

## SECTION XXVIII. HISTORY, ARCHEOLOGY AND CULTUROLOGY

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### TESTAMENT OF PETER I – TO IDENTIFY THE INITIATOR OF THE FORGED DOCUMENT

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**Abstract.** *Testament of Peter I became an outstanding bestseller among the world political documents since it was published in the 10-ies of the XIX century. It reflected the fundamental trends and directions of the Russian imperial policy thoroughly. Therefore, it was used as an instrument of the ideological fight against the Russian Empire and then against its successor — the Soviet Union by the western countries.*

*In addition to ideological disputes, the forged testament of Peter I attracted attention from a scientific point of view. The question was to identify the party interested in creating such a forged document, as well as the date and purpose of creation.*

*A completely different version unlike the previous ones has been established by the current research. In particular, the initiator of the falsification of Peter I's testament was the King of Prussia Frederick II.*

*The aforementioned initiative arose during the Seven Years' War in the 60-ies of XVIII century, after the development of the rudimentary version of the Greek Project by Prussia and Russia, when Frederick II had to hide his authorship of the Greek Project for his own security and the security of the country as well.*

#### Introduction

At the end of the Seven Years' War, Frederick II reached a financial agreement with Russia on the political chessboard, the result of which was a change in the foreign policy vector of the Imperial Court of St. Petersburg encouraging Russia to give up the annexation of Europe and become more active towards the south [50; 51]. It was a political step that met the interests of all European countries of that time. Frederick saved not only his own kingdom — Prussia, but also the whole Europe from Russian expansion and remained alone in the face of the Ottoman Empire with the stated political move.

A plan to encourage Russia against anti-Ottoman policy is developed within this context gradually acquiring an orderly shape in the form of strong postulates within the working process.

1. Providing a full carte blanche to Russia's political aggression in the East.
2. Veiling Russian aggression with a qualitatively new, previously unseen legend. The latter envisaged the restoration of the Greek Empire and the creation of the Dacian Kingdom, two buffer, puppet states controlled by Russia.

We carry out fundamental research in regard of the Greek Project, due to the special national-political importance of the issue. We have published the results of monographic research in the scientific conferences and publications in the different

cities of the world. In particular, in Oxford [62], Cambridge [66; 70], Paris [67], Melbourne [69], Moscow [65], Tokyo [68], Rome [61], Vienna [60], Warsaw [53; 54], Boston [52], San Francisco [56], Sheffield [55], Las Palmas [59], Tbilisi [57; 58; 71], Telavi [58; 63] Kutaisi [64; 72].

#### **Task of the study**

Various versions in historiography regarding the testament of Peter I explicitly admit that the falsification of the testament was needed by the customer for propaganda purposes. Our goal is to find out whether communication means necessary to use such a document for propaganda purposes really existed in the 60-ies of XVIII century.

#### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study is to determine the chronological period, purpose and approximate scope of the falsification order based on the analysis of the text of the testament of Peter I and the existing international situation.

#### **Novelty of the study**

According to the results of our scientific research, the initiator of the falsification of Peter I's testament is Frederick II, the King Prussia. None of the versions of world historiography mentions the name of Frederick II in connection with referred issue. Testament of Peter I is reviewed in connection with the Greek Project for the first time in historiography. It is outlined for the first time that the forged version of Peter I's testament is an accompanying product of the Greek Project.

#### **Research methods**

We rely on the methodological principles of objectivity, historicism, determinism, alternativeness, reconstruction, developed in the theoretical studies by the following scientists: Charles-Victor Langlois, Charles Seignobos [43]; Robin George Collingwood [13]; Marc Léopold Benjamin Bloch [8]; Peter Lambert and Phillip Schofield [44]; Abrams Lynn [1]; Brundage Anthony [7]; Gregory Ian, Ell Paul [24]; Hughes-Warrington [25]; Iggers George, Wang Qiang Edward [27]; Akira Iriye [28]; Kaldellis Anthony [31]; Koselleck Reinhart [38; 39]; Lukacs John [42]; Munro Doug, Reid John [45]; Quigley Carroll [78]; Raaflaub Kurt [79].

#### **Sources**

The results of this scientific research are based on the following primary sources:

1. Version of forged testament of Peter I composed by Charles-Louis Lesur and published in Paris, 1812 in the book – “Des progrès de la puissance russe, depuis son origine jusqu'au commencement du XIXe siècle” [40]

2. Testament of Frederick II of 1752, published by Bronikowski in Berlin, in 1922 – “Das Politische Testament von 1752. Friedrich der Grosse. Die Politischen Testamente” [4].

3. Testament of Frederick II of 1768, published by Taysen in Potsdam, in 1879 – “Die militärischen Testamente von 1752 und 1768: Aus den politischen Testamenten Friedrich II [89].

Other version of the falsification of Peter I's testament are also mentioned throughout the research:

1. The version of Gaillardet Frédéric, published in Paris, in 1836 – “Mémoires du chevalier d'Éon publiés pour la première fois sur les papiers fournis par sa famille” [21].

