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Patterns of National Identity Development among the Balkan Orthodox Christians during the Nineteenth Century

Abstract: The paper analyses the development of national identities among Balkan Orthodox Christians from the 1780s to 1914. It points to pre-modern political sub-systems in which many Balkan Orthodox peasants lived in the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Serbian and Greek uprisings/revolutions are analysed in the context of the intellectual climate of the Enlightenment. Various modes of penetration of the ideas of the Age of Revolution are analysed as well as the ways in which new concepts influenced proto-national identities of Serbs and Romans/Greeks. The author accepts Hobsbawm's concept of proto-national identities and identifies their ethno-religious identity as the main element of Balkan Christian Orthodox proto-nations. The role of the Orthodox Church in the formation of ethno-religious proto-national identity and in its development into national identity during the nineteenth century is analysed in the cases of Serbs, Romans/Greeks, Vlachs/Romanians and Bulgarians. Three of the four Balkan national movements fully developed their respective national identities through their own ethnic states, and the fourth (Bulgarian) developed partially through its ethnic state. All four analysed identities reached the stage of mass nationalism by the time of the Balkan Wars. By the beginning of the twentieth century, only Macedonian Slavs kept their proto-national ethno-religious identity to a substantial degree. Various analysed patterns indicate that nascent national identities coexisted with fluid and shifting proto-national identities within the same religious background. Occasional supremacy of social over ethnic identities has also been identified. Ethnification of the Orthodox Church, in the period 1831–1872, is viewed as very important for the development of national movements of Balkan Orthodox Christians. A new three-stage model of national identity development among Balkan Orthodox Christians has been proposed. It is based on specific aspects in the development of these nations, including: the insufficient development of capitalist society, the emergence of ethnic states before nationalism developed in three out of four analysed cases, and an inappropriate social structure with a bureaucratic class serving the same role as the middle class had in more developed European nationalisms. The three phases posed three different questions to Balkan Christian Orthodox national activists. Phase 1: Who are we?; Phase 2: What to do with our non-liberated compatriots; and Phase 3: Has the mission of national unification been fulfilled?

Keywords: the Balkans, national identity, proto-nationalism, Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians, Romanians, Macedonian Slavs

In the age of Euro-Atlantic revolutions the question of nationality emerged or re-emerged, depending on the theoretical approach. The concept of pre-modern origins of nations remains a matter of scholarly debate.[1] Yet,

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[1] There are two significant authors defending this position: John A. Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of N. Carolina Press, 1986), and Anthony

even if one does not accept Anthony Smith's *ethnies* or ethnic cores from which modern nations originate, it is difficult to reject the empirical evidence provided by E. J. Hobsbawm for proto-nations from which, or concomitantly with which, modern national identities emerged.[2]

Miroslav Hroch identified seven nation-states in early modern Europe: England, France, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal and the Netherlands. There were also two emerging nations, Germans and Italians and, about 1800, more than twenty "non-dominant ethnic groups".[3] The major objects of academic interest have been the Western nation-states and the national movements of Germans and Italians. South Slavs and Greeks have been covered occasionally. More importantly, theoretical frameworks have been based on Western or Eastern European experience, and the Balkans has been viewed mostly as a sub-variant of Eastern European types of nationalism.[4] The issue of national movements among the South Slavs was addressed in two important historical studies. The earlier, by Ivo Banac, was written before major theories in nationalism studies have been developed and, unsurprisingly, it made the notion of the nation too essential.[5] The best study in Serbo-Croatian on the emergence of Yugoslav nations, therefore, remains *The Creation of Yugoslavia (1790–1918)* by Milorad Ekmečić.[6] Among Greek scholars, an important contribution has been made by the political scientist and historian Paschalis Kitromilides.[7]

John A. Hall has significantly observed: "No single, universal theory of nationalism is possible. As the historical record is diverse so too must be

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D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

[2] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 46–79.

[3] Miroslav Hroch, "National Self-Determination from a Historical Perspective", in Sukumar Periwal, ed., *Notions of Nationalism* (Budapest: CEU Press, 1995), 66.

[4] An exception is Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood. Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), who devotes a chapter to the South Slavs (pp. 124–147) but, failing to consult the relevant body of literature, produces very dubious findings.

[5] Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

[6] Milorad Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije 1790–1918* [The Creation of Yugoslavia], 2 vols. (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1989). A shorter but also very useful analysis along these lines can be found in Dušan T. Bataković, *Yougoslavie. Nations, religions, idéologies* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1994).

[7] Paschalis M. Kitromilides, *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy* (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum Collected Studies Series, 1994); and also his *An Orthodox Commonwealth. Symbolic Legacies and Cultural Encounters in Southeastern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum Collected Studies Series, 2007).

our concepts."[8] In this paper I shall make an attempt to identify some key issues in the process which, in the nineteenth century, transformed proto-national identities of Serbs, Romans/Greeks, Bulgarians and Vlachs/Romanians into modern nations. There were some specific social conditions and some political circumstances that elude most of the suggested categorisations. Consequently, I have attempted to accommodate Hroch's tripartite development of national movements to Balkan cases where proto-national states developed into national states. I have also accepted, as quite suitable for the nineteenth-century Balkans, Hobsbawm's category of proto-nationalism and his core definition of this notion as "the consciousness of belonging or having belonged to a lasting political entity".[9]

The Balkans at the end of the eighteenth and in the nineteenth century

Substantial regional differences, tolerated local peculiarities and quite different positions of various social and religious groups is what characterised the Ottoman Empire; as Wayne Vucinich aptly summarised: "Never a homogenous polity, the Ottoman Empire was an enormous and intricate network of social subsystems."[10] Throughout early modernity, Ottoman towns in the Balkans coexisted with areas of pastoralist life where Neolithic patterns prevailed.

Many pre-modern economic and cultural patterns were present in the Balkans at the end of the eighteenth century. The identity of peasants was mostly quite local since social conditions were such that the Christian peasants in the Balkans lived in relatively small political subsystems. The peasant in highland areas lived in a small clan and felt loyal to his kin. The age of revolutions brought something previously unknown to the Balkans. From being loyal to his visible relatives, one was supposed to become loyal to invisible abstractions such as state and nation. Two ethnic states, Serbian and Greek, emerged in the first three decades of the nineteenth century: the Greek gained independence as early as 1831–1832 and the Serbian gained *de facto* autonomy in 1815, and officially recognised autonomy in 1830. From being members of different subsystems within the Ottoman Empire, by the 1830s the Christian peasants in Serbia and Greece became members of two ethnic states.

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[8] John A. Hall, "Nationalisms, Classified and Explained", in Sukumar Periwal, ed., *Notions of Nationalism* (Budapest: CEU Press, 1995), 8.

[9] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 73.

[10] Wayne Vucinich, "The Nature of Balkan Society under Ottoman Rule", *The Slavic Review* 21:4 (Dec. 1962), 597.

For accepting the abstract categories of the Enlightenment, a decline of clans and family solidarity was a precondition. By the nineteenth century, however, this was the case only among Muslim urban families which, however, could not subscribe to the European spirit of the age due to the secularism and Christian cultural background of the European Enlightenment. Therefore, in the Ottoman Empire, tiny merchant classes and learned individuals, mostly of Greek origin or at least belonging to Greek culture, were a rare subgroup that could have received and accepted the ideas of the Age of Revolution.

In the second half of the eighteenth century there appeared among most Balkan Christians a reverse pre-modern process, which involved the extension of kinship and the revival of the extended family. The process followed two lines. One was present in the western areas of Herzegovina, Montenegro, Northern Albania and the area of Mani in the Peloponnesus, where the extension of kinship took place, while extended families prevailed among the Christians of the rest of the Balkans. Thus, during the period of Ottoman rule an average South Slavic household had ten members, but the number could be as high as one hundred.[11] Private *çiftlik* estates emerged in the Ottoman Balkans in the seventeenth century, mostly along the Black Sea coast and in areas close to the Danube, but also along the river valleys of Greece and Macedonia. They normally covered 20–30 hectares of land and were owned by local Turkish or Albanian military officers. Bulgarian scholar Strashimir Dimitrov has established that only ten percent of the Bulgarian population was under the *çiftlik* regime by the end of the eighteenth century. Therefore, the major land regime, as John Lampe has noted, was the upland village, particularly in the Serbian and Greek lands.[12]

Substantial parts of the Balkans lived in a kind of a Neolithic age until at least the mid-nineteenth century, and some of these Neolithic features survived even later. Traian Stoianovich identified these characteristics as the so-called Earth Culture. "Balkan man, we have observed, was until recently an earth man, like the other man of the world, a product of Neolithic cultures, bound religiously, psychologically, and economically to the soil and space around him." It would be only "in our own time" that an elite culture "would cause a radical transformation, seemingly an obliteration of

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[11] Traian Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds. The First and Last Europe* (Armonk, NY and London: M. E. Sharpe, 1994), 158–164. Its original and much shorter edition is Traian Stoianovich, *A Study in Balkan Civilization* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), 133–137.

[12] John R. Lampe, "Imperial Borderlands or Capitalist Periphery? Redefining Balkan Backwardness, 1520–1914", in Daniel Chirot, ed., *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe: Economics and Politics from the Middle Ages until the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 187–189.

the old Neolithic culture." But, even such a submerged Neolithic culture, Stoianovich believed, "still profoundly conditions the deepest thoughts and feelings of peasants, workers, writers, and thinkers, and of men of action and politics."[13]

Indeed, ancient pagan rituals and conceptions survived in the Balkans and were fully present and obvious to some Western travellers who visited the European Turkey even as late as the beginning of the twentieth century. Noel Brailsford, describing religion among the Macedonian Slavs, noted: "But the real religion of the Balkans is something more deeply-rooted… It is older and more elemental than Christianity itself; more permanent even than the Byzantine rite. It bridges the intervening centuries and links in pious succession the modern peasant to his heathen ancestor, who wore the same costumes and led the same life in the same fields. It is based on a primitive sorrow before the amazing fact of death, which no mystery of the Resurrection has ever softened. It is neither a rite nor a creed, but only that yearning love of the living for the dead which is deeper than any creed."[14] What Brailsford attributed to the early twentieth century Balkanites corresponds to the description, provided by F. de Coulanges, of early Roman religion, in which the cult of the ancestors occupied a key place.[15] In this cult the hearth played an important role and this all makes it a part of a Neolithic culture since it implies the existence of stable habitations. Speaking of religious divisions among the South Slavs in an epoch that he termed "the era of beliefs" (1790–1830), Milorad Ekmečić has noted that members of different churches, in spite of deep divisions among them, "had, in superstition and relics of paganism, a belief that had been common to them. In terms of how strong religious feelings were, superstition was stronger than the official church and its teachings".[16]

At the beginning of the twentieth century the population of Balkan Christians was more than 85 percent rural on average. At the beginning of the nineteenth century rural populations lived in communal joint-families called *zadruga*. It was essentially "a household composed of two or more biological or small families, closely related by blood or adoption, owing its means of production communally, producing and consuming the means of

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[13] Stoianovich, *A Study in Balkan Civilization*.

[14] H. N. Brailsford, *Macedonia. Its Races and Their Future* (London: Methuen & Co., 1906), 75.

[15] Fustel de Coulanges, *The Ancient City. A study on the religion, laws, and institutions of Greece and Rome* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

[16] Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije*, vol. I, 23.

its livelihood jointly, and regulating the control of its property, labour, and livelihood communally."[17]

A semi-nomadic way of life and pastoral economy characterised many Balkan Christians and thus, unsurprisingly, strengthened tribal organisation which survived in the Balkans as late as the nineteenth century and, to an extent, even later in areas like Montenegro, Northern Albania, or the Peloponnesus. Philip Mosely, in an article first published in 1953, was able to find the tribal way of life in pre-1912 Montenegro and in Northern Albania: "Until recent decades, this tribal region probably represented the most ancient social system still extant in Europe." In this area the communal joint-family survived through the nineteenth century and disappeared in the first decades of the twentieth century.[18] As long as there was an independent Montenegro its ruler was viewed as the leader of one tribe and "the tribal way of life remained rather stable".[19]

The identity issue in the Serbian and Greek Revolutions

If one can accept that nationalism creates a modern nation, then it is important to see under which social conditions this process occurred in the Balkans. The task set before the small nationally conscious Balkan élites was a very difficult one. Neolithic peasants were supposed to be turned into nationally conscious citizens proud of their ethno-linguistic heritage. With lowland peasants the task was somewhat easier. Their regional identities and regional narratives were to be fused into one national identity and a single national narrative. Peasants were expected to interiorise two categories that were quite abstract for their worldview: state and nation. Ultimately, they were trapped in conscript armies imbued with the national spirit that by the time of the Balkan Wars had touched substantial parts of the Greek, Serbian, Romanian and Bulgarian peasantry. From the symbolism of earth culture they were supposed to arrive to the point of state and national symbolism. These two symbolisms were separated by millennia, but the national movements in the Balkans had only a century or less to carry out the transformation.

