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Trente-cinq mille français en Bulgarie (Varna, 1854)

(Abstract)

This article is based on the autobiographic narratives left by French soldiers of the Crimean War. They visited the Balkans during the first months of the war. Thus we find short descriptions of Gallipoli and Eastern Thrace, abundant data on Varna and a semi-fantastic description of Dobrudža. These sources are very homogenous and permit to verify the assertions of every single witness. As a whole, they remain rather superficial; few of those French soldiers actively consider the country where the fate of war has brought them. Few of them even mention the presence of a Bulgarian population in the vicinity. Yet, those fragments, put together, shed some light on the impact the Crimean War had on the Balkan peninsula.