2. The version of the Polish author Chodzko, published in the book – “La Pologne, Historique, Litteraire, Monumentale Et Illustrée, By Leonard Chodzko”- Paris, 1839 [10].

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## Research Results

In order to hide the anti-Ottoman idea—the rudimentary version of the Greek Project, necessary for the salvation of himself and the country, the King of Prussia had to take another purposeful step for inspiration.

It had to take some purposeful steps in order to conceal the referred political move. If we take into consideration the management style of Frederick, we believe that the King of Prussia should have chosen a forged document where the aggressive nature of Russia was shown in sharp colors. Consequently, Prussia had to defend itself from the Ottoman diplomatic attack by means of that forged document. This was supposed to be a kind of prevention that would allow Frederick not to disclose a secret financial agreement concluded with the Imperial Court of St. Petersburg.

This raises another question - what form and style should Frederick have chosen when drafting a forged document? We have to find out his priority - a newspaper article, a rumor, a proclamation, or something else.

We have studied the epistolary, political and literary heritage of Frederick II and paid attention to the fact that Frederick II wrote his testament twice — in 1752 and 1768. Both testaments contain a special chapter about the army [89, pp 45-88; 4, pp 127-188].

It is noteworthy that Frederick's testament, drawn up in French, was translated into German by Von Appel Bronikowski. A foreword of Von Teisen, copied from Miller's 1879 edition based on the order of Prussian Royal Court, is attached to the German translation of the testament [4].

The interest of modern society and scientific circles in the testament of Frederick II is confirmed by one of the latest editions published in Potsdam in 2016, with the foreword and explanations of Major Von Tiesen [89].

It is obvious that a testament is a convenient form for Frederick to convey his position. A rather sound suspicion in terms of the testament of Peter I arises. The falsification of the latter is undoubtful and it contains special focus on the expansion of Europe by Russia. The question is whether it is the document created by Frederick II to cover up Russia's anti-Ottoman policy. Our suspicions are further reinforced by the fact that Frederick II wrote both testaments at a rather young age. He was 40 years old when he made the first testament and 56 years old when he made the second one. It is also noteworthy that he lived for 18 years after writing the second testament.

We need to identify the main messages that should have been inserted in the forged document necessary for Frederick II in order to substantiate our assumption. The most important thing in terms of the referred document was not to cause anyone's doubt regarding the authenticity of the latter. The King of Prussia had to take a special care of it. Accordingly, this document had to accurately reflect the political movements and processes characteristic of Europe at that time. Due to this general postulate, the forged document had to indicate following:

- Russia is the aggressor. Russian aggression is not limited to the Ottomans. This aggression expands equally to the countries of Western and Northern Europe and Asia.
- Russia's attack on the Ottomans can only be a decision of the Imperial Court of St. Petersburg and not an idea imposed on Russia by anyone.
- Russia provokes Austria and incites against the Ottomans.
- Germany is a victim of the Russian politics. Russia constantly tries to weaken Germany.

- Russian aggression is based not only on military actions, but also on the confessional segment, that should be used as a trump card by Russia in the fight against the Turks through Christians living in the Ottoman Empire.

Three versions of the forged version of Peter I's testament have survived until this day. The first testament of Peter I was first published in Paris in 1812 by Charles-Louis Lesur in his book "The expansion of the Russian state from its foundation to the beginning of the XIX century" [40], Twenty-four years later (in 1836), another forged version of Peter I's testament was published by Gaillardet in the book "The Memoirs of the Chevalier D'Eon" [21, pp 171-175]. Here again, the testament consists of 14 points. This 14-point format is preserved in all forged versions of the testament.

In 1839, "Illustrated Poland" written by Chodzko was published in Paris. The book published Peter's forged 14-point plan once again. It is noteworthy that the referred document was called a testament in Chodzko's book [10].

There is a difference among these three forged versions of Peter I's testament. We suppose that these changes should be associated with political processes a forged version was created for based on the previous ones.

We believe that the earliest version, the text published in French by Charles-Louis Lesur, should be much closer to the original version of Peter I's forged testament. Taking into consideration the referred argument, we decided to fully present the forged text of Peter I's testament according to the French publication of 1812.

Following statements are formulated in the forged version of the testament composed by Charles-Louis Lesur:

1. „Nothing can be neglected in order to get acquainted the Russian people with the European way of life and customs. For this purpose invite a variety of people from Europe, especially scientists, who, either for a fee, or based on the philanthropic principles of philosophy, or for other motives, promote the achievement of this goal” [40, p 177].

2. „Keep the country in a state of continuous war in order to train the soldiers in battle and not allow the people to relax, so that they are always ready to act at the very first call “ [40, p 177].

3. „It is necessary to expand the borders to the north, along the Baltic Sea and to the south along the Black Sea” [40, p 177].

