

La Macédoine, Recueil de documents et matériaux, Sofia, éd. BAN (Institut d'histoire. Institut de langue bulgare), 1980, pp. 893.

In 1978 the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences produced a Bulgarian and an English edition of a weighty tome of documents relating to the general area of greater Macedonia from the time of the Slavs' invasion there (VIth century) up until the Second World War. A French edition was published in 1980, essentially unchanged apart from certain omissions regarding the identity of some of the documents and in the explanatory notes.

The book comprises a collection of historical material of all kinds, a total of 452 extracts from documents and texts dealing with the political, economic and cultural life of the Slavo-Bulgarians in various parts of Macedonia. The material is divided, in strict chronological order, into four lengthy chapters:

I. *VIth century - 1762* (pp. 19-113, 71 extracts). This first part covers the medieval and Ottoman periods, beginning in the VIth century with the Slavs' establishment in the Balkans and ending at the dawn of the Bulgarian national awakening (*Văzraždane*). The 71 extracts in this section basically concern Bulgarian presence and activity in various parts of Macedonia. The chief sources for the earlier period are Byzantine - ecclesiastical texts, lives of saints, chronicles and historical texts, referring to the Bulgarians' establishment in the Balkans and their struggles to strengthen their position on Byzantine territory in Macedonia. Byzantine writers provide increasing information about the Bulgarians after the latter embraced Christianity (second half of the IXth century) and particularly from the XIth century onward. For the later period extracts are used from works by western European historians and travellers (Fucher, Wilhelm de Tyr et al.), who were familiar with the region, extracts from the works of Turkish travellers (Haji Kalfa, Evliya Chelebi, et al.), one extract from a register in Zo-graphou Monastery giving the names of the Monastery's financial benefactors from various parts of Macedonia, excerpts from books etc.

II. *Period of National Awakening 1762-1878* (pp. 115-359, 170 extracts). This period begins with the writing of the «Slavo-Bulgarian History» by Pajsij Hilendarski in 1762 and ends with the Berlin Treaty of 1878 and covers the Bulgarians' national awakening and their struggle for a national Church and educational system. A large number of the extracts in this section are from the personal correspondence and the works of eminent Bulgarians who were active on behalf of the Bulga-

rian ecclesiastical, political and educational Renaissance, principally in the north and also in the central belt of Macedonia: amongst these notable men were the brothers Dimităr and Konstantin Miladinov, R. Žiznifov, K. Šapkarev and Gr. Pārličev. Another large part of the material in this section comprises journalistic reports in the Bulgarian and Serbian press of the time (including quite a large number of letters written by Bulgarians and providing information about events and people in their own areas). There are also documents from the Russian archives, chiefly consular reports from the Russian consuls in Monastir (Bitola), excerpts from Russian, Bulgarian and Serbian books, registers of the names of Bulgaro-Macedonian students in Moscow and Odessa, petitions to the sultan from members of Bulgarian communities from Macedonia.

III. *Struggles for national liberation: 1878-1918* (pp. 361-673, 143 extracts). This third part covers the period from the Berlin Conference in 1878 to the end of the First World War. It contains a multitude of documents, as well as press reports and letters from Bulgarians from various communities, chiefly in northern Macedonia; the subjects covered are the Bulgarians' reactions to the provisions of the Berlin Treaty, the Kresna - Razlog uprising, resistance to «Macedonism», which was Serbia's attempt in 1885 to make the whole population Serbian, the establishment and activities of IMRO and IMARO, the Ilinden uprising and the reaction of the Bulgarian organizations to the Young-Turk Revolution.

A wealth of journalistic material is included, but this section comprises mainly documents from the Bulgarian revolutionary organisations.

IV. *Macedonia during the inter-war years* (pp. 675-860, 69 extracts). This section of the book is of particular interest in that it ceases to regard Macedonia as part of the Ottoman Empire and refers to the area as Greek and Serbian Macedonia. Journalistic reports, excerpts from books, protests and reports from Bulgarian organisations (IMRO) etc. endeavour to prove that the Greek and Serbian authorities applied pressure to the Bulgarians remaining in Macedonia after the exchange of populations, with the intent of bringing about their assimilation. It should be noted that some of the documents published here were purloined from the Bulgarian fascist authorities occupying Greek Macedonia during the Second World War (p. 847, doc. 67; p. 843, doc. 65; p. 840, doc. 63; p. 836, doc. 61).