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[17] Philip E. Mosely, "The Peasant Family: the Zadruga, or Communal Joint-Family in the Balkans, and its Recent Evolution", in Robert F. Byrnes, ed., *Communal Families in the Balkans: the Zadruga* (Notre Dame, London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976), 19.

[18] Philip E. Mosely, "The Distribution of the Zadruga within Southeastern Europe", in Robert F. Byrnes, ed., *Communal Families in the Balkans: the Zadruga* (Notre Dame, London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976), 60 and 62.

[19] Ibid.

The structural school in Balkan studies found causes of the Serbian Uprising in a combination of Christian millenarian expectations and unbearable pressure of rebelled Ottoman administrators known as *dahi*s. Millenarian hopes were very present among the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire. The *parousia* or the second coming was expected in the year 7000 of the Byzantine era (1492 AD), and the liberation of Constantinople was predicted to take place after the reign of the first five sultans (the sixth began his reign in 1595), but also on the bicentenary of the fall of Constantinople, in 1653. Later, it was believed that Constantinople would be devastated in 1766 and that it would be a prelude to the *parousia* seven years later.[20] The eclipses of the Sun and Moon in 1804 were a sign to the Christian peasants of the Sanjak of Simendria (better known as the Pashalik of Belgrade) that salvation was very near indeed. Thus, as Traian Stoianovich aptly noticed, the French Revolution was concurrent with the Serbian "Re-volution", and this moving back was based on a deeply rooted chiliast expectation among Serbs and other Balkan Christians as well as Jews in early modernity that a "golden age" would come. Among Serbs, this feeling was especially strong in the second half of the eighteenth century.[21]

For Stoianovich, the First Serbian Uprising (1804–1813) was also the Serbian Revolution, and the subsequent uprisings of the Greeks between 1821 and 1829, and the Bulgarians in 1878, were, for Stoianovich, both "national and social". In Stoianovich's view, during the First Serbian Uprising the Serbian peasant leaders embraced a "new national ideology" which was propagated only in an "embryonic form" by Serbian merchants, officers and intellectuals from the Habsburg Empire.[22]

(a) *The Serbian case*

What certainly inspired the Serbian revolution were two elements: one intellectual, the other political. Although the leaders of the First Serbian Uprising only gradually embraced national ideology, leading intellectuals among the Hungarian Serbs viewed the uprising as a national cause and Serbia as their fatherland from the very inception of the Uprising. Only four months after the beginning of the Uprising the leading figure of the Serbian stream of the Enlightenment Dositej Obradović (1739–1811) wrote to another figure of the Serbian Enlightenment, Pavle Solarić (1779–1821), asking him to mediate in the effort to collect money for the Serbs "who are

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[20] Cyril Mango, "Byzantinism and Romantic Hellenism", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965), 35–36.

[21] Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds*, 169–170.

[22] Ibid., 172 and 174.

now happily fighting for the gens and fatherland".[23] In the twenty years between Dositej's first book, published in a kind of vernacular in 1783, and 1804, when the First Serbian Uprising began, a small but influential stratum of Serbian patriots developed among the Hungarian Serbs. They were the nucleus of the modern Serbian nation. They constituted an intellectual group of Serbian Josephinists who followed the ideas of the Enlightenment. The period 1790–1794 is marked by the emergence of the modern Serbian national feeling among the Serbian intellectuals in Hungary and Austria, a feeling that was not alien to the Serbian merchants all the way from Trieste to the Hungarian lands who financed or supported many books published by this group.

The other element was political. In 1790 a meeting of representatives of the Serbian people and church was summoned (Popular-Ecclesiastical Assembly). This was a part of the privileges that the Serbs in the Habsburg Empire had enjoyed from the time of the Great Migration of Serbs from the Ottoman Empire to the Hungarian part of the Habsburg Empire in 1690. This was the seventh such assembly since 1744, and the purpose of them all was to elect the spiritual head of the Serbian people in Hungary – the archbishop. The Assembly was held in Temišvar/Temesvar (modern Timisoara) in August/September 1790. This was a peculiar gathering, since the leading role was played by members of the Serbian bourgeoisie. The archbishop/metropolitan elected by the Assembly was Bishop of Buda Stefan Stratimirović, an Enlightenment figure himself, and a freemason initiated in 1785 (at the time he was abbot of the Krušedol monastery).[24] A majority of the deputies attending the Assembly supported the request that the Serbs be granted a territory with autonomous rights in the Banat.[25] This

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[23] Dositej Obradović to Pavle Solarić, Trieste, 5/17 June 1804, in *Sabrana dela Dositeja Obradovića*, ed. Mirjana D. Stefanović, vol. 6: *Pesme, pisma, dokumenti* [Collected Works of Dositej Obradović, vol. 6: Poems, letters, documents] (Belgrade: Zadužbina Dositej Obradović, 2008), 68.

[24] Among 39 names in a list of the members of the lodge *Vigilantia* (Ger. *zur Wachsamkeit*) in Osijek (Esseg) in Slavonia from 1785, one can find Stefan Stratimirović, abbot of the Orthodox Krušedol monastery at the time, Stefan Novaković, owner of a printing house in Vienna in 1792–1794 (when he printed 70 Serbian titles), and the Serb Orthodox Bishop of Novi Sad Josif Jovanović Šakabenta. Cf. Strahinja Kostić, "Serbische Freimaurer am Ende des 18. Jahrhuderts und ihre wissenschaftlishe und literarische Tatigkeit", in Eva H. Balazs et al., eds., *Beförderer derAufklärung in Mittel- und Osteuropa* (Berlin: Camen, 1979), 148 and 151.

[25] Aleksandar Forišković, "Politički, pravni i društveni odnosi kod Srba u Habsburškoj monarhiji" [Political, Legal and Social Relations among Serbs in the Habsburg Empire], in *Istorija srpskog naroda* [History of Serbian People], vol. IV-1 (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1994), 277–279.

was the earliest nucleus of the modern idea of Serbian statehood and it was initiated by the already influential bourgeois class among the Hungarian Serbs.

At exactly the same time when the Temišvar Assembly was held, Serbia found herself under Austrian rule for the second time in the eighteenth century. It was in this period, when the Serbs in Hungary enjoyed a cultural renaissance, that it became easy to cross the border between the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empire. The Austrians at first supported Serbian volunteers in Serbia against Ottoman authority in 1788, then made their regular army out of them and, finally, launched their own two campaigns in 1789. In the second campaign they took Belgrade. Serbian siding with Habsburg forces and occasional advancements and retreats of Ottoman forces compelled many Serbs to flee across the Danube and the Sava into the Banat and Srem in 1788. It is possible that as many as 80,000 to 100,000 Serbs escaped to Austrian soil.[26] Since Serbia was under Austria, in the course of the following year the refugees were able to return. All of this enabled communication between the Serbs on the two sides of the Sava and Danube rivers, and the Serbs of Serbia could see how far advanced the Hungarian Serbs were. This means that at the time of the Serbian Uprising many people in Serbia had already had firsthand experience of how people lived in a European country and this facilitated the task that the Serbs of southern Hungary who joined the Uprising set themselves: to create a new Europeanised Serbian élite. Opening the leading educational institution of that age in Serbia, the College of Belgrade, on 12 or 13 September 1808, Dositej Obradović said to the students: "You will be the ones who will enlighten our nation and lead it to every goodness, because by the time you will have become the people's headmen, judges and managers, the people's progress, honour and glory will depend on you."[27]

Only the spreading of Enlightenment ideas not only among the Hungarian Serbs but also in the nascent Serbian state at the time of the First Serbian Uprising (1804–1813) may explain the activities of the Hungarian Serb Teodor Filipović (1776–1807), the second doctor of jurisprudence among the Serbs. He arrived in Serbia as early as March 1805. On his way there he changed his Greek first name Teodor to its Serbian equivalent, Božidar, and his family name to Grujović. In September, his draft on the establishing of a governing council was accepted at the insurgents' assembly. Following the French *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, and

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[26] Slavko Gavrilović, "Ka Srpskoj revoluciji" [Towards the Serbian Revolution], in *Istorija srpskog naroda* [History of Serbian People], vol. IV-1 (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1994), 377–379.

[27] *Sabrana dela Dositeja Obradovića*, vol. 5, 177.

under the influence of Rousseau, Grujović prepared the *Word*, a speech that was to be delivered at the inauguration of the supreme state authority in Serbia: the *Word* insisted on law, freedom and security.[28]

It was no coincidence that, three decades later, two achievements almost coincided. In 1832 the first printing house in the Principality of Serbia began operation. In 1833 the first private publisher, Gligorije Vozarović, released six books. Four of them were new editions of Dositej Obradović. In 1834–1836, he published five more books by Obradović.[29] These were the first printed collected works of a Serb. It was exactly in this period that another liberally-minded Hungarian Serb, Dimitrije Davidović, drafted the very liberal but short-lived Constitution of 1835.

A recent lexicon of the Serbian Enlightenment identifies 129 names of Serbian writers in the age of Enlightenment.[30] Even though not all of them were proponents of the Enlightenment, but simply lived and wrote in that era, most were imbued with the spirit of the age in one way or another. Moreover, most of them lived in the Habsburg Empire and thus the Serbian Enlightenment was conceptualised in cities such as Vienna, Buda, Szentendre (Sentandreja), Sremski Karlovci (Karlowitz) or Sombor, but also Venice or Trieste, which had significant Serbian communities of merchants, businessmen, lawyers, teachers, professors etc. Only two of these writers lived all their lives in the Pashalik of Belgrade. When some of them came to Serbia to join the uprising, like Dositej Obradović and Ivan Jugović, they were quite successful in instilling the national spirit into many leading figures of the uprising. Although Hungarian and Austrian in geographic origin, the Serbian Enlightenment had a Balkan impact: its influence on Serbian notables of the Pashalik of Belgrade facilitated the diffusion of the idea of nation and citizen. What makes the Serbian Enlightenment writers very particular is that an influence of the Graecophone Enlightenment existed but was very limited, with Dositej Obradović being a rare exception.

In 1786, Sava Popović Tekelija was the first Serb to defend a doctoral dissertation in jurisprudence. In his dissertation he spoke of Rousseau as

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[28] Danilo N. Basta, "Životni put Božidara Grujovića (Teodora Filipovića)", in Jovica Trkulja & Dragoljub Popović, eds., *Liberalna misao u Srbiji. Prilozi istoriji liberalizma od kraja 18. do sredine 20. veka* (Belgrade: CUPS and Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, 2001), 11–29; Ljubinka Trgovčević, "The Enlightenment and the Beginnings of Modern Serbian Culture", *Balcanica* XXXVII (2007), 106.

[29] Volume 10, containing Obradović's letters, was published in 1845. Cf. *Katalog knjiga na jezicima jugoslovenskih naroda 1519–1867*, ed. Dušica Stošić [Catalogue of Books in Languages of Yugoslav Peoples, 1519–1867] (Belgrade: Narodna biblioteka Srbije, 1973), 281–282.

[30] Mirjana D. Stefanović, *Leksikon srpskog prosvetiteljstva* [Lexicon of the Serbian Enlightenment] (Belgrade: Službeni glasnik, 2009), 261–292.