4. „Encourage the hostile attitude of England, Denmark and Brandenburg towards Sweden, so that these states turn a blind eye both to the conquests we may carry out in this country and to the final subjugation of Sweden“ [40, p 177].

5. „Make the Austrian Empire interested in the expulsion of the Turks from Europe; based on this motivation, you should have a permanent army, start building ships on the Black Sea coast. Constantly move forward and reach Constantinople“ [40, p 177].

6. „Support anarchy in Poland, gain influence over its Sejm, especially over the election of kings, use every opportunity to defeat Poland and finally conquer it“ [40, p 177].

7. „Establish close relations with England and maintain a direct relationship with it through good commercial agreements; Grant the latter a kind of monopoly within the country, that will ensure bringing British and Russian merchants and sailors closer, who will promote the improvement and increase of the Russian fleet and thus enable the domination of the latter over the Baltic and Black Seas. This is a necessary condition for the successful and rapid implementation of this plan“ [40, p 177].

8. „I call on all my successors to make sure that India's trade is truly world trade. A real ruler of Europe will be the one who manages this trade. Therefore, a real

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opportunity of starting a war with Persia and acceleration of its subjugation should not be missed; It is necessary to reach the Persian Gulf and restore the former Levantine trade through Syria “[40, p 178].

9. „No matter what happens, interfere in the internal affairs of Europe, especially of Germany, by force or cunning for any reason” [40, p 178].

10. „Be hypocritical and maintain an alliance with Austria, excite the favorite thoughts of Austrians about conquests, use the influence over the latter and involve it in devastating wars for further and gradual weakening. Sometimes help. Meanwhile, secretly encourage its enemies in Europe, especially in Germany, arising envy and distrust against Austria in sovereign states.

Note: This is easy to achieve, as this arrogant Imperial Court has repeatedly claimed to dominate all old states of Europe and when it tries to make similar attempts, we will occupy several provinces nearby Hungary and finally, incorporate the latter into our empire as an independent unit“ [40, p 178].

11. „Choose German princesses to marry Russian monarchs and strengthen ties of kinship and privileges to enhance Russia's influence throughout the empire“ [40, p 178].

12. „ Use the religious influence over Greek-Eastern renegades or schismatic, common in Hungary, Turkey and southern Poland, to attract them with all possible temptations, to make them seek our protection and achieve to be recognized as spiritual rulers. Thus, Turkey will be subdued under this pretext. Poland will be under a yoke as it will not be able to defend itself either by its own forces or through political ties“ [40, p178].

13. „ Every minute is precious and it is necessary to prepare strong blows secretly, all the means to act purposefully, wisely and quickly, so as not to give Europe a chance to come to its senses. You have to start very carefully, with separate negotiations first on the issue of redistribution of the world, initially to Versailles and then to the Imperial Court of Austria. Meanwhile, they should not have doubts as Russia is the de facto ruler of the entire East and holds nothing but this title. No doubt, this project will entice them and lead to a destructive war, which will soon grow into a large scale due to the extensive ties and relations between these two hostile states. Herein, all other European states will definitely take part in this controversy“ [40, pp 178-179].

14. „ In this urgent situation, assistance is requested to Russia by one of the warring states. After a long hesitation, they can exhaust each other's forces and you can pull your strength together, then you have to support Austria overtly. You have to send countless Asian troops before its ground troops are heading towards the Rhine. And as soon as the latter penetrates deep into Germany, two armed fleets of the Black Sea and the Baltic sea depart from the ports of Azov and Arkhangelsk. They will suddenly appear in the Mediterranean and oceans to land these nomadic, cruel, and predatory people that will overflow Italy, Spain, and France; One part of the inhabitants of these states will be destroyed, the other will be taken captive and exiled to the Siberian deserts, while the rest will be deprived of any opportunity to act. This diversion will give the regular army an opportunity to act with all its power and subdue the rest of Europe in faith of victory“ [40, p 179].

This is a full version of a forged testament of Peter I composed by Charles-Louis Lesur, published in Paris, in 1812.

The historiography of the Testament of Peter I is rather diverse. The referred issue was studied by Kates [32], Gaillardet [20; 21; 22; 23], Lehovich [41], Mogilenski [46], Richter [80], Shubinskii [88], Danilova [14; 15; 77], Sokolnicki [86], Blanc [5],

Cross [9], Kozlov [36], Jourdan [29], Mezin [47;48], Stroev [82; 83; 84; 85], Iakovlev [26], Kurukin [33; 34; 35], Aleksanian [2; 3], Dorman [2], Buhert [6], Medinski [49], Partanenko and Ushakov [74], Pavlenko [76], Cherniak [12], Kondakov [37].

It is noteworthy that everyone agrees on the statement- it is a falsification of a historical source [47, p 18].

From a historiographical point of view, the first question emerged in connection with this particular document is to identify the initiator of the falsification of Peter I's testament. Therefore, certain criteria should be determined in order to use it as a guide for further studying the issue.

