



Bulgarian teachers of the liberation age

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Dedicated to the memory of Nestor Markov on the occasion of his
180th birthday anniversary

Abstract When browsing through the biographies of the generation of Bulgarian teachers who lived and worked in the years around the liberation-bringing Russo-Turkish war (1877–1878), we see the clear outlines of the impediments blocking the education and development endeavors of the young Bulgarian state. Five centuries after it had been engulfed by the Ottoman empire and severed from European culture, Bulgaria was far behind the times. In this article we review the activities of eleven Bulgarian teachers who lived and worked around the time of liberation from the Ottoman rule. Their lives and activities on the borderline of two epochs strike us with their self-sacrificial efforts to overcome the enormous backwardness of the Bulgarian nation. We point out their contribution in the spheres of education and science. The biographies of these Bulgarian teachers present a vivid picture of the times and are an edifying subject to study and remember.

Introduction

The history of the Bulgarian state, stretching from its establishment

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in the seventh century to the present day, is a chain of upheavals and downfalls. Bulgaria, of all modern European states, is the oldest country to have preserved its name. During the reign of Khan Krum, of great Prince Boris and the Kings Simeon and Ivan-Asen the Second, the Bulgarian kingdom was a powerful state, bordering the lands of Franks and Germans. It was highly developed economically and culturally, but because of the presence of mighty neighbors, Bulgaria had its weaknesses.

For about two centuries (11–12th centuries AD) Bulgaria was under the rule of the Byzantine Empire. At the end of the 14th centuries it was taken over the Ottoman Turks and ceased to exist as an autonomous state for nearly five centuries [2]. After the annihilation of the Archbishopric of Ochrid (1767), the autonomous Bulgarian church was turned over to the Constantinople patriarchate [23].

During the 15–18th centuries Bulgarian culture was predominantly influenced by that of the Ottoman Empire. Toward the end of the 18th and during the 19th centuries the Bulgarian lands started seeing an upsurge of economic activity and national integration. This marked the reawakening of the Bulgarian people and an urge to establish a nation state—period known as *The Bulgarian Revival*. The Bulgarian teachers were one especially active social group, which gave a strong boost to national self-consciousness and cultural development. Following the restoration of the autonomous Bulgarian church in 1870, the clergy and the teachers were the main motivating force of the popular enlightenment and the Bulgarian uprisings [3].

This article aims to provide comprehensive information on teachers who were reared in the traditions of patriotic Bulgarian families and was graduated from the newly established Bulgarian schools of the national Revival period. In those pioneering schools, also known as *monastery schools* the pupils, instead of being placed in different classes, all studied together and the teacher tutored each one personally. The teacher was called *daskal*; this alternative name for a teacher is still in use nowadays in the Bulgarian language. At first, schools occupied a number of cells in monasteries and churches, where the Bulgarian spirit had been kept alive over the centuries. In the 15th

century such schools were founded in Boyana, Sofia, Dobrich and other locations and the first monastery school in Plovdiv opened in the 17th century.

Monastery schools were essentially primary schools with a religious orientation. In the years around the Crimean war (1853–1856) monastery schools were gradually replaced by the so-called mutual-aid schools, where the senior and more learned students took up the education of the juniors [4]. This in turn enabled a teacher to train a larger number of pupils. By the time of the Crimean war about 200 mutual-aid schools opened in different locations with a predominantly Bulgarian population. The 1860s saw the introduction of the first European-style schools, owing to the efforts of the cohort of teachers in the focus of our review. These schools consisted of separate classes, but were still a far cry from full-fledged secondary schools.

A small number of the young graduates of Bulgarian schools went on to complete their studies abroad, where they finished secondary schooling, enrolled in foreign universities and made a name for themselves as scholars in the European sense of the word. Some of them continued to work in the countries where they had made their scientific careers, mainly in Russia. For example Prof. Marin Drinov (1838–1906) [5] studied in his home town of Panagyurishte from 1855 to 1858. He then went to Russia and graduated from the Kiev Seminary and the Faculty of History and Philology of the University of Moscow. He became a Russian citizen and defended a Master's Degree thesis on the subject of the Balkan Peninsula's colonization by the Slavonic tribes (“Zaselenie Balkanskogo poluostrova slavianami”). Subsequently he became a Professor in Slavic Studies at the University of Kharkov, a member of the Academy of Sciences of Saint Petersburg, a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Krakow, a member of the Czech Academy of Sciences and Arts in Prague and a member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb.