"celeberrimus nostrae aetatis philosophus" (the most celebrated philosopher of our age) and "vireruditissimus" (the most learned man).[31] The link between the Enlightenment and the First Serbian Uprising is obvious in his case. It was Count Tekelija who published, in Vienna a year after the outbreak of the Serbian Uprising (1805), the *Geographic Map of Serbia, Bosnia, Dubrovnik, Montenegro and Neighbouring Regions* and immediately supplied 500 copies to the leadership of the Serbian Uprising. In 1804, he submitted to the Emperor Napoleon I a proposal to create an Illyrian kingdom which would stretch from the Adriatic to the Black Sea; with its areas united around the Serbs, the new kingdom would have been a barrier against Austria and Russia.[32]

Serbian proponents of the Enlightenment had a major task to replace Russian-Slavic language and corresponding vague Slavic identity that developed among Hungary's ethnic Serbs in the second half of the eighteenth century. They advocated instead either a vernacular or a compromise Serbian-Slavic language very close to vernacular, and encouraged Serbian identity. By doing that successfully between 1783 and 1804 they imbued the Hungarian Serbs with a spirit that prompted many of them to come to Serbia during the First Serbian Uprising.[33]

(b) *The Greek case*

Ideas of the Enlightenment were more deeply rooted in the Greek areas of the Ottoman Empire and within Greek merchant colonies than among the Christian Orthodox Serbs. This was the result of a network of Greek merchants who operated in the eighteenth century. They existed not only in the Balkans but also throughout the Mediterranean and even as far away as the Indian coasts. Greek language was used as language of trade throughout the Balkans. The eighteenth century witnessed the rise of merchants among Christian Orthodox Slavs, especially among Serbs, but also, though to a lesser extent, among Bulgarians. However, Hellenisation affected Bulgarian merchants heavily and also some Serbian merchants by the end of the eighteenth century. Therefore at the beginning of the nineteenth century, on the eve of the Serbian and Greek revolutions, ethnic Greeks or at least

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[31] Tököl, Sabba [Tekelija, Sava], *Dissertatio ivridica de cavsa et fine civitatis* (Pest: Printing House of Joseph Gottfried Lettner, 1786), 13.

[32] Dušan T. Bataković, "A Balkan-Style French Revolution? The 1804 Serbian Uprising in European Perspective", *Balcanica* XXXVI (2006), 118–120.

[33] By 1807 the number of Serbian volunteers from the Military Frontier in the Habsburg Empire who joined the Serbian Uprising rose to 515, cf. Bataković, "A Balkan-Style French Revolution?", 122.

more or less Hellenised Christians with other ethnic backgrounds (Tsint-sar, Serb, Bulgarian or Albanian) were the only Christian merchant class in the Ottoman Empire. This class financed the Graecophone Enlightenment in the same way as the Serbian merchant class supported the Serbophone Enlightenment in Austrian and Hungarian lands. Although they preferred only limited social revolution, merchant classes of both ethnic groups "furnished the leadership" of the Serbian and Greek uprisings.[34]

There is a clear continuity between Greacophone secular writers from the end of the eighteenth century and the development of modern Hellenism throughout the nineteenth century. The rise of publications in Greek in the last quarter of the eighteenth century was substantial, and in the two decades preceding the Greek War of Independence impressive 1,300 titles were published.[35]

In 1989 Paschalis Kitromilides called attention to the polemic between Neophytos Doukas, a figure of the Greek Enlightenment, and Ignatius, archbishop of Wallachia, to support his assumption that the Greek Enlightenment and the Orthodox Church insisted on two different kinds of identities on the eve of the Greek revolution. In 1815, Doukas asked, from Vienna, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Cyril VI (1813–1818), to send one hundred monks from Mount Athos to teach Christian shepherds and non-Greek speakers of the Ottoman Empire Greek. In his worldview, those who spoke Greek constituted one community, and those Christians who spoke other languages constituted other communities. Ignatius had a different opinion: he acknowledged that there were nations (Moldavians, Wallachians, Bulgarians, Serbs, Vlachs of Epirus, Greece and Thessaly, Albanians and the Tsakones of the Peloponnesus) with their own languages, but insisted that "all these people, however, as well as those inhabiting the east, unified by their faith and by the Church, form one body and one nation under the name of Greeks or Romans."[36]

For the ethnic Greeks in the Ottoman Empire, pan-Byzantine consciousness was a very comfortable form of identity. While the ethnic Serbs and Bulgarians preserved memory of their own medieval saints and rulers, the *Rum millet* simply continued to reaffirm an identity that had already existed in the Byzantine Empire. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the term Ἕλληνες, which was going to be developed by both the Kingdom of Hellenes and by mainstream Greek nationalism from the 1830s and

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[34] Traian Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant", *The Journal of Economic History* 20:2 (June 1960), 312.

[35] Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), 25.

[36] Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "'Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans", *The European History Quarterly* 19 (1989), 156–158.

afterwards, referred to the ancient Greeks. Contemporary ethnic Greeks called themselves *Ρωμαίοι* (Rômaioi) – Romans, or *Χριστιανοί* (Hristianoi) – Christians.[37] The main opposition was obviously between Christians and Muslims since Roman/Greek proto-national identity was pan-Byzantine in essence. What the leading figures of the Greek Enlightenment wanted to do was to Hellenise this kind of proto-national identity. Greek authors faced the contempt that the Enlightenment and the late eighteenth century felt for Byzantium, exemplified in Edward Gibbon's six-volume work on the decline and fall of the Roman Empire (published between 1776 and 1778). They also witnessed, only ten years later, what a great success Jean-Jacques Barthélemy made with his five-volume book *The Travels of the Young Anacharsis* (*Voyage du jeune Anacharsis en Grèce*), which lavishly extolled the legacy of Hellas.[38] Therefore, their choice was easy: they embraced ancient traditions with an effort to Hellenise contemporary Greek-Byzantine identity.

Thus the ideas of the leading spirit of the Greek Enlightenment Adamantios Korais (1748–1833; or Koraes in *katharevousa*) were in open conflict with the identity of the vast majority of his compatriots. He was the leading figure of the Greacophone, and perhaps Balkan, Enlightenment as well. He lived in Paris from 1788 until his death. There he became "a self-appointed mentor of emergent Greece".[39] He felt strong dislike for Byzantium. The fourth holder of the Koraes Chair at King's College, Cyril Mango, summarised Korais's messages to his compatriots about their medieval empire and their classical heritage: "Break with Byzantium, cast out the monks, cast out the Byzantine aristocracy of the Phanar. Remember your ancient ancestors. It was they who invented Philosophy."[40] He advocated a middle way in linguistic reform, accepting demotic Greek but in a purist form known as *katharevousa*. The Kingdom of Hellenes established in 1832 followed his advice, but the language was purified "to the point where hardly anyone could write it correctly, much less speak it".[41] As a result, the ethnic Greeks had two concomitant ethnic identities for several decades: one insisting on their Hellenic heritage and the other stemming from the

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[37] Victor Roudometof, "From *Rum Millet* to Greek Nation: Enlightenment, Secularization, and National Identity in Ottoman Balkan Society, 1453–1821", *The Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 16 (1998), 19.

[38] The book saw forty editions and was translated into all major European languages, as well as modern Greek and Armenian. Cf. Mango, "Byzantinism and Romantic Hellenism", 36.

[39] Ibid. 37.

[40] Ibid. 38.

[41] Ibid. 39.

Orthodox Commonwealth and based on pan-Byzantine consciousness. The proponents of the former had their cultural centre in the new capital of the Kingdom of Hellenes, Athens; the advocates of the latter emanated their messages from the seat of the Patriarch at Constantinople.

The Greek rebels from the Greek War of Independence (1821–1829/32) felt themselves as medieval Romans rather than as ancient Athenians. As Hobsbawm observed, "paradoxically they stood for Rome rather than Greece (*romaiosyne*), that is to say they saw themselves as heirs of the Christianized Roman Empire (i.e. Byzantium)."[42] The opposition of the two identities was too harsh and the gap between them seemed unbridgeable.

Programmes of national unification in Greece and Serbia

By 1833 the Kingdom of Greece and the Principality of Serbia were able to gather together only a smaller part of their national communities. Out of some three million Greeks in the Ottoman Empire the Kingdom gathered some 750,000, of whom a vast majority were ethnic Greeks, although some of them were Vlachs and Hellenised Albanians but both groups in the Kingdom by this time felt Greek identity.[43] Describing the Serbian people in *Danica* for 1827, a popular yearbook with a calendar, the Serbian language reformer Vuk St. Karadžić concluded, using linguistic criteria, that there were five million Serbs, of whom approximately three million were "of Greek [Christian Orthodox] faith", around 1.3 million were of "Turkish [Islamic] faith", and the rest were of "Roman [Catholic] faith". He acknowledged that only those of "Greek faith" called themselves Serbs and only one million of them lived "in the whole of Serbia". So, in Karadžić's opinion, two-thirds of those who felt themselves as Serbs lived outside of "the whole of Serbia".[44] Since Karadžić geographically identified the remaining two million Serbs, it was obvious that one million Serbs of Serbia were not just those who lived in the autonomous principality headed by Prince Miloš Obrenović, but also the Serbs living in territories that would be liberated much later. Therefore, his estimation essentially was that less than one quarter of Christian Orthodox Serbs lived in the Serbia of Prince Miloš. In 1833 Serbia re-took six districts that were a part of Karageorge's Serbia during the First Serbian Uprising. In that way she encompassed more than a quarter of all Serbs of Orthodox faith. In both cases, in Greece

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[42] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 77.

[43] Douglas Dakin, *The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821–1833* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), 9.

[44] *Danica. Zabavnik za godinu* 1827, published by Vuk. Stef. Karadžić (Vienna: Printing Works of the Armenian Monastery, 1827), sec. 77–78.

and Serbia, more than two-thirds of their compatriots lived outside of their states in the 1840s.

"What to do with other non-liberated compatriots?" This is the key question of Phase 2 in the development of national identity in the Balkans. The question was responded almost simultaneously in both states by producing programmes of unification. In Greece it became known in 1844 by the name of *Megali idea* – the Great Idea. In debates preceding the adoption of the Greek Constitution of 1844, a leading politician, Ioannis Kolettis, famously said: "The Greek Kingdom is not the whole of Greece, but only a part, the smallest and poorest part."[45] For Serbia, several programmes were designed by the Polish Parisian emigration around Prince Adam Czartoryski in 1843 and 1844. The draft prepared by a Czech agent of Prince Czartoryski, František Zach, is known as *Plan of Slavic Policy*. The last draft based on Polish proposals is the redefined and abridged *Plan of Slavic Policy*. It was made with some or no help of the Serbian politician Ilija Garašanin and was completed by the end of 1844. It is known as the *Draft* or *Načertanije* in Serbian-Slavic idiom. Its final draft was more moderate than the Greek idea: it envisaged only the liberation of ethnic Serbian areas in the Ottoman Empire. The Plan, however, looked more like a design for South-Slavic unity. In the 1840s Serbian identity was still to a certain degree Slav-Serbian identity and that was the name of the idiom used at that time. Therefore there was no opposition between the adjectives Serbian and Slavic and sometimes they were even synonymous. In spite of that, dichotomy between narrower Serbian and larger South-Slavic or Yugoslav unification was to be characteristic of the Serbian national plans until 1918.

The Kingdom of Hellenes, with its Bavarian King Otto who came from neoclassical Munich, was modelled in such a way as to look like a resurrection of Hellas. Yet, the slow pace of modernisation created negative assessments of modern independent Greece as early as the 1840s. The Principality of Serbia had an even bigger identity problem. It was perceived as a semi-Oriental state. Therefore, both countries had difficulty being accepted into the symbolic geography of Europe. Modern Greece had this problem since she was expelled from it in the 1840s, and modern Serbia faced this problem throughout the nineteenth century since her European character was too often disputed in the West. Speaking of defining modern South-Slav cultures as radically different from the Ottoman, Milica Bakić-Hayden was led to conclude: "Thus from the standpoint of identity re-formation we have a contradictory process: on the one hand, a conscious differentiation from the Ottomans as an imposed 'Other' and, on the other,

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[45] Clogg, *Concise History of Greece*, 47.

an attempted identification with the Western Europe."[46] Locals had to use criteria borrowed from the West, from the repository of the Enlightenment and Romanticism. Only after the publication of Gladstone's famous pamphlet *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East* in 1876 could one discern predomination of anti-Ottoman discourses in the Western press. By that time, Greeks and Serbs had been endeavouring for three decades, from the 1840s, to attract Western sympathies, with ambiguous success.

In all Balkan Christian states there was a conscious intellectual and political effort to make them appear more European. It consisted in fusing the liberal ideology with the national idea. This was obvious in Serbia, where the first liberal ideas emerged in 1858. When the first modern political parties were established in Serbia in 1881, two of the three were liberal (the Liberal Party and the Progressive Party). They fused patriotism with political liberalism. The most prominent liberal in Serbia at the time, Vladimir Jovanović (1833–1922), is a typical example of this fusion. In Bulgaria, the liberal stream won the Constitutional Assembly elections in 1879, when the history of modern Bulgarian parties began. In Romania, a liberal stream appeared as early as the 1840s, and the decade 1876–1888 was the decade of liberals: Ion Bratianu (1821–1891) held the office of prime minister almost continuously. Greece was the most complicated case. Although the Kingdom of Greece had almost universal male suffrage as early as 1844, political life revolved around fluid groups dominated by prominent politicians rather than by ideologies. The closest to a liberal party was at first the English Party and later the party of Kharilaos Trikoupis (1832–1896) in the 1870s and 1880s. However, faced with a demagogue opponent, Theodoros Deliyannis (1826–1905), Trikoupis refrained from the fusion characteristic of the other liberal parties in the Balkans and only Eleutherios Venizelos (1864–1936) would be able to fuse liberalism and nationalism in his Liberal Party in 1911.