When we read the Lesur's version of a forged testament of Peter I, we can clearly say that its compiler has such deep knowledge of international politics and scrupulous awareness of the strategy of Russian and European states that we have to state unequivocally - the compiler is:

1. The person who needs this document not for fun, but as the most important document and proof from the state point of view.

2. The one who has a direct connection with the political processes described in the document and is a direct participant as well.

3. The individual not allowing strong emotional background to prevent the creation of a document full of dry, multifaceted and conceptual paradigms.

It should be noted that the creation of such a meaningful document requires a sufficiently large intellect and high education. At the same time, a specific motivation is also needed, excluding the possibility of searching its compiler and initiator beyond the Imperial Court of any European country.

No unified position exists regarding the referred issue in historiography. Berkholtz was the first person, who tried to identify the author of the forged version of Peter I's testament. In the article published in 1859, Berkholtz explicitly stated that the forged version of the testament was initiated by a French diplomat [14, p 207]. In booklets published in subsequent years, he clarified that Napoleon was the initiator of the falsification. One of the reasons is that Napoleon needed to justify himself and therefore he frightened the European states with the shade of Russian barbarians [14, pp 207-209]. Karnovich [30, pp 71-79] and Shubinski [88, pp 99-105] have different opinions. They believe that the initiator for the falsification of Peter I's testament was the French diplomat Chevalier D'Eon and not Napoleon.

According to the version of Shubinski, the French diplomat D'Eon wanted to show off in front of Louis XV and therefore created the referred testament. However, the identity of Chevalier D'Eon did not inspire confidence in France. Therefore, the testament was not considered as a serious document. This document was placed in the archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs accordingly [88, pp 101-104]. Later, Lesur found it and published in 1812. The same position, in terms of the author of the falsification of the testament, was shared by the Soviet scientist Iakovlev [26, pp 129-131]. Danilov also considers Chevalier D'Eon as the initiator of falsification of the testament [14, pp 255-265; 15, pp 238-265]. However, he clarifies his position and believes that D'Eon's notes acquired final shape after being corrected by the Count Broll, Ambassador of France in Poland [14, p 221].

The Russian researcher Mezin explicitly believes that the idea of falsifying the testament was born in the circle of Polish emigrants in France. Polish Sokolnitsky, General of Napoleon is considered to be the initiator of falsification [47, pp 20-25]. He agrees with Mikhail, a descendant of Sokolnitsky, who dedicated an article to this forged document in 1912 and declared his ancestor, General Sokolnitsky, to be the author of the forged text. However, he also noted that the co-authors of the final version were Polotsk and Motovich together with his grandfather [86, pp 92-93].

Thus, in historiography, the supposed authors of Peter's forged testament are considered to be:

1. Chevalier D'Eon,
2. General Sokolnitsky and Motovich,
3. Napoleon.

We consider it necessary to review separately to what extent Chevalier D'Eon, General Sokolnitsky and Napoleon meet the established three criteria for determining the author of the forged testament.

The motivation of the adventurer Chevalier D'Eon - to please Louis XV, is an entertainment and contains small elements of blackmail. In our opinion, it clearly rules out an in-depth understanding of the political situation characteristic of a forged text. Herein, Chevalier D'Eon is not a direct participant of the European political processes of that time that is a necessary precondition for composing such a sophisticated document. Furthermore, we believe that the version of D'Eon's authorship is excluded by specific circumstance: if this document had been at Versailles during the Seven Years' War, it would have been unconditionally used against Russia, as France was the ally of Prussia (occupied by Russia) before the Great Diplomatic Revolution. Therefore, the possibility of Chevalier D'Eon being an initiator of the forged testament and compiler of the text is ruled out.

As for the authorship of Napoleon's Polish General Sokolnitsky, he was one of the participants in the Polish uprising of 1794, an active participant in the Polish emigration to France, who became Napoleon's general. According to the spread version [47, pp 19-20], on October 19, 1797 he submitted "Opinions on Russia" to the directorate, which included anti-Russian sentiments together with the emotional background of the author. The main idea of this pamphlet was to portray Russia as a dangerous force obsessed with the conquest of Europe. The French Government did not consider this pamphlet relevant and did not respond to it.

In our opinion, this is a fairly strong argument in favor of the Polish version. Poland is doomed, and the patriots do their best in order to save their statehood, so we may suppose they use any available possibility. Such development of events is actually possible and realistic, but an emotional background is the main barrier to this version that should have been reflected in the text of the forged document in the form of some inaccuracies. However, none of them are observed in the forged versions of the testament of Peter I.

However, there is another extremely important issue - it should have been evident in advance that the forged document could not change anything for the Poles and consequently, it could not be a basis for composing such a sophisticated document as a forged testament of Peter I. This document is the result of a hard work. We do not think it will change the international political situation in favor of Poland. Therefore, we believe no one would spend so much effort to compose such a document, even the Poles.