There were not many Bulgarians boasting a similar career, because the completion of a university education abroad was quite expensive at the time and finding a sponsor was not an easy task. In this article we focus on the prevailing case of young men, who finished schooling

in Bulgarian schools, then studied abroad and upon their homecoming became teachers themselves. They authored textbooks and curricula, established community centres and lived through the Russo-Turkish war (1877–1878), also called the *Liberation War*. Some of the teachers took part in the Constituent Assembly which adopted Bulgaria’s first democratic constitution and went on working as teachers, scholars and administrators in the spheres of science and education of the young Bulgarian state [6]. In this article we introduce, the short biographies of eleven teachers, who dedicated their lives to the cultural and educational recognition of Bulgaria and whose merits are on a par with those of the famed Bulgarian revolutionaries. The present review is an extended version of paper [25], written in Bulgarian.

Educational obstacles before the Liberation

Before the end of the Crimean war (on 30 march 1856) teachers were drawn from pupils of the monastery schools. The “daskals” appointed teachers who continued to teach at their former schools in their home towns from the age of 20. After the Crimean war the Turkish Empire was in decline. Greece had been a newly-founded, autonomous state for some 30 years by then. Greek influence was especially strong in the Thracian lands, encompassing the lands bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, Balkan Mountain and Thessaloniki region, places with Bulgarian populations known in the period after 1867 as *Edirne vilayet* [27].

The end of the Crimean War ushered in the generation of teachers who modernized the teaching process and inspired pupils with studiousness and patriotism. Their activity had the moral and material support of the Bulgarian population, which was aware of the need of a better-quality education. Teachers at the time were respected and honored. Teachers were role models, undisputed authority figures and a source of inspiration to the young in their pursuit of a better and more meaningful life. The name “daskal” was used as a title and was a token of respect. Citizens who supported the town’s school and served the board of trustees were honored. Nesho Bonchev, in his article “About Schools” written in 1871, points out that in Bulgaria a

large number of schools were functioning, but that “...there is no order in the schools, no aim, we do not know what it is that we pursue... Schools must be differentiated—primary (3–4 years), real (7–8 years), grammar (7–10 years), ecclesiastical (7–8 years)... We need schools for primary teachers, institutes—for secondary school teachers... schools for crafts, painting, farming, trade.” Bonchev was an advocate of classical education: “Classical languages and literature are brain-training tools; they cannot be substituted by any of the remaining sciences, except mathematics... The organization of our schools is not a one-man task, but a task of an entire community, an entire city, an entire nation” [19].

With the exception of the small and isolated villages, being a teacher at twenty, with only an elementary education, was no longer enough. In the towns and the well-run villages there was now a growing number of class schools which had a different levels of classes: two to three classes in the villages, four to five in the cities. Class schools were a peculiar transition to the full gymnasium courses. By the April Uprising of 1876 (and before the Liberation) there were only three full secondary schools in the Bulgarian lands (in Bolgrad, Gabrovo and Plovdiv), but many class schools, also called “principal schools” [1], [8], [20]. The principal schools were autonomous entities, separate from the primary schools. Their curricula included subjects from natural and mathematical sciences and some had well-equipped laboratories as well.

These schools attracted well-trained and erudite teachers. As always, the quality of the staff determined the standard of education. Before the Liberation, there were about 600 people with higher education in the Bulgarian lands and over a third of them were medical doctors. There were 166 university graduates— 51 lawyers, 39 with a historical-philological specialty. Eleven had studied philosophy, nine had started natural sciences, seven—mathematics and 25—engineering; 47 had graduated from theological colleges [6]. Teachers in Bulgarian schools included many of the graduates from Russian seminaries. The distribution of teachers with higher education in the

Bulgarian lands was not even—they worked mainly in the big cities. We should mention the many teachers, who did not boast a higher education, but due to their perseverance and studiousness were able to catch up with their colleagues with university degrees. Petko R. Slaveikov, Dimiter Dushanov and Nestor Markov were prime examples.

Teaching was not an easy job at the time. There was a lack of textbooks and training aids in Bulgarian, as well as curricula. Therefore many teachers had to become authors of Bulgarian textbooks, translators of foreign educational literature and compilers of curricula. Joakim Gruev translated eleven and compiled 20 textbooks which underwent many editions. Nestor Markov translated one and authored seven textbooks and Dimiter Dushanov translated four textbooks and wrote two. In 1871 in Russe, Tsani Ganchev, Nestor Markov and Dimiter Enchev opened a bookshop that supplied schools, teachers, cultural clubs and anyone who wished with textbooks, reading books and school aids [9]. Those teachers also took up the difficult and responsible task of reviewing Bulgarian textbooks.

