaper and the assistance of local priests or teachers who could read this article to the illiterate population. Authors of *Kievskii Telegraf* criticized Andriiashev for his position a few years before.¹⁰¹ However, in late 1877, they did not any mean to contradict him because their newspaper was banned, some of them were writing in exile, and the war silenced the contradictory voices.

Translating Information from Abroad

The newspapers from the Russian Empire were important but not dominant sources of information for the Kyiv-based newspapers at the time of the main international crisis of the 1870s. On March 22, 1877, *Kievlianin* published several news items about ongoing events in the Balkans, and all reference to sources were connected to imperial newspapers – apart from the above-mentioned *Golos* and *Russkii Mir*, the editors also published news from *Novoe*

year or five kopecks per an issue (see “Prinimaetsya podpiska... [Subscription is being accepted...],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, January 1, 1875, 1).

⁹⁹ “Otgoloski voiny,” *Drug Naroda*, 1877, October 3 (15), 302.

¹⁰⁰ See Onur Isci, “Wartime Propaganda and the Legacies of Defeat: Russian and Ottoman Newspapers in the War of 1877–1878,” *Russian History* 41, no. 2 (2014): 181–196.

¹⁰¹ “Oproverzhenie [A Denial],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, 1875, July 23, 3.

Vremya, a Sankt-Petersburg newspaper edited by writer Aleksei Suvorin.¹⁰² However, in another issue, the editors did not mention any Russian newspapers at all when they were talking about the news from the peninsula, and instead, their reader could learn about the unfolding crisis from a French newspaper *Le Temps*,¹⁰³ Bulgarian *Napredok*, and German *Kölnische Zeitung* among the sources of information.¹⁰⁴ In the following issue, none of these newspapers appeared, but the information from five other newspapers from Austro-Hungary, Germany and France were chosen by the editors.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, the readers could witness the flows mediated by the variety of newspapers from different imperial or national contexts and collected together to create a particular media discourse on the pages of a Kyiv-based newspaper.

During the years 1875-1878, Kyiv newspapers referred to approximately 150 newspapers and periodicals from abroad, which, however, appeared in different forms and contexts. The range of sources varied from *Lancet* and *British Medical Journal*, cited by *Kievskii Telegraf*, to clarify the story of the assassination of French and German consuls in Thessaloniki in May 1876, to Kraków-based newspaper *Czas*, used by *Kievlianin* to illustrate the information about potential dangers for the Russian empire in March 1877.¹⁰⁶ The information from these sources could come in a different way because the note about *Czas* was borrowed by editors from *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*, a daily from the capital of the Russian Empire, which meant that the original media discourse was already mediated by another source. The first account on international news published in *Kievskii listok* had references to four foreign newspapers, but all those references came from the side of

¹⁰² See "Turtsyia i slavianskiiia zemli [Turkey and Slavic Lands]," *Kievlianin*, 1877, March 22, 3.

¹⁰³ In the original article, the newspaper was called "Temps," without an article "le." The *Kievlianin*'s authors as well as their colleagues from *Kievskii Telegraf* and *Kievskii Listok* rarely included articles when they referred to the foreign newspapers, but the rest of the titles was usually published in original. At the same time, *Drug Naroda* always translated the newspaper titles from the other languages.

¹⁰⁴ "Turtsyia i slavyanskiya zemli [Turkey and Slavic Lands]," *Kievlianin*, 1877, March 24, 3.

¹⁰⁵ "Turtsyia i slavyanskiya zemli [Turkey and Slavic Lands]," *Kievlianin*, 1877, March 26, 3.

¹⁰⁶ "Innostrannaia khronika [Foreign News Items]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 9, 1876, 3; "Avstro-Vengriia [Austro-Hungary]," *Kievlianin*, March 1, 1877, 3.

Pravitelstvennyi vestnik, who selected and interpreted the information beforehand.¹⁰⁷ At the same time, the mentions of British scientific journals chosen by *Kievskii Telegraf* seem not to have been mediated by any other imperial periodical, but it was the only appearance of these newspapers in media discourses produced in Kyiv, so this information might have accidentally come through telegraph. It means that readers who engaged with different newspapers at different times met different levels of interpretation.

The newspaper editors also added their comments to articles coming from abroad if they had access to multiple sources. This possibility posed an additional challenge because of limited space for issues which appeared three times per week and where information from various dailies had to be published. On March 31, 1877, on the eve of the Russo-Ottoman war, *Kievlianin*'s authors started their review of international events with the complaint that they "received a bundle of newspapers, but not a single fact to clarify the burning Eastern question has come. Discourses, combinations, words, words, words, and that's all. It even becomes disgusting to take a newspaper in hand! Telegrams are not better at all: they only confuse you with their contradictions and uncertainty."¹⁰⁸ This complaint was followed by a survey of recent developments in the world, but the sense of challenge did not leave the pages of *Kievlianin*, whose editors aimed to provide their readers with "facts." Thus, on April 9, the editors again had to argue with the "empty bubbles" of newspapers in the British Empire which did not help to clarify the current tensions in the Balkans.¹⁰⁹

The uncertainty inside the information flows which circulated in the Russian Empire and beyond its borders during an international crisis was underlined by constant references to rumors on the pages of Kyivan newspapers. Three days after criticizing British newspapers for "babbling," *Kievlianin*'s editors mentioned that unnamed newspapers shared "sensational

¹⁰⁷ See "Innostrannia Izvestiia [Foreign News]," *Kievskii listok*, August 9, 1878, 3.

¹⁰⁸ "Vostochnia dela [Eastern Affairs]," *Kievlianin*, March 31, 1877, 3.

¹⁰⁹ "Angliia [England]," *Kievlianin*, April 9, 1877, 3.

rumors”, among which “hardly 1 per cent contained 1 per cent of truth.”¹¹⁰ Despite such a critical stance, they did not hesitate to present rumors from various sources to their readers, which was especially evident during the time of negotiations. On September 30, 1876, a rumor from the French newspaper *Le Temps* about the privately addressed willingness of the Russian emperor, Aleksandr II, to save peace in Europe was published without any comment.¹¹¹ In the next issue, readers could find a rumor about the Russian and Austro-Hungarian plans to occupy Bulgaria and Bosnia respectively. The author did not name the source of information in this case but, instead, told that “despite some inspiring doubts details, the rumor seems to be probable.”¹¹² The value both messages depended on the particular decisions taken by those who included them in the articles, which means that rumors could serve as important sources of information. Such attitude reflects the growing global tendency toward inclusion of gossips and rumors into newspapers’ discourses, which in the 1880s led to the creation of new journalism.¹¹³ *Kievlianin*, whose editors were keen on sharing definite information, accepted the possibility of the potential definite character of rumors.

The references to rumors published by foreign and domestic newspapers or telegraph agencies revealed additional problems related to the growing speed of information flows and its effect on everyday life. On April 18, 1876, *Kievskii Telegraf* published a rumor about the readiness of the Ottoman Empire to declare war on Montenegro, which was followed by note that this immediately affected the stock exchange.¹¹⁴ The news was not additionally commented, but it illustrated the potential power of such reports, which could become an instrument of disinformation or misinformation during the international crises or wartime. On April 23, 1877, *Kievlianin* published a note that they sent their readers a telegram with a rumor

¹¹⁰ “Obshcheye polozhenie del” [General State of Affairs],” *Kievlianin*, April 12, 1877, 3.

¹¹¹ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, September 30, 1876, 3.

¹¹² “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, October 2, 1876, 3.

¹¹³ See, e.g., Andrew Griffiths, *The New Journalism, the New Imperialism and the Fiction of Empire, 1870–1900*, 1–10.

¹¹⁴ “Innostrannia Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, April 18, 1876, 3.

that Turkish troops that left Kars, a city in North-Eastern Anatolia, adding that the “rumor turned out to be false.”¹¹⁵ The last remark highlighted the challenge of bringing the information to the newspaper in the imperial provinces where fewer number of issues and dependence on the external sources required the editors to adapt to rapidly changing international events.

However, local authors’ work with external sources did not end with apologies for misinforming their readers in the time of growing international tensions, and instead, took various forms. On a very basic level, they could decide which telegrams or news items to publish in every issue, which was evident even in the case of *Kievskii listok*, which chose to republish only particular articles from *Pravitelstvennyi vestnik*. Apart from that, the newspapers could shape the telegrams they received. On June 4, 1876, *Kievskii Telegraf* used a telegram received from Agence Havas to create a separate news item about Greece.¹¹⁶ The day before, *Kievlianin* also created news about Greece based on the telegram from Vienne Correspondenzbüro and its comment about “great disturbance of minds” in the country.¹¹⁷ In the very same issue, they also published series of news about the Ottoman Empire which started with a reference to official telegram that was split into separate parts and inserted in the article.¹¹⁸ In such a way, the authors re-narrativized the condensed message which came from abroad and created a different news item for their local readers.

The references to external newspapers, either all-imperial or foreign, also did not always mark a mere consumption of information from the sources whose owners could pay for a dozen informants or correspondents worldwide or were close to the place where worth-covering events were happening. The Kyiv-based authors could easily question those materials and open a discussion with other periodicals. In the editorial published in *Kievskii*

¹¹⁵ “Telegrammy «Kievlianina» [Telegrams of *Kievlianin*],” *Kievlianin*, April 24, 1877, 1.

¹¹⁶ “Gretsiiia [Greece],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 4, 1876, 3.

¹¹⁷ “Gretsiiia [Greece],” *Kievlianin*, June 3, 1876, 3.

¹¹⁸ See “Turtsiia [Turkey],” *Kievlianin*, June 3, 1876, 3.

Telegraf on September 2, 1875, the author calls for donations to help people in the Balkans shared by *Russkiy mir* in order to “reproach the Russian society for its indifference” in the case of the ongoing uprising in Bosnia.¹¹⁹ In this case, the news about donations became only a starting point for openly addressing a broader issue. Even though the *Russkii mir*’s article was not criticized per se, it was turned into a tool for criticism.

Moreover, the texts from external periodicals could be turned into news themselves. In a month after seeing the critical editorial, the readers of *Kievskii Telegraf* could find news about ongoing debates between *Russkii mir* and *Journal de St.-Pétersbourg* around the question of Russian imperial politics toward the Ottoman empire. The newspaper editors chose two excerpts from both newspapers to cite and decided to create a separate article based on them and place it in the section “Foreign news.”¹²⁰ *Kievlianin*’s editors also used similar combinations to create news based on others’ opinions. In particular, they referred to a Czech periodical to criticize the politics of Pope Pius IX in related to Balkan Slavs, cited Polish newspapers in the context of debate around the Polish legion, which was to be formed in the Ottoman army, and made an overview of British newspapers when the information about potential intervention of the British Empire appeared during the Russo-Turkish war.¹²¹ At some point earlier, Vitaliy Shulgin even decided to introduce a separate section dedicated to the reviews of opinions in the Russian imperial press in regard to the ongoing crisis, allowing the readers to familiarize themselves with excerpts on the continuity of news items.¹²²

¹¹⁹ “Kiev”, 2 sentyabrya 1875 g. [Kiev, 2 September 1875],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, September 3, 1875, 1-2.

¹²⁰ “Turtsyia i yuzhno-slavyanskiya zemli [Turkey and South Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, October 5, 1875, 3-4.

¹²¹ “Nevmeniaemyi ili nepogreshymyi? [Crazy or Infallible?],” *Kievlianin*, May 5, 1877, 3; “Otzyvy polskikh” gazet” o pol'skom” legione [The Newspapers’ Responses about Polish Legion],” *Kievlianin*, May 17, 1877, 1-2; “Angliia [England],” *Kievlianin*, July 19, 1877, 3.

¹²² See “Mneniia russkoy pechati po vostochnomu voprosu [Opinions of the Russian Press about the Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, August 31, 4.

Concluding thoughts: The International Contexts and the Censored Provincial Press

As I demonstrated in this chapter, multiple choices opened for Kyiv-based newspapers after the Great Eastern Crisis started. The information flows intensified drastically, and the editors had to decide which news items to select, process, and publish while keeping their editorial policies unchanged. The variety of sources they could use meant that the selection process always met with personal choices and opinions of local newsmakers, for whom the belief in truth coexisted with the prejudices toward certain sources of information. The prevailing censorship also influenced their policies, limiting the speed of information delivery, but simultaneously leaving space for the independent presentation of the international contexts.

Newspapers in Kyiv brought information about the Great Eastern crisis from multiple sources and locations. Based in Kyiv, they reached imperial capitals via telegraph wires and tried to catch the essential in the condensed information flows. They shaped the original texts re-creating them or combining them with other thoughts to write a new, different news item. Rumors from the Paris streets and gossips from London circles also appeared in front of the eyes of a dweller of Medzhybizh or Konotop who subscribed to *Kievlianin*.¹²³ However, an additional dilemma was raised beyond each such landing – where and how to place it on the pages of newspapers whose issues appeared two-three times per week. The placement of news was important because it shaped readership practices, catching attention or being left on the margins where the eye of a reader did not stop frequently. Thus, in the next chapter, I show that how decisions taken by editors from issue to issue directly influenced the appearance of the Great Eastern Crisis in places far removed from the event-making or decision-making areas.

¹²³ “Parizh”, 24 noyabr. (6 dek.). [Paris, 24 November (6 December)],” *Kievlianin*, November 25, 1876, 1; “Angliya. [England],” *Kievlianin*, May 31, 1876, 3. See also correspondence from Medzhybizh and Konotop: V. Voytychshyn, “Iz Medzhyvozha (Korrespondentsyia «Kievlianina») [From Medzhybizh (*Kievlianin*’s Correspondence)],” *Kievlianin*, November 6, 1876, 2; Zemlyak, “Iz Konotopa (Korrespondentsyia «Kievlianina») [From Konotop (*Kievlianin*’s Correspondence)],” *Kievlianin*, March 11, 1878, 2-3.

2 – Giving a Space on the Pages: The Great Eastern Crisis in Kyiv media

Recently, newspapers have extended their political sections, for which news from the theatre of military events in the Turkish territory provides materials. The public is truly interested in the course of this war, but it mainly limits itself with reading the latest telegrams and only rarely reads editorials, which serve as a sketch of the ongoing events. Other news usually are not read, with the exception of a small number of the first-rate 'politicians.' Thus, there is no ground, to the detriment of local interests, to spend on the newspapers' issues for political, often repetitive, news. Kiev telegraph administration has opened a monthly subscription to telegrams.¹²⁴

Introducing the Disturbances in the Balkans

On March 12, 1875, Ivan Andriiashev started the section “Foreign review” with the words that the newspaper “has not reported about the foreign news for a while. The main reason is that, actually, there was no news.”¹²⁵ This remark was followed by a brief observation of recent events, including the recent developments in Germany and Italy, war in Spain and the willingness of European states to discuss the law of war. Commenting on the last initiative, the authors praised the “universal movement toward saving peace” which had become evident in Europe and the intentions of the Russian government.¹²⁶ However, this remark was put on the bottom of the last page in the issue, right before the name of the editor-in-chief, which made it less visible among other texts.¹²⁷ For the editor, this news seemed to be less prominent in comparison to others in the overview, but at least, it received some attention. In this chapter, I analyze how the attention to the ongoing events in the “East” paid by the Kyiv-based editors changed before and during the Great Eastern Crisis of 1875-1878. Looking at the changes in the newspaper pages, I argue that the crisis entered the provincial media context despite the efforts to minimize the presentation of the information from abroad. Focusing primarily on local affairs, the authors reacted to the dynamic of international affairs and shifts in the

¹²⁴ “V” poslednee vremia gazety znachitel'no rasshyrili... [Recently, newspapers have extended...],” *Kievskii Listok Ob"yavlenij*, July 7, 1876, 1.

¹²⁵ “Inostrannoe obozrenie [Foreign Review],” *Drug Naroda*, March 12(24), 1875, 128.

¹²⁶ “Inostrannoe obozrenie [Foreign Review],” *Drug Naroda*, March 12(24), 1875, 128.

¹²⁷ In total, the issue contained 16 pages.

information flows, whose intensification posed a challenge for the censored newspapers which had a limited number of issues per week to circulate.

The news from the Balkans were on the margin of the Kyiv-based newspapers in the first months of 1875. The next day after Andriiashev's note was presented to the audience, a new issue of *Kievlianin* was released, and among other foreign news, editors placed a note about the favorable development of diplomatic affairs between Montenegro and the Ottoman Empire, which also appeared in the last section of the issue's last page.¹²⁸ Only news from Mexico separated this note from the name of the editor-in-chief, who decided to present it after introducing seven other news items. In fact, this placing of information about relations between autonomous Montenegro and the Ottoman empire was only a momentous decision of the editorial board. Two months before, when the tensions between the two reached a high point, the news about them appeared on the top of the "Foreign news" section.¹²⁹ These tensions presented a good newsbreak to share with readers, but as soon as it was solved, the need to create news about the region disappeared. In late March, subscribers of Kyiv newspapers could find an echo of those January events on the pages, but in the meantime, the whole region could disappear from the local media discourses.¹³⁰

At the same time, information about events in the peninsula or the Ottoman Empire in general did not disappear for a long time. On March 24, 1875, together with the details about Montenegro and the Ottoman Empire, *Kievlianin*'s readers could find a note about the "disturbing news coming from Herzegovina," about persecution of Christians in that Ottoman province.¹³¹ This news was the last in the foreign news section, but the accent on its "disturbing" character could attract readers. A similar news item appeared in the same

¹²⁸ "Obshcheie obozrenie [General Review]," *Kievlianin*, March 13, 1875, 4.

¹²⁹ See "Inostrannyya Izvestiia [Foreign Review]," *Kievlianin*, January 14, 1875, 3; "Inostrannyya Izvestiia," *Kievlianin*, January 14, 1875, 3.

¹³⁰ See "Obshcheie obozrenie [General Review]," *Kievlianin*, March 24, 1875, 3; "Turtsiia i slavyanskiia zemli [Turkey and Slavic Lands]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, March 26, 1875, 4.

¹³¹ "Obshcheye obozrenie [General Review]," *Kievlianin*, March 24, 1875, 3.

newspaper in early April, and in *Kievskii Telegraf* in the end of the month, without clear connections between the information.¹³² Editors placed them at the end of the “Foreign news” section, and such tendency lasted until mid-July 1875. On July 11, an article “Turkey” appeared on the last page before the advertisement section at *Kievskii Telegraf*, in which readers could find a remark about the uprising in Herzegovina. The news ended with the words translated from *Schleswiger Nachrichten* that “poor people had nothing to lose, except for their hard life,” which marked the beginning of the almost uninterrupted coverage of events in the Balkans, which lasted until the newspaper was banned.

The beginning of uprising, however, provoked diverse reaction among the local newspapers. *Kievlianin* informed its readers about the “disturbances” in Herzegovina the day before, on July 10, placing this information in the middle of the “Foreign news” section.¹³³ However, in a few issues, newspaper subscribers could find it already at the top of the section, which highlighted the changing importance of the events for the newspaper editors.¹³⁴ With minor fluctuations, the news about the uprising remained in that position for the following few months, constantly bringing the attention toward the ongoing changes in the Balkans. Three other Kyiv-based newspapers did not refer to the uprising at the beginning.¹³⁵ On July 16, *Drug Naroda*, placed added a small article about tensions between Romania and the Ottoman Empire, while the first reference to the events in Herzegovina appeared only a month later, on August 15, in the middle of the “Foreign review” section.¹³⁶ For the bimonthly newspapers oriented toward the peasants, the remote developments in the foreign provinces

¹³² “Obshcheie obozrenie [General Review],” *Kievlianin*, April 5, 1875, 3; “Slavianskiiia zemli [Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii telegraf*, April 30, 1875, 3.

¹³³ “Inostrannyia Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, July 10, 1875, 4. The news about meeting of German emperor Wilhelm II and Bavarian king Ludwig II and approval of law on higher education in France preceded the information about Herzegovinian uprising.

¹³⁴ “Inostrannyia Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, July 24, 1875, 3.

¹³⁵ There was no foreign news in *Kievskii Listok* and *Kievskiiia gubernskiiia vedomosti* at that time at all.

¹³⁶ “Turtsyia [Turkey],” *Drug Naroda*, July 16(28), 1875, 224; Turtsyia [Turkey],” *Drug Naroda*, July 15(27), 1875, 256.

were not the top priority for publishing at the time when even the scale of uprising was not certain.

Choosing the Titles: “Herzegovina,” “Slavic Lands,” and “Turkey”

At the same time a bunch of changes in presenting the details from the burning peninsula demonstrated that their editors constantly reacted to the rapidly changing events, sorting out the information they received and creating connections between the news they found the most appropriate. The audience of *Kievlianin* could witness experiments with the titles of the articles dealing with the international crisis that had started. When the uprising started, the editors of *Kievlianin* placed it in connection with other events in the Ottoman empire highlighting the words “disturbances in Herzegovina” in the “Foreign news” section. On July 26, they placed this news in the separate article “Uprising in Herzegovina,” which appeared on the last page of the issue.¹³⁷ After that, this title, with occasional modifications, constantly appeared on the pages of the newspaper until the beginning of October, when it was changed to “Herzegovina.”¹³⁸ On October 9, the last title appeared in the “Foreign news” after the article “Turkey,” thus separating the internal affairs in the Ottoman Empire and the uprising.¹³⁹ In the next issue, the new title was introduced, “Turkey and South Slavic lands,” which combined the information about the question of reforms in the empire, situation in Herzegovina, and the news from Serbia.¹⁴⁰ Such separation existed prior to the beginning of

¹³⁷ “Vozstanie v” Herzegovine [Uprising in Herzegovina],” *Kievlianin*, July 26, 1875, 4.

