

The Routes to the Bulgarian National Movement: Simultaneously Homogenous and Polymorphous

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ABSTRACT

The present article deals with the various aspects of the Bulgarian national movement during the 19th century related to both its ideological parameters and to its practical orientations. The purpose of the study is to show how the process generally called Bulgarian revival/awakening embraced a variety of diverse or even contradictory individual and collective initiatives, which, however, share in common the awareness of a distinct Bulgarian national identity. In other words, the Bulgarian revival was not characterized by homogeneity, either as to its ideological principles or to its aspirations and the means to achieve them. More specifically, the first expressions of Bulgarian nationalism were cultural, in that they promoted school founding, teaching, the use of the Bulgarian language in writing, publishing Bulgarian newspapers and journals, as well as studying Bulgarian history, local culture and traditions, ethnology etc. Such activities intended to establish the distinct character of the Bulgarian people. Next, the Bulgarian national movement adopted more radical stances and claimed ecclesiastical and political independence. Therefore, the Bulgarian national 'project' consisted of three separate but interdependent/complementary trends which can be labeled as cultural, ecclesiastical, and political nationalism. Moreover, each trend developed as the sum of different approaches. For example, different theories about the Bulgarian ethnic origins were elaborated; moderate and radical methods in furtherance of the ecclesiastical aims were used – through negotiations, political intervention, forming a united church; passive and revolutionary means for the achievement of the political goals were chosen – Turko-Bulgarian dualism, federalism, and eventually uprising.

Key Words: Bulgaria; National movement; Turkey.

Bulgaristan Ulusal Hareketine Çıkan Yollar: Eş zamanlı olarak Homojen ve Çok Çeşitli

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada; hem ideolojik parametreler hem de pratikteki yönelime ilişkin olarak Bulgaristan'ın 19. Yüzyıl süresindeki ulusal hareketi çeşitli bakımlardan ele alınmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı; çeşitliliğin ve hatta zıtlığın kucaklandığı Bulgar uyanışını ve ortak girişimlerin Bulgar ulusal kimliğini paylaşmaları sürecini göstermektir. Diğer bir deyişle, Bulgar uyanışı homojen bir şekilde ideolojik ilke veya beklentilerle şekillenmemiştir. Bulgar milliyetçiliği başlangıçta; okullarda Bulgarcanın kullanıldığı, Bulgar gazetelerinin yayınlandığı, Bulgar tarihinin çalışıldığı, yerel kültür ve geleneklerin konu edildiği vb. bir şekilde tanımlanmıştır. Tüm bunlar, Bulgar insanın diğerlerinden ayrılan yönlerini ortaya koymaktadır. Sonrasında ise, Bulgar ulusal hareketi daha radikal bir duruş sergileyerek dini ve politik özgürlüğü benimsemiştir. Bu nedenle; Bulgar ulusal 'projesi'; kültürel, dini ve politik milliyetçilik başlıkları altında üç bağımsız/tamamlayıcı trendden oluşmaktadır. Her bir trend, farklı yaklaşımlar altında gelişmiştir. Örneğin, Bulgar etnik kökeni hakkında farklı teoriler gündeme gelmiş; anlaşma ve politik müdahaleler yoluyla birleşik kiliseler kurarak dini amaçları daha iler götürmek için ılımlı ve radikal yöntemler kullanılmış; politik hedeflere ulaşmak için Türk-Bulgar düalizmi, federalizm ve sonrasında da ayaklanma gibi pasif ve devrimci yollar izlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bulgaristan; Ulusal hareket; Türkiye.

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The present paper attempts to draw a concise outline of the several routes taken by the Bulgarian national movement during the better part of the 19th century, both in terms of ideological expression and dynamic action, until the establishment of the autonomous Bulgarian Principality in 1878. Its aim is to examine the dimensions and multifaceted aspects of the national movement, and in so doing reveal that it comprised different (at times conflicting) individual and collective initiatives, whose common denominator was to arouse Bulgarian national consciousness. The phenomenon generally referred to as the Bulgarian revival/awakening evidently was not characterized by homogeneity -not in its ideological components, and not in its aims and aspirations or the means for their achievement. Hence, the multi-formity behind the implied homogeneity is focused on here with the intention to view the issue from a new perspective. In addition, its parameters are examined in relation to the principles as well as the actual face of Bulgarian nationalism.

THE TERM VAZRZHDANE

Firstly, the multiple meanings that have been given to the term *vazrazhdane* (= revival/awakening) in Bulgarian historiography will be looked at. This is the word that was used in the phraseology adopted in the 19th century to describe the route of Bulgarian national integration. It was congruent with the principles of nationalism in that it implies that the idea of *nation* is not new -it has always existed, albeit in a latent form; and that the newer ideological trends and political developments of the time, such as the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, created the appropriate conditions that recalled this notion from people's subconscious and "re-awakened" it.²

Eventually, the expression *Balgarskoto vazrazhdane* (Bulgarian revival) became established in historical terminology, however, it was not consistently employed by historians in its literal sense but has taken on a variety of conceptual meanings. Most commonly, it is conceived as a "nationalizing" process. In other words, *Balgarskoto vazrazhdane* is the sum of all the procedures, actions and practices, which resulted in the creation of the Bulgarian nation. Two other meanings, sometimes presented as complementary and other times as separate, are attached to this interpretation. The one places emphasis on the intellectual-cultural elements and perceives it as a transitional process from the way the world was viewed in medieval times to the worldly positivist

2 Regarding the meaning of national "awakening" in the theory of nationalism see indicatively: E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Blackwell, 1994, pp. 47-49; A. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Blackwell Publishing 2008, pp. 6-18.

spirit of modernism, while the other views it in the light of economic and social restructuring; more precisely, the progression from feudalism to urban capitalism.³

Furthermore, the Bulgarian Revival refers to the period of Bulgarian history during which the above changes occurred.⁴ Although there is no consensus as to the specific chronological duration, it is generally approximated as having taken place in the Bulgarian territories in the last 100 years of Ottoman rule. There is general agreement in the historiographical approaches that the main phase of national mobilization was in the third decade of the 19th century. The starting point is considered to be the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829 which was directly associated with a series of reforms undertaken by the Ottoman Empire. As to when it ends, some put it at 1870 with the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate and others at 1878 with the founding of the Bulgarian Principality.⁵ Mention must also be made regarding those who contend that the onset of the early stages of the Revival date back to the beginning of the 17th century. The first professional Bulgarian historian, Marin Drinov connected the beginning of the Revival with the composition of Slavo-Bulgarian history in 1762 by the Hilendar Monastery monk, Paisij. In any case, the year 1762 has become a milestone in Bulgarian history. On the other hand, there are some researchers who support that the Revival continued past 1878, extending it either to the first and even the second World Wars.⁶