The compilation and translation of textbooks by the teachers themselves was a natural process—no one else knew the needs and the abilities of their students. At the same time all curricula suffered from a kind of subjectivity—they depended on the worldview and knowledgeability of the senior teachers. The content of the curricula preoccupied the entire Bulgarian society. There were heated arguments about whether education should be secular and *real*, or should have a humanitarian and religious bias instead. The polemics were taken up by the “Turtsia” (Turkey) and “Vremya” (Times) newspapers. After a prolonged debate, when the aspiration to join the family of developed, modern states became nation-wide, real education prevailed in the early 1870s. The study of mathematics, physics, chemistry, natural science and foreign languages was widely introduced in the curricula. A model of an excellent curriculum was that of the Gabrovo school. Called “A Rulebook for the Students of the Gabrovo School”, it was compiled by Ivan Gyuzelev, Raycho Karolev, Peter Genchev and Vasil Mihov [10]. One of the ways to align the curricula and raise the profes-

sional level was the teacher's assemblies [1, 20]. Teachers of the larger cities and the good schools shared their experience and knowledge with their colleagues from the smaller towns and villages. Thus, gradually, the Bulgarian school education system took shape and its quality level was comparatively good. In 1876 American journalist, Januarius McGahan, visited the school in Sliven. He wrote "I was surprised to see such a well organized school, equipped with all modern aids, in this secluded village, in this almost obscure corner of the Balkan Peninsula" [1]. The idea to open a higher school grew to maturity and came to life after the Liberation. Alongside problems with procuring the necessary school equipment and finding qualified teachers, there was another thread the strong Hellenic influence over Bulgarian society. The long years of Greek influence upon the Church and religious and commercial life had shaped a stratum of wealthy Bulgarians, who spoke Hellenic fluently and admired everything Greek. These followers of the Greek way of life, the so-called "grecophiles", hindered the national awareness of the Bulgarian population. The Greek influence was especially strong in Southern Bulgarian lands, on the border with Greece. The Greek "Megali Idea" aimed at the annexation of the Bulgarian lands south of the Balkan mountain and Macedonia. This was only a question of time, given Turkey's decline. Therefore one of the main tasks of our educators was the widespread study of Bulgarian language and history in order to break away from grecophilia and foster a feeling of pride of the Bulgarian identity.

In 1865 to 1866 Midhat Pasha, Vali of the Danube vilayet, proposed the merger of the Bulgarian and the Turkish schools [10]. He had witnessed the quick advance of Bulgarian education, which was making Turkish authorities anxious. His idea was met with a strong resistance by both sides. Bulgarians defended the right to have schools of their own, while Muslims did not want their children to study together with infidel people (turkish: g?vur). So the idea about merging the schools was stillborn—a typical example of a clash of two different societies and cultures in one nation [7].

The progress of education after the Liberation

After the Russo-Turkish Liberation war of 1877–78 Bulgarian society needed the rapid cultivation of an adequate number of educated people, capable of giving an impetus to the cultural progress of the society. After the April Uprising of 1876 most schools were closed and classes were terminated. Some of the teachers of the Gabrovo High School like Nestor Markov, Tsani Ginchev, Raycho Karolev, Peter Genchev were arrested and jailed at the Tarnovo prison. Following their release, they took teaching jobs at the ecclesiastical school of The Saints Peter and Paul Monastery near the city of Lyaskovets, turning it into a secondary school. When the war of Liberation broke out, many teachers offered their services to the Russian army command—Nestor Markov was a translator at the Gen. Josif Gurko headquarters and Petko Gorbánov was a scout.

After the end of the war some teachers returned to their primary occupation, while others joined the administration, because educated and intelligent civil servants were in great demand. Many of the latter occasionally taught at large schools and did their best to be of benefit to newly liberated Bulgaria, both to the Principality of Bulgaria and to Eastern Rumelia. Ivan Gyuzelev, teacher of Mathematics at the Gabrovo high school became an assistant to Prof. Marin Drinov, who had just returned from Russia. Drinov organized the post-liberation educational system and was later elected a government Minister of Public Education. Joakim Gruev was head of Public Education in Eastern Rumelia and a high school headmaster. Tsani Ginchev was a regional school inspector of the Vratsa and Oryahovo districts. Yossif Kovachev was in turn head of the Public Education department in Plovdiv, a school inspector in Sofia and a professor at a newly-opened secondary school. Raycho Karolev was headmaster of the Gabrovo secondary school and a minister of education.

The provisional Russian administration created a Department of Education and Spiritual Affairs, headed by Prof. Marin Drinov. The department officials found a rather well-organized secular system of schools dating back to pre-Liberation times. Reforms commenced and Marin Drinov came up with Russian structural models whenever Bul-

garian traditions offered no solution to a given problem [11]. This referred especially to the structure of the school inspectorate, the school system and the content of the curricula. Nevertheless the regulations and laws introduced by the provisional Russian administration did not impose the “Russian model” on Bulgarian education. According to Article 78 of the Tarnovo Constitution “primary education is free and mandatory to all Bulgarian subjects.” The mandatory and free primary schooling of children of both sexes was the main difference from the Russian educational system, where education was not mandatory [11].