Our version is supported by the fact that Poland, like the Caucasus, is a geopolitical space for Europe, doomed for conquest within the international system of that period. Given reality, should have been perfectly evident to Napoleon's General Sokolnitsky, so he should have known that it was in vain to search a power especially in European states, that would be aggressive towards Russia and defend Poland after getting acquainted with the details of the testament.

We should review several issues regarding the version that Napoleon is the author of a forged document. Assuming the authors of this version believe that the idea of falsification really belonged to Napoleon and he needed it for propaganda

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purposes. We have to find out where Napoleon should preach the idea of this forged document – to his own people, to the people of Europe, or to the diplomatic backstage? The privilege of this forged document and the use of the conceptual plans presented there as unequivocal evidence have to be determined as well.

In our opinion, Napoleon does not need to raise the degree of aggression against Russia at all. He has a certain idea. This idea is a revolutionary export of a free society model against a feudal society. Consequently, the opponent of Napoleon is not Russia itself, but the feudal world. Therefore, whoever fights against this world is an ally of Napoleon. Consequently, no additional argument and special propaganda is needed for Napoleon to start the European Wars. The war and confrontation with Russia is also a part of this revolutionary export.

This is not the present world, where the propaganda possesses the greatest role and scale. This scale has become grand using the latest communication technologies (internet, social networks, television, radio, world postal, air and rail infrastructure). When Hitler [26, pp 130-132] or/and the USA [11, pp 375-384] needed to use the testament of Peter I for propagandistic purposes the result was eminent in both cases. The result was obtained through using the means of communication available at that time - the work of radio, press and television.

According to Hugh Ragsdale, a professor at the University of Alabama all government officials from Napoleon and Talleyrand to Harry Truman considered "Peter I's testament as a document setting out the real goals of Russian and Soviet foreign policy" [81, pp 15-22]. The same point of view is presented by John Garry Clifford, a professor at the University of Kansas [11, pp 371-380].

It is also noteworthy that on December 3, 1979, an article pointing to the connections between Peter I's testament and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was published in the American newspaper Christian Science Monitor [81, p 92].

These means of communication did not exist in the time of Napoleon and especially in the 50-60-ies of the XVIII century. Therefore, the propagandistic goal could not reach large scales. This is a world of other communications, qualitatively different, closed, where propaganda is possible only on the widest scale - within several regions of one country.

Consequently, if this document had been composed during the time of Napoleon, it would not have had a propaganda purpose of such a scale as to create anti-Russian sentiments around the world or in Europe.

The most important and decisive thing is that Napoleon does not oppose Russia. The purpose of his wars is the revolutionary export of the idea of freedom - the free world must destroy the obsolete feudalism. Consequently, the European format proposed by Napoleon implies not the conquest of any particular country, but the rearrangement of European countries in accordance with the model of personal freedom. Hence, Napoleon's goal is to promote the idea of human freedom. He does not need to justify his aggressive policy by presenting Russia as an aggressor in dark tones. Therefore, we believe his connection with the forged document shall be ruled out.

One more significant detail: following record exists in historiography - the soldiers of Napoleon's army were given Lesur's books. This book was used to incite the French warriors against Russia and arise the motivation to fight. We consider this version to be rather doubtful, as it is highly inconvenient in terms of practical implementation. Moreover, it is unrealistic. Lesur's book contains about 500 pages and is not convenient to be used in the way. The goal of the warrior is to fight not to read a book. The frost of Russia and the harsh climatic conditions, especially the

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most difficult peripeteia of fighting could not ensure the opportunity for the French warriors to read this book in the trenches.

One more question also exists. Lesur's book was published in 1812. Hence, we have to answer, whether the book publication date coincides with the most outstanding fragment of Napoleon's Wars - the expedition to Russia and whether it was associated with the referred event and served a specific purpose of confrontation with Russia as well.

Eventuality shall be ruled out completely. We have to review the version that Lesur's study contained some political messages before Napoleon's confrontation with Russia, but we have to find out the addressee of these messages. To our mind, this book is intended for diplomatic use and not for general propagandistic purposes.

We have excluded the propaganda version based on the analysis presented above, indicating the lack of appropriate necessary communication means for that period. We suppose that the forged document found in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France could be used only during diplomatic negotiations. It should be admitted that the forged testament could not change anything within the context of Napoleon's European wars, it contained only one indecisive argument. The latter, along with other more important arguments and motivations, had to prove Napoleon's expedition to Russia throughout European diplomatic field. Russia was a special target for Napoleon, since the Russian Empire was one of the strongest bastions of feudalism among European states and its defeat would actually start a permanent wave of anti-feudal movement throughout Europe. While discussing the obsolescence of feudalism, it is worth noting that Russia cannot be considered as the counterweight to feudalism.

Thus, as a result of the above presented analysis, we declare that none of the three versions meet the three criteria of determining the initiator of a forged version of Peter I's testament. D'Eon, Sokolnitsky and Napoleon could not be considered as the initiators of the forged document.

Therefore, we believe that the date of the forged document should be determined at first in order to identify the possible authors. We have to determine the crucial criteria to identify the period of creating the forged testament.