The emergence of Bulgarian national consciousness was triggered by the ideological and political influences originating in western and central Europe, (i.e. the French Revolution, the Enlightenment, Nationalism, and Romanticism)⁷, as well as the crucial socio-economic changes taking place in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman dominion. The growth of trade, as well as the appearance of an upcoming urban class shook the foundations of traditional social and economic structures.⁸ Moreover, the Russian influence, in particular Slavophilism and Pan-Slavism⁹ in relation to the

3 R. Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation in the Balkans. Historiography of the Bulgarian Revival*, CEU Press 2004, p. 11 ff. This is a translation from the Bulgarian with minor changes to the book by the same author entitled *Kak se misli Balgarskoto Vazrazhdane (How the Bulgarian Revival is perceived)*, Sofia 2002.

4 The examination of this issue by Daskalov in his aforementioned book *Kak se misli Balgarskoto Vazrazhdane*, provoked relevant discussion. In fact, some historians support that the Bulgarian Revival should not be considered as a separate historical period. See: A. Vezenkov, *Ochevidno samo na prav pogled: 'Balgarskoto Vazrazhdane' kato otdelna epoha (Evident from the first look: the Bulgarian Revival as a separate period)*, *Balkanskijat XIX vek*, Sofia 2006, pp. 82-127.

5 Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation*, op. cit., pp. 103-104.

6 Op. cit., pp 99-106, V. Boneva, *Bazrazhdane: Balgarija i Balgarite v Prehod kam Novoto Vreme (Revival: Bulgaria and the Bulgarians during the Transition to the New Age)*, Shumen 2005, pp. 10-16.

7 L. Stavrianos, *The Influence of the West on the Balkans, The Balkans in Transition*, ed. by Ch. & B. Jelavich, University of California Press 1963, pp. 184-226.

8 V. Boneva, *Bazrazhdane*, op. cit., p. 123 ff.

9 J. Sampimon, *Becoming Bulgarian*, Amsterdam 2006, pp. 159-215.

Bulgarians cannot be ignored. Also, their neighbors, particularly the Greeks, had preceded in forming a national idea. At a time when differentiation based on national characteristics was still very fluid in the Balkans, the Greeks' sense of ethnic identity -greatly aided by the establishment of the Greek state- initiated the distinction of the Other, and by extension that of the Bulgarians. In other words, the formation of a distinct national identity by the Greeks, in essence, "obliged" the Others to seek their own separate national basis.¹⁰

Following on the track set out above, but with no intention to minimize the value of the other parameters, the present study confines itself to the ideological, cultural, and political expressions of Bulgarian nationalism, during the main period of the Revival.

'CULTURAL NATIONALISM'

The Bulgarian national "awakening" started - in the form of 'cultural nationalism' - as a series of isolated initiatives by a small Bulgarian intelligentsia, mainly from the diaspora. Cultural nationalism was promoted through the establishment of schools, and the general written and spoken use of the Bulgarian language (up until then the educated used Greek). In addition, Bulgarian newspapers and magazines were published, and historical, ethnographic, folkloric, and linguistic studies were carried out.¹¹ At first, these activities were not coordinated; their intent was to reveal to the Bulgarian people their distinct ethnicity. Gradually, however, they acquired ethnic content with the aim to construct Bulgarian national identity. This ideological transformation was accompanied by, on the one hand, the integration into a Slavo-Bulgarian entity.¹² On the other hand, there was a slow but steady disassociation from the dominant Greek Orthodox cultural environment, which in the Ottoman Empire had not yet fully developed distinct national characteristics but still rested on

10 As Eric Hobsbawm observes: 'But it (the new Greek Nationalism) also had the paradoxical result of narrowing Hellenism to Hellas, and thus creating or intensifying the latent nationalism of the other Balkan peoples. While being Greek had been little more than the professional requirement of the literate Orthodox Balkan Christian, hellenization had made progress. Once it meant the political support for Hellas, it receded, even among the assimilated Balkan literate classes. In this sense Greek independence was the essential preliminary condition for the evolution of the other Balkan nationalisms.' See: E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe, 1789-1848*, London 1962, p.142.

11 The literature related to the cultural development of the Bulgarians is extensive. Indicatively see: T. Meininger, *The Formation of a Nationalist Bulgarian Intelligentsia 1835-1878* (Ph. D. Thesis at the University of Wisconsin 1974); N. Genchev, *Balgarskata Vazrozhdeska Inteligencija (The Bulgarian Intelligentsia of the Revival)*, Sofia 1991; N. Aretov, *Balgarskoto Vazrazhdane i Evropa (The Bulgarian Revival and Europe)*, Sofia 1995; V. Boneva, *Bazrazhdane, op. cit.*; J. Sampimon, *Becoming Bulgarian*, op. cit.

12 J. Sampimon, *Becoming Bulgarian*, op. cit, p. 89.

a religious basis. The shift was progressive and occurred at two levels: the collective and the individual. The former was finalized up until the decade of the 1850s, and the latter, which continued till much later, concerned the individual's identity based on national criteria. A characteristic example is the case of Grigor Stavrev Parlichev, the prime mover in the Bulgarian national movement in the area of Ohrid, who up until 1860 had still not acquired a Bulgarian national consciousness.¹³ Despite being fully aware of his ethnic Bulgarian origins, when it came to deciding on a national identity, he opted for the Greek; not only did he write and speak in Greek but he also used the Greek surname of Stavridis.