The changes that came into effect affirmed the state control of education and a uniform school system with unified school schedules and curricula. Administration bodies on central, regional and local level were established. This was the foundation upon which, in the years to come, various ministers would oversee the further “construction” of educational affairs. The most difficult and controversial points were the way of financing, the selection of a model for the development of Bulgarian education and the problem with the qualification and training of school staff. Over several years different financing schemes were proposed, which took into account the practices in neighboring states, Europe and America. New schemes for the composition of curricula and requirements, concerning the students, were proposed. The influence of European models grew ever stronger. In spite of that administrators did not cease juggling with reorganizations and novel educational schemes until the very beginning of the 20th century, when the European educational model was finally adopted. The ministers Konstantin Jirek (term of office 11.05.1881–5.07.1882), Dimitar Agura (15.03.1883–21.08.1883) and Raycho Karolev (11.07.1884–21.08.1886) played a major role in this process.

Let us next trace in brief the life of Nestor Markov, whose 180th birthday anniversary we mark this year and of ten other teachers who were his contemporaries, followers and in some cases, close companions and friends.

Nestor Markov (1836–1916)

The personal and professional life of Markov reflects many of the above mentioned difficulties. Markov, fresh from a monastery school, at twenty became a teacher in his home village of Krivo pole in the district of Haskovo. This was not enough, however, for the knowledge-thirsty young man. He continued his studies in Haskovo and took up teaching again, this time in Harmanli, where he enjoyed the love and respect of both his students and the townspeople. However, Nestor Markov was libeled by local grecophiles. He was said to have ordered students to march, to sing rebellious songs and that he incited them against the authorities. These grecophiles contracted two hired murderers, but Markov, aided by a herdsman, managed to escape them. This dangerous episode was immortalized in a folk song, dedicated to daskal Nestor. Being banned from teaching, he embarked on the road to learning again, this time in Plovdiv, at the high School headed by Joakim Gruev—the only such school in Eastern Rumelia. “For 28 years the Plovdiv school prepared some of the most distinguished Bulgarian teachers, pedagogues and enlighteners” [20]. Markov simultaneously attended the Turkish ecclesiastical school (medresset), as well as lectures by protestant missionaries. In Plovdiv he learned Hellenic, Turkish, Arabian and his beloved French languages. After his stay in Plovdiv Markov was again appointed a teacher in Haskovo, but didn’t keep this job for long. Well known for his battles with the grecophiles, Markov was greeted with animosity by the influential followers of the Greek way and was arrested and incarcerated in Plovdiv. Stoyan Zaimov wrote: “The awakening of the Bulgarian spirit in Haskovo has two landmarks—the landmark of Nestor Markov—whose banner is a free Bulgarian church and the landmark of Berkovsky—great and free Bulgaria” [23]. Nestor was released following the active defense of influential Haskovo citizens but was banned from teaching within the whole Edirne vilayet.

In 1867, following a recommendation by Joakim Gruev Nestor, Markov was appointed a senior teacher at the Pleven school. Pleven marked the beginning of the mature period in his career. It was probably here that Markov joined the secret revolutionary committee founded

by Vassil Levski [12]. Being young, far-sighted and full of energy and love of his work, he proved himself to be a real reformer of education in the city and environs. The success of Nestor Markov was due also to the respect and great support he received from the notables and all of the citizens of Pleven. In Pleven Markov opened a municipal school for girls and in 1869 he initiated the establishment of the Saglasie (Accord) Community Centre [13]. In this cultural club, the first theatrical play in the city, directed by Nestor Markov himself, was staged [13]. Meanwhile he opened schools in eight villages around Pleven.

There another important event in his life took place. In 1868 Markov married Ekaterina hajji Konstantinova hajji Pakova. She belonged to the notable Pleven-based hajji Pakovi family, the so-called Pleven Castriots, a branch of the big clan of George Castriot (Skanderbeg), national hero of the Albanians [28]. Ekaterina gave birth to a daughter and five sons. Among them was a scholar in microbiology, Prof. Vladimir Markov, a medical doctor, Prof. Konstantin Markov, a lawyer, Ivan Markov, a coal mine owner and developer, Svetoslav Markov and a mathematician, Marko Markov, who was killed as a volunteer member of a detachment in the Ilinden-Preobrazhenie Uprising [19].