¹³⁸ See “Vozstanie v” Herzegovine [Uprising in Herzegovina],” *Kievlianin*, July 29, 1875, 4; “Herzegovinskoe vozstanie [Herzegovinian Uprising],” *Kievlianin*, July 29, 1875, 3; “Herzegovinskoe delo [Herzegovinian Affair],” *Kievlianin*, September 9, 1875, 3; “Herzegovinskoe vozstanie [Herzegovinian Uprising],” *Kievlianin*, September 11, 1875, 3; “Herzegovinskoe vozstanie [Herzegovinian Uprising],” *Kievlianin*, October 4, 1875, 3; “Herzegovina,” *Kievlianin*, October 7, 1875, 3.

¹³⁹ “Turtsyia [Turkey],” *Kievlianin*, October 9, 1875, 3; “Herzegovina,” *Kievlianin*, October 9, 1875, 3.

¹⁴⁰ “Turtsyia i yugo-slavyanskiia zemli [Turkey and South Slavic Lands],” *Kievlianin*, October 11, 1875, 3.

the Russo-Turkish war in April 1877, after which the editors started including news from Herzegovina or Bosnia to articles signed as “Turkey.”¹⁴¹

Kievskii Telegraf also showed the willingness to adapt to the changing international environment and simultaneously create new media discourses. The title “Turkey and Slavic lands” appeared in the “Foreign news” at the beginning of 1875, way before the uprising started, and later they also compiled news from the Balkans under the title “Slavic Lands.”¹⁴² When the uprising in Herzegovina started, information about it was firstly placed in the article “Turkey,” then was included to “Slavic Lands,” and, finally, was put to a separate article.¹⁴³ However, the editors’ experiments with arranging information on the pages went even further in this case. On July 30, 1875, the “Foreign news” section contained one subsection named “From the Slavic Lands,” where, together with the news from the Balkans, readers could find details about the recent events in Prague and Lviv.¹⁴⁴ Both cities belonged to Austro-Hungary and were remote from the peninsula, so it was a specific editor’s decision to place them in the subsection. This decision could mirror the Slavophil views of the newspaper authors, e.g., Mykhailo Drahomanov in whose political program the idea of Slavic unity constituted an important element.¹⁴⁵ However, Drahomanov left the newspaper in August 1875, while at the end of October, the subsection was introduced again with information about the events in the

¹⁴¹ Compare, e.g., “Turtsyia i yugo-slavyanskiya zemli [Turkey and South Slavic Lands],” *Kievlianin*, October 11, 1875, 3; “Turtsyia i slavyanskiya zemli [Turkey and Slavic Lands],” *Kievlianin*, March 17, 1877, 3; “Turtsyiai slavyanskiya zemli [Turkey and Slavic Lands],” *Kievlianin*, March 19, 1877, 3. “Turtsyia[Turkey],” *Kievlianin*, June 9, 1877, 3

¹⁴² See “Turtsyiai slavyanskiya zemli [Turkey and Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, January 6, 1875, 3; “Slavyanskiya zemli [Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, April 30, 1875, 3.

¹⁴³ “Turtsyia[Turkey],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, July 11, 1875, 3; Slavyanskiya zemli [Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, July 20, 1875, 4; “Vozstanie v” Herzegovine [Urpzing in Herzegovina],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, August 8, 1875, 3.

¹⁴⁴ “Iz” slavyanskikh” zemel’ [From Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, July 30, 1875, 4.

¹⁴⁵ Drahomanov defined himself as “not as any -phile, neither Ukrainophile, nor Slavophile, but simply as a Ukrainian with all-human tendencies, a man of the Ukrainian nation (homo nationis ukrainicae)” (See Mykhailo Drahomaniv, *Lysty na Naddnyprians’ku Ukraïnu* [Letter to Dnipro Ukriane] (Kyiv: Drukarnia M. Zaiizdnoho, 1917), 90; transl. in Anton Kotenko, “The Ukrainian Project in Search of National Space, 1861-1914” (PhD diss., Central European University, 2013), 134), his Slavophile attitudes were clear (see Johannes Remy, “Panslavism in the Ukrainian National Movement from the 1840s to the 1870s,” *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 30, no. 2 (Winter 2005): 43-50).

Western Balkans and Lviv.¹⁴⁶ This subsection appeared in *Kievskii Telegraf* until the end of its operations and, in such a way, presented the imagined unity of Slavic lands created by issue-to-issue decisions of the periodical's editors.

The imagined unity of "Slavic Lands" was flexible, and the question of inclusion or exclusion of particular news to the section could be different from issue to issue. On February 6, 1876, the editors included the information about Romania's refusal to pay tribute to the Ottoman Empire in the subsection "News from Slavic Lands."¹⁴⁷ In the next issue, Romania appeared again in the context of its decision not to unite with Serbia and Montenegro in their potential confrontations with the Ottomans.¹⁴⁸ However, when news about developments in the Romanian parliament and the ministerial crisis reached Kyiv in April 1876, both of them were placed in the foreign news section.¹⁴⁹ The opposite tendency occurred with the news from Bulgaria, references to which at first were placed outside the subsection "News from Slavic Lands." When the telegraph delivered the news about a potential uprising in the province in December 1875, the readers of *Kievskii Telegraf* could find it in the article "Turkey," where it was presented after other internal affairs in the empire.¹⁵⁰ However, when the uprising actually started in April next year, the news about it was combined with other events from the Balkans.¹⁵¹ In this case, Bulgaria was presented as a self-sustained entity detached from other issues within the Ottoman Empire. Thus, for the editors in Kyiv, internal affairs of "non-Slavic" Romania and the Ottoman Empire did not fit the idea of the section about "Slavic Lands," while the connection both countries' policies with the events in the

¹⁴⁶ "Izvestiia iz" slavyanskikh" zemel' [News from Slavic Lands]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, October 22, 1875, 3.

¹⁴⁷ "Izvestiia iz" slavyanskikh" zemel' [News from Slavic Lands]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, February 6, 1876, 3.

¹⁴⁸ "Izvestiia iz" slavyanskikh" zemel' [News from Slavic Lands]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, February 8, 1876, 3.

¹⁴⁹ "Rumyniia [Romania]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, April 4, 1876, 3; "Rumyniia [Romania]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, April 14, 1876, 4. Similar placing occurred on the pages of *Kievlianin*, where news from Romania appeared in articles "Turkey and Slavic Lands."

¹⁵⁰ "Turtsiia [Turkey]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, December 10, 1875, 4.

¹⁵¹ See, e.g., "Izvestiia iz" slavyanskikh" zemel' [News from Slavic Lands]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, April 18, 1876, 4; "Izvestiia iz" slavyanskikh" zemel' [News from Slavic Lands]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, April 28, 1876, 4.

“Slavic” places nearby, could make the editors make a different decision and include them under the same title.

Presenting the Opinions: Foreign Media Discourses and Domestic Editorials

The spectrum of decisions about information coming to Kyiv with the intensifying struggle in the Balkan peninsula went beyond the dilemma of placing or not placing particular news in the “News from Slavic Lands” or comparable sections. The question of how to present various reactions to the struggle or where to introduce the opinions expressed by foreign press also required separate decisions from the side of newspaper editors if they did not copy articles from other Russian newspapers, as was in the cases of *Kievskii listok*. On August 12, 1875, *Kievlianin* published the article “Austro-Hungary and the Herzegovinian question” about the negotiations and the position taken by Austro-Hungary in the “Herzegovinian events.”¹⁵² Thus, the editors created a new title to order the information coming in the previous days. In contrast to this, several days before, *Kievskii Telegraf* published an article “Austro-Hungary,” in which the relations between the empire and Romania were discussed.¹⁵³ The authors used the title that previously appeared frequently in the newspaper to add some details about the developments in the Balkans. This approach soon became dominant for all the newspapers, and even the opinions of the foreign press were placed under the titles “England” or “Germany,” well-known to the subscribers of Kyivan newspaper.¹⁵⁴ The sharper the Great Eastern Crisis became, the more news about it were placed in the articles traditionally dealing with the ordinary internal or foreign politics of the countries.

¹⁵² “Avstro-Vengriia i gertsegovinskii vorpos” [Austro-Hungary and the Herzegovinian Question], *Kievlianin*, August 2, 1875, 3-4.

¹⁵³ “Avstro-Vengriia [Austro-Hungary],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, August 1, 1875, 1.

¹⁵⁴ See, e.g., “Angliia [England],” *Kievlianin*, June 3, 1876, 3.; “Germaniya Germany,” *Kievlianin*, June 3, 1876, 4.

The growing intensity of the events in the Balkans also led to the appearance of separate telegrams dealing with those events on the pages of *Kievlianin* and *Kievskii Telegraf*. On July 31, 1875, *Kievlianin* published a telegram from Ragusa informing about the ongoing fighting in Herzegovina at the beginning of the “Foreign news.”¹⁵⁵ In the next issue, they presented another telegram in the same section and simultaneously added one to the subsection “Latest News,” the last part of the “Foreign news” section.¹⁵⁶ At the same time, *Kievskii Telegraf* did not place any separate messages together with other news from abroad, but on October 24, their readers could find the appearance of one short note from Ragusa on the newspaper’s front page.¹⁵⁷ This innovation happened two days after the “News from Slavic Lands” section was introduced, which thus marked changes in editorial policy. Since then, telegrams related to the Balkan affairs, as well as other urgent messages, were regularly placed on the front page, which mirrored the broader attempts to find appropriate ways to restore the newspaper’s ability to meet the competition on the local market after a big group of its contributors left the periodical in August 1875.¹⁵⁸ The same change, however, also happened in the editorial policy of *Kievlianin*, whose subscribers could find three telegrams about the uprising in Herzegovina on the front page on November 11.¹⁵⁹ These editorial decisions meant that the Great Eastern Crisis left the “foreign news” section and entered the other, more visible parts of the newspapers.

¹⁵⁵ “Telegramma «Kievlianina» [Kievlianin’s Telegram],” *Kievlianin*, July 31, 1875, 3.

¹⁵⁶ “Telegramma «Kievlianina», [Kievlianin’s Telegram]” *Kievlianin*, August 2, 1875, 3; “Posledniia Izvestiia [The Latest News],” *Kievlianin*, August 2, 1875, 1.

¹⁵⁷ “Telegramma «Kievskago telegrafa» [Kievskii Telegraf’s Telegram],” *Kievskii telegraf*, October 24, 1875, 1.

¹⁵⁸ This disruption was caused by misunderstanding between the owner, Avdotia Gogotska, and the group of university professors whom she invited earlier in the year. See Savchenko, *Zaborona ukrainstva*, 146-155. On June 30, the authors published a short note about their decision (See “Vsledstvie raznoglasiya v” Mneniiakh”... [As a result of disagreement in the opinions...],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, July 30, 1875, 1). In the editorial published in the next issue, the newspaper owner responded that the involvement of the authors was different during the year, thus questioning the importance of particular contributors (See “Kiev”, 1-go avgusta 1875 g. [Kiev, 1 August 1875],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, August 1, 1875, 1).

¹⁵⁹ “Telegrammy «Kievlianina» [Telegrams of Kievlianin],” *Kievlianin*, November 11, 1875, 1.

While telegrams were constantly published in different part of Kyiv-based newspapers until the end of 1878, even when the contestations in the Balkans ended, the other articles connected to the crisis did not follow them.¹⁶⁰ On the same day when *Kievskii Telegraf* introduced the “News from Slavic Lands” section, one of the first editorials dedicated to the ongoing international crisis also found space on the newspaper’s pages.¹⁶¹ The article was skeptical about the capacities of the Russian imperial government to impose its agenda on an international scale and thus, concluded that “every call to help our dear suffering brother, every call even from the clearest and warmest heart, alas, is ridiculous.”¹⁶² The issue was previously approved by the local censor, which meant that the skepticism about the perspectives of the Russian Empire as well as the whole idea to publish a leading article dealing with international relations was acceptable for the provincial newspaper, otherwise accused of being not loyal enough to the government. However, such articles appeared quite rarely until the moment the periodical was finally banned, which do not allow to reflect more on the motivations of the editors to publish them at all.

Despite regular updates on the events related to the Great Eastern Crisis, the number of editorials touching upon it was also scarce in *Kievlianin*. From time to time, the newspaper authors pointed out that the European press actively engaged with the events on the Balkans, but these reflections appeared primarily in the “Foreign News” sections.¹⁶³ The first editorial was published only in mid-summer 1876, when the Serbian-Ottoman war started. On July 1, the newspaper subscribers could find an article “Newspapers review” at the beginning of the

¹⁶⁰ *Drug Naroda* did not publish any telegrams at all, the first telegrams related to the international affairs appeared in *Kievskii gubernskii vedomosti* only after the Russo-Turkish war started, and *Kievskii Listok* introduced its telegrams only in mid-summer 1878, when the editorial policy changed.

¹⁶¹ The first commentary on the situation was published on September 2, it was the above-discussed reflection on the *Russkii Mir*’s call for donations for the “struggling Slavs.” See “Kiev”, 2 sentyabrya 1875 g. [Kiev, 2 September 1875],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, September 3, 1875, 1-2.

¹⁶² “Kiev”, 21 oktyabrya 1876 g. [Kiev, 21 October 1876],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, October 22, 1875, 1.

¹⁶³ See, e.g., “Vostochniya dela [Eastern Affairs],” *Kievlianin*, January 6, 1876, 1; “Yuzhno-Slavyanskiia zemli [South Slav Lands],” *Kievlianin*, February 21, 1876, 3; “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, May 29, 1876, 3.

unofficial part of the newspaper, in which Vitaliy Shulgin referred to the recent debates in the Russian and the foreign press. Paying attention to the omnipresent “enthusiasm with which the Russian society and literature follow the struggle of our Southern brothers,” he argued that there still are topics “extremely important for the present and the future of our fatherland,” meaning first and foremost the issues related to the peasant reform.¹⁶⁴ The author concluded that the main task of the local newspaper was to keep an eye on the local life, implicitly prioritizing it over any of the foreign relations, even though he admitted the importance of “All-Russian questions.” Thus, in the following issues, the editorials were left to discuss the local wheat trade, the presence of Polish population in the Kray, or developments in agriculture.

The sharp development of international crisis did not make the editors pay more attention to the ongoing contestations in the editorials. When the Russo-Turkish war started, *Kievlianin* and *Drug Naroda* published pathetic articles in support of the Russian imperial army, while *Kievskii Listok* did not even mention a word about these events.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, in the next issue, *Kievlianin*’s subscribers could again enjoy reading an editorial dedicated to the landownership in the Kray, which bore no relation to wartime.¹⁶⁶ Later in the year they could find regular updates about the fighting, republished from *Russkiy Invalid*, an official newspaper of the imperial Ministry of War, but in total the local topics prevailed.¹⁶⁷ Thus, even when the international crisis bled into the domestic affairs, it still did not affect the

¹⁶⁴ “Gazetnoe obosrenie [Newspapers Review],” *Kievlianin*, July 1, 1876, 1.

¹⁶⁵ See “Kiev”, 13 aprelya 1877 g.,” *Kievlianin*, April 14, 1877, 1; “Kiev”, 15 aprelya 1877 g.,” *Drug Naroda*, April 16 (28), 1877, 121-122; “Gorodskiya novosti i proishestviya [City News and Accidents],” *Kievskii Listok Ob'yavleniy*, April 16, 1877, 1.

¹⁶⁶ “Zemlevladienie v” iugozapadnom” krae [Landownership in South-Western Krai],” *Kievlianin*, April 16, 1877, 1. In early 1877, a series of editorials raised the question of land-ownership (see e.g., “Zemlevladienie v” iugozapadnom” krae [Landownership in South-Western Krai],” *Kievlianin*, February 26, 1877, 1; “Zemlevladienie v” iugozapadnom” krae [Landownership in South-Western Krai],” *Kievlianin*, February 28, 1877, 1; “Zemlevladienie v” iugozapadnom” krae [Landownership in South-Western Krai],” *Kievlianin*, March 12, 1877, 1).

¹⁶⁷ See e.g., “Vtoraia nedelia voyny [Second week of the War],” *Kievlianin*, May 5, 1877, 1; “Chetvertaia nedelia voyny [Fourth Week of the War],” *Kievlianin*, May 5, 1877, 1; “Petnadsataia nedelia voyny [Fifteenth Week of the War],” *Kievlianin*, August 13, 1877, 1.

necessity to present local affairs, which seemed to be more valuable for the editors despite the urgency of the wartime situation.

Expanding the Coverage: The Internalization of The Great Eastern Crisis

At the same time, the information about the crisis ran through the newspaper pages beyond editorials and “Foreign news” sections. While the *Kievskii Telegraf* editors were skeptical about the campaign started by *Russii Mir* in favor of people in Herzegovina, *Kievlianin* published its first call for donations to the Kyiv branch of the Slavonic Charitable Committee on October 28, 1875.¹⁶⁸ In a few days, they also placed the first report about the collected donations, and in the following years such articles became regular in the newspaper.¹⁶⁹ When the Russo-Turkish war started, the calls for help for the Imperial Russian Army almost completely replaced the one oriented to help the Balkan Slavs.¹⁷⁰ Their number also increased at that time, again marking the growing internationalization of international affairs.

The calls for action coincided with the appearances of various articles explaining the particularities of developments in the Balkan peninsula. On August 1, 1875, *Drug Naroda* published an article “From Herzegovina in Turkey,” in which the author briefly explained the recent changes in the Ottoman province based on the words of “inhabitants of Herzegovina who came to Kiev for pilgrimage.”¹⁷¹ However, before jumping into the part about the

¹⁶⁸ “Kievskii Otdel” Slavianskago blagotvaritel'nago komiteta... [Kiev Branch of Slavic Charitable Committee], *Kievlianin*, October 28, 1875, 1.

¹⁶⁹ “V posobie postradavshim” khristianskim” semeistvam” v” Bosnii i Gertsegovine [For Aid for the Harmed Christian Families in Bosnia and Hertzegovina], *Kievlianin*, November 1, 1875, 1. Similar calls were also published in other local newspapers, except for *Kievskii Telegraf*, whose authors were at first skeptical about such aid, as I pointed out in the previous chapter (See also “Nam” stalo izvestno, chto «"Obshchestvo popecheniya o ranenikh" i bolnykh" voynakh"»” [It became known that The Society of Care for Wounded and Sick Soldiers], *Kievskii Listok Ob"javlenii*, December 17, 1875, 1; and a little less clear call from *Drug Naroda*: Pozhertvovaniya zemstv”... [Donations from provincial governments...], *Drug Naroda*, October 1 (13), 1876, 334-335).

¹⁷⁰ On April 28, 1877, *Kievlianin* published the first article calling for help for wounded and sick soldiers on the front page (see “Ot Kievskago mestnago upravleniia obshchestva popecheniia o ranenikh” i bolnykh” voynakh,” [From Kiev local administration of The Society of Care for Wounded and Sick Soldiers]” *Kievlianin*, April 28, 1877, 1). Later similar articles constantly appeared on the front or second pages of the newspaper.

¹⁷¹ “Iz” Hertsegoviny v” Turtsii [From Herzegovina in Turkey],” *Drug Naroda*, August 1 (13), 1875, 1.

uprising, the author made an overview about what Herzegovina is, presuming that his readers may need such information. Such intentions to enlighten the audience were a distinctive feature of the provincial press in the time of changes in literacy and social structures. Thus, letters from Serbia published in *Kievskii Telegraf* in summer 1875, or stories about Christmas celebrations in the Western Balkans which appeared in *Kievlianin* later in the year, had a clear educational function apart from its pure informational potential.¹⁷²

At the same time, the growing attention to the Balkans during the international crisis presented an opportunity to share some curiosities with readers in order to catch their attention. On May 5, 1876, the *Kievlianin* editors placed an article “Bosnia” instead of a traditional feuilleton on the front page. The article presented parts from a travelogue written by an English writer, Adeline Paulina Irby, who visited Bosnia in 1861 and had an entertaining character, thus aiming to catch the readers’ attention with several unknown facts written in engaging language.¹⁷³ However, the most entertaining texts appeared in *Kievskii Listok*, whose authors used the ongoing crisis as an opportunity to tell more curious stories about the Ottoman Empire before switching to a moderate literature and political-oriented newspaper in 1878. On October 16, 1876, they published a short article “Calf Witness,” telling an anecdote about an Armenian dweller from Istanbul who had to bring a calf to the court in order to prove that his cow was stolen by a Muslim man. This story, originally published in the French newspaper *Le Temps*, had to prove the incompatibility of the reforms in the Ottoman Empire where “the evidence from a calf worth more than that of a Christian.”¹⁷⁴ Without knowing further details about the reforms, a newspaper subscriber could learn enough about

¹⁷² A., “Pismo iz Srbije [A Letter from Serbia],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, August 8, 1875, 3; “Kak” prazdnuyetsta Sochelik” i Rozhdestvo Khristovo v” Srbije [How Christmas Eve and Christmas are Celebrated in Serbia],” *Kievlianin*, December 23, 1875, 1-2. The original story appeared in Czech journal *Světlozor* and later was translated into Russian before it was published in *Kievlianin*.

¹⁷³ N. Z. “Bosnia,” *Kievlianin*, May 4, 1876, 1.