A number of other prominent Greek-speaking Bulgarian intellectuals also had to contend with the critical dividing line between a sense of patriotism and national orientation and somehow balance the two, at least during the early stages of their careers. One such was Petar Beron (1799/1800-1871), author of *Riben Bukvar* (the *Fish Primer* i.e., the first Bulgarian school primer), who was very active in educational developments in the Bulgarian-populated regions.¹⁴ Examples of those who were more steadfast supporters of a national cultural project included Vasil Aprilov (1789-1847), who in 1835 set up the first Bulgarian school in Gabrovo and was one of the founders of Bulgarian ethnography;¹⁵ Konstantin Fotinov (1790-1858), editor of the first Bulgarian-language magazine entitled *Lyuboslovije* (Philology) published in Smyrna between 1844 and 1846;¹⁶ and Spyridon Palaouzov (1818-1872), who was the first to be involved with Bulgarian Medieval studies.¹⁷

Thus, one major outcome of the Bulgarian national movement was the cultural "renaissance" that not only simply coexisted but kept in step with the other more radical routes that emerged later. This cultural development was neither systematically propagated as an organized scheme of actions and events, nor was it under the control of any one specific national center. On the contrary, it involved a set of activities,

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- 13 On this issue see: R. Detrez, *Grigor Parlichev, een casestudy in Balkannationalisme*, translated by Zherminal Chivikov into Bulgarian from Dutch with the title *Krivolici na Misalta (The Flexibility of Thought)*, Sofia 2001; P. Matalas, *Ethnos kai Orthodoksia. Oi peripeteies mias shesis. Apo to "Elladiko" sto Voulgariko Shisma (Nation and Orthodoxy. The adventures of a relationship. From the "Greek" to the Bulgarian schism)*, Heraklion 2003, pp. 193-200.
- 14 Sampimon, *Becoming Bulgarian*, op. cit., pp. 77-83, *Koj Koj e sred Balgarite XV-XIX v. (Who is Who among the Bulgarians 15th-19th centuries)*, Sofia 2000, pp. 39-40.
- 15 D. Todorov, *Balgarskata Etnografija prez Bazrazhdaneto (Bulgarian Ethnography during the Revival)*, Sofia 1989, pp. 73-84; *Koj Koj e*, op. cit., pp. 25-26.
- 16 N. Danova, *Konstantin Georgiev Fotinov v kulturnoto i idejno politicheskoto razvitie na Balkanite prez XIX vek (The Contribution of Konstantin Fotinov in the cultural ideology and political development of the Balkans in the 19th century)*, Sofia 1994; *Koj Koj e*, op. cit., pp. 275-276.
- 17 G. Brucciani, *La scrittura de la Nazione. Storia, Lingua e Fede nel Risorgimento bulgaro (XVIII-XIX sec.)*, Pisa 2009, pp. 118-127; *Koj Koj e*, op. cit., pp. 202-203.

mainly supported by members of the Bulgarian diaspora communities on the basis of personal choices and priorities. Multi-formity but also ideological divergence was only to be expected when one considers the lack of coordination and the absence of a unified plan. Indicatively, a few of the different approaches to the question concerning the origin of the Bulgarians, which was central to the reconstruction of the Bulgarian past in ethnic terms, are presented below.

The Slavic character of the Bulgarian nation was indisputably agreed on by all the intellectuals who were involved with this specific issue, however, there was less consensus about the theories put forward not only as to where the Slavs came from before settling in the Balkans, but also as to the ethnic origin of the proto-Bulgarians. Vasil Aprilov was one of those advocating that the Proto-Bulgarians were of Slavic descent. He maintained that the Bulgarians resided in the Volga region, prior to their moving down into the territories of the Eastern-Roman Empire at the end of the 5th century AD.¹⁸ Konstantin Fotinov, in keeping with the historical model of the 18th century introduced by Paisij, espoused that the line of descent of the Slavo-Bulgarians was from the grandson of Noah, Mosoch. He believed that the Slavs were the first people to settle in Europe from as early as 3000 BC. Furthermore, he incorporated them into the ancient Greek setting, giving his version by claiming that in the Trojan war they fought bravely on the side of Alexander of Macedon, who as an act of acknowledgement for their valor, gave them the name *slavni* meaning glorious [deeds in battle]; hence the origin of their name.¹⁹ Ivan Seliminski maintained that the Bulgarians were indigenous to the Balkans and that already from 1000 B.C. they had their own political organization.²⁰ Spyridon Palaouzov believed that the Volga River was the cradle of the Proto-Bulgarians whom he claimed were a Turanid race. They were Slavonized in the 7th century AD when they moved southwards mixing with the Slavs of the Balkans.²¹ And finally, Georgi Rakovski (1821-1867) undertook the task of producing linguistic and cultural evidence to show that the Bulgarians, like the other Slavs, were direct descendants of the ancient peoples of Central Asia and Mesopotamia.²²

18 D. Canev, Vasil Aprilov i negovite vazgledi za balgarskata istorija (Vasil Aprilov and his ideas on Bulgarian history), *Izsledvanija po Balgarska Istorija 6. Problemi na Balgarskoto Bazrazhdane*, Sofia 1981, pp. 160-161.

19 N. Danova, *Konstantin Georgiev Fotinov*, op. cit., pp. 308-311.

20 I. Seliminski, *Izbrani Sachinenija (Collected Works)*, Sofia 1979, pp. 158-159.

21 G. Brucciani, *La scrittura de la Nazione*, op. cit., pp. 121-123.

22 N. Aretov, *Balgarskoto Vazrazhdane*, op. cit., pp. 64-72; D. Stamatopoulos, *To Vyzantio meta to Ethnos. To provlima tis syneheias stis valkanikes istoriographies (The Byzantium after the nation. The problem of continuity in Balkan historiographies)*, Athens 2009, pp. 190-197.

‘ECCLESIASTICAL NATIONALISM’

Although ideological and cultural expression was the starting point of Bulgarian nationalism, it soon took a more dynamic turn in the aspiration for ecclesiastical independence. ‘Ecclesiastical nationalism’ as an orientation arose in the mid-1850s through the cultivation of Bulgarian national feeling. The result was the irreparable damage to the unity of the Orthodox millet in the Ottoman Empire,²³ which up until then had formed a uniform religious community under the ecclesiastic leadership of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Along with the ecclesiastical issue, there was growing protest at the dominant role of the Greek language in the cultural-educational domains.