Nestor Markov taught in Russe, then again in Pleven, at the Gabrovo High School and the ecclesiastical school of the Saints Peter and Paul Monastery near Lyaskovets, which was converted into a secular secondary school after the April Uprising of 1876[2]. Everywhere he was greeted with great respect and affection because of his dedicated work and innovations in the field of education. The Russo-Turkish War broke out and in the autumn of 1877 Nestor Markov was enlisted as an interpreter at General Gurko's headquarters. He, went with the Russian troops, went all the way to San Stefano. Thanks to the high prestige that he had earned with his honesty and diligent work, after the war he was appointed by the provisional Russian authority as a secretary to the Chief Administrator of Haskovo district and later—as the Haskovo Prefect [9]. Simultaneously Markov chaired the Unity Committee (“Edinstvo”) of Haskovo, which was delegated to play a very important role in the political life of the postwar newly formed

autonomous part of Bulgaria, called *Eastern Rumelia* [17]. Thus began the career road of Nestor Markov as a senior civil servant in newly liberated Bulgaria. Afterwards he was appointed a Prefect of the entire district of Stara Zagora (1879–1882) [14]. In this city, most of which had been burnt down to the ground, the organizational skills of Nestor Markov and his extraordinary capacity for work was fully revealed. The prime concern of building homes for the thousands-strong population did not override one of the most important tasks, the construction of the Secondary schools for girls and boys in Stara Zagora. This achievement made his heart beat with pride. His appointment as District Governor of Tarnovo followed (1882-1884) [9].

After the death of Russian emperor Alexander the Second, (from April 4 till August 3, 1883) Markov was entrusted as caretaker of the Ministry of the Interior as a deputy to Gen. Sobolev, who had to attend the coronation of Alexander the Third in Russia [15]. One year later he was appointed District Governor of Russe (1884-1886) and was elected a deputy in the third Constituent Assembly from the constituency of Harmanli [9]. Since Markov did not exactly enjoy the affection of then Prince Ferdinand and Prime Minister Stefan Stambolov, he relinquished his administrative position and devoted himself again to the teaching profession between 1887 and 1893, teaching consecutively at Sofia's First Secondary School for Boys and the Prince Boris State-owned Secondary School in Russe. Between 1901 and 1903 he was appointed a district governor of Varna and Plovdiv, but continued his scholarly activities.

Nestor Markov published seven textbooks in Mathematics and Grammar and books in Turkish and French. Markov's most important scholarly contributions were made in the fields of Mathematics, Physics and of Lexicography. He made an authorized translation from the French of J. Olivier's textbook in Algebra, Geometry and Statistics. He compiled the first collection of mathematical problems for Bulgarian schools. The biggest cultural and scientific achievement of Nestor Markov became his Bulgarian-French and French-Bulgarian dictionaries, which appeared in several editions and won high praise from the Republic of France [16]. For the first editions in 1894 and 1898 he

was awarded the honorary title “Knight of Education” of the French Ministry of Education and Arts. The high quality of the pocket-sized dictionaries was attested by the fact that the German publishers released two extra editions in 1929 and 1940, after his death.

His contribution in the sphere of lexicography is considerable. V. Kyuvlieva writes: “Alongside the Turkish language which was being taught in the Bulgarian class schools for political reasons, being the official language in the Turkish Empire, Nestor Markov introduced and taught French in the cities of Pleven, Russe and Gabrovo, convinced as he was in its usefulness for the young Bulgarian generation. The ambitious teacher certainly saw in the French language one of the means to overcome the centuries-long isolation from the European cultural processes, which had been imposed on Bulgaria. France attracted the attention of Bulgarian social activists not with its cultural achievements alone, but also with its democratic social and political atmosphere, as a counter thesis to the retrograde Turkish Orient. French, with its established function of an international language, widely used in diplomacy, politics, cultural and commercial ties in the European world, was gaining a fast popularity in our schools. Nestor Markov’s merit in this process is undeniable” [24].

In conclusion, I quote a character description of Markov, which appeared in *New Era*, a Varna-based newspaper, on Aug.25 1901: “Mr. Nestor Markov is the one and only district governor, who is leaving the best possible memories of himself both as a human person and as a public servant in the entire district. Overflowing with wisdom and kindness, a trusted authority on his job and the laws, a great worshipper of justice and the rule of law, invulnerable and permeated by tactfulness and common sense in his actions and above all—obsessed by the thought to set a beginning and help the economic and cultural elevation of the district, he has ardently given in to his deed after successfully pacifying the party spirits and inspiring respect towards the authorities. The entire population is caught by surprise of his sudden transference. The leave-taking and the parting of Mr. Markov with the consuls, the officials and the citizens were extremely cordial and extremely intimate. We share the joy of the people of Plovdiv that

they will have, as a foremost representative of the Government and of the Crown, such a clever and kind man”.

The above description can apply, to a large extent, to the next ten contemporaries of Nestor Markov.