¹⁷⁴ “Telenok-svidetel. [Calf Witness],” *Kievskii listok ob”yavleniy*, October 16, 1876, 3.

the state of affairs from this anecdote picked for them from an endless flow of details about the state of affairs in a city 1100 kilometers to the south of Kyiv.

The dominance of information flows related to the Balkans during the four years and the need to meet the demands of readers who wanted to know more about the peninsula or the wars, also influenced the book market in the Russian empire, bringing new titles to the advertisement sections of Kyiv-based periodicals. On September 9, 1876, *Kievlianin* published a piece of advertisement informing about two marches, “March of South-Slav Heroes” and “Proclamation of South Slavs,” available for purchase in a local book-and-music store.¹⁷⁵ The advertising texts about marches appeared also during the Russo-Turkish war, showing the adaptivity of local businessmen to the demands for information.¹⁷⁶ At the same time, the newspaper authors shared their reviews on the books related to the crisis, such as the review on the collection “Brotherly help to the Suffering Families in Bosnia and Herzegovina,” published in *Drug Naroda* in April 1876.¹⁷⁷ The articles about new books that explained the events of the past years also started appearing in the advertisement section of local newspapers. In mid-1878, several books related to the Russo-Turkish war were already advertised in *Kievskii Listok*.¹⁷⁸ The choice of the items to advertise was usually made by the store, but its placement on the pages of the newspaper meant that the ongoing Great Eastern Crisis entered each and every part of the local periodicals.

Looking for the Eastern Question: How did the Concept Appear?

On October 2, 1876, *Drug Naroda* announced the Russian translation of William Gladstone’s pamphlet “Bulgarian horrors and the Question of the East,” firstly published a month before

¹⁷⁵ “Marsh” yugo-slavianskikh” geroev” [March of South Slavic Heroes],” *Kievlianin*, September 9, 1876, 4.

¹⁷⁶ In July 1877, *Kievlianin* placed two pieces of advertisement about marches related to the ongoing war from two different book-and-music stores in the city (see “Vpered!” na pomoshch’ brat’yam slavyanam” voennyi marsh [Ahead! A Military March to Help the Brothers Slavs],” *Kievlianin*, July 12, 1877, 4; “V knizhnykh” i muzhykalnykh” magazinakh... [In book- and music stores...],” *Kievlianin*, July 12, 1877, 4).

¹⁷⁷ “Bibliografiia. [Bibliography],” *Drug Naroda*, April 18(30), 1876, 127.

¹⁷⁸ “Tolko chto postupila v prodazhu kniga... [A book has just come to the market...],” *Kievskii Listok*, April 29, 1878, 4; “Bolgariia 1877-1878 g. Eskizy [Bulgaria 1877-1878: Sketches],” *Kievskii Listok*, August 5, 1878, 1.

in England. The announcement contained the direct reference to “*vostochnyi vopros*” (“the Eastern question”) which appeared in the pamphlet’s translated title.¹⁷⁹ Neither the title nor the content of the book received additional explanations from the authors, who, instead, focused on the circumstances of the publication, leaving the readers to decide what was the connection between the Eastern Question and the “Bulgarian horrors.” Such decision might have been complicated because this announcement was the only text in which the concept appeared, which poses the question of how the newspaper authors placed this obvious for historians of diplomacy concept in the media discourses they created in Kyiv during the four-year international crisis.

Newspaper authors mentioned the Eastern Question way before the uprising in Herzegovina started. On February 1(13), 1875, *Drug Naroda* published a short article “Turkey and the Slavonic Lands” in the section “News from Abroad.” Commenting on the favorable resolution of the tensions between the Ottoman Empire and Montenegro, the observer quoted the excerpt from an unknown source that the Three Emperors' Alliance became an institution which “keeps an eye on the peace in the East” but then doubted whether it would postpone the “solution of the question” for a long time.¹⁸⁰ Presumably, the mentioning of the ‘question’ that had to be solved marked a partly implicit reference to the Eastern Question.¹⁸¹ The author was certain about the shakiness of the position in this case and did not provide any further explanations to the readers about the peculiarities of his thought, but the position regarding the Eastern Question presented in the newspaper seemed also to be shaky. On April 18(30), 1876, the observer of the “Foreign review” section in *Drug Naroda* started his text with a passage about “festive calmness” that prevailed in Europe, but

¹⁷⁹ “Peterburuckiia gazety izveshchayut”... [Peterburg newspapers inform...],” *Drug Naroda*, October 2(14), 1876, 302. Similar announcement was published in *Kievlianin* several days before (see “Po slukham”, *soobshchaemym*” gazetoi.. [According to the rumors, presented by a newspaper...].” *Kievlianin*, September 25, 1876, 2).

¹⁸⁰ “Turtsia i Slavianskiia Zemli [Turkey and Slavic Lands],” *Drug Naroda*, February 1(13), 1875, 47.

¹⁸¹ “Turtsia i Slavianskiia Zemli [Turkey and Slavic Lands],” *Drug Naroda*, February 1(13), 1875, 47.

later pointed out that only the “ill-fated Eastern Question” disturbed the public opinion in the continent.¹⁸² He also referred to the ongoing struggle on the Balkan peninsula, where the insurgents won several battles against the Ottoman troops, but simultaneously he also mentioned “the shadow of suspicion towards Russia”, which was presented as a peacebreaker by the German newspapers, followed by a quote from *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* about the failed attempts to resolve the conflict in the Balkans based on the project of Count Andrassy, a minister of foreign affairs of Austro-Hungary.¹⁸³ Thus, the article presented at least three components of the Eastern Question which was not openly stated by the author. The last was sure that his readers from the rural intelligentsia were familiar with the term and could recognize in the complicated context where personal opinion of the reviewer intertwined with the foreign media discourse.

A vague presentation of the Eastern Question also appeared in other newspapers issued in Kyiv, and it never was a problem for their authors. In April 1875, *Kievskii Telegraf* republished an article from the Czech newspaper *Pokrok* from Austro-Hungary, quoting the passage about a potential Hungarian alliance with Germany and the willingness of Hungary to participate in resolving the Eastern Question. The quote continued with a conclusion about Hungarian and German plans to “enslave the neighboring nations,” and any clear explanation neither of this conclusion nor the concept of the Eastern Question was presented to the readers in Kyiv.¹⁸⁴ Thus, the concept was presumed to be familiar to them even though it meant the undefined fate of the “neighboring nations” in this case.

Apart from bringing an undefined concept, all the above-cited articles mirrored mostly the foreign discourses about the Eastern Question, adapted for the local audience by the provincial press. On August 30, 1875, *Kievlianin* published a short note in the “Foreign news”

¹⁸² “Inostrannoe obozrenie [Foreign Review],” *Drug naroda*, April 18(30), 1876, 128.

¹⁸³ “Inostrannoe obozrenie [Foreign Review],” *Drug naroda*, April 18(30), 1876, 128.

¹⁸⁴ “Avstro-Vengria [Austro-Hungary],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, April 24, 1875, 6.

section about the attitude of the Russian Empire to the Herzegovinian uprising and the “Eastern Question”, citing to the Belgian newspaper *Le Nord*.¹⁸⁵ In a week, they described the situation in the Balkans in the same section, quoting French *Agence Havas*, in whose message the “Eastern Question” appeared again.¹⁸⁶ Both cases present a clear and simultaneously complicated nature of principles on which the provincial press worked. On the one hand, the editors did not bring any additional remarks, borrowing the messages created in foreign media environments with almost no changes. On the other hand, they selected these texts among others available and translated them, even though the act of translation was left invisible to the reader, thus partly changing the original discourses.¹⁸⁷ Thus, the editors placed the modified opinions from abroad with original references to the Eastern Question within the other foreign news and created new hybrid media discourses.

The power of editorial decisions became far more explicit when a separate article called the “Eastern question” was introduced in the section “Foreign news” several weeks later. On November 13, the editors put three pieces of news in this article – information about the booklet “Austria and South Slavs” published in Vienna, information about the preparation of the Russian troops in different parts of the empire, and a letter from Giuseppe Garibaldi to Mićo Ljubibratić, one of the leaders of Bosnian rebellion.¹⁸⁸ The Eastern Question presented an umbrella that united all those aspects at one moment by decision of the *Kievlianin* editors.¹⁸⁹ Such editors’ agency is also clear from the previous issue of *the newspaper* where the article “The Rebellion of Southern Slavs” without any references to the Eastern Question

¹⁸⁵ “Herzegovinskoe vozstanie [Herzegovinian Uprising],” *Kievlianin*, August 30, 1876, 3.

¹⁸⁶ “Ne smotria na etu telegrammy ob” uspekhakh”...[In spite of this telegram about successes...],” *Kievlianin*, September 7, 1875, 3.

¹⁸⁷ On the particular role of translation in media see, e.g., Christina Schäffner and Susan Bassnett, “Introduction: Politics, Media and Translation - Exploring Synergies,” in *Political Discourse, Media and Translation*, ed. Christina Schäffner and Susan Bassnett (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 1-31.

¹⁸⁸ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, November 13, 1875, 3-4.

¹⁸⁹ The aspects of international events which could be marked as the “Eastern Question” are discussed in more details in the next chapter.

covered the recent developments in the Balkan peninsula.¹⁹⁰ At the same time, the column “Eastern question” appears in early December 1875, when it is almost entirely dedicated to discussions about the purchase of the Suez Channel by the British government, while the news from Herzegovina, for instance, is put in a separate column.¹⁹¹ In this case, the introduction of the Eastern Question was again situational because it corresponded with the most recent developments on the international arena.

The situational mentions of the Eastern Question” prevailed in texts published in the Kyiv newspapers between 1875-1878. After announcing Gladstone’s book, *Drug Naroda* published a review on it in mid-October 1876, in which the Eastern Question was mentioned only once, in the title of the reviewed book. The rest of the text contained quotes and reviewer’s comments but neither of them directly referred to the concept.¹⁹² However, in the next issue, they published another review, presenting the book “Turks and Christians: a Solution of the Eastern Question” by James Lewis Farley. The review was republished from *Golos*, but in the introduction, *Drug Naroda*’s author mentioned separately that the book “throws new light on the Eastern Question and the relations between the Christians struggling at the moment and the Turks.”¹⁹³ In this case, the newspaper presented the combination of at least three media discourses, the one created by book, the one created by *Golos* and its own that included the decision to place the Eastern Question in the text. This decision underlined the challenges and possibilities the provincial media had to deal with during the ongoing international crisis, which brought the international debates into the provincial context.

¹⁹⁰ “Vozstanie iuzhnykh” slavian” [The Uprising of Southern Slavs],” *Kievlianin*, November 11, 1875, 3.

¹⁹¹ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, December 2, 1875, 3; “Hertsegovina [Herzegovina],” *Kievlianin*, December 2, 1875, 3

¹⁹² “Bibliografiia [Bibliography],” *Drug Naroda*, October 16 (28), 1876, 314-316.

¹⁹³ “Bibliografiia [Bibliography],” *Drug Naroda*, November 2 (15), 1876, 329-332.

Concluding thoughts: Making Sense of the International Crisis

The editors of Kyiv newspapers immediately reacted to the changes on the international scale in 1875-1878, bit by bit bringing the information about the crisis to their readers. The dominant importance of local affairs did not leave much space for it in the editorials, but instead, the smallest details flooded the other parts of the newspapers, challenging the local authors to find the language they could use in order to explain all recent developments. The limited space of the non-daily periodicals did not allow to cover all the topics, however, so book reviews or announcements presented an additional option for them to familiarize the city dwellers or subscribers from the province with the ongoing crisis.

At first, the crisis was locked in the “Foreign news” section, but then it started flooding the other part of the newspapers, culminating during the Russo-Turkish war, when domesticated in media, it also became domestic in everyday life. The editorials kept presenting opinions about non-war-related activities, but the war appeared in other articles. These changes were also accidentally bringing dozens of rumors and various approaches to process the information wave, which had been growing for four years. This wave brought the Eastern Question to the newspapers, whose authors consciously allocated it on the pages without explaining further what it might have meant. The references to the concept, however, could be as diverse as the number of sources it was coming from, and a particular meaning stayed beyond each of the mentions. The peculiarities of these meanings as well as the positionality of the authors in the global debates around the “two words of fear,”¹⁹⁴ will be discussed in the next chapter to reveal further the agency of provincial information makers.

¹⁹⁴ These words appeared in an article published by the Daily News, a newspaper widely cited by Kyiv-based newspapers, on March 29, 1875, a few months before the Great Eastern Crisis started. See “The visit of the Emperor of Austria...” *The Daily News*, March 29, 1875, 5.

3 – Presenting the urgent problem on the peripheries: explicit and implicit Eastern Question

The study of rich and beautiful Ukrainian folklore, and especially political songs which represent political history of Ukrainian nation told by the nation itself, made me fall in love with this nation and with all power of my being live through all parts of the Ukrainian question in Russian and Austro-Hungary. The study of songs about the Ukrainian-Turkish struggle, in comparison with the same songs of Balkan nations, made me think over the so-called Eastern Question, and all together led me to the thought about the necessity of raising broadly the federative-democratic question in whole Eastern Europe.¹⁹⁵

Follow the flows: the intertwined complexity of meanings

The intersection of foreign, internal imperial, and provincial media discourses in Kyiv during the Great Eastern Crisis of 1875-1878 created a complex scenario in which the Eastern Question was discussed, as I presented in the previous chapters. Blurred boundaries between original and borrowed references to the concept in the provincial press make the differentiation of those discourses complicated because local authors had some freedom in selecting materials and introducing it to the local audience. For instance, on June 6, 1876, *Kievskii Telegraf* presented an article “France” in the “Foreign News” section, which included an overview of a text published in the French periodical *Journal des Debates* and a note about the death of George Sand. The first dealt primarily with the German foreign politics, and the authors from *Kievskii Telegraf* characterized it as “an article about the Eastern question.”¹⁹⁶ Such naming meant that the author decided to frame the information using this particular term, but it is unclear whether the original article contained any references to the Eastern question. It leaves us with the ambiguous situation in which the local editor’s voice may overlap with other voices or even simply appear in the form of direct translation. The peripheral status of local censored press in the Russian Empire would make me opt for the second option, but the editor’s decision to introduce the above-cited text as well as similar

¹⁹⁵ Mikhail P. Dragomanov, “Avtobiografia [Autobiography].” *Byloe. Zhurnal Posviashchennyi Istorii Osvoboditel'nago Dvizhenia* 1 (1906): 191.

¹⁹⁶ “Frantsiia [France],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 9, 1876, 3.

texts creates some space for further interpretations. This chapter argues that the newspaper authors did not stick to particular predefined strategies of presenting the Eastern Question to the local audience, and instead stayed with heterogeneous opinions on the spatial and semantic aspects of the concept, varying their understandings of how to reveal it to their readers.

This chapter starts with the issue of the local author's different positions in regard to the Eastern Question. The concept appeared hand-in-hand with other international and local developments that were important for Kyiv-based newspapers in the 1870s, being connected or separated from local affairs or broader, global contexts. Examining these connections, I show that the Eastern Question mostly remained an external concept linked to local affairs only by the editor's decisions. The editors and other newspaper authors traced lines of continuity between the Eastern Question and some of the locally important issues, such as Polish and Jewish affairs, while discussing other questions at the same time. Additionally, the Eastern Question could be sensationalized by the authors for bringing more attention to the particular articles published in local press, which also aimed to bring it closer to the readers in the province.

The decisions made by newspaper authors did not always lead to the presentation of the Eastern Question on its own terms. In the second part of the chapter, I briefly analyze how the concept was utilized for the authors' purposes without being often clearly highlighted as a particular important concept. In particular, I argue that the Kyiv-based newspapers referred to it in order to present their views on the questions important for them locally, while the essence of the Eastern Question could remain aside. At the same time, the explicit prejudices of the local authors could become evident in their texts dealing with the Eastern Question. In particular, the "othering" of national or religious groups went together with the comments on the Great Eastern Crisis, in which the examined concept also appeared.

All these particularities created a variety of potential interpretations of the concepts, which leads to the last part of the chapter, predominantly dealing with the meanings of the Eastern Question that the authors presented to their newspaper readers in the Western provinces of the Russian Empire. Instead of religiously following the differentiation between domestically and externally created meanings, I present them in their complexity, which was problematic and sometimes even contradictory. Showing that the Eastern Question was related predominantly to the affairs in the Ottoman Empire, I still show how vague the question of inclusion and exclusion of certain elements in the debates was for authors in Kyiv between 1875-1878. This vagueness also showed that the concept could be changed, and new, somewhat unexpected meanings could be added. The authors of different newspapers could freely introduce these additions and later remove them, creating variegated local media discourses.

Spacing the Crisis: “East,” “Europe,” and the Eastern Question

The references to the “East” laid in the cornerstone of the description of events in the Balkan peninsula in Kyiv-based press between 1875-1878, another feature which neither of the local authors openly reflected on. On February 1(13), 1875, *Drug Naroda* published a short article ‘Turkey and the Slavonic Lands’ in the section “News from Abroad.” Commenting on the favorable resolution of the tensions between the Ottoman Empire and Montenegro, the observer quoted the excerpt from an unknown source that the Three Emperors' Alliance became an institution which “keeps an eye on the peace in the East” but then doubted whether it would postpone the “solution of the question” for a long time.¹⁹⁷ The ‘East’ in this case, referred to the Balkans, where the tensions between the Ottoman government and local powers was occurring. Similar references may be found later during the years of the crisis,

¹⁹⁷ “Turtsia i Slavianskii Zemli [Turkish and Slavic Lands],” *Drug Naroda*, February 1(13), 1875, 47.

e.g., when the newspaper editors published “A governmental message about the Herzegovinian affairs” in May 1876, in which the remark about the East appeared again.¹⁹⁸ Even though the authors, sitting in Kyiv, were geographically to the east of Montenegro or Herzegovina, in the unofficial, as in the first case, or official, as in the second case, narratives presented in *Drug Naroda* to peasant teachers and priests, the Balkan region was still “Eastern”.

Such geographic imagination was also familiar to other journalists based in Kyiv. On August 12, a month after the end of the Congress of Berlin, the previously reformed *Kievskii Listok* republished an article “On the Eastern affairs” from *Pravitel'stvennyi vestnik*, which mostly contained materials about Bosnia.¹⁹⁹ The articles with the same title appeared in the newspaper in a similar context from time to time in the subsequent weeks.²⁰⁰ The image of the East was here taken from the media discourse developed in the imperial core and mediated to the local readers in Kyiv by the local newspaper.

The reference to the “Eastern affairs” in the context of the events in the Balkan peninsula was also present in the texts published by *Kievlianin*. On May 18, 1876, the newspaper added a news item about the struggle for domination in “Eastern affairs” between the Russian Empire and Austro-Hungary, which the observer mentioned in the context of “directions of European diplomacy in the Eastern Question” and linked to the ongoing state of affairs of the Ottoman Empire.²⁰¹ Several months before, the newspaper also permanently published an article “Eastern affairs,” which, in this case, presented a conscious decision of the Kyiv-based editors who had to combine news from abroad by themselves. On December 23, 1875, the newspaper compiled news about the Ottomans’ intentions to suppress the uprising, ongoing

¹⁹⁸ “Pravitel'stvennoe soobshchenie o gertsogovinskih delakh” [Governmental Messages about Herzegovinian Affairs],” *Drug Naroda*, May 1(13), 1876, 146.

¹⁹⁹ “Po vostochnym delam [About the Eastern Affairs],” *Kievskii Listok*, August 12, 1878, 3.

²⁰⁰ “Po vostochnym delam [About the Eastern Affairs],” *Kievskii Listok*, August 19, 1878, 3.

²⁰¹ “Vostochnyi vopros” [Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, May 18, 1876, 3.

battles on the Balkans and the project of reforms for the Ottoman Empire, initiated by Gyula Andrassy, Austro-Hungarian minister of foreign affairs, in the article.²⁰² On January 3, 1876, a similar set of news appeared on the newspaper's pages.²⁰³ The very same title also was introduced in late March 1877, on the eve of the Russo- Ottoman war, with minor changes in the content.²⁰⁴ Although the origin of the title could be external, coming either from the capital-based or foreign newspaper, the listed editors' decisions familiarized it to local readers, domesticating the ideas about affairs in the East.

At the same time, the very idea of the "East" was adopted on the provincial level beyond the newspaper pages. On July 7, 1877, *Kievlianin* received a letter from the Sosnytsia uyezd (Chernihiv gubernia), whose author described the place of politics in the local life, summarizing that "not only in cities but also in our remote places only talks about the present events in the East are present."²⁰⁵ In this case, the East first and foremost referred to the Danube where the battles were going on, which the letter's author mentioned among the rumors circulating in his surroundings. His voice was the voice of a local literate peasant or a member of the intelligentsia who was skeptical about local clergy and women's interest in politics, calling the women "eternal enemies of newspapers' columns." Writing from Sosnytsia, 1,5° to the East of the Danube Delta, he replicated the well-known images of the territory where the "politics" was going at the time.²⁰⁶ The East was a part of his moderate vocabulary which allowed him to reflect on the most recent changes in the local life, before shifting to more ordinary topics about burnings and a "possessed woman."²⁰⁷

²⁰² "Vostochnyia dela [Eastern Affairs]," *Kievlianin*, December 23, 1875, 3.

²⁰³ "Vostochnyia dela [Eastern Affairs]," *Kievlianin*, January 3, 1876, 3.