The book begins with an eleven-page foreword (pp. 5-15) which makes a clear and straightforward statement of the present Bulgarian position on the Macedonian question. At the end of the book there is an index of personal names, newspapers and periodicals (pp. 851-871) and an index of geographical names (pp. 872-893).

The division of the material according to historical periods follows the general lines of the chronological divisions of Bulgarian history, though it deals exclusively with the Macedonian aspect. The main aim of the book is to lay the foundations for the view that from the time it first appeared in Macedonia the Slav element was and is essentially Bulgarian and directly refutes the well-known position of the Federal Republic of Macedonia concerning the existence of the «Macedonian Nationality». Nowhere in any of the sources is there any mention of a «Macedonian» Slav people, and the term Macedonia has a purely geographical significance. In recent times some of the chief exponents of «Macedonism», such as Goče Delčev (doc. 52, p. 430; doc. 58, p. 444), Kr. Miširkov (doc. 32, pp. 744-746) and Dimităr Vlahov (doc. 60, pp. 846-849), have referred in their writings to their own Bulgarian national consciousness.

It must be emphasised here that this book makes an useful collection and presentation of a rich volume of material, much of it little known and hitherto inaccessible. However, one must not lose sight of the fact that the very nature of the collection — i.e. a rich but nevertheless selective presentation of documents considered from a specific viewpoint — necessarily limits its significance. The book would be more effective without the foreword, in which general conclusions and opinions are drawn and maintained on the basis of the fragmentary documents and the inadequate evidence in the main body of the work. In order to support these conclusions satisfactorily, all the conflicting views and all the other sources would have to be cited and a critical commentary provided. The book has no such lofty ambitions and consequently its authority is somewhat impaired by such conclusions in the foreword as that, for example, encountered on p. 13, where it is noted that «Les documents de la période des années 30 prouvent à l'évidence que sous le pouvoir serbe et grec et jusqu'à la Seconde Guerre mondiale, les Bulgares de Macédoine restent la principale population autochtone...». We cannot apprehend what is the meaning of the word *autochtone*!

The following review points out some of the book's weaknesses, on the basis of the conclusions reached and stated in the foreword.

a) The documents differ widely in character and the value of the evidence they provide varies considerably: Byzantine sources, Old Slavonic texts and archive material are presented alongside press reports, personal correspondence, extracts from book etc. All this material is massed together and divided up into chronological order without the least critical evaluation, so that all the historical evidence it contains is presented as if it were of equal importance.

b) Different interpretations are frequently put upon geographical or administrative terms. For instance, with no mention of the fact that for Byzantine writers the term Bulgaria was often of purely geographical significance within the context of the Byzantine state, the term is used here in a purely ethnological sense. In doc. 55, p. 88, for example, mention is made of Gregory, Archbishop of Ochrid and All Bulgaria, whose signature is to be found on documents from the XVth century. The use of the title «and All Bulgaria» alone is the justification for including the document. However, the archiepiscopate of Ochrid owed its second title, «and All Bulgaria» to the brief existence of Samuel's Bulgarian state and to the Byzantine bureaucracy which had retained it ever since an edict of Basil the Bulgarslayer. C. J. Jireček¹, notes that Ochrid was a bastion of Hellenism from the XIIth century onwards.

Let it also be noted that when Neofit, the Metropolitan of Serres, wrote on October 18, 1878 that two-fifths of the population of the district of Serres were Slavophone, he certainly did not mean that they were Bulgarian, as the title to his letter in the book implies (no. 129, p. 276-278). It is obvious the language is not the prime determining factor of a people's national identity, which is a well-known fact in that particular area as his text expressly indicates and especially in border areas where there are always bilingual.