Joakim Gruev (1828–1912)

Gruev was born in Koprivshtitsa and studied in Koprivshtitsa and at a Greek school in Plovdiv. He taught in his home town from 1848 to 1856. He headed the “Cyril and Methodius” Class School in Plovdiv, which was considered to be the best of its kind at the time. There he introduced the study of Turkish and Greek languages. He became one of the initiators to celebrate May 24 as the Day of Bulgarian Letters and Enlightenment. He was chairman of the City Council of Plovdiv from 1871 to 1872 and Turkish commissioner in Haskovo in 1875. He took part in the fight for the restoration of the autonomous Bulgarian church. Following the establishment of Bulgarian Exarchate, he became a member of the Eparchial Council in Plovdiv. During the April Uprising he was arrested. After the liberation of Bulgaria chaired the Judicial Council in Eastern Rumelia, headed the Department of Education (1879–1884), was a counseling member of the High Administrative Court and a high school headmaster. He was a co-founder of Plovdiv’s Scientific-Literary Society and was a member of the Bulgarian Literary Society (BLS) [1] from 1884. His more important works were nine textbooks and five novels.

Tsani Ginchev (1832–1894)

Ginchev was born in Lyaskovets. He studied at first at a monastery school in the local cloister and then in Tarnovo and finished secondary schooling in Belgrade. There he collected folk songs, legends and fairy tales. He graduated from the Odessa Seminary. In 1860 he enrolled at the St. Vladimir University of Kiev and attended lectures in Natural Sciences for two years. From 1862 till 1869 was a teacher at the Bulgarian colony in Karaagach, Bessarabia. He Taught in Russe from 1870 to 1872. Alongside fellow teachers Nestor Markov and Dimitar Enchev, he opened a bookshop. He taught natural sciences at the

Gabrovo high school from 1872 to 1876). During the April Uprising was detained, together with all other teachers. After the Liberation became a teacher at the Class School for Boys in Tarnovo. In the course of the Liberation war he was appointed by Gen. Gurko as a member of the provisional City Governing Committee and as a chairman of the District Governing Council (1878–1879). After the Liberation became a district governor in Oryahovo (1879–1880). He took part in the Constituent Assembly and was elected a representative in the First Grand National Assembly. He served as District School Inspector of the Vratsa and Oryahovo districts (1881–1884) and taught at the High School in Lom and at the Secondary School for Girls in Tarnovo (1886–1893). He chaired the Tarnovo Unity Committee and was the publisher and editor of Trud Magazine (1887–1893). In 1884 participated in the First Congress of the Bulgarian writers and journalists. He became a member of the BLS in 1884. He was the bearer of the Order of Civil Merit, Second degree, awarded in 1892. He published poems and folklore material and also published a textbook in agriculture and two novels.

Todor Nikolov Shishkov (1833–1896)

Shishkov was born in Tarnovo and studied at the class school in Elena. He taught in Kilifarevo (1848–1849), in Tarnovo (1851–1852) and Stara Zagora (1856–1861). He initiated the opening of a community centre in Stara Zagora. He then studied literature at the Sorbonne and College de France, attended lectures in Slavic studies in Prague (1866). He served as a correspondent of Kolokol newspaper. Following his return to Bulgaria he became a teacher of English and Bulgarian languages, Physics and Arithmetic in Sliven, Gorna Oryahovitsa and Tarnovo. He was chairman of the board of the Tarnovo community center, where he also read lectures. He took part in the city's theatrical life. From 1871 till 1873 he was a teacher and manager of the Bulgarian school in Fener, Istanbul. After the Liberation he was consecutively a teacher in Gabrovo and Varna, Chief of Staff of the Varna governor (1879), Prosecutor in Shumen, Chief Magistrate of the Shumen and Svishtov district courts, inspector of the Svishtov educational

district (1881–1885). He taught at the secondary schools in Gabrovo, Russe and Varna. He contributor to several newspapers and magazines and was the author of five textbooks and two dramatic plays.

Dimiter Dushanov (1837–1904)

Dushanov was born in Kazanlak in the family of the noted teacher of the Revival period, Tacho Mangata. He studied in his home town and continued to teach there in 1852 and 1853. He continued his studies in the Edirne Greek school and the Greek school in Kurucesme, Istanbul (1856). In 1859 he came back to Kazanlak and devoted himself to teaching from 1860 to 1871. He worked in Haskovo in 1869 and 1870 and in Tulcha, Karnobat, Pleven, Sevlievo and Plovdiv. He became secretary of the Kazanlak district government (1878–1879). He married Rahil Barak-Dushanova, a Serbian teacher in Bulgaria. He contributed to various periodicals and was the author of three textbooks and two novels.