In the beginning the cause for the discontent was financial: the Bulgarians found the church taxes they were obliged to pay to the Patriarchate exorbitant and insufferable. This was followed by remonstrance in the form of demands that the high clergy, which was Greek, be replaced by bishops of Bulgarian origin, and that the Slavic instead of the Greek language be used for the liturgy and religious ceremonies. The Ecumenical Patriarchate, however, refused both demands. The first frictions in relation to this took place in the town of Vratsa in 1824; there was more tension in the following decade at Samakov and to a greater extent in Veliko Tarnovo where in 1839 the Bulgarians demanded the appointment of Neofit Bozveli in the position of Metropolitan, however again without success.²⁴ Later, under the direction of the Bulgarian community of Constantinople, which had a strongly developed sense of their Bulgarianess²⁵, these actions became more coordinated. In 1844, Neofit Bozveli and Ilarion Makariopolski, two clerical leaders of the Bulgarian ecclesiastical movement, put the Bulgarian demands regarding their ecclesiastical organization in writing to the High Porte. This resulted in their being exiled to Mount Athos on suggestion of the Patriarch, where Bozveli died in 1848.²⁶

23 The academic discussion on the millet system in the Ottoman Empire is extensive. For a recent contribution on the topic see: D. Stamatopoulos, *From Millets to Minorities in the 19th Century Ottoman Empire: An Ambiguous Modernization, Citizenship in Historical Perspective* ed. By S. Ellis, G. Halfdarnarson & A. K. Isaacs, Piza 2006, pp. 253-273.

24 P. Nikov, *Vazrazhdane na Balgarskija Narod. Carkovno-Nacionalni Borbi i Postizhenija (The Revival of the Bulgarian Nation. Ecclesiastical-National Struggles and Attainments)*, (third edition), Sofia 2008, p. 61 ff.; Z. Markova, *Balgarskoto Carkovno-Nacionalno Dvizhenie do Krimskata Vojna (The Bulgarian Ecclesiastical-National Movement up to the Crimean War)*, Sofia 1976 (2nd edition in *Izbrani Sachinenija*, Volume I, Sofia 2007), p. 99 ff.; J. Hopkins, *The Bulgarian Orthodox Church: A Socio-Historical Analysis of the Evolving Relationship Between Church, Nation and State in Bulgaria*, East European Monographs, No DCCXXVI 2009, p. 105 ff.

25 Z. Markova, *Balgarskoto Carkovno-Nacionalno*, op. cit., p. 119 ff.

26 P. Nikov, *Vazrazhdane*, op. cit., pp. 87-91.

An important step toward meeting the aspirations of the Bulgarians was the erection of the Bulgarian church in the Ottoman capital in 1849. The authorization of both the ecclesiastical and political leaderships was attained by the efforts of two influential fellow countrymen, John Exarch and Stefan Bogoridi. The latter contributed the property on which the church was built.²⁷

The first phase of the Bulgarian ecclesiastical movement, which lasted for about three decades, was milder in the sense that it asked for certain rights within the context of the established Church order. In the decade of the 1850s, however, the movement took on a more radical dimension, and simultaneously a more intense national character, setting as a non-negotiable claim ecclesiastical independence. In other words, they wanted the official recognition of separate Bulgarian millet. More specifically, this second phase began in 1856 when within the context of the implementation of the wider reforms that the Sultan had decreed in the *Hatt-i Humayun*, which included the reorganization of the Orthodox millet, a request was made for the establishment of an independent Bulgarian Church.²⁸

Major conflict between the Bulgarians and the Patriarchate of Constantinople ensued. Lasting for well over a decade, there were continual unsuccessful attempts at negotiations and failure to reach any sort of understanding. The dispute was obviously an issue which went beyond the ecclesiastical boundaries²⁹, characterized as it was by a spate of submissions of plans and proposals, incessant accusations and counter-accusations, not to mention the up-front and the behind-the-scenes intense lobbying that took place. It appeared that the Bulgarian side, through their objective to create an independent ecclesiastical organization with a nationalist character, had, in essence, set out to change the way the citizens of the Ottoman empire had been until then separated into millets. Without formulating it overtly, what they demanded, in reality, was the transposition of nationality onto religion. The obvious political repercussions that such a settlement would have in the wider Balkan region provoked not only the lively interest of the Ottoman government but also the deep concern of the Russian

27 Z. Markova, *Balgarskijat Hram v Carigrad (Nachalna Istoriija)* (The Bulgarian Church in Constantinople. The Initial Story), *Izbrani Sachinenija*, Volume II Studii i Statii, Sofia 2008, pp. 100-110.

28 V. Boneva, *Balgarskoto Carkovnonacionalno Dvizhenie 1856-1870 (The Bulgarian National Church Movement 1856-1870)*, Sofia 2010, p. 51 ff.

29 The most contemporary study on the issue is that by V. Boneva, *Balgarskoto Carkovnonacionalno Dvizhenie*, op. cit. In the Greek literature see: P. Matalas, *Ethnos kai Orthodoxia*, op. cit., p. 163 ff., which has the reactions of the Greek side.

and Greek states.³⁰ As was to be expected, the Patriarchate vigorously supported the unity of Orthodoxy, rejecting outright any potential division on national grounds.

Like the other routes that the Bulgarian national movement took, the ecclesiastical was no exception, in that behind the homogeneity that is at first implied, there were, in fact, a number of significant differences as to how its demands would be achieved. A closer examination reveals that the various internal tendencies -some more, some less powerful- resulted in a lack of unanimity in the actual content of their claims, as well as the strategies to achieve them. The three most significant alternative orientations are presented here; the first two dominated the development of events, while the third had marginal impact.

More specifically, the two basic groups which comprised the central body of the movement were the moderates and the radicals, or as they were nicknamed by their contemporaries the 'Old' and the 'Young' wings respectively. The former, headed by Krastevic, Bourmov and others, through the publication of their newspaper *Vreme* (Time), supported a compromise solution of common consensus with the Patriarchate without any intervention by the High Porte. Their main concern was to preserve the unity of Orthodoxy. They had direct co-operation with the Russian ambassador in Constantinople, Ignatiev, who acted as a go-between, since their views were, to a large degree, similar. Being a moderate faction, its members were on committees that included representatives of the Patriarchate and designed plans that were discussed at the negotiation table; in other words, they followed the strategic path of discourse.³¹

The second group, (the 'Young') headed by the representative of the Bulgarian community of Philipoupolis (modern day Plovdiv), Stoyan Chomakov and the publicist of the newspaper *Makedonija* (Macedonia) Petko Slavejkov, represented the hard liners. Placing much greater weight on the nationalist dimension of the issue, their objective was to found an outright separate Bulgarian church. They were not interested in attaining patriarchal consent and were indifferent to the unity of the Orthodox Church. In fact, they viewed the prospect of an ecclesiastical schism as a positive outcome in that it would facilitate their goal of national emancipation, being,

30 On the Russian position see: T. Meininger, *Ignatiev and the Establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate 1864-1872*, Madison 1970; Z. Markova, *Rusija i Balgarskijat Carkovno-Nacionalen Vapros 1856-1864* (Russia and the Bulgarian Ecclesiastical-National Issue 1856-1864), *Izbrani Sachinenija*, Volume II *Studii i Statii*, Sofia 2008, pp. 165-247; E. Naxidou, *I Voulgariki Eksarhia kai I Ekklisia tis Rossias* (The Bulgarian Exarchate and the Church of Russia), *Acts 28th (Part B) and 29th of the Greek Historical Conference*, Thessaloniki 2009, pp. 147-172.