In Greece, the question "What to do?" was further complicated by the fact that Kolettis made no reference to Byzantium at all, although just one year earlier the first to use the expression *Megali idea*, Alexandros Sutsos, dedicated one verse to the Comnene Empire. The division created by the emergence of a Hellenised identity was overcome by the work of two prominent persons. Spiridon Zambelios published Greek folk songs in 1852. In them, ancient, medieval and modern Greek histories were fused into a

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[46] Milica Bakić-Hayden, "National Memory as Narrative Memory. The Case of Kosovo", in Maria Todorova, ed., *Balkan Identities. Nation and Memory* (London: Hurst and Company, 2004), 32.

discourse of national resistance.[47] Historical narrative was connected by the historian Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos (1815–1891) who published *History of the Greek Nation* in five volumes in 1860–1874. This work connected five periods of Greek history into a continuous narrative: Ancient, Modern, Christian, Byzantine and the period of modern Hellenism. Byzantium and Hellas were reconciled in the most effective way. This impressive piece of scholarship with ideological components of the epoch "supplied psychological and moral reassurance for a society whose national aspirations far exceeded not only its abilities but also – and more seriously – the moral calibre of its political life."[48] How highly esteemed was *History* of Paparrigopoulos in official circles may be seen from the fact that the Parliament of the Hellenes allocated money for the French translation of his *magnum opus* published in 1879.[49]

The second phase in the development of national identity of Serbs was embodied in the work of two exceptional persons. Vuk Karadžić (1787–1864) was alphabet reformer and passionate collector of Serbian folk poetry and epic heritage. Prince-Bishop of Montenegro Petar Petrović Njegoš (1813–1851) was, on the other hand, a man who brought a new meaning to Serbian epic poetry. Vuk Karadžić completed the work of Dositej Obradović and canonised the vernacular of Serbian peasants of south-west Serbia as the literary language. He published two dictionaries of the Serbian language (in one volume in 1818, and a substantially enlarged edition in two volumes in 1852), and a collection of Serbian epic songs, which he called "Serbian heroic songs", in three volumes: two in Leipzig in 1823, and one in Vienna on 1833; and again in Vienna in 1845, 1846 and 1862. The most important of them were the collections published in 1823 and 1845 covering heroic song from the oldest times until "the fall of the Empire and of Serbian nobility". From 1818, he published all his works in a reformed alphabet based entirely on the phonetic principle. In 1847, he published the first translation of the *New Testament* in vernacular.[50] The second edition of

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[47] Victor Roudometof, "Invented Traditions, Symbolic Boundaries, and National Identity in Southeastern Europe: Greece and Serbia in Comparative Historical Perspective (1830–1880)", *East European Quarterly* 32:4 (Winter 1998), 438.

[48] Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "On the Intellectual content of Greek nationalism: Paparrigopoulos, Byzantium and the Great Idea", in David Ricks & Paul Magdalino, eds., *Byzantium and the Modern Greek Identity* (London: Ashgate, 1998).

[49] Roudometof, "Invented Traditions", 440.

[50] The translation of *The New Testament* by Vuk Karadžić was banned in Serbia, but became a standard edition in 1868. A committee of the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church issued a revised edition only in 1984, and again based on Karadžić's translation.

his Dictionary was based on a much wider geographical scope of Serbo-Croat dialects and therefore became a standard dictionary of Serbian language but also, to a certain extent, of what was to be called Serbo-Croatian language after the Second World War.[51] He arranged the signing in March 1850 of the Vienna agreement on common literary language of Serbs and Croats, which facilitated later designs of Yugoslavia. Petar Petrović Njegoš, on the other hand, canonised the local struggle of Montenegrin notables to preserve their Christian and Serbian identity within a larger framework of Serbian history. His epic poem *The Mountain Wreath*, published in 1847, begins with the 1389 Battle of Kosovo and the assassination of the Ottoman sultan by the valiant Serbian hero Miloš Obilić, and it is dedicated "to the memory of Kara George, the father of [restored] Serbia"[52] as the latest incarnation of the spirit of Obilić.

Vuk's legacy was not automatically accepted by the Serbian cultural mainstream. The stratum of educated Serbs from southern Hungary (from 1848 known as Serbian Vojvodovina, today's Vojvodina), which dominated both Serbian culture in Habsburg Hungary and the Serbian bureaucracy in the Principality of Serbia disliked Vuk St. Karadžić for his vernacular, which they found too simple, and also for his new orthography, which was too revolutionary to be accepted. The Serbian Archbishopric of Sremski Karlovci was also against his reforms. A ban on publishing books in the new orthography was in force in the Principality of Serbia from 1832 until 1860, and Vuk's orthography was not officially accepted until 1868. Nonetheless, verses of *The Mountain Wreath* and verses from Vuk's epic (heroic) songs of the Kosovo cycle became obligatory reading for Serbian patriots of the Romantic era as early as the mid-nineteenth century, and by the end of the nineteenth century knowing as many lines of these poems as possible by heart become a matter of good national demeanour.[53]

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[51] Karadžić's *Srpski rječnik* (Serbian Dictionary) of 1852 was replaced only in 1967–1976 with *Rečnik srpskohrvatskoga književnog jezika* [Dictionary of Serbo-Croatian Literary Language], published in Novi Sad in six volumes (the first three volumes were co-edited in Novi Sad and Zagreb). The leading history of the Serbian people assesses the second edition of Vuk Karadžić's dictionary as follows: "It became the foundation of the Serbian literary language and the bible of Serbian philologists." Cf. Pavle Ivić and Jovan Kašić, "O jeziku kod Srba u razdoblju od 1804. do 1878. godine" [On the language among the Serbs from 1804 to 1878"], in *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. V-2 (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1994), 363.

[52] English translation was made by James W. Wiles in 1929: *The Mountain Wreath of Nyegosh Prince-Bishop of Montenegro 1830–1851* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1930).

[53] In 1892, in a bestseller entitled *On Conditions of Success*, intended for the members of the Serbian Youth Trade Association, the prominent Serbian economist, diplomat and

The spirit of both the Serbian heroic songs and *The Mountain Wreath* is clearly imbued with feelings encouraging the struggle for liberation of those Serbian areas that were still under Ottoman domination. Therefore Zambelios, Paparrigopoulos, Karadžić and Njegoš all encouraged an unmistakably clear answer to the question "What to do?" The task of Serbian and Greek patriots in the 1850s and later was to encourage national liberation of their compatriots who still lived under Ottoman domination.

Ethno-religious identity among Balkan Christians in the early modern era

In spite of state-building in the Balkans, and successive efforts to carry out modernisation in nascent states, the main layer of identity in the Balkan Christian States, and also in the parts of the Balkans under Ottoman control, remained ethno-religious until the second half of the nineteenth century. In some areas this kind of identity prevailed even in the first decades of the twentieth century. To understand why this was so, one needs to analyse the nature of the Ottoman political and social system.

The Ottoman administrative system placed various groups under different religiously affiliated jurisdictions. These religious communities were known by a name that was applied to the Orthodox Christians from the nineteenth century – *millet*. The word *millet* comes from Arabic and literally means a nation; in reality millets were confessional "nations" or confessional communities. Each community administered autonomously its own family law and religious affairs. Thus, different ethnic groups belonging to the same religion were under the jurisdiction of the same millet. As soon as the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II conquered Constantinople, he assisted the election of the Orthodox theologian and philosopher Gennadius Scholarius to the position of the Patriarch of Constantinople or Ecumenical Patriarch.

The Bulgarian Patriarchate disappeared with Bulgarian statehood at the end of the fourteenth century, and the Serbian Patriarchate was suppressed after the fall of the Despotate of Serbia in 1459, although details about this are vague. It is not clear if the Serbian Patriarchate was suspended by a single act or gradually. Whatever is the case, the first Ecumenical Patriarch after the fall of Constantinople, Gennadius II (1453–1464), was the head of all Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire and they included not only ethnic Greeks or Romans but also ethnic Bulgarians, Serbs,

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writer Čedomilj Mijatović (1842–1932) recommended the books that every Serbian merchant had to have. They included the Holy Bible (translated by Vuk Karadžić and Djuro Daničić), *Fables* by Dositej Obradović and *The Mountain Wreath* by Petar Petrović Njegoš: Čed. Mijatović, *O uslovima uspeha. Pisma srpskoj trgovačkoj omladini* (Belgrade, 1892), 164.

Albanians and Vlachs. Later patriarchs were also heads of the Eastern Or-
thodox Arabs. The Ecumenical Patriarch was considered as "Patriarch of
non-believers" by Ottoman authorities and, for them, he became "Patriarch
of the Romaioi" only about 1700,[54] mostly due to the tremendous influence
of the Phanariote Greeks in that period.

In the late 1520s and in the 1530s there were severe disputes between
Greek and Serbian bishops within the Archbishopric of Ohrid, which was
under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The Porte's support
oscillated between the two factions, but four Orthodox patriarchs sided
with the Greek archbishop of Ohrid, and the Serbian opposition leader
Pavle, bishop of Smederevo, was finally defeated in 1541. However, Serbian
opposition remained, and when, in 1555, it so happened that three viziers
at the Porte were Serbs by origin, Serbian arguments prevailed. In 1557
the Serbian Patriarchate was re-established and its jurisdiction covered vast
areas of Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, northern Vardar Mace-
donia, south-western Bulgaria and Hungary as far as Komarno and Esz-
tergom. In this way what was later called the Roman *millet* was practically
divided and two Eastern Orthodox jurisdictions coexisted for two centuries
(1557–1766): one run by the patriarch of Constantinople and the other by
the patriarch of Peć (Pech)/Ipek. Patriarch and bishops of the Patriarchate
of Peć were mostly ethnic Serbs and only in the last two decades of its exis-
tence the Patriarchate was intentionally Hellenised and then abolished.

More than two centuries of continual work of the Serbian Patriarch-
ate had critical importance for the preservation of Slavic Christian Balkan
identities, especially Serbian but to a certain extent Bulgarian as well. A lead-
ing Serbian interwar historian, Vladimir Ćorović, observes in his posthu-
mously published *History of Serbs* that the geographic notion of Macedonia
unexpectedly spread during the sixteenth century and at some point reached
even the Danube and included Herzegovina. In Serbian popular ballads the
town of Peć in Metohija, and the last medieval capital of Serbia Smederevo
(Simendria), situated on the Danube, were included into the geographi-
cal scope of Macedonia.[55] In 1519, Serbian printer Božidar Vuković wrote
down that he was from Podgorica "in Macedonian parts"; Vuk Karadžić

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[54] Dimitrios Stamatopoulos, "From Millets to Minorities in the 19th-Century Otto-
man Empire: an Ambiguous Modernization", in Steven G. Ellis et al., eds., *Citizenship
in Historical Perspective* (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2006), 254.

[55] In 1845 Vuk Karadžić published the second volume of Serbian poems (volumes 2,
3 and 4 contain "heroic songs"). Poem no. 81, "The Death of Voivoda Kaica", situates
"the gentle town of Smederevo" in "Maćedonija". Cf. *Srpske narodne pjesme. Skupio ih
i na svijet izdao Vuk. Stef. Karadžić*, vol. 2 (Vienna: Printing Press of the Armenian
Monastery, 1845).

claimed that "all areas of our people used to be called Macedonia".[56] Obviously, the jurisdiction of the Archbishopric of Ohrid over former territories of the Serbian Patriarchate was instrumental in spreading the notion of Macedonia to former Serbian lands, as noticed by Ćorović. Calling these areas Macedonia essentially meant accepting the symbolic geography of pan-Byzantine consciousness which always contained a strong Hellenic component even if that component was Byzantinised. Therefore, the re-establishment of the Serbian Patriarchate meant that the Orthodox population living in the territories under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Peć was transferred from pan-Byzantine symbolic geography to another, also to a large extent Byzantinised but different, symbolic geography centred on the ideology of the medieval Serbian state. In this way the Hellenisation of the Serbian part of the Orthodox Balkan Commonwealth was prevented and this also had some impact on Bulgaria.