Josef Kovachev (1839–1898)

Kovachev was born in Stip, then a Bulgarian town. He studied at a mutual-aid school in his hometown and taught at Gilyani from 1855 to 1859. He continued his studies at the Belgrade Secondary School (1859), moved to the Kiev Seminary (1861) and studied at the Kiev Ecclesiastical Academy (1864–1868). Upon graduation, he became a teacher in Gabrovo. He taught in Stip and Prilep (1869–1871), where he introduced a number of changes in the school practice, creating a new type of pedagogical school. He was a school inspector in Kyustendil (1872–1873) and a teacher in Prilep (1874–1877). During the Russo-Turkish War, Kovachev was arrested. After the Liberation he headed the Public Education Department in Plovdiv (1878) and served as a school inspector in Sofia (1879), took part in the Constituent Assembly, he was a chief secretary of the Ministry of the Interior (1880–1881) and mayor of Sofia (1886–1887). He headed the Department of Philosophy and Pedagogy at the University of Sofia (1888–1898) and became the University's first professor-donor. He bequeathed his rich library to the secondary school of Thessaloniki and the seminary of

Istanbul. He was a member of the BLS since 1884, a temporary contributor to *Den* newspaper in 1875 and *Periodichesko Spisanie* magazine (1876). He was the author of three textbooks.

Todor Peev (1842–1904)

Peev was born in Etropole and studied in Etropole, Lovech and Sofia as a student of Sava Philaretov. In 1859 he became an assistant teacher in Sofia and from 1860 to 1861 he taught in Samokov. He studied further at the French Catholic College in Babek, Istanbul (1862–1864). With a recommendation from French missionary E. Boret, Peev was appointed a senior teacher in Silistra (1865–1867). It did not take long for him to put his school on a par with the best class schools in Bulgaria. He introduced the study of foreign languages, Physics, Chemistry and Rhetoric. He also helped with the opening of many village schools. Following the example of the Lyceum programme, he compiled a project for the opening of a central Bulgarian school. In the same dynamic manner he revitalized the education practice in Kyustendil (1867–1870) and in his home town (1870–1872). He initiated the establishment of community centers in Kyustendil and Etropole and chaired the Etropole Revolutionary Committee, set up by national hero Vassil Levski. He emigrated to Romania and became a member of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee in Bucharest (1874). He served as a teacher and headmaster of the Bulgarian school in Braila (1873–1876). He was secretary of the BLS (1873–1876) and editor of its mouthpiece—*Periodichesko Spisanie* (1873–1876). He took part in the preparation of the Stara Zagora and the April Uprisings. After the Liberation he was chairman of the Orhaniye District Council (1878), Governor of the districts of Zlatitsa, Kyustendil, Varna, Pleven and Svishtov, official at the State Council (1881–1883), Varna District Governor (1899) and trade agent in Skopje (1899–1901). He was a member of the BLS (1884) and secretary of the BLS in Sofia (1884–1885). He was the author of the first original Bulgarian novel (*Fufulesku*, the Successful Son-in-law of Hajji Stefania), written in 1876, but only published a century later in 1976.

Petar Genchev (1843–1905)

Genchev was born in Lyaskovets. He was Tsani Ginchev's brother. Until 1858 he studied in Lyaskovets and finished schooling at the Odessa seminary (1858–1861). In 1861 he enrolled in the Kiev Ecclesiastical Academy, from which he graduated with a Master of Theology degree (1871). After his homecoming he taught in Gabrovo (1871–1876). Together with Raycho Karolev, Ivan Gyuzelev and Vassil Mihov he compiled a "Rulebook for the students of the Gabrovo school" and curricula for the main men's and women's schools. He taught Bulgarian and Old Church Slavonic languages and made a donation to the school to buy equipment for a physics room and a chemistry laboratory. During the April Uprising Genchev was arrested and taken to the Tarnovo prison with the rest of the teachers. Following his release he became a teacher in literature at the Seminary of the St. Peter and Paul Monastery near Lyaskovets (1876–1877). During the Russo-Turkish War he was a clerk in the office of the Tarnovo governor. After the Liberation he was a People's Representative in the Constituent Assembly. He was a longstanding Head of Department at the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ecclesiastical Matters between 1878 and 1892. In 1886 he was sent on a mission to Istanbul concerning the arrangement of the schools in Macedonia. He was a member of BLS since 1884 and the Society's secretary (1882–1884) and auditor (1898). He was decorated with the Order of St. Alexander, fifth degree (1886), fourth degree (1888) and second degree (1891).