It must be pointed out that in the English edition of 1978 all the towns of Macedonia are referred to only by their Slavonic version of names (Solun, Lerin, Kostur, Sjar, etc.)—even with regard to the period when they were already part of the Greek state (1913 onwards). In the French edition the situation is somewhat different: Thessalo-

1. C. J. Jireček, *Geschichte des Bulgaren*, 1876, p. 211. Gelzer, *Byzantinischen Zeitschrift*, 1893, p. 42-43. Concerning the activities of the Greek community in the Archbishopry of Ohrid, see S. Varnalidis, 'Ο ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ζωσιμάς (1686-1746) καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησιαστικὴ καὶ πολιτικὴ δράσις αὐτοῦ, (The Archbishop Zosimas (1686-1746) and his ecclesiastical and political activities), Thessaloniki, 1974.

niki appears throughout as Salonique or Thessalonique, whereas the towns of Florina and Kastoria are still referred to as Lerin and Kostur.

c) Certain testimonies are of such a kind that their value as evidence is limited and the significance of the information they provide is therefore greatly reduced; by such testimonies we mean the reports by Bulgarian newspaper correspondents and other journalistic information furnished by Bulgarians (doc. 16, pp. 710-712; doc. 19, p. 715-717; doc. 20, pp. 718-720; doc. 21, p. 721; doc. 24, pp. 725-729; doc. 30, pp. 736-741; doc. 33, pp. 746-747; doc. 36, p. 351; doc. 39, p. 763; doc. 48, pp. 793-795). We may also include exclusively Bulgarian documents and petitions which are given without signatures or without stating the number of petitioners (cf. doc. 85, pp. 229-230; doc. 84, p. 229) extracts from Bulgarian books containing general and unproven assertions and statistics with no accompanying comparison with contemporary opinions and figures (cf. doc. 40, p. 411) and official and unofficial texts written by organizations under Bulgarian control (IV-doc. 1, pp. 661-662; doc. 3, pp. 668-671; doc. 5, pp. 674-676; doc. 6, pp. 676-684; doc. 7, pp. 684-691; doc. 10, pp. 695-696; doc. 13, pp. 701-707; doc. 17, pp. 712-714; doc. 34, pp. 747-748; doc. 37, pp. 752-754; doc. 38, pp. 755-762; doc. 51, pp. 798-805; doc. 55, pp. 816-819; doc. 56, pp. 819-822), representatives of Bulgarian political parties (IV - doc. 11, pp. 696-698).

d) There are numerous barbs directed against Hellenism and in particular against the Greek clergy and the Patriarchate (doc. 28, p. 152; doc. 38, p. 162; doc. 40, p. 168; doc. 53, p. 183). A closer scrutiny of these same documents, however, might present a somewhat different picture: let us use document no. 16, pp. 141-142 as an example, which is a letter of thanks from the notables of Bačno to Al. Exarh for sending aid. It is mentioned that the aid was given through Auxentius, Bishop of Belessa, who was a Patriarchist and whose activities were anything but anti-Bulgarian. It should, by the way, be noted that in what is nowadays Greek Macedonia no exarchal episcopacy was ever established. As far as the period of the Bulgarian Renaissance is concerned, which is principally taken up with documents regarding education and the ecclesiastical question, it must be emphasised that, directly or indirectly, the dominance of Greek education in this area is made quite obvious by the documents themselves.

For an indication of this, cf. the report submitted by the Russian consul in Monastir (dated 23rd January, 1870), in which he himself points out that Bulgarian educational propaganda had had little effect,

since the Slavophone element wrote Greek and attended Greek schools. Moreover, the Bulgarian communities in Monastir and Thessaloniki were in no position in 1875 to maintain even one school, despite the Exarchy's subsidies and the free education which was offered (doc. 152, p. 315), whereas the vast majority of pupils, as we know, attended the Greek schools, which were flourishing. In north-east Macedonia the Bulgarian schools were quite undeveloped up until 1885². Greek education made a great contribution to the Bulgarian Renaissance, since all the leading lights of this renaissance had, without exception, been nurtured on it and frequently expressed themselves much better in Greek than in Bulgarian. And this is why it is out of place in this day and age to insist on re-publishing views which may have been perfectly well justified in their time, considering the negative aspects of the Greek educational system and the Greek Church, but which have long been considered exaggerated³ and are now being re-examined in a new light.