²⁰⁴ "Vostochnyia dela [Eastern Affairs]," *Kievlianin*, March 31, 1877, 3; "Vostochnyia dela," *Kievlianin*, April 2, 1877, 3; April 5, 1877, 3.

²⁰⁵ M. D-vo., "Iz Sosnitskago uezda [From Sosnytsia uезд]," *Kievlianin* July 7, 1877, 3.

²⁰⁶ See also James Krukones's remarks about peasants' interest in the contemporary affairs in James H. Krukones, *To the People: The Russian Government and the Newspaper Sel'skii Vestnik ("Village Herald")*, 1881-1917 (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987), 1-6.

²⁰⁷ M. D-vo., "Iz Sosnitskago uezda," 3.

Uneven imagined spaces appeared on the pages of Kyiv-based newspapers between 1875-1878 not only in the context of the “East”, but also “Europe” presented another important point of reference. On May 5, 1876, the *Kievskii Telegraf*’s observers started reviewing the foreign news with a short article “Europe,” which presented the readers the recent agreements between the states to “pacify the East.”²⁰⁸ The author did not mention any particular states in this case, but the text alludes to the Russian Empire among those states. The same article appeared in the newspaper in the next issues, discussing primarily information about the Berlin Conference, where, according to the article the great powers tried to deal with the issue of reforms in the Ottoman Empire.²⁰⁹ On May 16, the article informed the readers about the agreement to prevent the continuation of the “*status quo* in the East,” thus marking the imagined differentiation between the two spaces.²¹⁰ At the same time, the place of the Russian Empire in relation to “Europe” was not finally fixed. On the one hand, it belonged to the great powers from the continent who tried to unravel the tangle of Eastern affairs, appearing implicitly in the texts dealing with negotiations. On the other hand, it could be presented separately when it acted alone, bringing its own agenda on the international scale.

In the cases when the Russian Empire’s cooperation with other states in relation to the “ill-fated” Eastern Question was presented, the former was described as a part of “Europe.” Several days before the Russo-Ottoman war started, *Kievlianin* published an article about the failure of the “European concert” to prevent an “inevitable” war, where the position of the Russian Empire was already presented in the opposite to the rest of the “concert.”²¹¹ The idea about the concert came from the European political and diplomatic circles, and the Russian

²⁰⁸ “Evropa [Europe],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, May 5, 1876, 4.

²⁰⁹ “Evropa [Europe],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, May 7, 1876, 4; “Evropa [Europe],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, May 9, 1876, 4; “Evropa [Europe],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, May 12, 1876, 4.

²¹⁰ “Evropa [Europe],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, May 16, 1876, 3.

²¹¹ “Vostochnyia dela [Eastern Affairs],” *Kievlianin*, April 9, 1877, 3.

Empire was considered an important part for a long time.²¹² However, in the time of the growing contestations, it was the local editor's decision to point out to the different policy of the domestic imperial power. The upcoming war only deepened these differences, and for Kyiv-based newspapers, Europe became more and more the Other, while the Russian Empire could appear in the context of Eastern affairs.²¹³ These discourses, however, were often both brought from outside, mostly the other discussions within the Russian empire, and created domestically, highlighting the hybrid character of discussions around the international affairs which the provincial readers could witness regularly. This hybridity left space for active interventions on the side of the newspaper authors who still included or excluded the Russian Empire to/from Europe by their decisions, shaping the discourses about politics which could later be discussed in Sosnytsia or settlements nearby.

Adopting the Language of “Crisis”

The urgency of the politics related to the “East” coincided with the perception of the permanent crisis, expressed widely by the newspaper authors. The term “crisis” widely appeared in the “Foreign news” sections starting way before the so-called “Great Eastern Crisis” began, mostly referring to the internal affairs of the states whose affairs presented at least some interest for the Kyiv-based editors. In an overview published on April 26, 1875, *Kievlianin* referred to the ministerial crisis in Turkey, while in five days, they mentioned the “fear of ministerial crisis” in Greece.²¹⁴ Both crises were resolved quickly, but in mid-June news about the expectations of the new crisis in Greece again appeared on the newspaper

²¹² See, e.g., Matthew Rendall, “Russia, the concert of Europe, and Greece, 1821–29: A test of hypotheses about the Vienna system,” *Security Studies* 9, no. 4 (2000): 52–90, doi.org/10.1080/09636410008429413.

²¹³ See, e.g., “Vnutrenniia Izvestiia [Internal News],” *Kievlianin*, June 25, 1877, 3; “Avstriia,” *Kievlianin*, June 25, 1877, 3.

²¹⁴ “Inostrannia Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, April 26, 1877, 3; “Inostrannia Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, May 1, 1877, 3.

pages.²¹⁵ Such references to Greece in the context of its internal crises were often the only news coming from that country, but so was the information from other places. Based on the telegrams received from Agencé Générale Russe, on November 11, 1876, *Kievyanin* published an article about simultaneous ministerial crises in the Ottoman Empire, Serbia, Romania, Greece, and France.²¹⁶ The simultaneity of crises in a couple of states were also visible in some of the later issues.²¹⁷

The more or less constant presence of such references to a “crisis” highlights Reinhart Koselleck’s argument about the increased everyday usage of the concept in the nineteenth century. Koselleck points out that the reference to “crisis” came from the medical usage to a more political one, but in the case of Kyiv, it also appeared in relation to everyday issues.²¹⁸ On August 24, 1876, one of *Kievlianin*’s front-page articles started with notion about “The Financial Crisis experienced by South-Western Kray,” thus bringing a local dimension to the “horizon of meanings.”²¹⁹ At the same time, marking the Ottoman Empire as a “sick man of Europe” allowed the newspaper authors to refer to the “crisis” in one of the terms original meanings, related to the medical sphere.²²⁰ Playing with these metaphors, predominantly authors at *Kievlianin* made the idea of crisis omnipresent and an almost inevitable part of the news between 1875-1878, which potentially could influence the perceptions of internal developments and events abroad for the local audiences.

²¹⁵ “Inostrannia Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, June 12, 1877, 3.

²¹⁶ “Vostochnyi vopros [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, November 11, 1877, 3. The notions about the internal political crisis in France also appeared in the article dedicated to that county in the same issue.

²¹⁷ See news about crises in France and the USA in “Frantsyia [France],” *Kievlianin*, December 7, 1877, 3; “Soedenennye Shtaty [United States],” *Kievlianin*, December 7, 1877, 3, and news about crises in Austro-Hungary and Greece in “Avstro-Vengriya [Austro-Hungary],” *Kievlianin*, December 9, 1877, 3; “Gretsyia [Greece],” *Kievlianin*, December 9, 1877, 3.

²¹⁸ Reinhart Koselleck, “Crisis,” trans. Michaela Richter, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 67, no. 2 (April 2006): 357-400.

²¹⁹ “Perezhivayemyi iugozapadnym kraem finansovyi Krisis”... [The financial crisis experienced by South-Western Kray],” *Kievlianin*, August 24, 1876, 1.

²²⁰ “Evropeskii kontsert [European Concert],” *Kievlianin*, February 3, 1877, 3.

Using the term “crisis” to describe the ongoing contestations in the “East” and explain the Eastern Question also became an option for *Kievlianin*’s editors after the Russo-Ottoman war started. On May 14, 1877, the newspaper’s readers could find a short article about the position of the German Empire in the international affairs, whose author pointed out that the friendship between Germany and the Russian Empire “was not interrupted during the whole Eastern crisis and so much contributed to European agreement.”²²¹ The “Eastern crisis” was temporalized in this case, even though it was the first time of the concept was mentioned in any of the newspapers. In half-a-month the concept appeared again in the article “England” and again presented an original, i.e., local, reading of recent developments in the international arena which led to the extraction “of the center of gravity of the Eastern crisis from the sphere of military actions to the sphere of diplomatic negotiations.”²²² The Eastern crisis, thus, was presented as a multidimensional phenomenon, and yet its presence was self-evident because the author did not explain its essence to the readers.

Primary debates around the Eastern and other “questions”: looking for the positionality of local authors

The “Eastern crisis” brought a few new elements to the multiple “questions” which circulated in media discourses created by Kyiv-based press. Holly Case marked the presence of “questions” as an inevitable part of the public life during the “Age of Questions,” which also reached the Russian Empire.²²³ In such a context, their active appearance in a provincial context does not present a big surprise. However, in her study, Case refers to Foucauldian understanding of questions, contrasting it with Koselleck’s stances in conceptual history and thus implicitly resisting the idea to interpret the questions as concepts. However, in the case

²²¹ “Germaniia [Germany],” *Kievlianin*, May 14, 1877, 3.

²²² “Angliia [Engalnd],” *Kievlianin* May 31, 1877, 3.

²²³ Case, *The Age of Questions*, 1-7.

of the local press, the conceptual approach with Koselleck's notions on temporality and "contemporaneity of noncontemporaneous" may be more fruitful.²²⁴ On February 1, 1875, *Kievlianin*'s editorial was entitled "The Workers' Question," drawing the readers' attention to the "violation of contracts by workers" in the Krai, which led to the "poor state of local agricultural and factorial industries."²²⁵ This question was "posed" on different levels – in the newspaper, during the gatherings of agricultural masters in Kharkiv and by the imperial government who had established the "Committee on the Question of Workers." Thus, the "workers' question" had both official and non-official, local, and cross-imperial dimensions, but neither of the references brought in the newspaper dealt with its possible solution. Instead, reference to it allowed the conservative editors to express their sentiment against the troubles brought by workers' "violations," and the usage of the "question" helped to highlight this explicitly negative attitude. It was persistent even though its usage was connected to the very recent developments in the province, thus presenting "the linguistically determined pre-given data that structure its sense and its understanding repeat themselves."²²⁶ Its temporality remained undefined, but, at least, the *Kievlianin*'s authors presumed that their readers would be familiar with what "question" might mean, adding a new tone to this familiar idea.

The "Workers' question" was one among other challenging "questions" which had an undefined temporal character while being raised on a local level. On the one hand, such general questions as the interconnected "peasants' " and "chinsheviki' "²²⁷ appeared in Kyiv-based newspapers from time to time because of the highlighted pressing unresolved consequences of the peasant reform. In these cases, the authors could frame their articles starting with the formulation "on the question of," which might have had a slightly different

²²⁴ Reinhart Koselleck, 'Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, transl. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 90.

²²⁵ "Rabochii vopros" [Workers' Question], *Kievlianin*, February 1, 1875, 1.

²²⁶ Reinhart Koselleck "Social History and Conceptual History," transl. Kersin Benke, in *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 37.

²²⁷ "Chinsheviki" were the peasant who paid the quit-rents ("chinsh") to the local landlords for land-using.

connotation that the “questions” presented in Case’s book or similar studies. This formula presented the authors an opportunity to leave the core of their ideas untouched while detailing it.²²⁸ On the other hand, authors referred to the questions which were relevant for a moment and were “invented” by editors at some point, such as “Potatory question,” “Forestry question,” “Cemetery question,” “Sanitary question,” or “Prisons’ question.”²²⁹ They appear once or twice in the newspapers and then were “forgotten,” while their meanings matter only at the time when authors referred to them.

At the same time, the “Jewish” and “Polish questions” remained persistent on the local scale at the time when the Eastern Question entered the media discourses in Kyiv. At first, the authors treated them separately from the Eastern Question, mostly linking both to the provincial affairs. Newspaper authors were ambiguous about the Polish and Jewish presence in the Krai, and both “questions” always presented a challenge for them. On January 8, 1875, *Kievskii Telegraf* published an editorial “How many questions are in the Jewish question?” whose author argued that the Jewish questions, which mostly was related to the “emancipation and exploitation of Jews,” had to be viewed as a complex of smaller questions, which had to be studied and solved in connection to other questions.²³⁰ Thus, he called for the investigation of the “internal Other” without completely alienating the Other. However, such a call was rather an exception because most of the articles published in conservative *Kievlianin* or “people’s” *Drug Naroda* were hostile to the Jews. *Kievlianin* also was hostile to the Polish populations, whose uprising of the 1860s was still remembered in the Krai. Thus, when the

²²⁸ On June 9, 1877, *Kievlianin*’s editorial was dedicated to the “solution of the question on chinsh law by the Senate,” accenting the particular aspect of the “chinsheviki quesiton” which was successfully resolved (See “Reshenie Senatov” voprosa o chinshevom” prave [The solution of the question about chinsh law by the Setate...],” *Kievlianin*, June 9, 1877, 1).

²²⁹ “Po piteinomu voprosu [About the potatory question],” *Kievlianin*, 1876, November 27, 1876, 2; “Lesnoi vopros” v” nastoyashchee vremya [Forestry question in the present times],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, March 26, 1875, 1; “Kladbishchenskii vopros” [Cemetery question],” *Kievlianin*, September 30, 1876, 1; “Sanitarnyi vopros” v Kieve [Sanitary question in Kiev],” *Kievlianin*, January 1, 1876, 1; “Novoye vzbuzhdenie tiuremnogo voprosa [New raise of the prisons’ question],” *Kievlianin*, August 25, 1877, 1.

²³⁰ “Skolko voprosov” v” ievreyskom” voprose? [How many questions are in the Jewish question?]” *Kievskii Telegraf*, 1875, January 1, 1-2.

news about the potential help from the Poles to the Ottomans reached Kyiv during the Great Eastern Crisis, the local readers could find almost immediate negative responses to in the newspapers. In *Kievlianin*'s editorial published on November 25, 1876, Vitaliy Shulgin praised the address of Jan Tadeusz Lubomirski, one of the chief Polish noblemen, who called for the Polish reconciliation with the Russian Empire and condemned those Polish activists who hoped that "the Eastern Question, from its side, will raise the Polish Question."²³¹ For the first time, Shulgin combined two questions together adding a new extracting the one related to the local affairs and adding a more international dimension to it.²³²

At the same time, the Jewish question mostly remained important on the local scale but yet partly connected to the ongoing international crisis. After the Russo-Ottoman war started, *Kievlianin* raised an issue of drafting the Jewish population to the imperial army. This issue was at the cornerstone of the debates about Jewish status in the Russian Empire, and, as John Klier suggested in his seminal study, was a factor that influenced the future pogroms.²³³ In the late 1870s, the regulation of how Jews' had to be drafted to the army was still an unresolved, which thus gave a new point for *Kievlianin*'s antisemitism in the time of the war.

Several new external "questions" also appeared on the newspaper pages after the Great Eastern crisis began. In their overview on "Slavic lands" published on June 6, 1876, the *Kievskii Telegraf*'s authors mentioned the "Slavic question" which needed to be solved.²³⁴ The "question" referred to the ongoing contestations in the "East" and thus, it might have been overlapped with the Eastern question, to which the newspaper authors referred in the next issue.²³⁵ The same overlap could also be visible in the case of *Kievlianin*, whose authors

²³¹ "Kiev", 24 noyabrya 1876 [Kiev, 24 November 1876], *Kievlianin*, November 25, 1876, 1.

²³² The links between the Polish and the Eastern questions also appeared a year later when the rumors about the Polish legion in the Ottoman army were circulating in the local press (See, e.g., "Turtsyia[Turkey]," *Kievlianin*, October 4, 1877, 3).

²³³ John Doyle Klier, *Imperial Russia's Jewish Question, 1855-1881* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 392.

²³⁴ "Slavianskiye zemli [Slavic Lands]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 6, 1876, 3.

²³⁵ "Frantsyia [France]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 9, 1876, 3.

frequently used the concept of the “Slavic question” to describe the events in the Balkans in the summer of 1876.²³⁶ However, in the fall, at least two articles with open references both “questions” parallelly appeared, one of which came from the local author, while another seemed to be brought from outside²³⁷. The international context they presented did not change much which shows that the decisions authors took were rather situational. The situational character of such decisions may be highlighted by the fact that in 1875, newspapers sometimes referred to the “Herzegovinian question,” meaning the uprising in the Ottoman provinces.²³⁸ The rapid changes in information flows made local editors adapt constantly and “invent” or “borrow” the concepts for their readers even though in other, more calm cases, they could apply the already familiar terms.

At the same time, one question presented to the local audience stayed aside the “Eastern.” In their article “England” published on March 14, 1875, *Kievskii Telegraf* made a short overview of the article published in the British conservative newspaper the *Morning Post*, which dealt with the “Central-Asian question.”²³⁹ The last referred to the affairs between the British Empire and Afghanistan and the role of the Russian Empire in those relations. Although the *Morning Post* authors linked that question to the Eastern question, the Kyiv-based editors never emphasized this connection.²⁴⁰ Moreover, this mentioning of the “Central-

²³⁶ See V. Kramskoy, “Po slavianskomu delu [About the Slavic Affair],” *Kievlianin*, June 29, 1876, 1; Aleksei Rozov, “Otnoshenie naroda k” slavianskomu delu [The People’s Attitude to the Slavic Affair],” *Kievlianin*, August 26, 1876, 1.

²³⁷ “Mneniia russkoj pechati po vostochnomu voprosu [Russian Press Opinions about the Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, September 2, 3; “Otnoshenie polskogo naseleniia po slavianskomu voprosu [The Attitudes of the Polish Population to the Slavic Question],” *Kievlianin*, October 28, 1876, 1;

²³⁸ “Vozstanie iuzhnykh” slavyan” [The Uprising of Southern Slavs],” *Kievlianin*, November 11, 1875, 3.

²³⁹ “Angliia [Englands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, March 14, 1875, 3.

²⁴⁰ See “Literature,” *The Morning Post*, February 11, 1875, 2; “The Central Asian Question,” *The Morning Post*, March 8, 1875, 6 (presumably, the *Kievskii Telegraf*’s authors made an overview on this article); “London, Tuesday, May 18, 1875,” *The Morning Post*, May 18, 1875, 4; “The Eastern Questions,” *The Morning Post*, May 28, 1875, 4; “The Golos has alluded...,” *The Morning Post*, June 17, 1875, 4; “Literature,” *The Morning Post*, July 19, 1875, 4. All dates are mentioned according to the Gregorian Calendar.

Asian question” was on the two placed in the “Foreign news” section of Kyiv-based newspapers,²⁴¹ while all others appeared in the sections dealing with the “internal news.”

Presenting the “Central-Asian question” as an “internal” question related to the geopolitical changes in the regions marked in the newspapers as “Middle Asia.” In 1875, the Russian Empire advanced against the Kokand Khanate, annexing it in 1876. The annexation resulted in the resistance of the local population and brought temporary instability to the region, which was covered by the local press or all-imperial press, and then republished in other places throughout empire, including Kyiv-based periodicals. On September 18, 1875, *Kievlianin* republished the news about uprisings in Kokand from *Russkii Invalid*, putting it to the “Internal news” section.²⁴² Additionally, commenting on the Russian possessions in *Drug Naroda*, Ivan Andriiashev paid attention to the reactions of the local settled population who “realize that constant troubles totally undermine their well-being and thus see the key of more continuous and more durable peaceful times in the appearance of the Russian troops.”²⁴³ The imperial “civilizing” mission was highlighted in this short passage, bringing to the readers the sense of disturbances in Central Asia which had to be solved and image of local societies which had to be “ordered.”²⁴⁴ However, this question was important in itself, detached from other urgent questions which appeared in local press in Kyiv. The only connection between Central Asian question and the Eastern Question came from outside, when *Kievlianin*’s made an overview of the imperial newspapers in late August 1876 and paid attention to the article published in *Novoe Vremya*, whose author linked the “Middle-Asian question” to the “question of South Slavs,” while referring to the person of general Chernyaev who was an

²⁴¹ The other one appeared in *Kievlianin* on July 5, 1875. See “Angliia [England],” *Kievlianin*, July 7, 1875, 3.

²⁴² “Vnutrenniia Izvestiia [Internal News]” *Kievlianin*, September 18, 1875, 3.

²⁴³ “Kokan” [Kokand],” *Drug Naroda*, March 1(13), 1876, 72.

²⁴⁴ The idea of ordering Central Asia presented one of the biggest challenges for the Russian imperial government, “drawn to Enlightenment theories of society” in the mid-nineteenth century, as Daniel Brower shows in his essay on Islam and ethnicity in Russian-controlled Central Asia (Daniel Brower, “Islam and Ethnicity: Russian Colonial Policy in Turkestan,” in *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700-1917*, ed. Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 115-137).

important figure in both of them.²⁴⁵ The local editors did not adopt this discourse completely, thus leaving their readers an image of events in Central Asia as a matter of internal imperial politics.

Unproblematized references to the “East” and “Europe” where the “crisis” was happening between 1875-1878 and situational decisions of linking the Eastern Question to the locally important “questions” presented a frame for readers to familiarize themselves with the ongoing contestations. The readers’ responses to the media discourses were also situational, but nevertheless present in the local press. At least, the reference to the “East” to mark the struggle in the Balkans was partly adopted and recreated in those response, which partly questions Holly Case’s conclusion that “the Russian people generally did not share the passion of commentators on the Eastern question.”²⁴⁶ The very concept of the “Russian people” is also problematic in the case, and their reactions to the questions are difficult to be excavated, so far as only literate could send their thoughts to the Kyiv-based editors. The last, however, utilized the Eastern Question to stress their agenda in local and even international relations, the aspect which also requires additional attention.