Any case and facts have their preconditions. The determination of these preconditions is essential to define the date of the forged testament.

The main subtext of the forged testament is Russia's desire to conquer the whole world. Accordingly, it should have been actual and important for other states with anti-Russian sentiments. We have to clarify – period and reason for the strongest anti-Russian sentiments in European states and the time the referred issue was the most relevant in Europe.

The legend of the creation the forged version of Peter I's testament is presented in three chronological sequence:

1. Second half of 50-ies of XVIII century – the legend of D'Eon,
2. Second half of 90-ies of XVIII century- Polish legend, Sokolnitsky, Tomber,
3. Beginning of 10-ies of XIX century – the legend of Napoleon.

The main criterion to define the time of creation of a forged document from these three chronological layers is the distinct threat posed by Russia to Europe and thereby creating a growing background of the anti-Russian threat.

The most distinctive threat out of these three periods is posed by Russia to Europe during the Seven Years' War, when the Russian army occupies Berlin in 1760. Thus completely changing the political landscape of Europe at the time. Such European bridgehead of the Imperial Court of St. Petersburg is an obvious

precondition for further Russian aggression towards the West. These are the emotional sentiments clearly perceived beyond the forged document.

We have to admit that the presence of the Russian army in Europe is confirmed both in the second half of the 90-ies of XVIII century and in the first decade of XIX century. However, this is not a Russian military vehicle aimed at conquering Europe, but a Russian army fighting alongside the army of other European monarchies within anti-Napoleonic coalition. In our opinion, the latter could not lead to an escalation of anti-Russian sentiments to the level and scale existing in Europe after the Russian military expansion during the Seven Years' War.

Anti-Russian sentiments similar to those of the second half of the 50-ies of XVIII century did not exist in Europe in the 90-ies of XVIII century, when the main thoughts of Europe was directed to the consequences of the French Revolution and the new public order accordingly. Nor in the 10-ies of XIX century, when the export of the French Revolution and/or wars against one of the authors of the idea, Napoleon, were a priority for feudal Europe.

Accordingly, the main criterion - strengthening of anti-Russian sentiment in Europe is observed in the second half of the 50-ies of the XVIII century, clearly associated with the political processes of the Seven Years' War.

It is noteworthy that the legend of the testament confirms the period of the Seven Years' War, when Russia participates in large-scale international military and political battles for the first time and achieves unexpected successes for everyone. These processes are accompanied by cardinal changes for the world, leading to the formation of a completely different political and diplomatic landscape. This is a period when numerous things have been re-evaluated, so we have to look for reasons serving the creation of a forged testament and then make it publicly available.

Qualitatively different reality from a diplomatic and political point of view has become the main precondition for the life impulses of a forged testament. On the one hand, we have an unexpected European triumph of the Russian army, which, despite the strange decision of the Imperial Court of St. Petersburg and the withdrawal from Europe, can be repeated at any moment and on the other hand, the diplomatic landscape, where Russia is left without an ally.

The need to create a forged testament did not fit into international politics so evidently neither before nor afterwards. Obviously, it has become useful and necessary in this qualitatively different and unprecedented reality.

If we take into account the complicated situation during the above stated war and the multifaceted diplomatic moves of European states, it becomes evident that the falsification of Peter's testament was associated with a certain European state during the Seven Years' War. Moreover, this testament should have had a specific function.

The greatest peculiarity we face in this war is the withdrawal of the Russian army from Berlin. It is difficult to find any opposing side in the war having such an advantage during the war and still refusing the achieved result. It is not a normal, standard event.

This fragment of the Seven Years' War requires a special explanation, which is impossible with one task. It is obvious that we face a multifaceted task.

This unusual move of Russia was rather profitable to the King of Prussia - Frederick II. According to some reports, he was in despair and even thought of committing suicide after the loss of Berlin. The variations of the text of his letter is often used by the Russian historiography in order to prove it [87, col 1222-1224].

Actually, a full *carte blanche* was given to Frederick II by the unusual decision of the Russian army.

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This unusual turn coincides with the change of Russia's foreign vector from north to south. Hence, the first reasoned suspicion arises – whether the forged version of Peter I's testament is a document created by Frederick the Great to inspire the authorship of the Greek project. We have to find out whether there are passages in the text that correspond to the messages of Frederick II in order to answer this question. Therefore, we have to review the text of a forged document once again.<sup>1</sup>

• **Russia is the aggressor. Russian aggression is not limited to the Ottomans. This aggression equally extends to the countries of Europe, both in the North and in the West, as well as in Asia.**

Presenting Russia as an aggressor is confirmed by numerous paragraphs of the forged version of the testament, showing specific conceptual directions how Russia should become the largest empire in the world. This thesis is observed in the following paragraphs of the forged version of the testament.

Paragraph 2 – „Russia must be constantly on a war and its soldiers should be ready to act at the very first call“ [40, p 177].