It follows therefore that the Orthodox Church (both the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Serbian Patriarchate) was the crucial preserver of ethnic consciousness that was centred on medieval traditions. In the case of the Ecumenical Patriarchate it meant that Byzantine/Romaic identity was its key signifier and in the case of the Serbian Patriarchate it was the Serbian church and state traditions of the late medieval Nemanjić dynasty, sainted by the Serbian Church in the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The Patriarchate of Peć preserved proto-national identity of Serbs. When it was suppressed in 1766 the same task was successfully performed by the Serbian Archbishopric of Karlovci/Karlowitz in Srem (elevated to patriarchate in 1848), which existed from 1690 to 1920.[57] The Archbishopric/Patriarchate of Karlovci operated completely independently from the Ecumenical Patriarchate, since it was an institution the existence of which was sanctioned by several Austrian emperors. Therefore, Eric Hobsbawm quite correctly remarked: "There is no reason to deny proto-national feelings to pre-nineteenth century Serbs, not because they were Orthodox as against neighbouring Catholics and Muslims – this would not have distinguished them from Bulgars – but because the memory of the old kingdom defeated by the Turks was preserved in song and heroic story, and, perhaps more to the point, in the daily liturgy of the Serbian church which had canonised most of its kings."[58]

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[56] Vladimir Ćorović, *Istorija Srba* [History of Serbs], vol. 2 (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1989), 164.

[57] The seat of the Patriarchate was at the monastery of Krušedol from 1707 until 1716, when the monastery was set on fire by the Turks and the seat moved to Sremski Karlovci. Cf. Djoko Slijepčević, *Istorija srpske pravoslavne crkve* [History of the Serbian Orthodox Church], vol. 2 (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1991), 29–30.

[58] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 75–76.

Even in the case when the state churches from the middle ages fully disappeared as separate bodies, like in Bulgaria, monks who were ethnic Bulgarians were able to preserve ethnic consciousness and medieval traditions in some of the monasteries located far from urban centres. In these monasteries Bulgarian medieval manuscripts, the art of religious painting and bookbinding were preserved. Besides, itinerant monks, known as *taxidiotes*, travelled to collect alms and acted as go-betweens with Bulgarian peasants. Some others were itinerant teachers.[59] In such a way Orthodox monasteries were key centres of learning, albeit in reduced scope, and a kind of information centres of their age. They were also chief keepers of the memory of old state traditions.

The abolishment of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1766 and of the Archbishopric of Ohrid the following year meant that, by the end of the eighteenth century, the Patriarch of Constantinople became ethnarch of some thirteen million Orthodox Christians.[60] This had a very profound influence on Bulgaria, where many Bulgarian priests were Hellenised, and this process was even strengthened in the second half of the eighteenth century. There even was a tendency to replace Cyrillic script by Greek alphabet in writing Bulgarian. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries most Balkan Christian merchants identified themselves as Greeks. The only group that did not follow this pattern was Serbs, who took a large part of Hungarian retail trade after the Treaty of Passarowitz (1718), but even they began being Hellenised in the Ottoman Empire at the end of the eighteenth century and this process continued until after 1821.[61] However, the existence of the Archbishopric of Karlovci, the Austro-Ottoman conflict of 1788–91 and the privileges granted to the ethnic Serbs in the Pashalik of Belgrade in the 1790s reduced the Hellenisation of ethnic Serbs in the Ottoman Empire to towns, and mostly to the merchant class.

Where could this identity, based on ethnic and religious grounds, be situated in terms of modern nationalism studies? What immediately comes to mind is Anthony Smith's theories on *ethnies*. Discussing it, Victor Roudometof concluded: "I would like to suggest that Greeks, Albanians, Bulgarians, Serbs, and Romanians were *ethnies* in the Ottoman Balkans and were clearly aware of their differences."[62] Yet, he does not want to imply that modern nations were born out of an ethnic core. In his opinion, therefore, prior to the 1850s, class and ethnicity overlapped.

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[59] Richard J. Crampton, *Bulgaria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 20–21, 30.

[60] Dakin, *Greek Struggle for Independence*, 9.

[61] Cf. Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant", 310–311.

[62] Roudometof, "From *Rum Millet* to Greek Nation", 12.

Since it was the non-Muslim, and not non-Turkish, population in the Ottoman Empire that was subjected, the opposition of Balkan Christians to the Ottoman Empire was the opposition to Muslims as "others". The "otherness" of the Ottoman Empire was complete and it derived from its Muslim nature with the sultan being a caliph and with the powerful ulema in Constantinople and elsewhere.

The collapse of the Orthodox Commonwealth began in 1831 with the ethnification of the Orthodox church in Serbia. Prince Miloš took special care in the 1820s to regulate the question of a separate Serbian church and the church question became a part of the Hatt-i sherif of August 1830 that granted autonomy to Serbia but also gave Serbs the right to elect the metropolitan and bishops. "They will be invested by the Greek Patriarch in Constantinople and they are not obliged to come personally to that capital city."[63] In September 1831 a concordat was signed with Patriarch Constantius I (1830–1834). It regulated the amount of money that the autonomous church in Serbia had to pay to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The title of the head of the church was "metropolitan of all Serbia". The Patriarch of Constantinople was to be notified about the election of a new metropolitan and he was obliged to accept him. From 1831 the metropolitan and all bishops in the Principality of Serbia were ethnic Serbs. Although the second metropolitan of Serbia was invested by the Patriarch of Constantinople in December 1833, it is indicative that Prince Miloš consulted the Archbishop of Sremski Karlovci, and not the Ecumenical Patriarch, on who should be Metropolitan of Serbia.[64] In 1848 the Archbishopric of Karlovci was elevated to patriarchate, and the Serbs had a person with the title of patriarch for the first time after 1766. The Kingdom of Greece followed suite in establishing a separate church in 1833, the autocephalous status of which was canonically recognised in 1850. The Bulgarian church – Exarchate – was established as a completely separate body in 1872, and the church in Romania became independent from Constantinople in 1865 (its autocephaly was recognised by the Patriarchate in 1885). The Serbian Orthodox Church became fully autocephalous in 1879. Thus between 1831 and 1872 Balkan Orthodox churches were fully ethnified and became promoters of national ideas.

Noel Brailsford summarised the reasons that led to this national-religious fusion: "It is the only free and communal life which the Turks permit him [Christian]. It is essentially a national organisation. It reminds him of the greater past. It unites him to his fellow-Christians throughout the Empire, and in the free lands beyond the Empire. It is the one form

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[63] Slijepčević, *Istorija srpske pravoslavne crkve*, vol. 2, 315–318.

[64] Ibid. 325–326.

of association and combination which is not treasonable… Any political organisation outside the Church must necessarily be a secret and proscribed society."[65] Under these conditions the church became the central institution of the Balkan Slavic Orthodox Christians. Growing national movements demanded a tool. The only network that could be used by the Kingdom of Serbia and the Principality of Bulgaria in the 1880s and 1890s was the one around the Orthodox Church. By the end of the nineteenth century the Romanian Orthodox Church became a central pillar of Romanian national identity. All this naturally affected the Orthodox Church: "She has been more or less secularised and her spiritual functions have suffered. Her mission has been patriotic rather than spiritual."[66]

The Bulgarian case

Here one needs to address the Bulgarian case, for which the issue of a separate Orthodox church had particular significance. Prior to the creation of San Stefano Bulgaria in 1878 and the Serbian-Bulgarian war of 1885, there was a surprising degree of solidarity of ethnic Serbs from the Principality of Serbia with ethnic Bulgarians. This implies that each ethnic group was aware of the existence of the other. Although prominent patriots of both groups considered that the other group was ethnically very close to them, and the two obviously were the same in religious terms, they were fully aware that the two groups were different and separate in ethnic terms. It cannot be explained in any other way than by introducing the concept of either *ethnies* or proto-nations. Where one ended and the other began could not be defined by language due to many border dialects of both languages that are closer to one another than to some other dialects of the same language. Yet, language was a delineator and both Dositej Obradović and Vuk Karadžić were aware of that. Medieval traditions were another equally important delineator that both proto-nations kept.

A specific issue of Bulgarian national "awakening" is that it coincided with, and was inseparable from, the Bulgarian struggle for an autocephalous church in the period between the 1840s and 1872. As was previously described, the non-existence of an ethnic Bulgarian church hierarchy led to the Hellenisation of the Bulgarian clergy and Bulgarian culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Ethnic Greeks could not fully Hellenise Bucharest, where there was an influential Bulgarian colony. In addition, emerging Serbia was also interested in encouraging the Bulgarian movement. Therefore, early Bulgarian national consciousness was to a very

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[65] Brailsford, *Macedonia*, 61.

[66] Ibid. 62.

large extent encouraged from areas outside of its ethnic centre, including Constantinople.

In 1829, a Russian-Ukrainian scholar, Yuriy Ivanovich Venelin, published the book entitled *Ancient and contemporary Bulgarians*, in which he insisted on the Slavic origin of Bulgarians and their closeness to Russians. Bulgarian merchant Vasil EvstatievAprilov (1789–1847), who had attended a Greek school in Russia and studied medicine in Vienna, was partly Hellenised. Venelin's book made a Bulgarian patriot out of him and he opened the fist Bulgarian secular school in Gabrovo, with the help of other local merchants.[67] It was run by Neofit Rilski/Neophytos of Rila (1793–1881), a monk and a leading figure of the Bulgarian cultural renaissance. In 1835, with the money provided by the "gens-loving" citizens of Bucharest, the Mustakov brothers, he published, in Kragujevac in Serbia, the first Bulgarian grammar for Slavic-Bulgarian schools.[68] He also made, in 1840, the first translation of the New Testament into the Bulgarian vernacular of Pirin Macedonia.

Not surprisingly the distribution of the first copies of the New Testament in Bulgarian coincided with efforts to establish a Bulgarian autonomous church. In 1849 the Bulgarians got their first place of worship. It was a church in Constantinople dedicated to St. Stephen and administered by a church council consisting of Bulgarians. It was the first Bulgarian ecclesiastic institution since the end of the medieval Bulgarian state. In November 1859, in two churches in Philippopolis/Plovdiv local priests began preaching in Bulgarian. In spite of fierce protests by the Greeks, Ottoman authorities, fearing riots, permitted services in both languages. When three major Bulgarian clerics cut their links with Constantinople, the Ecumenical Patriarchate arranged for their arrest by Ottoman authorities. Since there was no compromise with Constantinople even a short-lived experiment with the Uniate Bulgarian Church was initiated in 1861. Yet, it could not spread. Georgi Rakovski fought against it and, as R. Crampton observed, other Bulgarians also disliked it: "For them faith was still far more important than ethnicity or nationality; and they were prepared to wait until recognition came to realise their dream of a separate Bulgarian Church within the Orthodox community."[69]

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[67]Aleksandŭr Fol et al., *Kratka istoriya na Bŭlgariya* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1983), 162; Crampton, *Bulgaria*, 51–52.

[68] *Болгарска граммаtika* сего перво сочинена отъ Неόфѵта П. П. сущаго изъ свѧщенныѧ обители Рылскіѧ, за 0употребленіе на Славеноболгарските 0училища, а на свѣтъ издана отъ люборо дны те предстоѧтели за Болгарско то просвѣщеніе г. братїѧ Мустакови [Bulgarian Grammar compiled by Neophytos…], Въ Крагуевцѣ [In Kragujevac], 1835.

[69] Crampton, *Bulgaria*, 75.

Finally, in February 1870, the Porte issued a ferman authorising the establishing of a separate Bulgarian church. In January 1872 the three previously exiled Bulgarian clerics elected Antim/Anthimus of Vidin as the first Bulgarian exarch. Previously the church council met in February-July 1871. Although it was a purely church council it was viewed in a different framework by the Bulgarian public. The press called it "the Bulgarian National Council". Needless to say, the struggle for a separate Bulgarian church helped prominent Bulgarians to reach the second phase of national development in the 1860s. To establish a separate church had to involve political geography, since the territorial scope envisaged for the Exarchate would set the borders of Bulgarian nation within the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, R. Crampton's assessment that "it was in the church campaign that the modern Bulgarian nation was created" seems quite justified.[70] This statement of his, however, should be taken in the context of the time when, as he himself admitted, the matter of faith was still more important to many ethnic Bulgarians than that of ethnicity. Therefore, what the whole process of struggle created was the ethnification of the church, which certainly facilitated the path towards mass nationalism by the beginning of the next century.