(Un)hidden references: Framing and Utilizing the Eastern Question in the provincial media

The evaluation of the state of the Eastern Question was changeable for authors sitting in Kyiv between 1875-1878. In their overview of “Foreign news” published on January 16, 1875, the *Kievlianin*’s editors paid attention to the possible war between Montenegro and the

²⁴⁵ “Mneniia russkoi pechati po vostochnomu voprosu [Opinions of the Russian Press about the Eastern Questions],” *Kievlianin*, August 31, 1876, 4. The article also referred to the relations between the Russian Empire and the British Empire in the region, which, in fact, had some impact on the ongoing Great Eastern Crisis (see also Evgenij Yu. Sergeev, *Bol'shaya igra, 1856-1907: mify i realii rossiisko-britanskikh otnoshenii v Central'noi i Vostochnoi Azii [Great Game, 1856-1907: myths and realities of Russo-British Relations in Central and Eastern Asia]* (Moskva: Tovariščestvo nauchnykh izdanij, 2012), 135-185).

²⁴⁶ Case, *The Age of Questions*, 177.

Ottoman empire related to the so-called “Podgorica case,”²⁴⁷ arguing that if the war were to happen, “the general conflagration in the East would become inevitable.”²⁴⁸ The reference to “conflagration in the East” stand out against the background of generally moderate narrative presented in the section, adding an emotional element to it. The subsequent text dealt with an “unpleasant” state of the Ottoman Empire and listed the problems the sultan and his people had to face, which was a quite typical story written by Vasily Shulgin, *Kievlianin*’s editor-in-chief, or his fellow colleagues at that time. Similar references to the issues of the “sick man of Europe” often appeared on the pages of Kyiv-based newspapers before and during the Great Eastern Crisis, thus giving a powerful frame for the local readers of how to see the ongoing developments in the “East.” The mentioning of “general conflagration” only highlighted this frame for a moment when in fact, no serious troubles were present. In the next issue the editors mentioned about the contestations between “rotten administration of the Ottoman Empire” and the Christians, but later in the month the notes with more peaceful connotations were placed.²⁴⁹

Changes in rhetoric did not mean the disappearance of the references to “conflagration.” In their overview of new in the Balkans on September 4, 1875, the *Kievlianin*’s editors quoted the passage coming from Herzegovina whose author proclaimed that “if Montenegro remains neutral, the fear of the Eastern conflagration would be eliminated, and your [Montenegrin] prince Nikola will be the same worthless ruler as he was before.”²⁵⁰ This remark was related

²⁴⁷ In November 1874, Turks killed several Christians in Podgorica, which belonged to the Ottoman Empire at the time. The crime investigation caused tensions between the Ottoman Empire and Montenegro (see, e.g., Uğur Özcan, “Osmanlı Adalet Mekanizmasının Balkanlar’da İşleyişi Ve Podgorica’da Bir Cinayet Davasının Serencami (1874-1875) [Functioning of Ottoman Justice Mechanism in the Balkans and the course of a Murder Case in Podgorica (1874-1875)],” in *Balkanlar’da Osmanlı Mirası Ve Defter-i Hakani, İki Cilt*, ed. Abidin Temizer and Uğur Özcan (İstanbul: Libra Kitapçılık Ve Yayıncılık, 2015), 565-600).

²⁴⁸ “Inostrannyya Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, January 16, 1875, 3.

²⁴⁹ See “Inostrannyya Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, January 18, 1875, 3; “Inostrannyya Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, January 23, 1875, 3; “Inostrannyya Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, January 25, 1875, 3.

²⁵⁰ “Serbiia, Chernogoriia i Gertsegovina [Serbia, Montenegro and Herzegovina],” *Kievlianin*, September 4, 1875, 3.

to the undefined position of Montenegro to the uprising, which constituted the “fear” for the European powers. *Kievlianin* presented the full quote, thus remaining the most emotional part of the address untouched, which made the whole article sound more sensational. Similar effect was visible, for instance, when *Kievlianin* paraphrased the article from *Pravitelstvennyi vestnik* and mentioned “Herzegovinian confusion.”²⁵¹ Such decisions about wording of news articles could be equally borrowed and independent, which shows that editors’ were familiar with the discourse of sensationalism, a prominent feature of the emerging mass press in the mid-nineteenth century. “Sensationalism” referred to the conscious adding of adjectives or metaphors, which made even the most moderate text sound more sensational along with the declared calls for precision in the news coverage.²⁵²

Sensationalism as a “discursive strategy,” to use Jean Chalaby’s term, was visible also with authors’ references to the Eastern Question.²⁵³ On March 31, 1877, the *Kievlianin*’s subscribers could find a mentioning of “the burning question” in Vasily Shulgin’s reflection about the undefined character of the “Eastern affairs.”²⁵⁴ The Eastern Question was not mentioned in any of the articles placed in the issue, but a reader could recognize which question was “burning,” which allowed the author to play with the word choice, making the very “question” more sensational. At the same time, such choice was rather rare, and in other cases Shulgin or other authors preferred to directly mention the Eastern Question when discussing the ongoing international crisis. The authors from other local newspapers also used the concept in its original form or managed to explain the situation without referring to it at all. For the local figures, the decision to make the term more sensational was a “discursive tactics,” rather than a “strategy.”

²⁵¹ “Vnutrinniia Izvestiia [Internal News],” *Kiyevlyanin*, November 11, 1875, 3.

²⁵² For more criteria to distinguish sensational materials made on purpose see Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse* (London: Arnold 1995), 4-5.

²⁵³ See Jean. K. Chalaby, *The Invention of Journalism* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 1998), 97-99.

²⁵⁴ “Vostochnyia dela [Eastern Affairs],” *Kievlianin*, March 31, 1877, 3.

Sensational texts per se were not exceptional in the local media discourses and even were highlighted in the Kyiv-based newspapers. Before changing its editorial policy, *Kievskii Listok* presented a model for presenting such text for the local readers, combining freely information from internal and foreign sources with additional comments of its authors. On October 2, 1876, the newspaper editors published a compilation of news articles entitled “Around Russia.” Among the news about the Basil emperor Pedro II to the Crimean Peninsula and blowing up a crag in New York, they placed several articles about humanitarian aid for the Balkan Slavs, a story about selling of a Christian woman in the Ottoman Empire, and a story about a Serbian soldier who cut his fingers because he wanted to come back home.²⁵⁵ The last two articles were related to the ongoing Eastern crisis, but simultaneously both were sensational in their nature. The newspaper republished them from the *Times* and *Novoe Vremya*, thus bringing the media discourses from outside, but still placed them together, creating a presence of sensation which had to attract their readers.²⁵⁶ On the one hand, such choice of the news articles mirrored perfectly the editorial policy to bring curiosities to their audience, and the crimes happening during the international crisis were among the most compelling stories to publish. On the other hand, both articles had an element about a curious Other who acted differently than readers would expect. Such emphasis on curiosity was particularly evident in the case of presenting the Ottoman Empire, the news about which was often presented from a particular angle; be it the news about the death of the sultan’s wife or the state of the sultan himself, the local authors framed these elements in the context of

²⁵⁵ “Cherty turetskikh нравов [Features of Turkish Manners],” *Kievskii Listok Ob'yavlenii*, October 2, 1876, 2; “(Istoriia s otrublennymi paltsami) [Story about Cut Fingers],” *Kievskii Listok Ob'yavlenii*, October 2, 1876, 2.

²⁵⁶ The increasing presence of sensational news in the newspapers was one of the most prominent features of the media development in the second half of the nineteenth century. Commenting on this aspect in the British imperial context, Martin Hewitt concluded that “A good murder trial could triple or quadruple sales and even persuade weekly papers to publish daily” (see Martin Hewitt “The Press and the Law,” in *Journalism and the Periodical Press in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, ed. Joanne Shattock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 155). However, the effect of this changes on the press in the Russian Empire where censorship and state institutions also had impact on the editorial politics, has not been studied yet.

cultural differences.²⁵⁷ The Othering highlighted a curious or sensational character of the articles, but it also mirrored the prejudiced thinking of the local authors who hunted for the most promising news items.

The coexistence of sensational news and pre-established negative attitudes toward the Ottoman Empire was a typical feature for other newspapers as well during the Great Eastern Crisis. In their article “The Eastern question” published on May 20, 1876, the *Kievlianin*’s editors presented a political program of the students of the military academy involved in the *coup d'état* against the sultan Abdulaziz and commented that “it is hard to believe that the program was developed by people who for the whole life have been studying Koran and notching fanatic doctrine of Mohammed.”²⁵⁸ Muslim “fanatism,” highlighted by author, received a lot of attention between 1875-1878, predominantly linking to the actions taken by the Ottoman troops in the Balkans. On July 15, when the news about violence of the Ottoman army in Bulgaria reached the pages of the local press, *Kievlianin*’s authors resumed that those were “the scenes of wild fanaticism shameful for the civilization.”²⁵⁹ The references to “fanatism” appeared in subsequent issues, and on July 27, the newspaper’s editors introduced a regular article “Turkish Atrocities,” which presented an update on the “atrocities” committed in Bulgaria and Serbia.²⁶⁰ These changes resonated with the articles on the same topic which circulated in the British media context thanks to Januarius MacGahan, an American reporter for the *London Daily News*, whose reportages from Bulgaria caused the internal and international debates around the actions of *bashi-bazouks*.²⁶¹ Kyiv-based

²⁵⁷ See “«Levant Herald» soobshchaet”... [Levant Herald informs],” *Kievskii Listok Ob'yavlenii*, January 10, 1876, 3; “Odessa. (Vesti iz” Turtsii) [Odessa. (News from Turkey)],” *Kievskii Listok Ob'yavlenii*, June 9, 1876, 3; “Venskoï gazete Tagblatt soobshchait” [Viennese newspaper Tagblatt has been told...],” *Kievskii Listok Ob'yavlenij*, August 10, 1876, 3.

²⁵⁸ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*. May 20, 1876, 3.

²⁵⁹ “Turtsiia [Turkey],” *Kievlianin*, July 15, 1876, 3.

²⁶⁰ “Serbo-Turetskaia voina [Serbian-Turkish war],” *Kievlianin*, July 22, 1876, 3; “Serbo-Turetskaia voina [Serbian-Turkish War],” *Kievlianin* July 24, 1876, 3; “Zverstva turok.,” *Kievlianin*, July 27, 1876, 3

²⁶¹ See Joel H. Wiener, *The Americanization of the British Press, 1830s–1914. Speed in the Age of Transatlantic Journalism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 94-96.

newspapers authors were familiar with MacGahan's sensational reportages, and the direct references to the texts from the *Daily News* appeared in the *Kievlianin*'s above-mentioned article.²⁶² The very name "zverstva" ("atrocities") seems to be borrowed from the original texts.²⁶³

At the same time, the notions about Turkish "barbarism" did not primarily originated in the local media and intellectual environments. News about "unheard atrocities and nefarious brutalities" came also from other external sources, influencing the local interpretations of the events.²⁶⁴ On the one hand, such smooth appropriation marked the acceptance of the Western-like Orientalist discourse about the Ottoman Empire catalyzed by the sensational way of presenting information about the developments in the "East." On the other hand, as Daniel Brower and Edward Lazzerini argue, scholarly and public communities in the Russian Empire were capable of producing their own Orientalist discourse toward the internal population.²⁶⁵ These capabilities can also be extrapolated to the external "Orient," predominantly the Ottoman Empire. The notions of "barbarism" contradicting "civilization" were equally valid for the Kyiv-based press in the cases related to Central Asia, as was previously discussed and the Ottoman Empire. These references to "atrocities" combined the Russian imperial discourses with media discourses coming from abroad, which were adapted on the local ground by the decisions of editors of all newspapers, both conservative and more liberal, located in Kyiv. Presenting the Eastern Question to the local readers, they relied on this pre-existing frame.

If the presentation of the Ottoman Empire through the lens of "brutality" and "atrocities" in the context of the Eastern Question was an invisible consensus among the

²⁶² "Zversva musul'man" [Muslim Atrocities], *Kievlianin*, July 29, 1876, 4.

²⁶³ See "Moslem atrocities in Turkey.," *The Daily News*, June 10, 1876, 5; "Moslem atrocities in Bulgaria," *The Daily News*, July 23, 1876, 5.

²⁶⁴ See "Slavianskiya zemli [Slavic Lands]," *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 13, 1876, 3.

²⁶⁵ Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini, "Empire and Orient," *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700-1917*, 1-8.

provincial newspaper authors, the images related to the Balkan Slavs were more complicated. Barbara Jelavich points out that the general population of the Russian Empire supported the Slavs' struggle between 1875-1878 despite the fluctuations in the official politics.²⁶⁶ Such notions of support, which Vladlen Vinogradov called "irrational,"²⁶⁷ were somewhat uncritically incorporated in the history of the representations of Balkans in the Russian Empire between 1875-1878.²⁶⁸ Focusing on the "support" and "sentiments" as almost self-evident, scholars do not go deeper to look at what this "support" meant in the political and media discourses created in the imperial capitals and the provinces.

These discourses on the Balkan peoples were quite diverse and went far beyond representations of "fraternity," revealing the ambiguity of attitudes toward Balkan Christians in Kyiv-based newspapers. On the one hand, they expressed openly their support for the Balkan Slavs after the Great Eastern Crisis started. In the overview of the events in 1875, Vitaly Shulgin argued that "everybody is waiting for the independence of Herzegovina and dependent Slavs," mentioning, however, that this question was "an uneasy" one.²⁶⁹ From time to time, similar remarks appeared in other newspapers, including *Kievskii Listok* whose authors could refer to the Slavs' "struggled for independence" among other news articles about curiosities in 1876, after the Serbo-Ottoman war started.²⁷⁰ Such image of fighting Christians familiarized the contestations in the Balkans for both local authors and their audience who could relate the situation to their own contexts.

²⁶⁶ Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2000), 145.

²⁶⁷ See Vladlen Vinogradov, "Russko-turetskaia vojna 1877-1878 godov i evropeiskie derzhavy [Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878 and European States]" *Novaia i noveishaya istoriia*, no. 1 (2009), 127.

²⁶⁸ See Konstantin Nikiforov, "Predislovie [Preface]," in *Rossiia i Serbiia glazami istorikov dvukh stran*, ed. K. V. Nikiforov (Sankt-Peterburg: Aletejya, 2010), 5-9; M.Iu. Dostal, "Vvedenie [Introduction]," in *Slavyanskij vopros: Vekhi istorii* (Moskva: Institut Slavyanovedeniya i Balkanistiki, 1997), 3-4.

²⁶⁹ "Evropa v 1875 godu [Europe in 1875]," *Kievlianin*, January 1, 1876, 3.

²⁷⁰ "Vseobshcheie vnimanie obrashcheno... [Everyone's attention is drawn...]," *Kievskii Listok Ob'yavlenii*, September 8, 1876, 1.

On the other hand, the very same Slavs were presented as “impoverished” “victims” of Ottoman rule, which also presented them in a position of weak.²⁷¹ These metaphors aimed to highlight the bad conditions of the Slavs under the Ottomans, and thus raise awareness about those who “had nothing to lose,” as one of *Kievlianin*’s authors resumed.²⁷² However, the mentioning of “poor” “suffering” women and children, usual victims of “atrocities,” also presented the almost hopeless situation of these people.²⁷³ Moreover, while showing the Ottoman troops who committed “brutalities and lootings” in Serbia, the local newspapers were willing to republish the above-mentioned article about a Serbian soldier with cut fingers. Apart from *Kievskii Listok*, this story also appeared in *Kievlianin*, whose author also emphasized “the generosity” of General Cherniaev who did not punish the soldier who wanted to “come back to his house.”²⁷⁴ The generosity of the general resonated with the call for “condoling with the difficult miseries of the Orthodox Slavs in Herzegovina,” to which Kyiv branch of Slavonic Charitable Committee called through the *Kievlianin*’s pages.²⁷⁵ The struggling Slavs were in need of “support” from the dwellers of the Kray, without which their “miserable” lives would be in even greater danger in the time when the Eastern Question was present.

In this context, the Russo-Ottoman war gave another opportunity to stand against the “barbarity” which “oppressed” Christians.²⁷⁶ Such remark, however, contrasts a little with Maria Todorova’s notion about “imputed ambiguity” of the discourses related to Balkanism because the local authors did not undermine the potential of Slavs to govern themselves, while

²⁷¹ See references about victims in “Bosnia,” *Kievskii Telegraf*, March 5, 1876, 3; “Blagodaria vseobshchemu sochuvstviu naroda...[Thanks to the people’s general sympathy...],” *Kievskii Listok Ob"yavlenii*, August 25, 1876, 2; “(Zhertva magometanskogo fanatizma) [(A victim of Muslim Fanatism)],” *Kievskii Listok Ob"yavlenii*, October 16, 1876, 2.

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²⁷³ See “Slavyanskiia zemli [Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 13, 1876, 3.

²⁷⁴ “Russkaia perchat” po vostochnomu voprosu [Russian Press about the Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, September 30, 1876, 4.

²⁷⁵ “Kievskii Otdel Slavyanskogo blagotvaritel'nago komiteta... [Kiev Branch of Slavic Charitable Committee],” *Kievlianin*, November 4, 1875, 1.

²⁷⁶ “Dva chasa imperatora v Kieve [Two Hours of Emperor in Kiev],” *Kievlianin*, April 23, 1877, 1.

questioning their capacities to resist the Ottoman Empire successfully and accenting the need to help.²⁷⁷ The *Kievskii Telegraf*'s author who questioned the very first call for help from *Russkii Mir* discussed in the previous chapter and argued that more complex politics to deal with the reasons of "oppressions" of Christians in Bosnia, thus stayed alone in a sea of growing sentiments toward humanitarian action.²⁷⁸

The Eastern Question presented one option to highlight the agenda needed for Kyiv-based editors to bring their reflections and positions about the ongoing Great Eastern Crisis to provincial readers. Borrowing the information and narratives from outside, i.e., other Russian imperial newspapers as well as foreign periodicals, first and foremost British, they nevertheless placed it within their understanding of what could constitute "Turkish atrocities" against "impoverished" Slavs. The Slavs were weak enough to succeed with struggle with external help, and the question of how to help them was raised again and again in articles published on a provincial level. The references to the Eastern Question partly coincided with that need but partly were used to infiltrate the agenda important for the local authors. On March 25, 1878, *Kievlianin*'s editorials was finished with the author's criticism toward the international politics of Austro-Hungary and the British Empire. Pointing out the news about Austro-Hungarian claims, he concluded: "after all, we need to ask: [p. 2] who is more conscientious – England or Austria-Hungary? 'Both are better?'"²⁷⁹ gentle *khokhol*²⁸⁰ will reply," after which he mentioned the recent telegrams "after reading which we can only throw up our hands: 'An agreement between Austria and England, which is constantly reinforcing the fleet in the Sea of Marmora, is thought to be reached.' 'Germany approves Austrian politics regarding the Eastern question...' Are we really have to say: *et tu quoque!*..."²⁸¹ The

²⁷⁷ See Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 2nd ed. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 17-18.

²⁷⁸ "Kiev", 2 sentyabrya 1875 g. [Kiev, 2 September 1875], *Kievskii Telegraf*, September 3, 1875, 1-2.

²⁷⁹ Question written in Ukrainian.

²⁸⁰ A derogatory term for Ukrainians.

²⁸¹ "Kiev", 24 Marta 1878 [Kiev, 24 March 1878] *Kievlianin*, March 25, 1878, 1-2.

expressed hostility toward two empires was combined with the questioning of local *khohol*'s loyalty to make the author's point sound clearer. At the same time, Vasily Shulgin left the telegram about the Eastern Question unfinished, thus also leaving the readers to guess what the concept might have meant at that moment.

Searching for the Definition(s): What was the Eastern Question?

The multiplicity of political and media contexts on the pages of the Kyiv newspapers during the international crisis of 1875-1878 created an impression of a multi-faceted Eastern Question. The authors could simultaneously combine various aspects (un)related to the crisis while talking about the Eastern Question, and in this section, I demonstrate that the variety of meanings related to the concept depended on momentous decisions. As I highlighted in the previous chapter, the decisions to insert the Eastern Question were not always explicitly presented for readers, but were still visible when the crisis advanced. On November 16, 1876, *Kievlianin* published a telegram from Prince Gorchakov to Count Shuvalov on its front page. Commenting on the recent developments in Europe, Gorchakov underlined that “the diplomacy has never been worried so much about Eastern questions as during this year; Europe has never been so much disturbed, so much endangered in its serenity, its benefits and its security.”²⁸² The line was followed by a remark about the “abyss of evil” which “eroded Turkey” and thus questioned the “European security.” The mentioning of the “Eastern questions” was only one in the growing snowball of the Prince's metaphors, but it still highlighted the complexity of the situation. In the editorial published next to the telegram, Vitaly Shulgin did not pay attention to any of the references to the Eastern Question in the address, and instead focused on the risks for European diplomacy, thus not bringing an

²⁸² “Depesha ego svetlosti gosudarstvennago rossiiskago kantslera k” grafu Shuvalovu, iz” Tsarskago Sela, ot” 7-go noyabrya 1876 goda [A Telegram of His Grace Russian State Chancellor to Count Shuvalov from Tsarskoie Selo, 7 November 1876],” *Kievlianin*, November 16, 1876, 1.

interpretation of the concept which originated in the Russian imperial court. At the same time, Gorchakov's choice to mention it in plural mirrors the challenge which Shulgin had to face while presenting the concept to the local audience in Kyiv and the rest of the province in other. The "Eastern question" could have multiple meanings which changed from time to time, leaving a local editor with a need and a chance to present its chaotic complexities on the pages of the Southern-Western Krai newspaper.