Ivan Gyuzelev (1844–1916)

Gyuzelev was born in Gabrovo and studied in his hometown. He enrolled at the Herson Seminary in Odessa as a scholarship student of the Russian Holy Synod in 1860 and graduated in 1867. He continued his education at the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics of the New Russian University in Odessa. Upon completion of his studies in 1871 he returned to Gabrovo as a teacher in Physics and Mathematics. He initiated the raising of funds to equip the first school laboratory in physics in Bulgaria. He was a co-author of The programme of the

Gabrovo Secondary School, titled “Rulebook for the Students of the Gabrovo School”. He opened the so called Popular University and a theater at the community center. During the April Uprising he was arrested. After the Liberation he moved to Sofia as the right-hand man of Marin Drinov in the organization of school affairs. He was deputy in the Constituent Assembly from the quota of Prince Dondukov [15]; secretary of the Assembly, Minister of Education (March–November 1880) and chairman of the Supreme Chamber of Accounts (1880–1894). He worked at the Clerks’ Cooperative Savings Society (1905). He became a member of Plovdiv’s Scientific-Literary Society and of the BLS in 1884. He was decorated with the Order of St. Alexander, fifth degree (1888), fourth degree (1889) and third degree (1900). He wrote six textbooks.

Raicho Karolev (1846–1928)

Karolev was born in Gabrovo and studied at the local mutual-aid school. He attended the Seminary from 1863 to 1866 and the Ecclesiastical Academy in Kiev in 1871. He wrote an essay, entitled “About the Bogomils”, published in *Periodichesko Spisanie* magazine (1871–1873), which brought him the academic title, Master of Theology. He was a teacher in Gabrovo and headmaster of the Gabrovo secondary school (1875). He represented the town at the Eparchial Council in Tarnovo (1872). During the April Uprising he was arrested with the rest of the teachers and taken to the Tarnovo prison. After the Liberation he chaired the Gabrovo District Council (July 1878), inspected the schools in the Russe district (1878–1879) and served as a headmaster of the Gabrovo Secondary School (1880–1884). He was a representative in the Constituent Assembly from the quota of Prince Dondukov [15] and took part in the debate on the constitution of the Principality of Bulgaria. He was briefly a chairman of the Vidin Administrative Council and co-initiator of a museum to be set up in Gabrovo. He was elected a deputy in the Fourth General Assembly (1884), was Minister of Education from June 1884 to August 1886. He summoned the first teachers’ assembly after the Liberation (1886) and served as teacher and headmaster of the First Secondary School

for Boys in Sofia (1886–1890). Karolev, together with Dimitar Mishev and Stefan Kostov, founded the St. Kliment Literary Society in 1888. He later served as headmaster of the Secondary School for Boys in Plovdiv (1890–1894), Department Chief in the Ministry of Education (1894), chairman of the committee overseeing the state examinations of teachers on probation and director of the National Library in Sofia (1895–1899). He managed the Office of Statistics (1899). He taught at the Sofia Secondary School for Girls. Karolev was adviser at the Supreme Chamber of Accounts, a member of the BLS (1884) and later a member of the Board of Managers of BLS (1898–1899). He was awarded the Order for Civil Merits, fourth degree. He was the author and translator of six textbooks.

Petko Gorbanov (1846–1909)

Gorbanov was born in Elena, studied in Elena, at the Kiev seminary and graduated from Robert College in Istanbul (1864-1868) where he stayed as a teacher of Bulgarian language from 1869 to 1872. In Bulgaria he taught in Plovdiv from 1872 to 1874 and in Elena. After the April Uprising he accompanied Lady Strangford on her tour of Bulgaria. During the Russo-Turkish war he was a scout under Russian command. After the Liberation he worked as a lawyer and politician. He was a deputy in the Constituent Assembly, Chief Secretary of the Ministry of Justice and assistant mayor of Sofia. He was Prince Battemberg's Bulgarian language teacher. He served as the people's representative in Parliament, under the chairman of the Ninth General Assembly (1896–1898). He was the bearer of the Order of St. Stanislaw, third degree. He wrote "A Handbook of Instructions for Teachers" .

Conclusion

Determining cultural identity is considered to be a prime mark of a given society [7]. The Revival Period of the Bulgarian people was characterized by the struggle for national liberation, separation from the Muslim world and incorporation into European culture. Bulgarians, whose ethnicity predetermined their affiliation to the European

world, considered the Ottoman Empire as their enslaver and oppressor and the return to the Christian European civilization as their priority. The Bulgarian teachers, clergymen and revolutionaries who lived and worked around the time of Liberation, made the largest contribution to the growth of national consciousness, education and science in the developing third Bulgarian state and to the relatively quick catching up with the modern world after five centuries of hibernation. This paper pays due respect to the efforts of the Bulgarian teachers of the revival period and celebrates their deeds and lives, which serve as an example to contemporary colleagues and the entire society.

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