Another specific Bulgarian issue was that the united autonomous Principality of Bulgaria was created by a single foreign, Russian, intervention – by the Russian-dictated peace treaty of San Stefano in March 1878. The borders set at that moment "virtually annihilated"[71] the European Turkey and created a greater Bulgaria. The provisions of the treaty were substantially modified in Berlin in July, by restoring territories in Macedonia to the Ottoman Empire and dividing Bulgaria into two units. This means that, for a few months, a greater Bulgaria was a reality. This made the territorial aims of the Bulgarian national movement obvious. From 1878 until 1944 Bulgarian élites put a lot of fruitless effort into recreating San Stefano Bulgaria. However, Serbian and Greek aspirations were based on a combination of historic and ethnographic records. Bulgarian claims were not only historic, they could claim that such an entity, even if short-lived, indeed existed, and this secured a long-term dedication to this project. This led to a struggle with both the Greek and the Serbian national movement over Macedonia, since all three could establish their aspirations on medieval traditions, but also on certain ethnographic or linguistic records.

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[70] Ibid. 80.

[71] L. Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453* (London: Hurst and Company, 2000), 409.

(a) *Construction of Slavic Macedonian identity: from ambiguous ethnicity to modern national identity*

Speaking about the races in Macedonia, James David Bourchier, correspondent of *The Times* for South-East Europe, designated her, in 1911, as "the principal theatre of the struggle of nationalities in Eastern Europe".[72] With all races disputing Turkish reversion from Europe, he described the Macedonian question as "the quintessence of the Near Eastern Question".[73]

At the beginning of the twentieth century the whole of Macedonia was under Turkish rule. At that time the term covered territories of three Turkish vilayets: the whole vilayet of Salonica, the eastern and larger part of the vilayet of Monastir (sanjaks of Monastir, Servia and part of that of Korche), and the south-eastern part of the vilayet of Kosovo (sanjak of Üsküb). It was a region with a population of some 2,200,000 inhabitants. Around 1,300,000 were Christians, 800,000 Muslims and about 75,000 Jews. There were also some minor Christian groups: Uniate Bulgarians (around 3,600) and Bulgarian Protestants (about 2,000).[74] The dynamism of the region originated from two features: racial propaganda, and the fight of two Macedonian revolutionary movements. After the suppression of the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć (Ipek) in 1766, the Slavs in the Ottoman Empire were left without any ethnic ecclesiastical organisation. Consequently, the traditionally dominant Greek culture was unchallenged in Macedonia until the mid-nineteenth century.

Then the Bulgarians started to exercise their cultural influences and, when in 1871 the Sultan recognised an independent Bulgarian Church called Exarchate, the Bulgarians were able to appoint their bishops in some Macedonian towns. Bulgarian propaganda made especially remarkable progress in the period between 1891 and 1898. According to official Bulgarian figures, in 1900 there were 785 Bulgarian schools in Macedonia. Serbian propaganda came later and made some progress in the 1890s. At the beginning of 1899 there were 178 Serbian schools in the vilayets of Kosovo, Monastir and Salonica. Finally the Greeks had in 1901 927 Greek schools in the vilayets of Salonica and Monastir.[75] Obviously, the main struggle for cultural and educational influence in Macedonia, at the beginning of the twentieth century, was fought between the Bulgarians and the Greeks.

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[72] At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century the word "race" was frequently used in English to denote an ethnic group.

[73] James David Bourchier, s. v. Macedonia, *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* 11th edition, vol. 17 (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1911), 217, b.

[74] Ibid. 217, a.

[75] Ibid. 219.

At the beginning of the twentieth century probably the best connoisseur of Macedonia in Britain was Henry Noel Brailsford. By 1905 he had visited the Balkans five times, and Macedonia twice. In 1903/4, after St. Elijah's Uprising (Ilinden), he spent five months around Monastir acting on behalf of the British Relief Fund. He sent regular reports from the Balkans to *The Manchester Guardian*.[76] In December 1905 he finished his book *Macedonia. Its Races and their Future*. He tried to answer an important contemporary question: Are Macedonians Serbs or Bulgars? At that time most Britons believed that Macedonian Slavs were undoubtedly Bulgarian. This view was advocated by James David Bourchier, correspondent of the London *Times* for South-East Europe. It was also shared by some other British authorities, especially those around the Balkan Committee.

Yet, Brailsford gave no conclusive answer: "They are probably very much what they were before either a Bulgarian or a Servian Empire existed – a Slav people derived from rather various stocks, who invaded the peninsula at different periods. But they had originally no clear consciousness of race, and any stronger Slavonic Power was able to impose itself upon them."[77] Brailsford also noticed that in some instances fathers who considered themselves as "Greeks" brought into the world "Greek", "Serbian", "Bulgarian" or "Romanian" children. How was this possible? Brailsford was quick to realise that it was the result of education: "The passion for education is strong, and the various propagandas pander eagerly to it. If a father cannot contrive to place all his sons in a secondary school belonging to the race which he himself affects, the prospect of a bursary will often induce him to plant them out in rival establishments. It is, of course, a point of honour that a boy who is educated at the expense of one or other of these people must himself adopt its language and its nationality." It was during his first visit to Macedonia that Brailsford encountered this phenomenon of shifting national identities for the first time. He asked a Greek-speaking villager if he was from a Greek or a Bulgarian village. He got an astonishing answer: "Well, it is Bulgarian now, but four years ago it was Greek." Highly surprised, Brailsford asked how such a miracle was possible and was given a prompt reply: "We are all poor men, but we want to have our own school and a priest who will look after us properly. We used to have a Greek teacher. We paid him £5 a year and his bread, while the Greek consul paid him another £5; but we had no priest of our own. We shared a priest with several other villagers, but he was very unpunctual and remiss. We went to Greek bishop to complain, but he refused to do anything for us. The Bulgarians heard of this and they came and made us an offer. They said they

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[76] Brailsford, *Macedonia*, xii.

[77] Ibid. 101.

would give us a priest who would live in the village and a teacher to whom we need pay nothing. Well, sir, ours is a poor village, and so of course we became Bulgarians."[78]

What Brailsford witnessed in person was a transformation of ethno-religious or proto-national identity into national identity. Obviously, it could have taken any national direction provided that it was within the same Orthodox Christian identity. Yet, to strengthen identity one also had to nationalise heroes known in the region and to absorb different historical memories in order to create fervent adherents of a nation. So, local Bulgarian teachers told their pupils that Alexander the Great was Bulgarian rather than Greek.

Brailsford recorded another story that he heard from a French consul. The consul declared that "with a fund of a million francs he would undertake to make all Macedonia French. For this, he would have needed to create another historical narrative. And that indeed occurred to his mind. He would have preached that the Macedonians were the descendants of the French crusaders who had conquered Salonica in the twelfth century." He believed that "the francs would do the rest." This indeed was an exaggeration. As Brailsford observed, "the Greeks dispose of ample funds, and yet the Greeks have lost Macedonia."[79] Obviously, ethnic identity is easy to manipulate, but only within the same religion. Still, the proto-national part of the identity of Macedonians had a linguistic component and therefore it was more prone to be incorporated by Bulgarian or Serbian nationalism than by Greek wherever that linguistic element was Slavic.

The struggle for Macedonian Slavs between Bulgaria and Serbia led to the emergence of another political stream dealing with the identity of the region, that of a separate Macedonian nationality. In December 1903, Krste P. Misirkov published in Sofia a book entitled *On Macedonian Matters*. At the beginning of the twenty-first century he has been considered as one of the fathers of the Macedonian nation that was developed in communist Yugoslavia after 1945. He proclaimed Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia as the enemies of the Macedonian people.[80] As for the identity of Macedonian Slavs, he acknowledged a mixture of national and ethno-religious identity: "We did indeed call ourselves 'Bulgarians' and 'Christians' in the national sense; but why this was so, and whether it really had to be so, we did not very much care to ask."[81]Curiously enough, his book advocated a separate Macedonian nationality, but also confirmed that no such nationality existed

[78] Ibid. 102.

[79] Ibid. 103.

[80] Krste Misirkov, *On Macedonian Matters* (Skopje: Macedonian Review, 1974), 28.

[81] Ibid. 115.

in the past: "The first objection – that the Macedonian Slav nationality has never existed – may be very simply answered as follows: what has not existed in the past may still be brought into existence later, provided that the appropriate historical circumstances arise."[82]

Patterns similar to those from the nineteenth century have been used since the 1990s in the (Former Yugoslav) Republic of Macedonia. It is only that now Alexander the Great is supposed to have been an ancestor of the present-day Slav Macedonians.[83] The symbol of ancient Macedonia – Vergina – was placed on the first flag of the new independent state. It was only after resolute Greek protests that it was removed from the flag. By the beginning of the twenty-first century fascination with Alexander the Great became a nationwide phenomenon. This case seems to represent the most recent form of *arkhaiolatreia* (worship of antiquity), a stream that reached huge proportions among ethnic Greeks, but two centuries earlier.[84]

(b) *Shifts in ethnic identity within the same religious affiliation: the case of the Metohija Serbs (between Serbian and Russian identities)*

Brailsford was indeed aware of ethnic layers in the identity of the Macedonian Slavs when he observed that "any Slav race which belonged to the Orthodox faith might have won Macedonia, given the necessary fact and the necessary funds. Servia or Montenegro, or even Russia, might have done it. In point of fact it is Bulgaria which had succeeded."[85] From various accounts, it indeed seems reasonable to conclude that Serbia could have done it had she initiated her propaganda before the Bulgarians launched theirs. Could Russia have done it?

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[82] Ibid. 152.

[83] In a lexicon covering mostly prominent persons of twentieth-century Macedonia, Alexander the Great also has an entry. Cf. Petar Karajanov, Hristo Andonovski & Jovan Pavlovski, *Ličnosti od Makedonija* [Persons of Macedonia] (Skopje: Mi-An, 2002), 15. In the opening decade of the twenty-first century Alexandromania affected even parts of the intellectual mainstream in Skopje. Prince Ghazanfar Ali Khan of the Himalayan tribe of Hunza visited Skopje in July 2008. This tribe believes to descend from soldiers of Alexander the Great's army who stayed in faraway regions. Prime Minister of the Republic of Macedonia Nikola Gruevski met the prince at the airport in an effort to strengthen the claim that current Slavic Macedonians are actually descendants of ancient Macedonians and the local archbishop blessed the event. Neil MacDonald, "'Descendants' of Alexander help to boost Macedonian identity", *The Financial Times*, 19 July 2008.

[84] Clogg, *Concise History of Greece*, 27.

[85] Ibid. 103.

An unexpected incident, known as the Dečani/Dechani Question (*Dečansko pitanje*), that took place in neighbouring Metohija proved that even Russia could have made many Balkan Slavic Christians Russians had she launched her campaign at the right time.

The holiest place for the Christian Orthodox Serbs in Metohija has been the monastery of Dečani, with the relics of the Holy King Stefan of Dečani (and the former Patriarchate of Peć, the seat of the Serbian Patriarchate during medieval Serbian and Ottoman rule). The small number of Serbian monks and the monastery's accumulated debts produced by the mismanagement of its previous abbot led to the decision of the local bishop to allow Russian monks from the kellia of St. John Chrysostom on the Holy Mountain Athos to temporarily take control of the monastery in 1903. This led to a big dispute between the otherwise close governments at Belgrade and St. Petersburg.

The book by Dušan T. Bataković entitled *The Dechani Question* clearly shows that religious-ethnic identity of related Orthodox Slavic peoples could easily be turned towards one or another national idea depending on political circumstances. Thus, it was shortly after the Russian monks arrived that local Serbs began to be Russified, i.e. to claim to be "Russians" in order to underline the protection they expected from Imperial Russia against discrimination and violence perpetrated by Albanian Muslim outlaws, regularly tolerated by the local Ottoman administration in the Peć area. This policy was pursued by the new administrator of the Dečani monastery, hyeromonk Arsenius, and supported by the Russian consul in Prizren Tuholka. This, however, was not an imposed policy nor was there any particular Russian plan in this sense. It was Serbs of Metohija themselves who demonstrated a tendency to accept Russian identity, and the Russian monks accepted this readily and encouraged it. In political terms, this policy was conducted by the Russian party that was active in Peć, Prizren and Djakovica. It had a huge impact on local Serbs. It was aalready in the autumn of 1904 that local Serbs started to ask each other: "What are you, a Russian or a Serb?" Serbian deputy consul in Priština, who later became a famous Serbian writer, Milan Rakić, noted on 19 July 1905: "Some teachers and priests told me in Peć that this disgrace – the Russian Party – has begun lately to spread to villages. Some villagers do not even want to mention Serbs or Serbia, but rather publicly claim that they are Russians. This disgrace was brought on us by Russian monks in Dečani, by consul Tuholka in Prizren and by our own criminal negligence."[86] It was only at the end of 1909 that the Russian Embassy in Constantinople ordered the monks of Dečani to make no

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[86] Milan Rakić, *Konzulska pisma* [Consular Letters], ed. Andrej Mitrović (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1985), 58.

parties, including Russophile ones. Consequently, the Russian party soon ceased to exist and self-identification of local Serbs as Russians also disappeared with it.[87]

(c) *Social versus ethnic identity*

Serbian ethnographer Tihomir Djordjević described an interesting case in the region of Krajina, eastern Serbia, where in the 1830s local inhabitants preferred their social rights over their ethnic identity. His article is entitled "An example of immigration of Romanians to Serbia". As a matter of fact, in all letters that Djordjević quotes local inhabitants speak of Vlachs, but Djordjević modernised them into Romanians, an identity that fully developed two decades later, and only on the other side of the Danube.