The editor's attempts to fill in the "Eastern question" with particular meanings appeared in the different stages of the Great Eastern Crisis. On November 18, 1876, the *Kievlianin*'s section "International news" started with a long article "The Eastern Question," in which the author put news about "diplomatic victories" of the Russian Empire in Europe, the coming conference in Istanbul in December 1876, preliminary agreements about the demands for the Ottoman Empire, and the position of the British Empire in its relations with the Russian Empire.²⁸³ In this case, the Eastern Question was predominantly related to the diplomatic aspects of the ongoing crisis, and the Great Powers' attitudes to the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, the article also included a short note about potential military activities from the side of the Russian and Ottoman Empires and exchange of opinions between Disraeli and count Ignatyev on "what is Bulgaria?" The last question was also related to the future conference but simultaneously it raised a broader question about mental geography related to the Balkans. The authors cited Ignatyev's remark that "Turks have already defined the Bulgarian borders: Bulgaria is where the area is turned into a desert, where settlements and cities are burnt, where people were beaten, women were disgraced. The theater of Turkish horrors - that is Bulgaria."²⁸⁴ Thus, the geography of a place was defined by the recent "atrocities," which also influenced the understanding of the "Eastern Question."

²⁸³ "Vostochnyi vopros" [Eastern Question]," *Kievlianin*, November 18, 1876, 3.

²⁸⁴ "Vostochnyi vopros" [Eastern Question]," *Kievlianin*, November 18, 1876, 3.

At the same time, a few other articles in the section underlined the complexity of the references to the Eastern Question, showing the flexibility of the concept during the Great Eastern Crisis. The text “Turkey” presented details about the expectations of the war published in the Ottoman newspaper *Vakit*, “Austria-Hungary” presented an overview of anti-Russian text from Hungarian *Correspondence Hongroise*, while “England” included information about Marquis Salisbury’s willingness to maintain peace.²⁸⁵ The article “France” did not have any references to the topic, while the concluding text “Italy” was finished with the *Neue Wiener Presse* correspondent’s opinion about the Italy being persuaded to not support the Russian Empire in the “solving of the Eastern Question.” The last appeared again as a self-evident and did not have any clarification, but the previously listed examples show that the meanings of the concept could have been situational for the editor who had to decide where to place the articles.

Such undefined character of the term is even more evident in the editorial published in the *Kievskii Telegraf* in October 1875. Arguing that the Russian Empire “has made a step forward in the Eastern Question,” the author mentions the governmental note on the restoration of peace in the Balkans and the audience the Russian ambassador had in Constantinople.²⁸⁶ Thus, the Eastern Question marked mostly diplomatic aspects of the crisis happening in the “East,” as the turbulent region was marked in the text, and these remarks also showed that changing international context might have influenced the author’s decision to frame the multi-faceted Eastern Question.

While the issue of diplomacy related to the “East” was almost an inevitable part of the Eastern Question presented in Kyiv-based newspapers, other everyday aspects of the Great Eastern crisis, mainly the warfare, were barely linked to the concept. At the very same issue,

²⁸⁵ “Turtsiia [Turkey],” *Kievlianin*, November 18, 1876, 3; “Avstro-Vengriya [Austro-Hungary],” *Kievlianin*, November 18, 1876, 3; “Angliia,” *Kievlianin*, November 18, 1876, 3.

²⁸⁶ “Kiev”, 28 oktiabria 1875 g [Kiev, 28 October 1875],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, October 29, 1875, 1.

Kievskii Telegraf also published its traditional “News from Slavic Lands,” placing information about Herzegovinian insurgents and “the Latest Political News” with a not about “Muslim fanaticism.”²⁸⁷ Neither of the articles contained references to the Eastern Question. A similar tendency appeared in *Kievlianin*, where the article “The Uprising of Southern Slavs” was published on November 11, presenting details from the changes on the frontline and mentioning among others the “Herzegovinian question.”²⁸⁸ In the next issue, the article “The Eastern question” was published instead in the newspaper without any clarification about the developments in the battlefield or any tensions in the Ottoman Empire.²⁸⁹ For the local newspaper authors, the struggle in the Balkans could be a part of the Eastern Question only if the other issues, such a public opinion, were included in the narrative, as it was in the case of *Drug Naroda* in April 1876.²⁹⁰ The background of this decision is undefined because Ivan Andriiashev did not mention any sources in his article. The Russo-Ottoman war also did not receive much attention in the context of the Eastern Question. It rather presented an instrument to solve the Eastern Question, as *Kievlianin* argued on April 23, 1877, while not being a part of this question.²⁹¹ The decisions made by all three newspapers show that for them, the concept did not cover the immediate changes in the core of the international crisis, but the reactions to these changes could constitute one of the components of the “ill-faded Eastern Question.”

Nevertheless, the Great Eastern Crisis made the local authors change the meanings of the concept of the Eastern Question. From time to time, the newspapers authors mentioned “news phases” of the question, one of which, for instance, was highlighted by *Kievlianin* in

²⁸⁷ “Izvestiia iz Slavianskikh” zemel’ [News from Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, October 29, 1875, 4; “Posledniia politicheskiiia Izvestiia [The Latest Political News],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, October 29, 1875, 4.

²⁸⁸ “Vozstanie iuzhnykh” slavyan” [The Uprising of Southern Slavs],” *Kievlianin*, November 11, 1875, 3.

²⁸⁹ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, November 13, 1876, 3.

²⁹⁰ “Inostrannoe obozrenie [Foreign Review],” *Drug naroda*, April 18(30), 1876, 128.

²⁹¹ See “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, April 23, 1877, 3. The interpretations of what the “solution of the Eastern question” meant in the context of the Kyiv-based newspapers discourses will be discussed in the next chapter.

May 1876, during the Berlin conference.²⁹² Another reference appeared in the same newspaper after April 12, 1877. In their overview of international affairs on April 19, the authors were concerned with the “question of countries' attitudes to the Russo-Ottoman war; of the stance these states are ready take in the new phase of the Eastern question,” thus putting the war parallelly with the Eastern Question but simultaneously indicating that it brought changes to the question. Although they were essential, these changes in the international arena did not have the same effect on how the “Eastern Question” was interpreted or presented in Kyiv. In the above-mentioned article in *Drug Naroda*, the author placed a note about the support of Balkan Slavs in the narrative.²⁹³ Thus, an action related to the question became a part of this question. However, such an inclusion was rather an accident because other newspapers did not provide a clear connection between the solidarity with “oppressed” Balkan people as being an element of the Eastern Question. Both internal calls for help in all newspapers and description of such help collected in other countries stayed aside the Eastern Question, remaining a question of counties' internal politics or even an issue of everyday politics on the local level which caused debates, as in the case of *Kievskii Telegraf* author's response to *Russkii Mir* discussed above.

The ambiguity of changes and their impact on the local news making process where the multi-faceted Eastern Question appeared is also visible in the case of Egypt. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, in early December 1875, *Kievlianin*'s articles “Eastern question” covered predominantly the British purchase of the Suez Canal, while the news from the Balkans were placed separately.²⁹⁴ Several issues before, the newspaper also published a separate article “Suez question” where the Eastern Question was not directly mentioned, although the author referred to the British “Eastern politics.”²⁹⁵ A year later, the reference to

²⁹² “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, May 8, 1876, 3.

²⁹³ “Inostrannoe obozrenie [Foreign Review],” *Drug naroda*, April 18(30), 1876, 128.

²⁹⁴ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, December 2, 1875, 3.

²⁹⁵ “Suetskii vopros” [The Suez Question],” *Kievlianin*, November 22, 1875, 3.

the British politics in relation to the Suez Canal also appeared in the newspaper, but this time in the article “Italy” because the author presented the opinion of the Italian newspaper *Diritto*.²⁹⁶ Contrary to other articles in the section on foreign news which mentioned the “Eastern Question,” the one dealing with the Suez Canal presented a separate element in contemporary diplomacy.²⁹⁷ A similarly implicit separation was also visible in *Kievskii Telegraf* and *Drug Naroda* already in the Fall 1875. When the purchase happened, both newspapers listed the information about that parallelly to other news from the Ottoman Empire.²⁹⁸ However, when the Russo-Ottoman war started, a direct link between the “Suez” and the “Eastern” questions appeared again in *Kievlianin*. On April 28, the newspaper published an article “Suez question,” presenting an issue related to the status of the Canal during the war.²⁹⁹ On June 18, the same issue was presented again, but this time in the article “England,” where the politics of the British Empire was discussed, including its position in the “solution of the Eastern question.”³⁰⁰ Such a decision was again situational. At the same time, when the issues of internal politics in Egypt were presented in *Kievlianin*, being it a question of khedive’s fate or the tensions between Egypt and Abyssinia, they never were a part of the Eastern Question.³⁰¹ The last examples were mostly republished from foreign newspapers, e.g., *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, and the local authors could simply transfer the unchanged text to their audience in the Krai.

In these cases, the inclusion or exclusion of particular elements to the interpretations of the question depended on the sources of information, the changing events and sporadic editors’ decisions about selection of news articles to publish. The question of flexible

²⁹⁶ “Italiia [Italy],” *Kievlianin*, November 23, 1876, 3.

²⁹⁷ See “Angliia [England],” *Kievlianin*, November 23, 1876, 3; “Germaniia [Germany],” *Kievlianin*, November 23, 1876, 3.

²⁹⁸ See “Angliia [England],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, November 23, 1875, 4; “Turtsiia [Turkey],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, November 23, 1875, 4; *Kievskii Telegraf*, December 2, 1875, 4; “Angliya [England],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, December 2, 1875, 4; “Inostrannoe obozrenie [Foreign Review],” *Drug naroda*, December 1(13), 1875, 368.

²⁹⁹ “Suetskij vopros” [Suez Question],” *Kievlianin*, April 28, 1877, 3.

³⁰⁰ “Angliya [England],” *Kievlianin*, June 18, 1877, 3.

³⁰¹ See “Egipet” [Egypt],” *Kievlianin*, January 11, 1877, 3.

inclusion and exclusion was even more visible in the ways Kyiv-based newspapers presented news from the Balkans between 1875-1878. Although the Eastern Question was explicitly and implicitly connected to the events in the peninsula at that time, the decisions about framing those events for the readers could be different. On the one hand, the uprising in Herzegovina and its consequences were widely intertwined with the question in the media discourses created in Kyiv. On September 20, 1875, *Kievlianin* published an article “Herzegovinian uprising” which was, in fact, was entirely dedicated to the discussions about the “Eastern question.”³⁰² On the other hand, as I noted earlier in this chapter, when the military actions were discussed, the authors did not present them as a part of the Eastern Question.³⁰³

A similar tendency appeared in the representations of the Balkan nations, whose internal politics were almost never a part of the question. On October 9, 1876, *Kievlianin* published an article “Greece” which told the readers about the issues related to the countries’ ministers.³⁰⁴ At the same issue, the articles “The Eastern Question” and “Russian Press on the Eastern Question” were also present, neither of which touched upon Greece’s internal affairs. Instead, the first one contained information about Romanian military preparation, while the second one presented an opinion on Serbian struggle against the Ottoman Empire, which originally was published in the newspaper *Birzhevye Vedomosti*.³⁰⁵ Both notes dealt with the international activities of Romania and Serbia, which explains the *Kievlianin*’s editors’ decision to place them within among other news covered by the umbrella of the “Eastern Question.” While ministerial crises in both counties were remained their internal issues which

³⁰² “Gertsegovinskii vopros” [Herzegovinian Question],” *Kievlianin*, September 20, 1875, 3.

³⁰³ In the next issue, on September 23, *Kievlianin* released an article “Herzegovinian uprising,” dealing mostly with the fights and other events on the spot without any references to the Eastern Question at all (See “Gertsegovinskoe vozstaniye [Herzegovinian Uprising],” *Kievlianin*, September 23, 1875, 3).

³⁰⁴ “Gretsiya [Greece],” *Kievlianin*, October 9, 1876, 3.

³⁰⁵ “Vostochnyi vopros” [Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, October 9, 1876, 3; “Russkaia pechat” po vostochnomu voprosu [Russian Press about the Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, October 9, 1876, 3.

had a little to do with the international affairs, a single step toward going beyond the internal politics could turn to be a part of the Eastern Question for outsiders sitting in Kyiv. The situation was different with the Ottoman Empire, whose internal developments were widely covered in both articles cited above. In the next issue, however, a separate articles “Turkey” appeared on the *Kievlianin*’s pages in addition to the text about the “Eastern Question,” which showed the possible variations in the editorial policy.³⁰⁶ Still, for the editors the internal changes in the Ottoman Empire were happening abroad and could influence the other aspects, military or diplomatic, of the Eastern Question, which also meant that those changes could constitute an important part of the meanings related to the question itself.

Concluding thoughts: the Multi-faceted, Flexible, and Complicated Eastern Question

The story about the Eastern Question and its meanings in Kyiv newspapers during the Great Eastern Crisis were complex and multidimensional. For the local journalists, the concept was tightly linked to the “East,” an imagined space with the Balkans as one of its centers. The “East” was remote from Kyiv, as was “Europe,” but the authors of the newspaper and sometimes their readers were willing to reflect on both even if their reflections intertwined with the images produced in the imperial capitals or abroad. Other questions, especially “Polish” and “Jewish” presented additional concerns for the local authors who could refer to the Eastern Question as an explicit or sometimes even implicit instrument to deal with those concerns successfully. This means the Eastern Question was often linked to other questions and not always discussed on its own. At the same time, many local questions had nothing to do with the ongoing international crises, but their presence on the newspapers’ pages showed

³⁰⁶ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, October 11, 1876, 3; “Russkaya pechat” po vostochnomu voprosu [Russian Press about the Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, October 11, 1876, 3; “Turtsiia [Turkey],” *Kievlianin*, October 11, 1876, 3.

the importance of the very idea of “questions” for the locals to present and discuss. The references to “crisis” in the media discourses created in Kyiv marked similar or even greater importance, because this concept was omnipresent during the Great Eastern Crisis, one crisis among others revealed to the readers.

The sensational character of some news articles only highlighted the complexity of the representations of the crises. The “brutality” of the “Turkish atrocities” helped to ‘other’ the Ottoman Empire and its allies before, during and after the Russo-Ottoman war, and simultaneously raised the notions of unequal “fraternity” between Slavs. The “fraternity” partly divided opinions in the local press, but with the Ems ukaz and the banning of *Kievskii Telegraf*, the idea of the need to help almost helpless Slavs prevailed in the local discussions in the media, which also influenced the appearance of the concept of the Eastern Question.

The flexibility of meanings attached to the concept – from the tensions between the Ottoman Empire and Balkan nations through diplomacy and solidarity related to the affairs in the “East”, to the debates about the plans of European powers for the region, all marked a heteroglossia that was present in the Kyiv-based newspapers. It was maintained by the editors’ decisions according to which, on one day, the ongoing warfare in the Balkans could belong to the Eastern Question, but, on another, it was a part of a slightly different discourse, which was also not explicitly reflected in these variations. In these cases, the Eastern Question appeared as an interdiscursive phenomenon which could be related to the “East” in multiple ways. The internal affairs of Balkan states were discussed beyond these variations, while the same issues in the Ottoman Empire could present the core of the Eastern Question. The “sick man’s” problems had to be treated with the involvement of external “therapists,” forming another aspect of the Eastern Question for local audiences. However, the ways this treatment should have been provided, as well as the ways to solve the entire question were not clear at first glance, which I will further discuss in the following chapter.

4 – Solving the Eastern Question: thoughts and expectations in imperial Kyiv

Instead of proving clearly its justice and its aspiration for the peaceful cutting of the knot braided by time in the Balkan peninsula, England persistently stays on fulfilling the initial demand to present the whole Treaty of San-Stefano at the congress, the demand which is humiliating for Russian and barely capable of contributing to the solution of the Eastern question. Considering the Treaty of San-Stefano as violating the states' interests, the government in London, however, still avoids presenting the counter-offers which could replace the Russo-Turkish treaty and satisfy at all means the demands for justice and European interests.³⁰⁷

Changing Environments – Changing Forecast

On August 12, 1875, *Kievlianin* published a short summary of an article about the uprising in Herzegovina which appeared earlier in the Brussels-based newspaper *Le Nord*, highlighting that the “three great powers agreed to not raise the Eastern question.”³⁰⁸ The “great powers” mentioned in the text were the Russian Empire, the German Empire, and Austro-Hungary, whose actions, according to the observer, meant that the “peace in the East has been temporarily disturbed but the general peace remains out of all dangers.”³⁰⁹ However, this “temporal” disturbance lasted longer than a safe “general peace.” On the next day, *Kievskii Telegraf* published an overview of the events in the Balkans, pointing out that the uprising also reached Bosnia.³¹⁰ In less than a week, *Kievlianin* presented an opinion from the newspaper *Neue Freie Presse*, which argued that with reaching Bosnia the uprising also reached a “new phase.”³¹¹ The spread of military activities was presented as dangerous for the neighboring states, although it was still local in the remote corner of the Ottoman Empire. On August 30, *Kievlianin*’s editors placed another opinion-piece from *Le Nord* about the Russian Empire’s objective not to raise the Eastern question.³¹² This reference was the last in

³⁰⁷ “Inostrannyya Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, April 27, 1878, 4.

³⁰⁸ “Posledniia Izvestiia [The Latest News],” *Kievlianin*, August 12, 1875, 4.

³⁰⁹ “Posledniia Izvestiia [The Latest News],” *Kievlianin*, August 12, 1875, 4.

³¹⁰ “Gertsegovinskoe vozstanie [Herzegovinian Question],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, August 13, 1875, 3.

³¹¹ “Gertsegovinskoe vozstanie - vopros” dnya [Herzegovinian Question is the Question of the Day],” *Kievlianin*, August 19, 1875, 3.

³¹² “Gertsegovinskoe vozstanie [Herzegovinian uprising],” *Kievlianin*, August 30, 1875, 3.

Kyiv newspapers, while in others cases the authors presented the situation as if the question was posed.

The rapid internal transformations in the Ottoman Empire and different reactions to them from the side of external powers presented a challenge for the local newspapers in terms of predicting the outcomes of the Eastern Question. Being issued only several times per week or even per month, they had to go through an enormous amount of news, rumors, and opinions published in periodicals across Europe or provided by a dozen telegraph agencies, which, nevertheless, left some space for their own evaluations of the events in the “East.” On March 5, 1876, a *Kievskii Telegraf*’s reviewer resumed that the “various threads of the Eastern question, so carefully selected and tangled by the diplomacy in the last six months, starts slipping again from the governments' hands,” highlighting the speed of the changes he had to comment on.³¹³ For him, the Muslim inhabitants from the Bosnia Eyalet who decided to stand against the Ottoman government, were the reason for the “slipping.” The whole passage, generously filled with metaphors, showed the flexibility of language adopted by newsmen in Kyiv to clarify the “ill-fated” question during the Great Eastern Crisis. On the one hand, this flexibility allowed the authors to present their views on the issue, while metaphors could ease the perception of the messages they wanted to deliver. On the other hand, their interpretations were intertwined with information from other sources, including the sensational language which makes the original thought almost inseparable from the external texts which entered Kyiv between 1875-1878.

This chapter looks at how the combinations of various texts presented a diverse and complicated picture of what Kyiv-based authors considered as solutions to the Eastern Question during one of the major international crises in the 1870s. I start with a brief reflection on the ideal scenario which appeared on the pages of local periodicals, arguing that the authors

³¹³ “Inostrannia Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, March 5, 1876, 3.

considered the “freedom of Christians” as the final point of the question, but simultaneously the boundaries of “freedom” and “Christians” were somewhat blurred or could be different for different authors. At the same time, changing “phases” of the crisis or the question itself made them present short-term solutions, mostly important only at a moment when the new phase appeared. A new shift in the international arena could leave the previous part of the Eastern Question unanswered, which, however, did not pose a challenge for the authors who switched the attention of readers to new events. These shifts and adaptivity were also visible in the case of military or diplomatic interventions, which could help to solve the question.

After discussing the complexity of opinions related to the essence of what solving the Eastern Question involved, I continue with the analysis of presented perspectives for the “complicated” Eastern Question. Starting with the acknowledgement of “external,” foreign or cross-imperial, predictions of future developments of the crisis, I show that authors in Kyiv managed to maintain their own opinions about the possibility to resolve the Question. For them, the Eastern Question was a “historical” question, originating in the 18th century and its solution was inevitable. However, together with an emphasis on inevitability, the authors could point to short-term perspectives, which could change depending on the events related to the question and their perception in the center of the South-Western Krai. Stressing these different temporalities, I nevertheless argue that the question seemed to be solvable, contrary to other local or even regional questions, discussed in the previous chapter. Although the question was an external and thus less familiar for the authors, its fate seemed to be clearer than the fate of local issues.