Paragraph 3 - „Russia makes attempt to expand the borders to the north, along the Baltic Sea and to the south along the Black Sea“ [40, p 177].

Paragraph 4 – „The aim of Russia is to finally subjugate Sweden“ [40, p 177];

Paragraph 5 - „The aim of Russia is to expel the Turks from Europe and make the Imperial Court of Austria interested in this case“ [40, p 177];

Paragraph 6 - „The aim of Russia is to conquer Poland“ [40, p 177];

Paragraph 7 - „Build a fleet through making a close relationship with England, allowing Russia to dominate over the Baltic and Black Seas“ [40, p 177];

Paragraph 8 - „Russia plans to start war with Persia and accelerate its subjugation in order to penetrate into the Persian Gulf“ [40, p 178];

Paragraph 9 - „No opportunity must be lost in taking part in the affairs of Europe and especially in those of Germany“ [40, p 178];

Paragraph 10 - „Involve the Austrian Empire in devastating wars and gradually weaken it, meanwhile encourage its enemies secretly, especially Germany“ [40, p 178];

Paragraph 13 - „Provoke a devastating war in Europe, which will soon take a large scale“ [40, pp 178-179].

Paragraph 14 - „Acquire the status of a conciliatory judge in this war, organize a diversion allowing Russia to "subjugate the rest of Europe in faith of victory" [40, p 179].

• **Russia's attack on the Ottomans can only be a decision of the Imperial Court of St. Petersburg and not an idea imposed on Russia by another state.**

The existence of the second message preferred by Frederick II is confirmed, on the one hand by all the paragraphs of the above presented first message, showing that total aggression is a natural condition for Russia and on the other hand, by the conceptual line, considered to be one of the main directions of Russia's strategic development. In particular:

Paragraph 3 – „Russia makes attempt to expand the borders to the north, along the Baltic Sea and to the south along the Black Sea“ [40, p 177]

Paragraph 5 - „The Imperial Court of St. Petersburg should constantly advance and reach Constantinople. [40, p 177].

• **Russia provokes Austria and incites the latter against the Ottomans**

This message is confirmed by the following fragment of the forged document:

Paragraph 5 – „Russia should make the Imperial Court of Austria interested in expelling the Turks from Europe“... [40, p 177].

<sup>1</sup> Preferred messages of Frederick II will be given in bold and the extracts from the document – in normal font.

Paragraph 10 – „The Imperial Court of St. Petersburg should maintain an alliance with Austria, provoke favorite thoughts of Austrians about conquests, use it to influence and involve Austria in destructive wars and gradually weaken it... Secretly encourage its enemies, especially Germany. Arise envy and distrust against it in sovereign states [40, p 178].

• **Germany is a victim of Russian politics. Russia is constantly trying to weaken Germany.**

Similar statements of the message preferable to Frederick II are observed in the following sections of the forged testament of Peter I:

Paragraph 9 - „Russia must interfere in "the internal affairs of Europe and especially Germany", "by force or cunning and for any reason" [40, p 178].

Paragraph 11 - „Choose German princesses to marry Russian monarchs and strengthen ties of kinship and privileges to enhance Russia's influence throughout the empire “ [40, p 178].

Paragraph 10 – „Russia must create a state of war in Europe and maintain an alliance with Austria. Involve the latter in devastating wars and secretly encourage its enemies, especially Germany”[ 40, p 178].

• **Russian aggression is based not only on military actions, but also on the confessional segment, that should be used by Russia as a trump card in the fight against the Turks through Christians living in the Ottoman Empire.**

The preferable thesis of Frederick II is presented in the following fragment of the forged version of the testament.

Paragraph 12 - „ Russia should use the religious influence over Greek-Eastern renegades... make them seek Russian protection and achieve to be recognized as a spiritual ruler and subdue Turkey under this pretext [40, p 178].

Thus, specific extracts from the above presented document confirm unequivocally that all the political messages desired by Frederick II in relation to the Greek project are quite clearly formulated and reasoned within the forged version of Peter I's testament composed by Lesur. Accordingly, an opinion is put forward that the initiator of a forged version of Peter I's testament was King Frederick II of Prussia, whose goal was to conceal the authorship of the Greek Project and not to give himself away as the initiator of changing the vector of Russia's foreign policy.

Actually, Frederick believes that military-political deal with Russia is not worth turning the empire stretched over three continents into an enemy. Therefore, it is necessary to create an illusory systemic model in order (in particular, if the fact of payment to Russia is revealed) to remove the ground for envy from the Ottomans if necessary.

Frederick needs an alibi for such case in order to completely dispel his anti-Ottoman aggressive attitudes. The formula of the alibi is rather simple - a document must be created, in this case a forged version of Peter I's testament, clearly presenting the scale of Russia's anti-German plans and it should be believed in Europe. If such a document is recognized unequivocally, the suspicions of a financial transaction between Prussia and Russia will be dispelled.

Frederick II calculated thoroughly the possible problems associated with the forged versions of Peter's testament and therefore took care of the third level of inspiration.