Veliko Ostrvo (Big Island) in the Timok area (*Timočka Krajina*) was under Ottoman rule until 1830. A committee established to decide on borders gave this island to the Principality of Wallachia. Although the island's inhabitants were all Vlachs, they decided to opt for Serbia and demanded Serbian administration. The reasons were purely social. They had land on the Serbian side of the Danube and they were under pressure by feudal landowners, boyars, from Wallachia. On the other hand, Serbian Prince Miloš, fearing of potential power that local Serbian notables would gain should they be given landed estates with serfs, completely abandoned any feudal rights and therefore made Serbia attractive to those Wallachian peasants who were familiar with the situation.

The islanders headed by the priest Nikola sent a letter, dated 8 February 1831, to Stefan Stefanović Tenka, captain of Porečka Reka, complaining about being harassed not only "by old snakes [Turks], but, to our misfortune, we have been put under yoke by heathen *ciocois* [boyars], bloodsuckers of the poor." Tenka informed Prince Miloš that they demanded to stay under Serbia's patronage. One year earlier local boundaries had been set on their island, and "they are in considerable doubt that they can come under the yoke of Wallachian land". Miloš supported their demands and the locals addressed their issue to the vizier of Vidin, but to no avail. The peasants from the Big Island repeated their demands to Tenka in a letter of 27 January 1832. They prayed "to God to have mercy to transfer them as soon as possible under Serbian rule in order to liberate them from dogs *ciocois* and from Turks."

However, on 20 May 1832, the Principality of Wallachia sent an officer and ten soldiers to the Big Island to prevent the islanders from emigrat-

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[87] Dušan T. Bataković, *Dečansko pitanje* [The Dechani Question] (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1989).

ing. Locals immediately said to the officer that they were with Serbs against Turks "and they shed blood and therefore they belonged to no one other than Serbs, as the treaties of 1813 made in Bucharest by the Porte and the Russian court testify." Finally, they began migrating to the area between the villages of Slatina in the north and Kamenica in the south and there were already 120 houses there by the beginning of 1833, and 170 by mid-June. In honour of the son of Prince Miloš, Mihailo, Tenka called the new village Mihailovac (today Mihajlovac). Finally, on 19–20 March 1834, the remaining villagers of the Big Island were secretly transferred to Serbia with the help of Stefan Stefanović Tenka, with all their movable property. Prince Miloš summarised the situation in a letter to Tenka: "Wallachian authorities, by inhuman oppression which can be seen in all Walachian areas, have been the reason why the first inhabitants of the Big Island who have moved to our side had to flee."[88]

As can be seen, in the early 1830s the peasants of Veliko Ostrvo gave priority to their social rights over the fact that they had a different ethnic background from the Serbs and a quite distinctive linguistic heritage. For them, to become Serbian citizens meant to be free from feudal oppression and this was more important than any identity issue. Therefore, in their worldview the binary opposition was Wallachian citizenship–Serbian citizenship or, in simpler terms, Wallachia versus Serbia, which meant serfdom versus free peasant status. They quite easily connected their social aspirations with Serbian traditions from the First Serbian Uprising.

(d) *The Romanian case*

In early modernity and in the first half of the nineteenth century there existed two parallel principalities, Wallachia and Moldova. They were united by personal union in 1859, and in 1861 they became one political unit: Romania. In the eighteenth century they were under the influence of Greek/Byzantine culture, which continued until the 1820s.

Slavic and Greek influences for a long time prevented the course of Latinism that emerged at the end of the eighteenth century among Vlach speakers of the Uniate (Greek-Catholic) Church in Transylvania. A specific Vlach church was established in 1359 but it came under Serbian and Greek influences, of which the former prevailed. Manuscripts in Church-Slavonic are monuments of this period. From the end of the sixteenth century there are also works in the Vlach language. Moldovan chronicler Miron Costin

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[88] Tihomir R. Djordjević, "Jedan primer doseljavanja Rumuna u Srbiju" [An Example of Romanian Immigration to Serbia], *Srpski književni glasnik* LXII:1 (1 January 1941), 47–53.

(1633–1691) was seen by the leading Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga as a "Romanian patriot" and a person who wished to evoke the spirit of patriotism among his compatriots.[89] Costin's chronicle *Letopisețul Țărâi Moldovei* (The Chronicles of the Land of Moldavia) was written in Vlach and certainly confirms proto-national identity that will later be fully Latinised and will be expressed as a Romanian nation. In 1703 the terms Romanian and Romanian land were used by the Wallachian chronicler Radu Popescu. However, this stream was interrupted by the so-called Phanariote period (1711–1821), when Moldovan and Wallachian princes were Phanariote Greeks.

The ideas of the Enlightenment were received in the Principalities under Graecophone culture. Schools in Wallachian were opened only in the second decade of the nineteenth century, but some Greek influence remained and in 1840 out of 117 schools 28 were still in Greek.[90] Therefore in the Romanian case, as in the Bulgarian, the national movement had to insist on the linguistic nationalisation of education.

Another intellectual stream developed in Transylvania in the late eighteenth century; it was called Latinism. It viewed Vlachs and Moldovans as direct descendants of Dacians and Romans, and it gained ground from the 1820s. This kind of identity was first developed in Habsburg Transylvania, where Vlach proto-national identity developed into Latinised identity by the end of the eighteenth century. In 1698, in Transylvania, a part of the Orthodox clergy who were ethnic Vlachs accepted the Union with Rome. Their bishop spoke on behalf of "Wallach gens" as early as 1737. Seminarians of this church were being sent to Rome and it was there that they became aware of their Daco-Roman identity. One of them, Samuil Micu (1765–1806), wrote in 1778 a work with a title mentioning "natio daco-romana" which is called in barbaric idiom "natio Valachorum", and two years later he published, in Vienna, *Elementa linguae daco-romanae sive valachicae*.[91] Latinists were also the first to advocate the Latin alphabet for Vlachs.[92]

It was only in 1816 that the first history and geography of "Romania" was printed by Daniel Philippides (*c.* 1750–1832), a Greek scholar of

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[89] N. Iorga, *A History of Roumania. Land, People, Civilisation* (London: T. Fisher and Unwin, 1925).

[90] Roudometof, "From *Rum Millet* to Greek Nation", 16.

[91] Radu Florescu, "The Uniate Church: Catalyst of Rumanian National Consciousness", *The Slavonic and East European Review* 45:105 (July 1967), 335 and 337.

[92] Robert Lee Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Time* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 72–73.

the age of the Enlightenment.[93] He apparently was the first person "to use the term 'Romania' to describe as one entity the several geographical and political regions, including Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania, which exactly a century after he wrote made up the modern Romanian national state."[94] However, even the work of Philippides belongs to the Graecophone Enlightenment. In the multilingual dictionaries of Theodoros Kavaliotes (1770) and Daniel of Moshopolis (1802) the language of ethnic Vlachs was still called Βλάχικα – Wallachian.

There was continuity between the Latinist stream and the work of the Transylvanian teacher George Lazar. His brilliant disciple was Ioan Eliade Radulescu who reopened St. Sava School in Bucharest in 1822. "It was on his benches that the generation of 1848, Romania's future political leaders, were formed."[95]

Organic statutes encouraged by Russians were accepted in 1831 for Wallachia and in the next year for Moldova. They contained a provision on "fusion du peuple moldo-valaque". What curiously enough further encouraged the Latinisation of the Vlach proto-nation was Russian protectorate over the two Principalities (1829–1834). Even during Phanariote rule, ethnic Greek princes employed French secretaries. Russians found that the easiest way to communicate with Vlach notables was in French. The already widely spoken language in Wallachia now became even more popular and France became a role model for her Latin heritage and also for her liberal tendencies.[96]

In June 1848 a revolt in Bucharest and a new provisional government clearly articulated the demand for a Romania. "All lands inhabited by Rumanians should be called Rumania and form one state… the Rumanian nation demands that it be one and indivisible." But this spirit was just in an embryonic form. As L. Stavrianos noted about it: "It cannot be dignified with the name of a nationalist movement. Only an infinitesimally small portion of the population held national ideals."[97] Yet, the narrative of Roman descent was there and it was framed by the Romanian historian, politician and publicist Mihail Kogalniceanu (1817–1891), who participated in all key moments in the development of the Romanian nation from the 1840s onward.

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[93] The same year (1816) Phillipides published *Istoríatēs Roumounías* and *Geōgraphikóntēs Roumounías* in Greek. Cf. Kitromilides, "Imagined Communities'", 187.

[94] Ibid. 154–155.

[95] Florescu, "The Uniate Church", 340.

[96] David Mitrany, "Rumania" in Nevill Forbes et al., *The Balkans. A History of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Rumania, Turkey* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1915), 267–268.

[97] Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453*, 349.

It is quite common among scholars to call the masses of Wallachia and Moldova in early modernity Romanians as N. Iorga and other Romanian historians did. However, this approach means that modern terms are applied to earlier epochs. On the other hand, it is quite clear that the ethnic group called Vlachs was a proto-nation from which modern Romanians stem and therefore it is also not surprising to apply the term back to the past.

What facilitated the transition from proto-national to national identity in Romania in 1821–1860 was the level of urbanisation of Bucharest. This town became the capital of Wallachia in 1659, and by 1700 it was the largest Christian town in the Balkans with a population that exceeded 60,000. As a town in imperial borderlands that enjoyed relative tranquillity until 1716, it became a magnet for rich residents. By 1824 the population of 60–70 thousand included some 4,000 Germans, and 4,000–6,000 Jews; there were also large colonies of Hungarian Serbs, Bulgarians and, naturally, Greeks. But the majority of the population belonged to Vlachs at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[98] Population of the capital of Wallachia reached 120,000 by 1859. Therefore, when the Romanian national movement began in the 1820s Christian middle class capable of making a modern nation was more present in Bucharest than in any other contemporary town in the Balkans. This facilitated the introduction of Latin identity. When in 1862 Cyrillic script was finally replaced by Latin alphabet, the ideas of the Latinist school, initiated in the late eighteenth century in Transylvania, won a victory, a Pyrrhic one though, since in the following decades the Romanian Orthodox Church would become the cornerstone of Romanian national identity.

Phases of nationalism among Balkan Christians

Miroslav Hroch, using Central-European patterns, developed a three-phase model of the development of every national movement. In A phase a linguistic scholarly enquiry is conducted without political aims. In B phase a range of patriots endeavour to gather members of a particular ethnic group. Finally, in C phase, a mass movement is formed.[99] Hroch insists on two stages in the development of capitalist society: (1) the period of rise of capitalism, and (2) the period of stabilised capitalist "modern" society. B phase may take place fully during the first stage, but it may also develop partially or fully during the second stage. However, C phase in all four scenarios suggested by Hroch

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[98] John R. Lampe & Marvin R. Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550–1950. From Imperial Borderland to Developing Nations* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 86–88.

[99] Hroch, "National Self-Determination", 67.

happens during the second stage of capitalism. Moreover, "small nations were fully formed when they displayed a class structure typical of capitalist society."[100] Here arises an insurmountable obstacle in applying Hroch's model to the Balkans. By the time of the Balkan Wars there was mass nationalism in all four Balkan Christian States (Greece, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria); Montenegro with its pre-modern social structure was the only exception, being still restricted to Serbian proto-national identity.[101] However, although elements of capitalist "modern" society existed in all of them, none of them could have been characterised in such a way at the beginning of the twentieth century. Speaking of the building of Balkan nations in the nineteenth century, Stevan Pavlowitch observed: "Ethnic communities had come to a degree of self-consciousness in an often structureless environment…"[102]

There were indeed impressive improvements in the last few decades of the nineteenth century in all Balkan societies. Yet, as John Lampe put it, "the sweeping structural changes that turn growth into development would not appear in the Balkans until after the Second World War." There are several reasons for this outcome that Lampe was able to identify: (1) unproductive use of loans to expand state bureaucracies and military establishment, and not for productive purposes; (2) opposition of peasant majorities in Bulgaria and Serbia even to modest tariff and tax exemptions for native manufacture; and (3) limited size of domestic markets and shortage of industrial labour. As his title suggests, in the period 1520–1914, the Balkans was turned from imperial borderlands to capitalist periphery.[103] Therefore, capitalist society was only emerging during the second phase of the national movements of Balkan Christians and was still incomplete by the time these nations became imbued with mass nationalism.