Searching for the Answers to the Difficult Eastern Question

The visions of what might constitute the solution to the Eastern Question were as diverse as the elements which constituted the question for the Kyiv-based authors. In their

article “The Russian press on the Eastern Question” published on October 2, 1876, *Kievlianin* presented their readers with a reaction to a text which had recently appeared in *Novoe Vremya*. The authors started the summary by highlighting that “several days ago *Novoe Vremya* demanded the mouths of the Danube for Russia. Although this declaration raised criticism about the impropriety of such claims, this periodical placed an article which could hardly be titled.”³¹⁴ For the observer, such a suggestion could rather undermine the “poor” intentions of the “Russian people” whose support for Balkan Slavs did not end with the pragmatic thinking of returning the territories abandoned after the Crimean War.³¹⁵ “And what is remarkable,” the reviewer added later in the text, “the article in *Novoe Vremya*, thoroughly imbued with narrow and egoistic chauvinism, appeared when the periodicals were pointing out many times to the great significance of the contemporary movement of the Russian people, and the award they will receive as a matter-of-course, as a fruit of good seeds.”³¹⁶ The “good seeds” were embodied by an “altruistic” help for the struggling people in the peninsula, which was the point that mattered for the author. However, the development of the Great Eastern Crisis, which included the Russo-Ottoman war, seemed to change drastically the opinions placed on the *Kievlianin*’s pages. In early 1878, when a potential agreement with the Ottoman Empire was discussed in diplomatic circles, the Russian Empire claimed its former territories, which caused dissatisfaction in Romania. *Kievlianin* informed about this dissatisfaction, but this time, no references to “narrow and egoistic chauvinism” appeared.³¹⁷ The politics of the Russian imperial government and its representation in the provincial press shaped by the war presented clearly a shift in the perception of the Eastern Question itself. The “fruit” had to be

³¹⁴ “Russkaia pechat' po vostochnomu voprosu [Russian Press about the Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, October 2, 1876, 3.

³¹⁵ According to the Treaty of Paris, the Russian Empire lost the territory of South Bessarabia which also meant the lost control over the part of the Danube Delta (Articles XX-XXI of the Treaty).

³¹⁶ “I zamechatel'no to, chto stat'ia Novago Vremeni, naskvoz' propitannaia uzkim" i egoistichnym" shovinizmom", poiavilas' togda, kogda v" pechati mnogo raz" ukazyvalos' na vysokoe znachenie sovremennago dvizheniia Russkago naroda, na tu nagradu kotoruiu on" poluchit" samo soboiu, kak" plod" dobrago semeni.” See “Russkaia pechat' po vostochnomu voprosu,” *Kievlianin*, October 2, 1876, 4.

³¹⁷ See e.g., “Rumyniia [Romania],” *Kievlianin*, March 28, 1878, 3

materialized in order to cover the “burdens of war,” laid on the shoulders of Kyiv since April 1877.³¹⁸

The definite fate of the Danube Delta, however, did not mean the solution of the Eastern Question, neither in 1876, nor 1878. For the local authors, it was rather a minor point which appeared during one of the acts of this “tragedy.”³¹⁹ Similar points were mentioned by the authors even before the international crisis, for instance, when tensions between the Ottoman Empire and its vassals became visible. On January 27, 1875, *Kievskii Telegraf* placed an overview of foreign news paying attention to the temporary solution of the misunderstanding between the Ottoman Empire and Montenegro around the Podgorica case. Such solution only meant the removal of “the danger of appearance of the Eastern question in a dangerous form”, but not the solution of the question itself.³²⁰ Instead, referring to the articles published in the *Times* beforehand, the authors concluded that the “question” was “temporarily delayed.”³²¹ It was only in late Fall 1875, when the *Kievskii Telegraf*’s authors started presenting the articles dealing with its possible solutions. They referred primarily to the opinions from other newspapers, but simultaneously also started reflecting on the issue brought by the ongoing uprising in Herzegovina.³²²

The news about rebellious Christians in the Ottoman province helped the Kyiv-based authors to clarify how the Eastern Question had to be solved. The images of the “suffering” Slavs who fought “for their freedom” were adopted on the pages of local periodicals during

³¹⁸ See editorial “Kiev”, 13 april 1877 [Kiev, 13 April 1877], *Kievlianin*, April 13, 1877, 1.

³¹⁹ On May 21, 1876, *Kievskii Telegraf* published the editorial “Slavic Five-Act Tragedy,” whose author argued that the “center of gravity in the Eastern Question moved to Russia”, which meant the beginning of the final act of the tragedy (See “Slavyanskaya pyati-aktovaya tragediya [Slavic Five-Act Tragedy],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, May 21, 1876, 1).

³²⁰ “Turtsiya i slavyanskiia zemli [Turkey and Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, January 27, 1875, 3.

³²¹ “Turtsiya i slavyanskiia zemli [Turkey and Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, January 27, 1875, 3.

³²² See, e.g., an article republished from one of the Bavarian newspapers in “Germaniia [Germany],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, November 30, 1875, 4 and author’s reflection on the state of the Ottoman Empire in “Turtsiya [Turkey],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, November 30, 1875, 4.

the first month after the first news about unrest reached Kyiv.³²³ The “freedom” of the people under “the Turkish yoke” presented the most obvious solution to the Eastern Question, and this message appeared both in the articles published in *Kievskii Telegraf* after the crisis gained momentum in 1875 and in the texts which appeared in *Kievlianin* after the Russo-Ottoman war started. However, the essence of this “freedom” seemed to be far more difficult to present for the local level. On the one hand, there was an invisible consensus among the newspapers’ authors that the current “archaic” rule in the Ottoman provinces had to be changed to put the “sufferings” to an end.³²⁴ This rule was presented as one of the key reasons of the uprising, so its replacement with other, “freer” forms of governance might have changed the situation. On the other hand, the newspaper authors did not have any precise alternatives which could replace the previously established orders in the provinces and the region in general. They could consider inhabitants of Bosnia as both Serbs and non-Serbs, but could not see their liberation in simple unification with the Serbian principality.³²⁵ The Austro-Hungarian projects of occupying the rebellious province were partly discussed by *Kievlianin*, but neither of them appeared as a possible solution to the Eastern Question. The occupation might have complicated the situation because it did not promise “freedom” for the Slavs although the newspaper did not always criticize this aspect, especially when the negative reaction of Hungarians was discussed. In such cases, the prejudice toward Hungarians who were often considered as “Turcophile” prevailed over skepticism toward the Austrian project to include another element to its diverse bouquet of lands.

At the same time, the “freedom” for Slavs and, to take it broader, Christians in general, was not seen as possible within the Ottoman Empire. On October 11, 1875, *Kievlianin* pointed out that the Porte could not solve the “Herzegovinian question” by itself, questioning the

³²³ See, e.g., the editorial from *Kievskii Telegraf* discussed in the previous chapters: “Kiev”, 14 oktyabria 1875 g [Kiev, 14 October 1875],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, October 15, 1875, 1.

³²⁴ “Kiev”, 28 Oktyabria 1875 g. [Kiev, 28 October 1875],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, October 29, 1875, 1.

³²⁵ See “Bosnia,” *Kievlianin*, May 5, 1876, 1.

intentions of the government to deal with the uprising in late spring 1876.³²⁶ The suspicion increased drastically after Ottoman irregular troops committed crimes against inhabitants of Bulgaria in order to suppress the rebellion in the province which, for the locals in Kyiv, marked an inability of the central authorities to protect their subjects.³²⁷ The *coup d'état* against Abdul-Hamid only raised the level of suspicion, and the projects of reforms could promise the solution of the Eastern Question for the Kyiv-based authors. In February 1877, soon after the Constantinople Conference did not reach its goals, Ivan Andriiashev published his first and the last opinion article dedicated primarily to the Eastern Question in *Drug Naroda*. Assessing the potential of changes offered by Mithat Paşa to restructure the Ottoman imperial system, Andriiashev argued that “no one among Christians, or even Turks, believes in constitutional comedy played, so to say, by Mithat Paşa as a blind.”³²⁸ For him, neither of the internal movements could change the situation. Instead, he proclaimed that “there will be no good in the Balkan peninsula until the enlightened Christian government is established in Constantinople, which, standing on equal relations with Christians and Turks, will be able to appease all opposite interests.”³²⁹ The “enlightened Christians” were the only option to rule the “barbarous” hordes to save Christians and “Turks,” which is how the author called Muslims. This government, however, had to be established by Europe, which undermined the potential of local Christians to rule by themselves. The self-government and freedom within the Ottoman Empire, both important steps to solve the Eastern Question, could be only imposed from above.

Andriiashev’s remark also highlighted the need to deal with the Ottoman Empire as an independent state, a factor of the Eastern Question which appeared in Kyiv-based newspapers

³²⁶ “Iuzno-slavyanskia zemli i Turtsiia [South Slavic Lands and Turkey],” *Kievlianin*, October 11, 1875, 3.

³²⁷ See one of the earliest reactions in “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, May 13, 1876, 3.

³²⁸ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Drug Naroda*, February 03(15), 1877, 51.

³²⁹ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Drug Naroda*, February 03(15), 1877, 52.

from time to time. The capacities of the “sick man” to rule itself were widely questioned by the authors, as we showed in the previous chapter, and these were the “civilized” countries who had to decide on the Ottoman “affairs.”³³⁰ The poor state of those affairs led to the “crisis” in the Eastern Question, as *Kievlianin*’s author argued in May 1876, so its internal politics had to be solved by means of external powers.³³¹ However, what that “solution” might mean was less essential for him, and so it was for other authors. Instead of presenting scenarios of healing the “sick man,” they accidentally could bring an idea of the need to take away the Ottoman Empire, but this removal was limited to its European part. At the same time, the potential changes of the other part of the empire, which could also constitute the Eastern Question for the local meaning-makers, was left unnoticed. The question of Egypt is the most evident in this regard. Egypt had been considered as an element of the Eastern Question since the British government purchased the Suez Canal shares, but the question of how this element had to be treated was never raised in Kyiv. It appeared from time to time in *Kievlianin*’s articles during and right after the Russo-Ottoman war when the question of the Suez Canal blockade was raised, but not a note was made on what should have been done about it.³³² Egypt was far too remote from Kyiv to present a special interest for the people who prioritized explaining local issues, so the authors were satisfied with publishing short overviews on the current developments in the zone or republishing opinions from other newspapers.

Apart from the various components which might constitute the Eastern Question and its possible solution, the mechanisms that potentially could be used for the solution were also diverse. On the one hand, the local authors had emphasized diplomatic efforts to deal with the pressing question since the crisis started. On November 30, 1875, *Kievskii Telegraf*’s authors

³³⁰ See review on the article from *Journal des Debates* published in *Kievskii Telegraf*: “Frantsiia [France],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 9, 1876.

³³¹ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, May 11, 1876, 3.

³³² “Inostrannia Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, April 28, 1877, 3.

referred to news articles from a Bavarian newspaper about the “complete agreement” on the Eastern Question reached by Bismarck and Gorchakov.³³³ In two days, *Kievlianin* published an overview of the recent debates on the issue in the European press, all of which dealt with the question of how Great Powers could reach an agreement to solve the Eastern Question. The author mocked a brochure “l'Achat du canal de Suez et ses conséquences” published in Geneva for its ignorance of the Russian Empire’s role in the settlement and simultaneously described a caricature against Benjamin Disraeli’s intrigues which had appeared in the German satiric magazine *Kladderadatsch*.³³⁴ Although the article’s anti-British sentiment was clear, it nevertheless acknowledged the possibility to solve the Eastern Question with the peaceful involvement of the British Empire. The role of the Great Powers in general was more important in this case. Their presence made the question solvable, while the Ottoman government was demonstrating its incapacities.

However, the emphasis on the involvement of the states with their particular interests could equally delay the solution in the eyes of Kyiv-based authors, which happened at the Berlin Conferences in May 1876, when the British Empire did not openly support the other states’ position. Commenting on these developments from Kyiv, the authors of *Kievlianin* could only express the opinion that the “state of affairs in the East has become more difficult” without reflecting on how these difficulties could be resolved.³³⁵ They highlighted the growing role of other actors, such as the Russian Empire and Austro-Hungary, but still were predominantly passive observers of the changing circumstances, neither of which presented a solid ground for the solution of the Eastern Question. The uncertainty did not allow them to consider diplomacy as the means to achieve the solution, and sometimes it was more a source of disturbance. In their article about everyday life in Kyiv published in November 1876, a

³³³ “Germaniia [Germany],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, November 30, 1875, 4.

³³⁴ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, December 12, 1875, 3.

³³⁵ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, May 20, 1876, 3.

Kievskii Listok's author resumed: "Serene life of our city, shook during the day only by the news from the diplomatic world, finally freezes in the evenings."³³⁶ Unsuccessful attempts to solve the Eastern Question by means of diplomacy could be seen as deepening the uncertainty related to the question for the local authors.

On the other hand, war was presented as an alternative means to solve the question, but its potential role in the process was also complicated. Commenting on the failure of the Constantinople Conference in mid-January 1877, the *Kievlianin*'s observer argued that the peaceful tools to deal with the problem "were exhausted," and "Russia is staying face-to-face with Turkey, and it will have to continue its work of liberating the Slavs from the Balkan peninsula."³³⁷ To "continue the work" meant to start a war against the Ottoman Empire, a scenario which had become a reality in three months. For *Kievlianin*, this "people's war" presented a step toward the "real solution" of the Eastern Question.³³⁸ The Russian Empire was a main character in this drama, but not the only one. For instance, the very same newspaper published news articles about the potential involvement of Greece in the "armed solution of the Eastern Question."³³⁹ At the same time, the editors placed the information about the diplomatic resistance to such development of the plot from the side of Austro-Hungary.³⁴⁰ The diplomatic aspect of the solution, thus, never completely disappeared from the stage and even in the time of greatest battles highlighted on the pages of the local newspaper, the presence of the European concert behind the curtains was visible. Moreover, when the armistice between the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire was reached in January 1878 and the talks about potential war with the British Empire reached Kyiv, the

³³⁶ "Bezmyatezhnaia zhizn' nashego goroda... [Undisturbed life of our people...]," *Kievskii Listok Ob'yavlenij*, November 17, 1876, 1.

³³⁷ "Vostochnyi vopros" [The Eastern Question]," *Kievlianin*, January 13, 1877, 3.

³³⁸ See "Inostrannia Izvestiia [Foreign News]," *Kievlianin*, April 23, 1877, 3.

³³⁹ See, e.g., "Gretsiia [Greece]," *Kievlianin*, June 14, 1877, 3; "Gretsiia [Greece]," *Kievlianin*, September 24, 1877, 3.

³⁴⁰ "Avstriia [Austria]," *Kievlianin*, September 27, 1877, 3.

authors started stressing the “peaceful,” i.e., diplomatic, solution of the question, while the war did not seem to be a reliable tool anymore.³⁴¹ Kyiv would not like to have the “burden” of a new conflict on its shoulders again.

The growing speed of events which unfolded as the Great Eastern Crisis made the authors react as quickly as their three-issues-per-week format allowed. The views on how the Eastern Question could be solved depended on both previously established views about the need to give freedom to the people in the Balkan peninsula and the changing environment as the uprising in a small Ottoman province resulted in the series of armed conflicts and tensions across Europe. Neither of these episodes brought certainty to Kyiv about the solution of the question. The “People’s war” for “Christians’ freedom” was successful, but its consequences on the local level were also visible for the editors, who placed articles about its impact on the country’s economy.³⁴² In the end, the Congress of Berlin presented the most promising chance to “cut the knot.” However, this note came after the long chaotic chains of expectations expressed in Kyiv-based newspaper, which came as an immediate reaction to the news from the “East.”

The Fate of the Eastern Question

In this concluding section I argue that the “horizon of expectations”³⁴³ in relation to the Eastern Question was broad and complicated in so far as Kyiv-based authors combined their opinions on the future of the question with the changing predictions brought from external sources. On July 31, 1876, *Kievlianin* published an article “The voice of Russian from Kiev,” written by a local nobleman, Aleksandr Berdyaev, who called for actions in favor of Balkan

³⁴¹ “Inostrannyya Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, January 26, 1878, 3; “Inostrannyya Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, February 9, 1878, 3; “Inostrannyya Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, March 11, 1878, 3.

³⁴² See “Voina i narodnoie khozaistvo [The War and the National Economy],” *Kievlianin*, December 10, 1877, 1.

³⁴³ See Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 255-275.

Slavs. Among other arguments he proclaimed that “the present struggle in the Balkan peninsula is also a historical moment, before which many historical époques, which we used to recognize as remarkable, will likely fade. The Eastern question is being solved. Frightful words!” This part of the proclamation ended with an emotional reflection: “The fate of Russia also depends on the sense it will be solved. Russians must not spare themselves if they wish to avoid losing something greater if the denouement of the Eastern Question does not come in the sense favorable for Slavs.”³⁴⁴ The perception of the decisive moment was felt in the whole text and marked the changes in the attitude to the ongoing Great Eastern crisis, when the local elite started paying more attention to the struggle in the Balkans. The growing focus also resulted in multiple attempts to make sense of how the Eastern Question might result. Although the newspaper authors in Kyiv could not influence the means used to solve the question directly, they reacted to the internal processes in the empire and the external developments, implicitly or explicitly presenting their own opinions on the possible variations in the elusive question.

While Berdyaev was unsure about the broader perspectives to solve the Eastern Question, his colleagues presented quite a clearer understanding of what to expect globally. Several weeks before his article appeared, Mikhail Iuzefovich wrote his “A few thoughts about the Eastern Question,” in which he pointed out to the inevitability of the solution of the Eastern Question. He argued that “considering the turn taken by the affairs in the Balkan peninsula, the Eastern question is moving towards a solution not by the diplomatic constructions but by the force of circumstances, i.e., historically, as all big questions in mankind's life are being solved.”³⁴⁵ The “historically” defined fate of the question formed a cornerstone of his argument, marking a belief in the predestination of the issue, which “history

³⁴⁴ A. Berdyaev, “Golos” russkago iz” Kieva [The Voice of Russian from Kiev],” *Kievlianin*, July 31, 1876, 2.

³⁴⁵ M. Iuzefovich, “Neskolko’ myslei o vostochnom” voprose [A few Thoughts about the Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, July 3, 1876, 2.

[...] guided naturally against human will.”³⁴⁶ For Yuzefovich, the right thing for the interested powers was to let the Balkan Slavs act by themselves, paving the way to the solution. He ended his passage with a belief in the “final solution” and “complete triumph of our long-suffering brothers.”³⁴⁷ The “triumph” was certain even though the authors did not clarify the circumstances of the one, focusing instead on the “meaningless” attempts to stand against “history.” The ongoing tensions between the Great Powers and the uncertain position of the British Empire could only temporarily delay the outcome of the struggle, and the “Christian feelings” had to prevail to help those who suffered.

The reference to “history” as an abstract action which defined the fate of the Eastern Question was common for the Kyiv-based authors. It was implicitly presented in the above-mentioned Ivan Andriiashev’s article about the necessity to establish a Christian ruler in Istanbul, when the author argued that “sooner or later the similar matter will have to be resorted if European states do not want finally tolerate disorderly Turkish horde at their own expense and at their own responsibility.”³⁴⁸ It was more explicitly stated in *Kievlianin*’s editorial published a year after. When the armistice between the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire was reached, and the news about the potential intervention of the British government in the “Eastern events” reached Kyiv, Vitaly Shulgin proclaimed that the government went against the “laws of history: they believe that can stop the course of history and demands presented by life with their hands.”³⁴⁹ Historian by training and profession, Shulgin brought his expertise to evaluate the recent changes and highlight the anti-British sentiment in a sophisticated way, bringing attention to the undeniable “laws of history.” A similar reference to the undeniable character of the development of the Eastern Question also appeared in the early stages of the crisis in *Kievskii Telegraf*, whose author underlined the

³⁴⁶ Yuzefovich, “Neskolko' myslei o vostochnom" voprose,” 2.

³⁴⁷ Yuzefovich, “Neskolko' myslei o vostochnom" voprose,” 2.

³⁴⁸ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Drug Naroda*, February 03(15), 1877, 52.

³⁴⁹ “Kiev ”, 1-go fevralia 1878 [Kiev, 1 February 1878],” *Kievlianin*, February 2, 1878, 2.

potential solution of the Eastern Question “in the spirit of the times” if the Ottoman did not demoralize its subjects with “despotism.”³⁵⁰ This *Zeitgeist* presented an understandable frame to explain the complexities of the “Eastern drama” to the readers and paint a precise picture about the perspectives of the Eastern Question.

At the same time, the references to leading role “history” marked also a “historical-mindedness,” which was partly presented in the argument of the authors from Kyiv in 1875-1878. Looking at the current political trends through the lens of the past development was an important feature of the time. Analyzing British political context in the 19th century, Duncan Bell argues that “Historical- mindedness, as it was often called, structured political argument, rendering some lines of reasoning more intelligible, more perspicacious, and more plausible, than others.”³⁵¹ Following his explanations, William Kelley pays attention to the ways the British intellectuals, first and foremost liberal, reflected on the Eastern Question in 1875-1880. The case of historian Edward Freeman was one of the most exciting ones in this regard because he could manifest “historical- mindedness” during the Great Eastern Crisis in various ways.³⁵² The intellectual environment in the empire, was shaped by these variations, which also reached the pages of London and provincial newspapers, influencing the dominant discourses about the “question of Empire.”³⁵³

Still, the “historical-mindedness” of the Kyiv newspapers authors was slightly different. On the one hand, they argued that the Eastern Question was a “knot made by time,” acknowledging its continuity and the importance of the previous phases.³⁵⁴ In one of its articles, *Kievlianin* presented traces the issues related to the fate of the Ottoman Empire since

³⁵⁰ “Kiev”, 9 dekabrya 1875 [Kiev, 9 December 1875],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, December 10, 1875, 2.

³⁵¹ Duncan Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016), 7.

³⁵² See William Kelley, “Intellectuals and the Eastern Question: ‘Historical-Mindedness’ and ‘Kin Beyond Sea’, c. 1875-1880” (PhD diss., University of Oxford, 2017), 162-163.