e) The editors of the book have selected their sources, isolating certain excerpts and details which advance Bulgarian views. Since, however, they are not published in a purely scientific way — accompanied, that is, by references to other, frequently more numerous and better known, testimonies and sources of evidence — they can lead the uninformed reader to hasty conclusions and erroneous impressions. Isolated from their contemporary, local and ethnological context, without vital objective criticism, the extracts from Byzantine texts are selected to give the impression that Macedonia was dominated by the Bulgarian element and that other nationalities were limited in number, if not quite unrepresented. But there is no question about the fact that the Greek element was very much present in Macedonia; more numerous and dynamic than the Bulgarians, the Greeks left their mark on the

2. For details concerning the Greek educational activities in Macedonia, see St. Papadopoulos, *Εκπαιδευτική και κοινωνική δραστηριότητα του ελληνισμού της Μακεδονίας κατά τον τελευταίο αιώνα της Τουρκοκρατίας* (Educational and social activities of the Greeks in Macedonia during the last century of Turkish occupation), Thessaloniki, ΕΜΣ, 1970. For the Bulgarian cultural presence in Macedonia, see among other publications, 'Α. Α. Ταχιάος, *Η εθνική αφύπνισις των Βουλγάρων και η εμφάνισις της βουλγαρικής εθνικής κινήσεως εν Μακεδονία* (The national awakening of the Bulgarians and the appearance of the Bulgarian national movement in Macedonia), Thessaloniki, ΕΜΣ, 1974.

3. J. Ivanov, «Grăcko-bălgarski otnošenija predi cărkovnata borba» (Greco-bulgarian relations before the ecclesiastical controversy), in *Sbornik v čest na prof. L. Miletič*, Sofia, 1912, p. 163-164.

whole Byzantine period, both politically and intellectually. The extracts from Old Slavonic texts quoted here also move in the same sort of direction.

A typical example is the excerpt from the Old Slavonic *Life of Cyril*, written in the XIIth century (doc. 30, p. 64) in which reference is made to the Bulgarian origin of the man who brought enlightenment to the Slavs; the views of eminent slavists, both westerners and Slavs themselves, are ignored (F. Dvornik, B. Gaffenauer, Aug. Leskin, A.-E. Tachiaos), though they have used earlier sources, both Byzantine and Old Bulgarian, to demonstrate that the two brothers Cyril and Methodius were unquestionably Greek. Through some of the extracts from Turkish sources (docs. 62, 63, 64, 65, pp. 105-107) Macedonian towns and communities are presented as being purely Bulgarian, which during the Turkish occupation kept their Greek character very much alive — Edessa, Kastoria, Florina, Monastir, among many others. An excerpt from the Travelogue of Evliya Chelebi is included in the book in this connection; elsewhere, however, he speaks plainly of the dynamic Greek element in these areas⁴.

The documents published for the period 1918-1940 reflect the attitude of the Bulgarians and their great hopes and disillusionments. Their purpose is using linguistic argument to demonstrate that the Slavs living in Macedonia were indeed their brothers. The published material continue to refer and describe the oppression and discrimination to which the Bulgarians in Greek Macedonia were allegedly subjected by the Greek authorities. The editors wish to convince the people that in the period between the two World Wars the population of Greek Macedonians remained primarily Bulgarian in spite of Greek suppressions and terror. And this was accomplished, as stated, without any propaganda or influence from outside, but was the logical result of the historical development throughout the centuries (Doc. 20, p. 718-720, Doc. 41, p. 766-778, Doc. 43, p. 780-782, Doc. 47, p. 788-793).

The documents, however, do not make any reference to the fact that exchanges of population between Greece and Bulgaria and Turkey had made Greek Macedonia a homogeneous region. The treaty of Neuilly, which ended the state of war between Bulgaria and her adversaries, provided for the voluntary exchange of minorities between Greece and

4. See V. Dimitriadis, *Ἡ κεντρικὴ καὶ δυτικὴ Μακεδονία κατὰ τὸν Ἑβλιγιὰ Τσελεμπή* (Central and Western Macedonia according to Evlija Tselembi), Thessaloniki, 1973, pp. 163, 176, 272 et passim.

Bulgaria. Approximately 30.000 Greeks left Bulgaria while 53.000 Bulgarians departed Greece. To these figures one should add 16.000 Greeks and 39.000 Bulgarians who had fled to their respective homelands during the war⁵.