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[100] Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A comparative analysis of the social composition of patriotic groups among the smaller European nations* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), 25–26.

[101] In spite of the fact that one of the three founding fathers of the Serbian national movement (along with Dositej Obradović and Vuk Karadžić) was the ruler of Montenegro, Prince Bishop Petar II Petrović Njegoš, and also that the Prince Bishop had already been imbued with the Serbian national spirit at the end of the eighteenth century, Montenegro was not able to reach the phase of mass nationalism by the time it ceased to exist as a separate state and united with Serbia in November 1918. Serbian nationalism coexisted with Serbian proto-national identity in Montenegro, but was restricted to the ruling house of Petrović and to a very thin layer of bureaucrats, teachers and clergymen. On Petar I Petrović and his plans for Serbian unification see Bataković, "A Balkan-Style French Revolution?", 115–116.

[102] Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans* (London and New York: Longman, 1999), 159.

[103] Lampe, "Imperial Borderlands or Capitalist Periphery", 200–202.

Another very important difference is that the national movements in the Balkans did not develop as subsystems within the empires. For most of their time, the national movements developed and were formulated in self-governed political systems, of which one was fully independent (Greece), while two (three) were self-governed (Serbia, and the two Principalities that were fused into Romania in 1861) and then, from 1878, independent. Only in the Bulgarian case the national movement developed its first and most of its second phase under Ottoman rule (1830s–1878), but in Bulgaria too the transition to mass nationalism happened in a self-governed entity and from 1885 in a state entity virtually independent from the Ottoman Empire. It is necessary therefore to propose a modified version of the Hrochian three-phase division for the Balkans, based on empirical data from the region:

Phase 1 involves the emergence among Balkan Christians of individuals capable of conceptualising vernacular, or semi-vernacular, and of writing in it. These individuals had an immediate influence on the course of national movements, although they could imbue only a limited number of other individuals with the national spirit. The proposed form of national language was to serve as a means of horizontal communication between members of an ethnic group. The main question of this period was: "Who are we?"

Phase 2 means that the political programme of unification of a given ethnic group has been formulated and accepted by the political mainstream of that ethnic group. In this phase one or another form of political liberalism is fused with national aspirations. National feelings affect educated and well-to-do strata of the ethnic group. The prior emergence of an ethnic state is desirable but not obligatory prerequisite for this stage. It poses a new question: "What to do with our non-liberated compatriots?"

Phase 3 indicates the existence of an independent ethnic state that is capable to create a broad centrally-planned educational network and to design national elite. This network harmonises regional peculiarities of historical narratives into one dominant historical narrative, setting the stage for mass nationalism. Not in a single case in the Balkans was Phase 3 possible without an ethnic state that had been created before this phase. Ethnic state and its bureaucratic and educational networks rather than developed social structure made mass nationalism possible by the beginning of the twentieth century in four out of five independent Balkan Christian states. At this stage, middle classes, particularly the bureaucratic class, are fully imbued with the national spirit and the peasantry is also affected, although unevenly. The main dilemma of this phase is: "Has the mission of national unification been fulfilled?"

It is obvious that in the period between the first signs of modern national identity in the Balkans in the 1780s and the beginning of the twentieth century, when all major Balkan nationalisms (apart from Albanian) were

already shaped and firmly established, there existed two concomitant types of identities: ethno-religious (proto-national) identity among peasants, and national identity among groups of patriots. Phase 1 was obvious among Greeks and Hungarian Serbs in the 1780s. This phase was personified by leaders of the Greek and Serbian Enlightenments, Adamantios Korais and Dositej Obradović. Among ethnic Vlachs, Phase 1 begins in the 1810s, when the cultural mainstream of Wallachia and Moldova begins opposition to pan-Byzantinism. Bulgarian Phase 1 came slightly later, in the 1830s, with the educational efforts of Neophytos of Rila, his Bulgarian grammar and his translation of the New Testament into Bulgarian vernacular.

In all independent or autonomous Balkan Christian states (the Kingdom of Hellenes, the Principality of Serbia and the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldova) Phase 2 was concomitant and could be traced back to the 1840s. In Serbia, it is connected with the rise of the bureaucratic class, which involved another inflow of Hungarian Serbs; and in Romania, with the movement for the unification of the Principalities. By the 1850s all three nascent nationalisms, Greek, Serbian and Romanian, had liberal streams, another component necessary for reaching this stage. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the ideology of liberalism proved to be the most successful catalyst of nationalism and national ideas. Phase 2 was slightly delayed in Bulgaria due to the absence of statehood and the predomination of Greek culture. In the 1850s major communities provided education in Bulgarian for the first time.[104] What logically followed was the raising of the question of ethnification of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1858/59. By the 1860s the Bulgarian population reached Phase 2. In September 1866, a young Bulgarian student of the Owens College, Ivan Evstratiev Geshov (1849–1924), announced to the British public on the pages of *The Pall Mall Gazette* that a range of Bulgarian patriots existed:

> No Bulgarian, in the present state of our national advancement, will think of himself as Russian or Servian — nationalities whose language and history are wholly distinct from ours. And, of course, the mere supposition that there are Bulgarians who think of themselves as Greeks is an anachronism. In proof of this, I beg to state that those Bulgarians who were and are educated in Russia, Servia, and Greece, and who naturally ought to have some tendency towards these countries and their nationalities, are the boldest champions of the claim to our being a separate nationality — speak and write much more purely Bulgarian than any others…[105]

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[104] Crampton, *Bulgaria*, 50.

[105] I. E. Gueshoff, *The Balkan League* (London: John Murray, 1915), v.

As soon as Bulgarian statehood was established in 1878, a liberal political stream emerged at the Constitutional Assembly (February-April 1879) and that stream prevailed over the conservative political line.[106]

The Albanians were the last Balkan proto-nation to be affected by nationalism. Their movement was seriously hampered by pre-modern social organisation, which was completely tribal in the North. In addition, both the Ottoman authorities and the Orthodox Church in the South had their reasons to suppress the development of education and culture in Albanian.[107] Although elements of Phase 1 were present in the Albanian community in southern Italy in the 1870s or even slightly earlier, it really began in Albania in the early 1880s. When Ottoman authorities did not suppress the development of schools and press in Albanian for some five years (1881–1885) this created conditions for the beginning of Phase 1.[108] By the time of the Balkan Wars Albanian nationalism was still in Phase 1. Since the Albanians were religiously divided, language became "powerful link for the union of their countrymen".[109] The adoption of Latin script for all Albanians in 1908 meant that only from that moment there were preconditions for uniting, at some later point, different regional streams of ethnic Albanians belonging to three faiths. Independence of Albania in 1912/13 came primarily as a result of Ottoman defeats. Suffice it to say that the most serious volume on nationalism published in English in the interwar period treated all major Balkan nationalisms, but failed to mention Albania at all.[110] Elements of Phase 2 appeared in interwar Albania. Mass

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[106] Kosta Todorov, *Politička istorija savremene Bugarske* [Political History of Contemporary Bulgaria] (Belgrade: Sloga, 1938), 43–45.

[107] In the nineteenth century almost two-thirds of the ethnic Albanians were Muslim. Stavro Skendi, "Language as a Factor of National Identity in the Balkans of the Nineteenth Century", *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 119:2 (April 1975), 188.

[108] Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453*, 504–505; Stavro Skendi, "Beginnings of Albanian Nationalist and Autonomous Trends: the Albanian League, 1878–1881", *American Slavic and East European Review* 12:2 (Apr. 1953), 230–232, believed that the activities of the Albanian League (1878–1881) "paved the way for the achievement of independence of 1912". This is difficult to accept since independence came as a result of external rather than internal factors. As Skendi himself admitted, there were regional patterns to the League. The Orthodox Christians of the South abstained from the League, and by that time only they had some social preconditions for a national movement. The North took the lead, but social demands among the Northern highlanders were far from national. They wanted to prevent the introduction of new laws. Therefore, I believe that the League movement should be taken as proto-national rather than national.

[109] Skendi, "Language as a Factor", 188.

[110] *Nationalism. A Report by a Study Group of Members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs* (London, New York and Toronto: OUP, 1939). Apart from chapters on

nationalism will emerge in Albania concomitantly with communist modernisation after the Second World War, although in a peculiar fusion with Marxism-Leninism and Maoism.

When King Milan of Serbia declared war on Bulgaria in 1885, he had to face popular opposition to it. On the very day the war was declared, Milan Piroćanac (1837–1897), his prime minister in 1881–1883, called it "a foolish and senseless undertaking".[111] When Serbia was defeated by Bulgaria, King Milan wished to continue the war, but even members of the General Staff opposed it.[112] Ethno-religious identity was still too strong. Peasants could not imagine why they should wage war against an ethnically very similar and religiously identical group; nor could intellectual notables accept a war the only purpose of which was to prove that Serbia should be more important than Bulgaria. Later, in the era of mass nationalism, this kind of attitude could not prevail. The second Balkan War between Christian states (1913), which gave rise to the term "balkanisation", demonstrated that political elites faced much smaller problems to mobilise national homogenisation even in wars with national groups that belonged to the same religion and spoke very similar language as was the case between Bulgarians and Serbs. By the time of the Balkan Wars, all four states (Greece, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria) obviously reached Phase 3. By the 1920s the answer to the main question of this phase: "Has the mission of national unification been fulfilled?" was only seemingly clear. In the Romanian and Serbian/Yugoslav cases it was affirmative, in the Greek and Bulgarian it could not be other than negative. By 1945 not a single Balkan national movement could have replied completely affirmatively.

One should have in mind that independent Balkan Christian countries had small percentages of urban population even at the beginning of the twentieth century.[113] Therefore, the phase of mass nationalism at the beginning of the twentieth century reflects the mood primarily in urban centres, not necessarily in all lowland rural areas, and the least clear situation was

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major European nations the volume contains a 33-page chapter on "Other European national movements" covering the nationalities of the Habsburg, Ottoman and Russian empires with special sections on Greece, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria and Montenegro (pp. 81–113).

[111] A note made on 2 November 1885: Milan Piroćanac, *Beleške* [Notes] (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2004), 184.

[112] Chedomille Mijatovich, *The Memoirs of a Balkan Diplomatist* (London: Cassel and Company, 1917), 60–61.

[113] In 1910, the urban population accounted for 24% of the total population in Greece, 19% in Bulgaria, 11% in Serbia, and 9% in Montenegro. In Romania their share was 16% in 1912. See John R. Lampe, *Balkans into Southeastern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 14.

in highland areas, where literacy rate was the lowest and pre-modern social organisation still extant, in some areas almost untouched. Only further research may clarify the pace of advancement of nationalism into lowland and highland rural areas, but two features certainly facilitated it: the egalitarian spirit and the cult of epic poetry and heroes, both common to nationalism and pre-modern social units alike.

Existence of merchant class that financed Greek and Serbian intellectuals and opening of schools in Bulgaria in the 1830s was enough for Phase 1. In Greece and Serbia the states without nationalism produced Phase 2, and thus became the states with national programmes. In one case national programme and state emerged in the same year – San Stefano Bulgaria. For Phase 3 something more was needed, a stratum of trained bureaucrats imbued with the national spirit. Foreign loans that Balkan Christian countries took from Western creditors were spent exactly to create this stratum and to strengthen the military. The bureaucratic stratum included teachers, officers, civil servants and also intellectuals, since most of them lived off state-paid jobs. This bureaucratic nationalism dominantly contributed to Phase 3 in Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria; only Romania had a slightly more complicated social structure. A study by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, published in 1939, found that one of the peculiarities of Eastern European nationalisms had to do with the fact that middle classes were comparatively small in this region "and played a limited, although undeniable part in the growth of the national movements. On the whole the professional classes (clergy, teachers, lawyers, doctors) were much more important than those who engaged in commerce or industry."[114] This conclusion is applicable to the Balkan cases analysed in this paper.

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