³⁵³ For the prominence of the Eastern Question in the public discussions in the British Empire in the 1870s see, e.g., Leslie Rogne Schumacher, A “Lasting Solution”: the Eastern Question and British Imperialism, 1875-1878 (PhD diss., The University of Minnesota, 2012), 1-56.

³⁵⁴ See “Angliia [England],” *Kievlianin*, April 27, 1878, 3.

the 1770s, analyzing a potential connection between the issues that Catherine II revealed and the ongoing tensions a century later.³⁵⁵ The author criticized the “prophecy” from the 1770s published in a local newspaper from Chernihiv, according to which Istanbul was to be captured by the Russians and argued that such the text was connected to the Russo-Ottoman war going on at the time, but still linked that war to the recent conflict between the empires. More explicitly the historization of the Eastern Question was visible when the materials about the events in the 19th century appeared on the pages of Kyiv-based newspapers. The Crimean War and the Treaty of Paris were the first points to be referred to when the fate of the question was discussed.³⁵⁶ However, both events were still present in the “communicative memory,” to use Jan Assmann’s term, of the people in the Krai, who witnessed the “burdens” of 1853-1856 by themselves.³⁵⁷ The parallels between the two periods of tensions were almost obvious for them. At the same time, the reviews on the articles and books about earlier times of the Eastern Question, especially those published in *Drug Naroda*, had an enlightenment function rather than a conscious historization of the issue to understand its present state.³⁵⁸ In such cases, newspapers authors aimed to explain the shadowed worlds of the affairs in the Balkans, so their “historical-mindedness” had a pragmatic reason, while abstract reasoning about the “historical” question was of very little interest for them.³⁵⁹ They needed to explain its presence

³⁵⁵ “V” «Osobom” Pribavlenii k” Chernigovskim” Gub. Ved.» napechatano [It is printed in the *Special Attachment to Chernigovskiya gubernskiya vedomosti*],” *Kievlianin*, April 6, 1878, 2.

³⁵⁶ “Italia [Italy],” *Kievlianin*, December 16, 1876, 3; “Germaniia [Germany],” *Kievlianin*, April 8, 1878, 3.

³⁵⁷ See Jan Assmann, “Communicative and Cultural Memory,” in *Cultural Memories: The Geographical Point of View*, ed. Peter Meusburger, Michael Heffernan, Edgar Wunder (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011), 15-27.

³⁵⁸ See the two reviews on the English books which appeared in *Drug Naroda*: “Bibliografiia,” *Drug Naroda*, October 16 (28), 1876, 314-316; “Bibliografiia [Bibliography],” *Drug Naroda*, November 2 (15), 1876, 329-332. Both reviews were discussed in the second chapter of this thesis.

³⁵⁹ See a reference to “historical question” in *Kievlianin*’s editorial published in mid-July 1876: “Vpechatlenie sovremennoi bor’by slavyan’ s” turkami na russkoe obshchestvo [Impression of the Contemporary Slavic Struggle against Turks on the Russian Society],” *Kievlianin*, July 17, 1876, 1. In their article. Rafael A. Arslanov and Elena V. Linkova argue that the in the second half of the 19th century, the Eastern Question “turned from an object of abstract reasoning into an urgent problem” for the liberal intellectuals in the Russian Empire (See Rafael A. Arslanov & Elena V. Linkova Evolution of the perception of the eastern question by Russian liberals in the second half of the 19th century, *The International History Review* (2021), doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2020.1864656). However, such a differentiation between the two components seems to be artificial because in fact, even in the Kyiv-based newspapers, authors usually combined the elements of two, although the “abstract reasoning” was usually put to the background.

at a particular moment, and once the moment passed, they could sacrifice it in favor of discussing the future of more important “local” Jewish, Polish, or Ukrainian questions.

Similar “momentous” references were visible in the cases when the future of the Ottoman Empire was discussed in the contexts of the solution to the Eastern Question. The *Kievskii Telegraf*’s editorial published on December 10, 1875, was also remarkable because its author paid much attention to the state of the Ottoman Empire, which “decomposes [and] is in agony.”³⁶⁰ The stress on the empire’s decay was omnipresent in the media discourses created by the newspaper authors from when the uprising in Herzegovina intensified. On December 5, 1875, they noticed the “inevitable death” of the Ottoman Empire, reviewing the recent news from the “East.”³⁶¹ In a few months, the opinion about the “decisive moment in the defeat of Turkey” in the future was expressed in the context of European diplomatic efforts to deal with the crisis.³⁶² On February 11, 1876, they even presented a message that “the spring will bring the solution of the Eastern Question in the Slavic spirit.”³⁶³ At the same time, *Kievlianin* presented a more moderate discourse at first. While their competitors looked for the most derogatory metaphors to describe the Ottoman Empire’s decline, Russian monarchists’ newspaper summarized that the results of the praised Slavs’ struggle as well as the fate of the “new phase of the Eastern Question” still “belongs to the future.”³⁶⁴ Later the thoughts about the “rotten” Ottoman Empire and its predictable fall appeared on the pages of *Kievlianin*, including the above-discussed articles by Berdyaev and Yuzefovich, but still the authors did not make it clear what the fall would mean. Even the Russo-Turkish war did not clarify the future for them and as soon as the guns became silent, the Ottoman Empire started appearing as an independent player on the international arena, whose preferences were

³⁶⁰ “Kiev”, 9 dekabrya 1875 g. [Kiev, 9 December 1875],” *Kievlianin*, December 10, 1875, 1.

³⁶¹ “Turtsiia [Turkey],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, December 5, 1875, 3.

³⁶² “Izvestiia iz” slavianskikh” zemel’ [News from Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, February 1, 1876, 3.

³⁶³ “Izvestiia iz” slavianskikh” zemel’ [News from Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, February 11, 1876, 5.

³⁶⁴ “Evropa v 1875 godu [Europe in 1875],” *Kievlianin*, January 1, 1876, 1.

important for the Kyiv-based authors in the context of the potential Russo-British war.³⁶⁵ The image of the “sick man of Europe” in the discussions about the Eastern Question was as ubiquitous and elusive as the question itself.

Additionally, the picture of the Eastern Question’s future development created by authors and editors in Kyiv, depended on the changing evaluations presented in the external sources, primarily daily periodicals where the opinions could change several times between the two issues of *Kievlianin* or *Kievskii Telegraf*. In their article “News from the Slavic Lands” on December 19, 1875, the latter republished an opinion from unnamed Hungarian newspapers arguing that the position of Austro-Hungary in the Eastern Question had a calming effect and simultaneously questioned the sincerity of the recent sultan’s firman connecting it to British attempts to “destroy a coalition of three northern states” in the next article.³⁶⁶ A day later, *Kievlianin* published several opinions from *Politische Correspondance* and *Journal des Debates* about the conspiracy against the Christians in Istanbul followed by an reflection about a potential deepening of the crisis in the empire.³⁶⁷ The observers from both newspapers based their thoughts on the external sources combined with the information they previously received which led to the slightly different perspectives appearing on the pages. The intensified information flows, however, made the evaluation of the potential outcomes more difficult. On June 6, 1876, the *Kievskii Telegraf* authors made an open statement that they would distance themselves from discussing the outcomes of the “Slavic Question.”³⁶⁸ A few days later, *Kievlianin* also published an article in which they highlighted the “silence in the East” without evaluating the perspectives of such silence and instead, criticizing the foreign press for its focus on the curiosities happening across Europe.³⁶⁹ For

³⁶⁵ See e.g., “Turtsiia [Turkey],” *Kievlianin*, April 4, 1878, 3.

³⁶⁶ “Izvestiia iz” slavianskikh” zemel’ [News from Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, December 19, 1875, 4; “Turtsiia [Turkey],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, December 19, 1875, 4.

³⁶⁷ “Vostochnyia dela [Eastern Affairs],” *Kievlianin*, December 20, 1875, 3.

³⁶⁸ “Slavyanskiia zemli [Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 6, 1876, 3.

³⁶⁹ “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, December 20, 1875, 3.

them, the lack of information was equally challenging to present the potential outcomes of the Eastern Question as well as its overwhelming presence in the provincial media environment.

In fact, the shifting phases of the Great Eastern Crisis did not leave much space for remaining silent, and the Kyiv-based newspapers also filled the pages with the variable short-term forecasts, forming a “horizon of expectations” for their readers. Dangerous “thunderclouds” were replaced by “calm” rhetoric about the Eastern Question and vice versa within a week.³⁷⁰ The expectations of a “war” were omnipresent and yet disseminated on the pages during the whole Eastern crisis. On June 13, 1876, *Kievskii Telegraf* presented several opinions about the postponement of an armed conflict against the Ottoman Empire, yet questioning the steps toward changes in the empire.³⁷¹ In the next issue, they did not mention anything about postponement, but instead summarized that “if Serbia does not start the war [against the Ottoman Empire], the Slavic cause may be considered as lost.”³⁷² The Serbian-Ottoman war started 5 days after that, but the further interpretations of the nearest future never appeared because the newspaper was banned earlier than the first Serbian soldier crossed the border between the principality and imperial heartland. *Kievlianin* had more opportunities to discuss the nearest future of the Eastern Question, but its capacities also were limited. On April 12, 1877, their observer started the “Foreign news” section with the notion about the “lull before the storm.”³⁷³ On the very same day Aleksandr II proclaimed the war against the Ottoman Empire, starting a new “phase” in the solution of the Eastern Question.³⁷⁴ However, *Kievlianin*’s readers could learn about that only in two days, after the newspaper’s issue no. 44 passed the censorship.

³⁷⁰ See “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, May 27, 1876, 3; “Vostochnyi vopros” [The Eastern Question],” *Kievlianin*, June 1, 1875, 3; “Vostochnyi vopros,” *Kievlianin*, June 5, 1875, 3.

³⁷¹ “Slavyanskiia zemli [Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 13, 1876, 3.

³⁷² “Slavyanskiia zemli [Slavic Lands],” *Kievskii Telegraf*, June 16, 1876, 3.

³⁷³ “Obshchee polozhenie del” [General State of Affairs],” *Kievlianin*, April 12, 1877, 3.

³⁷⁴ See “Inostrannia Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, April 19, 1877, 3.

Concluding thoughts: Framing the Eastern Question in Kyiv

As I have demonstrated in this chapter, the Great Eastern crisis made it necessary to reflect on and respond to the elusive Eastern Question in the media that had already existed in Kyiv as well as during the international troubles of the 1870s. Although the external events were not the priority of the local newspapers whose authors had to deal with multiple challenges of intensified information flows and internal censorship, those authors nevertheless highlighted their positions on political developments on an international scale. Stressing the “freedom of Slavs” as an ideal response to the Eastern Question, they did not clarify what this freedom actually meant. They supported the struggle of Balkan Slavs, seeing it as evidence of “history’s decision,” but the result of such decision was not clear. The Kyiv-based authors historicized the Eastern Question, but this “historical-mindedness” was often purely pragmatic as far as they had to explain the current developments in the Balkans. At the same time, if a particular aspect of the question was less important for them, they even did not raise it as an issue to be solved. The Eastern Question had to be solved as soon as it became urgent, but once the urgency passed, the radical views on its solution were replaced by more moderate statements.

At the same time, the expectations about the future of the Eastern Question varied dramatically. On the one hand, the strong belief in an inevitable solution appeared accidentally in all newspapers, creating a sense of the notion of history as a decision maker coming to an end. For example, for Ivan Andriiashev in his *Drug Naroda*, it was especially important, since the newspaper did not frequently cover events abroad. Thus, its incidental articles dealing with the Eastern Question presented momentous feelings of an author who wanted to present the prospects of the issue as clear as possible. On the other hand, the authors of *Kievlianin* and *Kievskii Telegraf* were less straight-forward, changing the forecasts on

different levels. They also could believe in the upcoming “final” solution of the Eastern Question, but the essence of the “finality” was unclear because the “sick man of Europe” did not die during its “recurrent” crisis. Moreover, the changing phases of the crisis made those authors decide whether to remain silent about the potential outcomes of the Eastern Question or present the short-term forecasts, which presumed that the core of the question would probably remain untouched.

The uncertainty the Eastern Question brought to Kyiv with the first news about the rebellion in Herzegovina in mid-July 1875 lasted for the entire four years and went beyond the Congress of Berlin. On July 4, 1878, three days after the congress ended, *Kievlianin*’s observer resumed that “Europe has been too tired with the eternally long development of the Eastern drama to be worried about its new complications and unexpected turns”³⁷⁵ The author was also annoyed that the “eternally long development,” which did not bring any solution to the dubious Eastern Question appearing and disappearing as it did from the local discussions and news articles in 1875-1878. However, the article about the congress’s outcomes appeared only on the third page, while the newspaper’s editorial and main *feuilleton* highlighted local affairs. A long telegram from Berlin with the words of Bismarck about the end of the congress placed on the front page, was the only sign that the Eastern Crisis was still important for Vitaly Shulgin and his colleagues.³⁷⁶ *Kievskii Listok*’s issue presented on the same day did not have any references to the recent crisis at all, leaving the elusive Eastern Question beyond its pages. In the meantime, newspapers could highlight the local questions of bankruptcy or “revolutionaries” who could disturb local life, the questions that did not have precise “historical” beginning and clear prospects to end soon.

³⁷⁵ “Inostrannyya Izvestiia [Foreign News],” *Kievlianin*, July 4, 1878, 3.

³⁷⁶ See “Istekshee polugodie [The Last Half Year],” *Kievlianin*, July 4, 1878, 1; Aleksandr Tarnavskii, “Odnokaya Mogila [A Lonely Grave],” *Kievlianin* July 4, 1878, 1.

Conclusion

On September 18, 1878, Ivan Andriiashev started his overview of recent news from abroad in *Drug Naroda* with a note that “the present state of affairs in Europe is very curious,” arguing that “the Eastern Question is apparently solved. The Treaty of Berlin has come into force and is already unconditionally obligatory for all sides. One would think that it is time for the desired peace to be established, but in the meantime, a completely contrary [situation] appears.”³⁷⁷ For the author, the peace was not fixed because of the ongoing struggle in the Ottoman Empire where “a certain unknown Albanian league” did not want to accept the Treaty of Berlin, and the Bosnian population was not welcoming the Austro-Hungarian occupation. Thus, the former elements of the Eastern Question were still disturbing the calmness in the “East,” while the question itself was proclaimed as “solved.” The ambiguity of this post-Congress situation and uncertainty brought with a new flow of news from the Ottoman Empire to the Kyiv-based double-monthly newspaper which highlighted the essence of the Eastern Question during the whole Great Eastern Crisis, when local newspaper authors had to deal with the dilemma how to insert a familiar concept among the previously unfamiliar circumstances.

Drawing on the approaches from media history, this thesis showed that Kyiv-based newspaper authors faced constant challenges with the unstable information flows which delivered information about the ongoing crisis and its perception from all possible directions and contexts. It emphasized that the editors accidentally reflected on the new details about the major international events in the editorials, and even when the spirit of the Russo-Turkish war was felt on the streets of South-Western Krai’s center, they preferred to discuss the local affairs, entwining the “burning” Eastern Question into the texts from time to time. At the same time, they had to deal with the raising amount of telegrams from imperial capitals and

³⁷⁷ “Inostrannoe obozrenie [Foreign Review],” *Drug Naroda*, September 18 (30), 1878, 291.

provinces, not all of which could guarantee the reliability of details they presented. The locals had to rely on those details even though it might be a Paris coffee-house where the news came from rather than from the site of action. Moreover, the lower speed of transition from a sender to the provincial newspaper pages caused by censorship and accident interruptions in the wire network also influenced the presentation of information. The “news” had a different temporal dimension for the authors from Kyiv and their readers because when new details were available for news agencies on the spot, the local audience could still be satisfied with details from previously circulated telegrams.

At the same time, local newspaper could remain autonomous from the press from Moscow and Sankt-Petersburg in their approaches to source on information about the Great Eastern crisis. Information from the metropole was important for them, but not unique so far as they could rely on dozens of periodicals from abroad and telegraphs sent from Reuter’s, Havas, or Wolf’s Agencies, together with those from Sankt-Petersburg-based International Telegraph Bureau. This diversity of sources did not mean the equal treatment of information coming to the banks of the Dnipro-river because particular authors could be suspicious about the news from “hostile” sources. Still, this hostility was not expressed explicitly in most of the cases, and they often retranslated information from “questionable” places without any further explanation.

The great availability of sources also left a possibility to arrange the news according to personal approaches, as I highlighted in the second chapter. Much of the information was reinterpreted by the local newsmakers, which added an additional dimension to the appearance of crisis at the provincial level. Even “official” telegrams published in *Kievskie Gubernskie Vedomosti* and *Kievlianin* could be different because of the way they were placed on the newspapers’ pages. Additionally, the editors made clear decisions on where the crisis and the elusive Eastern Question had to appear for their audience. In the first month of 1875,

an attentive reader could find open references to the complicated “question” on the margin of the “Foreign news” section, but once the uprising in Herzegovina started, the news flow took the concept away from the columns with short reviews on the affairs abroad and spread around other parts of issues. The editors’ decisions still did not allow the crisis to occupy editorials, but other than that, it was omnipresent in Kyiv media between 1875-1878.

The Eastern Question, however, was not tightly attached to the ongoing events related to the crisis and appeared randomly in three out of five local newspapers. The concept was usually linked to the “East,” an imagined space which for the authors from Kyiv and their readers undoubtedly referred to the Balkans, but its appearance did not have precise logic, as I showed in the second and third chapters. It could mark the essence of the “crisis” which was permanently felt in the air as well as be used as an element of (un)conscious sensationalism presented and sold to the audience. Additionally, the Eastern Question could facilitate the introduction of locally important “Questions” with a capital “Q,” first and foremost the so-called Polish and the Jewish questions. Both were presumed to be familiar enough for the authors and their readers, so the external “question” brought a great comparative framework to underline the needed sentiments or present a lens to frame a different issue, as was partly visible in the case of the Ukrainian question. Thus, for the local authors, the Eastern Question was a useful instrument to reflect on the urgent issues rather than a concept or analytical category to reflect on its own.

The diversity of meanings which circulated around the concept confirmed the ambiguity of its presence in imperial Kyiv. It could mark the broad internal struggles in the Ottoman Empire or the impact of these struggles on international affairs or be reduced to the question of Herzegovinians’ future. The question of inclusion or exclusion of certain elements to the “space of experience” depended on the combinations of news items in front of the eyes of local authors and their readiness to experiment with the titles, as was evident in the case of

Egypt. Moreover, the authors could easily intertwine the term with their negative attitudes to the “atrocious” government of the Ottoman Empire or pre-established views about the Balkan Slavs who needed external “help.” The range of this assistance could be different, looking back at the polemics on the pages of *Kievlianin* and *Kievskii Telegraf*, but the flexibility of the context and its changing nature prove the usefulness of parts of Reinhart Koselleck’s conceptual history for the analysis of newspaper languages. Applied initially to the contexts of high intellectual debates, it nevertheless helps to underline the ubiquitous and undefined character which was well-known in the imperial provincial media context.

Koselleck’s idea of the “horizon of expectations” also turns out to be useful to show the variable thoughts about the future of the Eastern Question expressed on the pages of the press in Kyiv between 1875-1878. The authors were not always ready to present a clear vision on how the question had to be resolved and preferred to present their uncertainty to the readers if the space for their interpretations was limited by the “imbroglio” of information coming via the telegraph. At the same time, they did not regret thinking about the future “freedom” of Slavs and the “demolition” of the Ottoman Empire, tropes which commonly appeared in the local press during the Great Eastern Crisis. However, the readers of the newspaper had little chance to find what both “solutions” meant in practice because the authors mostly preferred to leave them with an abstraction. Only Ivan Andriiashev and his *Drug Naroda* tried to be precise when communicating with their audience, forming a defined basis of argument with recommendations of particular literature about the Eastern Question and particular solutions of the Eastern Question, which included, for example, the installment of a Christian monarchy in Istanbul. Of course, the latter did not happen as a result of the Russo-Ottoman war and the Congress of Berlin, but it did not prevent the editor of the “people’s newspaper” from re-entering a discussion to demonstrate that the Eastern Question was “apparently solved.” This contrast highlights the presence of ideas about short-term and long-term solutions discussed

in the last part of this thesis. The expectations of short-term solutions had a clearer implication related to the successful resolution of the ongoing contestations in the Balkans while long-term ones were vague because of their abstract nature. The “solution” itself was a process whose starting and ending points drowned in the mixes of news between 1875-1878.

This thesis uncovered the challenges to explore the Eastern Question in the provincial context, where various information flows were intertwined, merged or split not only by local authors but also by those who supplied information to Kyiv. The epoche-defining concept was both elusive and omnipresent, but it did not provoke sustainable intellectual discussions similar to those which appeared in the context of important local issues. The importance of the concept was linked to the Great Eastern Crisis which moved the question to the front pages of the periodicals around the globe. However, once the troubles in the “East” disappeared from telegrams, the question lost its visibility, and the authors in Kyiv could completely shift their focus to the local issues, leaving the question’s fate undefined. Their audiences had to wait for the next Eastern crisis when new authors could discuss it again.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁸ *Kievskii Listok* was published in Kyiv until 1881, after which the editorial board founded a new newspaper *Trud*. Vitaly Shulgin died in the end of 1878, and Dmitrii Pikhno, a professor of economics in Kyiv university, became *Kievlianin*’s editor-in-chief. Ivan Andriiashev published the last issued of *Drug Naroda* on December 15, 1878.

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