The processes this document was supposed to follow in Russia clearly contained an internal political scandal. On the one hand, it was necessary to use Russian domestic political processes in a manner not make anyone recall the issue of document forgery at all and if recalled, it should cause no suspicion in terms of

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Frederick II. The identity of the King of Prussia as the author of the Greek Project and the testament of Peter I should not be disclosed either.

The widely known scandal of Princess Tarakanova at the Imperial Court of St. Petersburg, one of the popular topics in the Russian historiography, shall be reviewed within this frameworks [73; 16; 18; 19]. To our mind, the dramaturgy of this scandal belongs to Frederick II.

Polish emigrants declared Tarakanova as the daughter of Elisabeth I. They tried to confront her with Catherine II and planned to dethrone the latter. The version of Peter I's testament is preserved in the archives of Princess Tarakanova. She reinforced the legitimacy of her requests based on the referred testament [17].

The resonance of this topic has become so great in both domestic and foreign historiography, that we can say unequivocally: each detail was calculated thoroughly by Frederick II [40, p 321; 75, pp 3-12].

For higher inspiration, Frederick should also take care that the so-called evidences of the testament become available to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of various European states. The priority was given to France, as Prussia did not have ideal relations with the latter during the Seven Years' War.

Naturally, we have to clarify our version - how materials composed at different times in connection with the falsification of Peter I's testament could be found in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France.

We believe that the use of Polish version as a transit was the most reasoned and politically motivated. As for the French version, it should be noted that after the Seven Years' War it lost global dominance and the French dominant was replaced by the English one. The desire for revenge from the side of France should be perceived as a common motivation. Therefore, the French were clearly interested in the testament of Peter I due to the motive of returning priority and the status of a potential ally of the Ottoman Empire.

Consequently, this mutual Polish-French political motivation was a real way of storing the forged documents drawn up later and declared as the testament of Peter I along with documents related to the Russian Empire of the 20-ies of XVIII century in the Archives of French Foreign Policy.

Therefore, it is not surprising, that a document drawn up in the 30-ies of XIX century and referring to the 14-point plan of Peter I is kept in the archives of the French Foreign Ministry along with documents of 1725. The preamble of the document also states that it was compiled in Warsaw in 1794 by Tombour, a former French emigrant and editor of the "Gazette de Pologne".

The author of this record indicates that a project similar to the one of Peter I was written by William Eton, Consul of St. Petersburg in England, in his book "Historical, Political and Modern Picture of the Ottoman Empire."

Another version of the testament is mentioned by the Pole Parodovsky in a letter written to his compatriot Sokolnitsky in October 1796. He states that he discovered the favorite journal "Lefort" of Catherine II with the daily records of the empress while working as Zubov's secretary at the Imperial Court of St. Petersburg. According to Parodovsky it also contained the paragraphs of Peter I's testament though in different sequence.

This method of multiple inspiration guaranteed the confusion of the person having desire to identify the initiator of the Greek Project.

Finally, we have to answer the question - whether the forged version of Peter I's testament fulfilled its purpose in relation to the Greek Project?

In our opinion, it did. In the course of diplomatic relations, conducted secretly as usual, it should not be excluded that the Prussian side presented Peter's testament to the representatives of the Ottoman Empire and thereby covered up its own initiative

to draw up a Greek Project. This is a topic that might have been conducted in a secret negotiation format and its results and progress would not have been reflected in diplomatic protocols.

The Russian scientist Mezin, who studied the historiography of the issue, writes that none of the researchers of Peter I's testament will doubt that the creation of this forged document is associated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France [47, p18]. Our version that Peter I's testament is associated with Frederick the Great and not with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, totally destroys the general stereotype recognized in the world historiography.

### Conclusion

Thus, following statements can be concluded based on the outcomes of our research conducted in terms of the forged testament of Peter I.

1. Preconditions for the creation of this forged document is chronologically associated with the 60-ies of XVIII century, which coincides with the end of the Seven Years' War.

2. A sudden and unpredictable change in the foreign policy vector of the Russian Empire, the process of starting a new anti-Ottoman campaign, is directly related to the personal and national-political interests of Frederick II the King of Prussia, which is formed in an obviously secret format. The rudimentary version of the Greek Project endangers the King of Prussia in case the identity of its initiator, Frederick II, is disclosed. Therefore, he needs another, secondary, inspirational format to hide his authorship of the anti-Ottoman campaign.

3. Frederick II creates a kind of model of the Russian imperialist constitution, a forged version of the testament of Peter I, for the secondary inspiration. The latter describes the goals and directions of the Russian aggression fundamentally, presenting Frederick II's Germany as the greatest victim.

4. This forged document was created for diplomatic, not propaganda purposes.

5. The possibility of creating a forged version of Peter I's testament for propaganda purposes is totally ruled out. The communication means and infrastructure of Europe and the whole world in XVIII and the beginning of XIX century did not give the opportunity to use the referred document for propaganda purposes.

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