

**LIGHT ON THE WAR. VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE WAR  
IN THE BULGARIAN ILLUSTRATED PRESS, THE END OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup>  
CENTURY AND THE BEGINNING OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

Dobrinka Parusheva

Abstract

The current article aims at analyzing the way in which the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 were visually represented in the most popular Bulgarian illustrated magazine of the time, *Ilyustratsiya Svetlina* (Illustration Light). The author uses as a point of departure the practices of representation of war and violence in the magazine which already existed before the 1910s and seeks to answer questions such as what type of representation of the war the magazine offered to its reading public; what were the dominant themes; what was the role of the visual material in the narrative about war; how were “We” and the “Others” presented, etc.

From the point of view of the visual the Balkan Wars were presented on the pages of *Svetlina* (Light) by a mixture of “traditional” and “modern” means: the reproductions of paintings, caricatures, drawings were used along with photographs. The new forms of visual representation pretended to reproduce reality and truth but the war time and the censorship limited them by means of various rules. On the other hand, the meaning of all images and of the visual ones in particular depends very much on what the audience constructs through them. Bearing in mind the fact that at the time photography was widely used to support the mass national and military mobilization and propaganda, the author claims that what the editor of *Svetlina* did was calling the attention of its readers to precisely what the Bulgarian government wanted the Bulgarian people to pay attention to.