According to the statistics of the League of Nations, the ethnological composition of Greek Macedonia in 1926 was as follows:

Greeks	1.341.000	88,8%
Moslems	2.000	0,1%
Bulgarians	77.000	5,1%
Various	91.000	6,0%

The same source shows that in 1912 the Greek, comprised the 42,6% of the population (513.000) and the Bulgarians 9,9% (119.000)⁶.

The official Greek census of 1928 corroborating the findings of the League of Nations showed that out of a population of 6.032.761, there were only 81.984 Slavophones⁷.

The majority of these slavophones lived in Western Macedonia. Greece classified them officially as Greeks who spoke a Slavonic dialect and refused to place them under the minority treaties of the League of Nations. As a large number of them had a Bulgarian consciousness, they had not emigrated to Bulgaria, as they could, but remained in Western Macedonia, either from pressure exerted by the I.M.R.O., the natural attachment of the peasant to his land, or the attitude of certain Greek Macedonian politicians who, in the hope of winning Slavophones votes, prevented their emigration to Bulgaria⁸.

For the period preceeding WWII an attempt is made by the editors to indicate that in spite of the fact that the Bulgarians living in Greece were subjected to suppression and terror their national consciousness and aspirations were not altered, since the population of Greek Macedonia was basically Bulgarian. The documents, however, used do not have any demonstrative proof, they are simply memoranda

5. Stephen Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey*, New York 1932, p. 105.

6. League of Nations, *Greek Refugee Settlement*, Geneva 1926, as quoted in E. Kofos, *Nationalism and Communism in Macedonia*, Thessaloniki 1964, pp. 47 and 83.

7. *Annuaire Statistique de la Grèce*, Athens 1928.

8. Kofos, *Nationalism and Communism in Macedonia*, p. 48.

of Bulgarian organization from abroad (no. 64, p. 841-843, no. 66, p. 844-847). Moreover the use by the editors of official Greek documents (no. 61, p. 837-838, no. 63, p. 840, no. 65, p. 843-844, no. 67, p. 847), which were taken by the Bulgarian forces during WWII when parts of Macedonia were under fascist Bulgarian occupation, do not in any way support the Bulgarian allegations.

In the documents presented nothing is mentioned of the fact that as was the case in the First World War, it was the Axis promise of restoring the frontiers of Great Bulgaria, including all of Macedonia and Western Thrace, that inevitably led the expansionist Bulgarian government into its Axis partnership.

During the War, in 1941, Eastern Macedonia and Western Thrace came under Bulgarian occupation and the Bulgarians started a policy of suppression and Bulgarianization of the Greek population. Illustrative of the policy of suppression followed by the Bulgarians in this area is an American report of Burton Berry, second Secretary of the Rome Embassy who had visited Greece in October 1941, in which is stated: «... in the villages of Eastern Macedonia the Bulgars indulged in wholesale arrests, deportations and murder. The massacre was so ruthlessly staged and the destruction of property so callously carried out, that a German Commanding Officer at Cavalla privately expressed himself as being horrified... From the time of the occupation of the district the Bulgarian authorities constantly have exerted pressure upon all Greeks to move away when economic or physical pressure on individuals has proven insufficient to maintain the exodus at a desirable rate, the authorities to accelerate the «voluntary» exodus, have resorted to mass arrests, deportations and slaughter...»⁹.

Moreover a report of the Office of Strategic Services of 8 February 1945 states: «... from the moment of the occupation it became clear that the Bulgarians planned to annex permanently the areas under their control. About 90.000 Bulgarian colonists were brought into Thrace and an equal number into Eastern Macedonia, Asia Minor, and the Aegean and Cyclades Islands. Furthermore, the Bulgarian government decreed that all Greeks in the Bulgarian controlled areas would become Bulgarian citizens unless they declared to the contrary before 1 April 1943, in which case they would have to leave «Bulgaria» meaning those part of Greece under Bulgarian occupation. This process of Bulgarianization was halted only by the withdrawal of the Bulgarian occupation

9. DS 868.00 / 1136, Berry to Department of State, Rome, 14 November 1941.

forces in the autumn of 1944...»¹⁰. In spite, however, of this forced bulgarization in eastern Macedonia and western Thrace, it has to be emphasized that the population remained overwhelmingly Greek and this Greek preponderance did not diminish during the Bulgarian occupation of 1941-1944.

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10. DS, Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch, No. 2662, Washington, 8 February 1945, p. 29.