31 E. Naxidou, *I Arhiepiskopi tis Ahridas os ideologiko ypovathro tis Ekklisiastikis Aneksartias ton Voulgaron 1850-1870* (The Archbishopric of Ohrid as an Ideological Background of the Ecclesiastical Independence of the Bulgarians 1850-1870), *Valkanika Symmeikta 14-15 (2003-2004)*, pp. 35-36.

thus unswerving in the demand that all Bulgarian populations in the Balkans come under the authority of the new ecclesiastical body. This faction was, of course, well aware of the consequences of the materialization of such an ambitious project: on the one hand, it would lead to a serious rupture with the Patriarchate, and on the other, it would have to have the support of the High Porte. The radicals strongly disagreed with the consensual nature of Russian ecclesiastical policy and were opposed to Ignatiev's conciliatory attempts.³²

During the ecclesiastical dispute, it appears that the most radical opinions constantly gained ground and thus all possibility of reaching reconciliation was lost. Hence, in 1867, under pressure from Chomakov's group, the plan put forward by Patriarch Gregory VI for the creation of a Bulgarian church with restricted autonomy was rejected on the grounds that under its control, it only included the region between the Danube and the Haemus mountains. In fact, in order to create a diversion, the hardliners presented a submission to the Sultan requesting the re-establishment of the Archbishopric of Ohrid.³³ This action, however, was merely a ploy, outwardly seeming to have undergone a re-evaluation of the Bulgarian objectives. In reality, it was a temporary change of tactics and a diplomatic maneuver with the intention of nullifying the patriarchate's initiative and procuring as many benefits for their cause as could be got by keeping the processes for the resolution of the thorny issue alive.³⁴

Apart from these two main groups regarding the ecclesiastical issue, there was a third, albeit less effective group that did not manage to gain widespread support or consequence. This refers to the attempt by a small number of people to secure the much-desired Bulgarian ecclesiastical independence in an un-'orthodox' (so to speak) manner, namely through their affiliation to the Catholic Church, which would also automatically entail their being recognized as a separate millet. This undertaking was the direct outcome of Franco-Russian rivalry in the East and France's strategic decision to strengthen its influence on the Ottoman Empire by, among other things, reinforcing the activities of the Catholic missions in the regions inhabited by Bulgarians. The Bulgarian case provided ample opportunity for the Catholic missionaries to do their work of converting. The various Catholic Orders had already begun to make inroads from the decade of the 1830s, however, conditions became more favorable after the

32 Ibid., p. 36.

33 A. Shopov, Dr. Stojan Chomakov, *zhivot, dejnost i arhiva*» (Dr. Stojan Chomakov, his life, action and archive), *Sbornik na BAN XII Klon istoriko-filologichen i filosofsko-obshtestven*, Sofija 1919, pp. 443-446, No 375.

34 E. Naxidou, *I Arhiepiskopi tis Ahridas os ideologiko ypovathro*, op.cit, pp. 36-39.

Crimean war, when the discontent of the Bulgarians with their ecclesiastical leadership was at its peak.³⁵

One characteristic incident was the mass conversion to the Uniate Church in 1859 in the town of Kilkis, as an act of reprisal to the Patriarchate's refusal to put a bishop of Bulgarian origin in that particular province. The encroachment of Catholic Papacy on its territory greatly alarmed the Patriarchate, which was quick to satisfy the Bulgarian demand and thus avert the danger.³⁶

At the same period, through his newspaper *Balgarija* (Bulgaria) Dragan Chankov was propagandizing in Constantinople the notion of the Bulgarians realizing their ecclesiastical demands through their conversion to Catholicism. In 1860 his views began to gain wider acceptance after the total failure of the Bulgarians to support their demands at the General Clerical-Lay Assembly of the Orthodox millet, which convened for the purpose of reorganizing the latter (1858-1860).³⁷ At the end of 1860, many members of the Bulgarian community of Constantinople, headed by Dragan Chankov, Georgi Mirkovic and the priest-monks Iosif Sokolski and Makarius, came into contact with the Catholic Archbishop of Constantinople and signed a deed of affiliation with the Uniate Church. A few months later, at the beginning of 1861, Iosif visited Rome where the Pope ordained him as Archbishop of the Bulgarian Eastern Catholic Church. This event provoked the intense reactions not only of the Patriarchate and of Russia, but also of the leaders of the Bulgarian national movement itself. Soon after, Sokolski was "persuaded" to escape to Odessa on a Russian ship, where he de-converted from Catholicism and returned to Orthodoxy. The vast majority of those who had converted soon followed suit, including Chankov, who also terminated the publication of his newspaper.³⁸

The failure of the above ventures, as well as similar ones though smaller in scale in the years that followed, was inextricably interwoven with the actual motives that instigated them. It appears that the Bulgarians never had any real intention of denying their traditional religion of Christian Orthodoxy; they simply used the threat to go

35 On the relationship between the Bulgarians and the Uniate Church see: Kiril Patriarh Balgarski, *Katolicheskata propaganda sred Balgarite prez vtorata polovina na XIX vek*, (*Catholic propaganda to the Bulgarians during the second half of the 19th cent.*), Sofija 1962; P. Voillery, Un aspect de la rivalité Franco-Russe au XIXe siècle: les Bulgares, *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* XXI 1(1980), pp. 31-47.

36 Kiril Patriarh Balgarski, *Katolicheskata propaganda*, op. cit., pp. 120-127.

37 The Bulgarian representatives, who were 4 out of a total of 45 members, submitted to the Assembly a petition, in which they asked for: the bishops of each province to be elected by the residents themselves, to speak the language of their congregation and to have a set pay; in addition they demanded that bad church management and irregularities to be averted. See: P. Nikov, *Vazrazhdane na Balgarskija Narod*, op. cit., p. 143; V. Boneva, *Balgarskoto Carkovnonacionalno Dvizhenie*, op. cit., pp. 146-147.

38 Kiril Patriarh Balgarski, *Katolicheskata propaganda*, op. cit., p. 155 ff.

over to Catholicism as a stratagem to apply pressure on both the Patriarchate to give in to their claims, and Russia to give up her reconciliatory policy and actively support their cause.

Finally, while the margin of hope of a compromise being reached between the Patriarchate and the Bulgarians appeared to have all but diminished, in 1870 the Ottoman political leadership by *Ferman* (Decree) of the Sultan established the Bulgarian Exarchate without the consent of the Great Church.³⁹ The latter condemned it as a totally unacceptable act of interference in its internal affairs and denounced the newly established Church as schismatic by decision of a *Great Local Synod* in 1872.⁴⁰

‘POLITICAL NATIONALISM’

Along with ecclesiastical nationalism there emerged the first signs of ‘political nationalism’, which had a more revolutionary character. In other words, at around the same time, awareness arose that the Bulgarian national movement should strive to gain political independence through organized revolutionary action. The main supporters of this idea were the Bulgarian émigrés of Serbia and Romania, in particular the communities of Belgrade, Bucharest, and Braila.

Thus, while the basic concern of the Bulgarian communities inside the Ottoman Empire was to achieve ecclesiastical independence, to which they were led by their fellow countrymen of Constantinople, already from the decade of the 1860s the Bulgarians abroad had attached a strong political dimension to national ideology and nation building. They declared that the road to independence was the revolutionary route. However, in spite of their common orientation, they too were not able to act as a united body at either an ideological or a practical level. Nevertheless, besides individual initiatives, there were also many attempts made at more coordinated action under the direction of numerous Revolutionary Committees, which however, did not attract a large number of supporters, at least not before 1875.

39 V. Boneva, *Balgarskoto Carkovnonacionalno Dvizhenie*, op. cit., p. 1028 ff.

40 M. Gedeon, *Eggrapha Patriarhika kai Synodika peri tou Voulgarikou Zitimatos 1852-1873 (Patriarchal and Synodical Documents on the Bulgarian Issue 1852-1873)*, Constantinople 1908, pp. 427-432. These documents were reprinted by A. Angelopoulos in his book *The World of Orthodoxy in the Balkans Today* volume II, Thessaloniki 1995.

A pioneer of political nationalism was Georgi Rakovski, a leading figure of the Bulgarian Revival.⁴¹ Not only was he the first to believe that political liberation could come only from armed struggle but he was also one of the first to attempt to put his ideas into action. Further, Rakovski fervently supported the claim that the revolution had a greater chance of success, if it were incorporated into the designs of a wider Balkan collaboration. Towards this end, he made contact with both the Greek and the Serbian sides, however, these endeavors had no substantial results.⁴² As early as 1841, Rakovski had organized in Braila an unsuccessful attempt of a Greco-Bulgarian uprising,⁴³ while during the Crimean War he armed a band (cheta) with the intention of having them unite with the Russian troops, when the latter would enter Bulgarian territory.⁴⁴ And in 1862 in Serbia, he formed a Bulgarian legion with the aim of mobilizing armed resistance in the Bulgarian regions. However, he was obliged to quickly disband it when the Serbs came to an agreement with the High Porte regarding the dispute over the withdrawal of the Turkish residents and the Turkish military guards from the Serbian Principality.⁴⁵ After this, Rakovski settled in Bucharest, where he again tried to organize armed brigades which would cross the Danube and incite their compatriots to insurrection.⁴⁶

Another key figure of political nationalism was Lyuben Karavelov (1834-1879),⁴⁷ who was a consistent supporter of federalism. During his stay in Bucharest (1869-1875), Karavelov went one step further in expanding the notion to include that after common revolutionary action, a united Balkan federation would be set up. He developed and

41 Indicatively see: M. Arnaudov, *G. S. Rakovski, Zhivot, Delo, Idei* (*G. S. Rakovski, his Life, Work and Ideas*), Sofia 1942; V. Trajkov, *Rakovski i Balkanskite Narodi* (*Rakovski and the Balkan Peoples*), Sofia 1971; V. Trajkov, *Georgi Stojkov Rakovski. Biografija* (*Georgi Stoikov Rakovski. A Biography*), Sofia 1974; M. Firkatian, *The forest traveller. Georgi Stoikov Rakovski and Bulgarian Nationalism*, New York 1996; V. Chani-Moisidou, *Oi Ellinomatheis Logioi Voulgaroi tou 19ou aiona* (*The Greek-speaking Bulgarian Intellectuals of the 19th century*), Thessaloniki 2010.

42 V. Trajkov, *Rakovski i Balkanskite Narodi*, op. cit., pp. 43-138, & 315-383.

43 M. Firkatian, *The forest traveller*, op. cit., pp. 27-32.

44 Ibid., pp. 41-45.

45 V. Trajkov, *Georgi Stojkov Rakovski*, op. cit., pp. 244-261.

46 Ibid., pp. 306-358.

47 The literature on Karavelov is extensive. Indicatively the following are mentioned: M. Dimitrov, *Lyuben Karavelov. Biografija* (*Lyuben Karavelov. A Biography*), Sofia 1959; M. Arnaudov, *Lyuben Karavelov. Zhivot, Delo, Epoha. 1834-1879* (*Lyuben Karavelov. His Life, Work and his Age 1834-1879*), Sofia 1964; K. Sharova, *Lyuben Karavelov i Balgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1867* (*Lyuben Karavelov and the Bulgarian Liberation Movement 1860-1867*), Sofia 1970; N. Kondarev, *Ideologijata na Lyuben Karavelov* (*The Ideology of Lyuben Karavelov*), Sofia 1979; E. A. Zaharia, *Lyuben Karavelov. Bulgarian Apostle of Balkan Federation*, PhD thesis, University of Arizona 1984; I. Stojanov, *Lyuben Karavelov. Novi Shtrih kam Zhivota i Dejnosta mu* (*Lyuben Karavelov. New data on his Life and Action*), Veliko Tarnovo 2008.

promoted his ideas through his publications, primarily the newspapers *Svoboda* (Freedom) and *Nezavisimost* (Independence).⁴⁸ According to him, the only feasible plan in order for the peoples of the Balkans to attain their much-desired liberation from Ottoman domination was through collaborative action; joining to form a united revolutionary movement which would subsequently be endorsed by the creation of a federation.⁴⁹ The pillars of this multi-ethnic dominion, he believed, would have to be the principles of liberalism which would guarantee internal autonomy to each member-state, as well as respect for the diverse ethnic traditions.⁵⁰

At the beginning of 1870, Karavelov together with Vasil Levski, another protagonist of political nationalism,⁵¹ founded in Bucharest the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee (BRCK), whose primary aim was to prepare for revolutionary action in the Turko-occupied Bulgarian lands.⁵² Levski entered Bulgaria so as to put this plan into action. Despite tensions and disagreements about the ideological identity, the control, and the best method for the realization of their design, the BRCK continued to be active until the end of 1872, when it was uncovered by the Ottoman authorities. Levski was arrested, due to being betrayed and later executed, while Karavelov evaded capture by fleeing and hiding for a short period in Belgrade. In the meantime the Committee dissolved and the revolutionary plan fell through.⁵³

One more leading figure belonging to the circle of the supporters of political nationalism was Hristo Botev.⁵⁴ Initially, he was one of Karavelov's close associates but they fell out over both ideological and personal reasons. When the turn of events led to Karavelov being marginalized, Botev became one of the new leaders of the BRCK, taking on the task of rekindling the revolutionary spark of their fellow countrymen which had all but gone out.⁵⁵ Although the newly reorganized *Committee* managed to instigate a small-scale revolutionary mobilization in the Bulgarian territories at the

48 Zaharia, *Lyuben Karavelov*, op. cit., pp. 164-199.

49 Arnaudov, *Lyuben Karavelov*, op. cit., pp. 519-543.

50 M. Dimitrov (ed), *Publicistikata na Lyuben Karavelov* (The Published Works of Lyuben Karavelov), Sofia 1957, pp. 457-461 & 655-657.

51 M. Macdermott, *The Apostle of Freedom. A Portrait of Vasil Levsky against a background of nineteenth century Bulgaria*, London 1967; I. Undzhiev, *Vasil Levski. Biografija* (Vasil Levski. A Biography), Sofia 1993.

52 A. Burmov, *Lyuben Karavelov i Sazdavaneto na Balgarskija Revoljucionen Centralen Komitet v Bukuresht* (Lyuben Karavelov and the Founding of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee in Bucharest), *Izbrani Proizvedenija v tri toma*, Tom Vtori, Sofia 1974, pp. 219-236.

53 Arnaudov, *Lyuben Karavelov*, op. cit., pp. 354-395; I. Undzhiev, *Vasil Levski*, op. cit., p. 295 ff.

54 A. Burmov, *Hristo Botev i Negovata Cheta* (Hristo Botev and his Cheta), Sofia 1974; I. Undzhiev, Cv. Undzhieva, *Hristo Botev. Zhivot i Delo* (Hristo Botev. His Life and Work), Sofia 1975; N. Zhechev, *Hristo Botjov. Letopis za Zhivota i Dejnosta mu 1847/8-1876* (Hristo Botev. A Chronicle of his Life and Action 1847/8-1876), Sofia 1997.

55 Arnaudov, *Lyuben Karavelov*, op. cit., pp. 443-480.

onset of the Balkan crisis in 1875, the failed offensive led to Botev's resignation and the dissolution of the BRCK a little later.⁵⁶

The insurrection known as the *April Uprising* of 1876, during which Botev lost his life, was the undertaking of a new *Revolutionary Committee*, organized in the Romanian town of Giurgiu at the end of 1875.⁵⁷ Although the attempt was unsuccessful, the Bulgarians gained European support in the form of a public outcry against the brutal atrocities committed by the Ottoman troops in their suppression of the uprising.⁵⁸

Within the context of political nationalism there is also another faction, which was against revolutionary activities and wished to attain an autonomous state on a more "peaceful" basis through legitimate political means. This prospect was coordinated through the *Bulgarian Secret Central Committee*, which was introduced in 1866 in Bucharest, with the instigation of the Liberal Romanians who had played a leading role in forcing the country's first prince, Alexandru Cuza, to abdicate.⁵⁹ More specifically, having realized that their newly established state was in a difficult position, both internationally and with the High Porte, the Romanians approached members of the Bulgarian diaspora, convincing them to initiate nationalist revolt in the Bulgarian provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Their intention was to create a diversion to remove emphasis from their situation. The collaboration was to be ratified with an agreement called a *Holy Alliance between the Bulgarians and the Romanians (Cveshtena Koalicia)*, which in the end did not eventuate because the Romanians, having ironed out their differences with the Ottomans, promptly withdrew their support.⁶⁰ Under these new conditions, the *Bulgarian Secret Central Committee* was re-formed with its main aim being:

*"the liberation of the homeland in any way and by any means, that is to say, through the creation of an autonomous Bulgarian Kingdom as a vassal state under the Porte, or as a federation (union) with the neighboring peoples."*⁶¹

56 K. Kosev, N. Zhechev, D. Dojnov, *Istorija na Aprilskoto Vastanie 1876 (The History of the April Uprising 1876)*, Sofia 2006, pp. 138-202.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 202 ff.

58 W. E. Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*, London 1876; K. Vazvazova-Karateodorova, *Balgarskijat i Chuzhdijat Periodichen Pechat ot 1876 g. i Aprilskoto Vastanie (The Bulgarian and Foreign Press in the Year 1876 and the April Uprising)*, *Aprilskoto Vastanie 1876-1966*, Sofia 1966, pp.181-201; Kosev, Zhechev, Dojnov, *Istorija na Aprilskoto Vastanie*, op. cit., pp. 441-464.

59 A. Burmov, *Taen Centralen Balgarski Komitet (Obrazubane i parvi period ot razvitiето mu)*» (The Secret Bulgarian Committee. Its first period and its development), *Izbrani Proizvedenija v tri toma*, Tom Vtori, Sofia 1974, pp. 58-81.

60 G. Jakimov, *Pantelej Kisimov. Zhivot i Dejnost (Pantelej Kisimov. His Life and Action)*, Sofia 2003, pp. 147-175; Dr. I. Kasabov, *Moite Spomeni ot Vazrazhdaneto na Balgarija s Revoljucioni Idei (My Memories of the Revival of Bulgaria and Revolutionary Ideas)*, Sofia 2009, p. 45 ff.

61 Kasabov, *Moite Spomeni*, op. cit., p. 60.

The pinnacle of the Committee's political action was the *Report* submitted to the Sultan in 1867, compiled by Pantelej Kisimov, which proposed the restructuring of the Ottoman Empire into a Turko-Bulgarian dual monarchy.⁶² In more detail, political and ecclesiastical autonomy would be conceded to the Bulgarians. Politically, all the Bulgarian provinces would form a separate entity under the name *Bulgarian Kingdom* to be administrated by a Christian Commissioner elected by a Bulgarian Constitutional Assembly and appointed by the Sultan, who would also be named Tsar of the Bulgarians. The *Bulgarian Kingdom* would be self-governing in its internal affairs but would pay an annual levy to the empire. The ecclesiastical issue, on the other hand, would be resolved with the declaration of the autocephalous *Bulgarian Orthodox Church*.⁶³

As was highlighted at the beginning, even though the majority of the Bulgarians of the diaspora agreed in principle with the adoption of revolutionary tactics, they were not able to map out a coordinated course of action. A clear indication of this is that in Bucharest, during the period 1860-1875 there were numerous active organizations with similar but not identical perceptions and objectives. The conservatives, who from 1862 had already set up the *Benevolent Society (Dobrodetelna Druzhdina)*, were under the direct influence of Russian politics, and although they were not opposed to armed struggle, it was only on the condition that there was Russian consent and protection. Under Russian direction, in fact, in 1866-1867 they made contact with Serbian diplomats, with the object of drawing up a revolutionary plan whose chief objective was the creation of a Serbo-Bulgarian state under the leadership of the Obrenovices.⁶⁴

On the other hand, various factions formed among the circles of the Liberals, who having a pro-western disposition, kept their distance from Russia. Apart from Rakovski's group, which constituted the *Higher National Bulgarian Secret Political Leadership (Varhovno Narodno Balgarsko Tajno Grazhdansko Nachalstvo)* with a clearly revolutionary orientation,⁶⁵ there was also the establishment in 1866 of the previously mentioned *Bulgarian Secret Central Committee*, which was in direct collaboration with the Romanians. Although initially its foremost objective was the preparation for armed rebellion, its conservative wing chose to change tactics and follow the legal road for their claims. This led to a split as the disgruntled radical members left to return

62 A. Burmov, Taen Centralen Balgarski Komitet (Vtori period ot Sashtestvuvaneto mu) (The Secret Central Bulgarian Committee. Its second Period), *Izbrani Proizvedenija v tri toma*, Tom Vtori, Sofia 1974, pp. 82-106; G. Jakimov, *Pantelej Kisimov*, op. cit., pp. 175-204.

63 P. Kisimov, *Istoricheski Raboti. Moite Spomeni. Chast III. Istorija s Dokumenti i Pisma (Historical Works. My Memoirs. Part III. Historical Documents and Letters)*, Sofia 1901 pp. 47-58; Kasabov, *Moite Spomeni*, op. cit., pp. 73-82.

64 Kosev, Zhechev, Dojnov, *Istorija na Aprilskoto Vastanie*, op. cit., p. 112.

65 *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114.

to their stance of revolutionary action.⁶⁶ Lastly, in 1870 the *Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee* under Karavelov and Levski became the most important vehicle for revolutionary ideology and praxis.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. The term Bulgarian nationalism refers to the sum of the multifarious individual and collective actions whose objective was, on the one hand, to raise, spread, and consolidate Bulgarian national consciousness, and on the other, to claim the rights that were the Bulgarians' due in accordance with the dictates of national ideology; in a nutshell, to gain ecclesiastical and political independence.
2. The Bulgarian national movement can be defined in general terms as cultural, ecclesiastical, and political nationalism. These, of course, are merely distinctions of the three different routes that Bulgarian nationalist expression took from an initial ideological starting point. In many cases, not only were they interconnected but they also shared the same protagonists. A characteristic example is Georgi Rakovski who through his historical, folkloric, linguistic and ethnological writings promoted the national identity of the Bulgarian people, at the same time, being a leading instigator of revolutionary action.
3. Each one of these three "nationalist routes" are characterized by multi-formity: (i) Cultural nationalism, which chronologically preceded and continued well after the expression of the other two more dynamic forms of national struggle, comprised their ideological foundation and driving force. It dealt with the individual choices and personal preferences of its prime movers, such as, the fields of education, linguistics etc., as well as the formulation of views, e.g. relating to the origins of the Bulgarian people. (ii) Ecclesiastical nationalism, formulated from the decade of the 1840s, manifested conflicting opinions mainly as to the method of achieving the desired goal. The moderates preferred the path of consensus through the process of negotiations with the Patriarchate, whereas the radicals wanted to break with the official Church leadership, in favor of intervention by the Ottoman rulers. There was also a small but nevertheless significant group which chose to leave Orthodoxy all together and join the Uniate Church. Lastly, (iii) Political nationalism, which made its appearance mainly after 1860, had on the one hand, the revolutionary activists who supported armed resistance, and on the other, those who believed in the non-violent means of transforming the Ottoman Empire into a Turko-Bulgarian dual monarchy.

⁶⁶ Kasabov, *Moite Spomeni*, op. cit., p. 82 ff.; G. Jakimov, *Pantelej Kisimov*, op. cit., p. 185.

4. The term 'movement', literally speaking, should only be used to refer to the demand for ecclesiastical independence, since only in this respect was there mass mobilization of the majority of the Bulgarian communities by a central leadership. In contrast, the elements of central coordination and mass movement were absent from both the cultural and political expressions of the Revival.
5. In the course of the Bulgarian national movement two distinct nationalist centers emerged with different priorities. More specifically, on the one hand, were the nationalists of the diaspora who supported a political approach to independence, and on the other, were the leaders of the Bulgarian community of Constantinople, in the heart of the Ottoman Empire, whose main aspiration was ecclesiastical emancipation from the Patriarchate.
6. The ecclesiastical character of the Bulgarian National movement seems to be contradictory to the principles that instigated it. Nationalism was a phenomenon of modernization, having its roots in the new ideas of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, which contested the authority of the Church, giving emphasis to a secular worldview. In the case of the Bulgarians, one main route of the national movement was expressed in the form of ecclesiastical emancipation, that is, using as a vehicle a traditional (conservative) institution. This paradox is, perhaps, the most distinguishing feature of Bulgarian nationalism.