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The Splitting of the Orthodox Millet as a Secularizing Process

*The Clerical-Lay Assembly of the Bulgarian Exarchate
(Istanbul 1871)*

In the fall of 1858 the first session of the Millet-i Provisional Council was convened at Fener, in the headquarters of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Istanbul; this has become known as the “*Ethnosynelefsi*” (“National Assembly”)¹, i.e. an assembly of clerical and lay representatives of the Orthodox millet (= religious community in the Ottoman Empire) resulting from the articles of a famous imperial decree, that of the Hatt-i Hümayûn of 1856.² The Assembly’s proceedings went on for two years, and led to the creation of a “constitutional” text, the General Regulations, which for the

¹ We should be cautious about calling the assembly of the millet’s representatives in 1858–1860 a “National Assembly” or “National” Provisional Council. The Ottoman text refers to a “commission” (*komisyon*), which undertook the task of formulating the General Regulations. The term “national” became established in Greek texts of the late 19th century, when the developments described in this article as the “splitting of the millet” were re-interpreted as the “rise of the nation”, i.e., the Greek nation, within the framework of the Ottoman Empire. However, this is an anachronism and a projection of national stereotypes onto a more complex reality. For this reason, for the Assembly of 1858–1860, we will employ the term *Millet-i Assembly*, viz., Assembly of the Orthodox millet (although the great majority of representatives were Greek Orthodox, particularly after the withdrawal of two of the four Bulgarian representatives), or Patriarchate’s Assembly, in order to distinguish it from the Assembly of the Bulgarian Exarchate.

² There were 23 lay representatives to the Millet-i Assembly (ten from Istanbul and thirteen from the provinces), and only seven clerics. Its Secretary was Michail Th. Afthonides, the Chief Secretary of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and the delegate of the Sublime Porte was Server efendi, the Foreign Ministry’s Director of Correspondence. See CHRYSANTHOS FILIPIDES, ARCHBISHOP OF ATHENS, “Οι Γενικοί Κανονισμοί του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου επί τη βάσει του κώδικος ΤΕ΄ του Πατριαρχικού Αρχιεποφύλακτου (Πρακτικά Εθνοσυνελεύσεως 1858–1860)” [The General Regulations of the Ecumenical Patriarchate according to the Codex ΤΕ΄ of the Patriarchate’s Chancery]. *Πρακτικά Ακαδημίας Αθηνών* [Proceedings of the Academy of Athens] (1946), pp. 6–7.

first time institutionalized the participation of the lay element in the election of the Patriarch as well as in the administration of the Patriarchate through the establishment of a new organ, the Standing Mixed Council, eight of whose twelve members belonged to the laity.³

In February 1871, one year after the Sublime Porte (which at the time was headed by the Grand Vizier Âli paşa) issued the imperial decree (*ferman*) which foresaw the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate, there was convened at Ortaköy (Mesochori), in Istanbul also the Church National Assembly⁴ of the Exarchate's supporters.⁵ The Assembly met from 23 February until 24 July of that same year; its basic task was to construct a Statute for the Exarchate, a constitutional map according to which it would operate in the future.⁶ Clearly, the convocation of this Clerical-Lay Assembly was the

³ *Γενικοί Κανονισμοί περί διευθετήσεως των εκκλησιαστικών και εθνικών πραγμάτων των υπό τον Οικουμενικόν θρόνον διατελούντων Ορθοδόξων Χριστιανών υπηκόων της Α. Μεγαλειότητος του Σουλτάνου* [General Regulations concerning the arrangement of ecclesiastical and national affairs of the Orthodox Christians subjects of His Majesty the Sultan under the Ecumenical Throne]. Constantinople 1862. The text has been published in French by L. ΡΕΠΠ, “Règlements Généraux de L’Église Orthodoxe en Turquie”, *Revue de L’Orient Chrétien* 3 (1898). For the text in its Ottoman version, see DÜŞTÜR, vol. 2, pp. 902–937. For the translation into Modern Turkish: YORGO BENLİSOY AND ELÇİN MACAR, *Fener Patrikhanesi* [Patriarchate of Fener, viz. Ecumenical Patriarchate]. Ankara, 1996, pp. 71–107. The most recent treatment of this topic is DEMETRIOS STAMATOPOULOS, *Μεταρρύθμιση και Εκκοσμίκευση: προς μια ανασύνθεση της Ιστορίας του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου τον 19^ο αιώνα* [Reform and Secularization: Towards a Reconstruction of the History of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the 19th Century]. Athens: Alexandria, 2003.

⁴ The term is a translation of *Ĉarkovno-narodniyat Sâbor* [=Church National Assembly], employed usually by Bulgarian historians. Henceforth, we will make use of the terms “Exarchate’s Assembly”, “Clerical-Lay Assembly” or “Church National Assembly” interchangeably.

⁵ Fifteen members of the Provisional Mixed Council (5 clerics and 10 “delegates”) and 35 representatives from provinces with Bulgarian populations participated in the proceedings, whose secretary was M. Balabanov. See Z. MARKOVA, *Bâlgarskata Ekzarhija, 1870–1879* [The Bulgarian Exarchate, 1870–1879]. Sofia, 1989, pp. 324–326. Markova draws primarily from At. ŠOPON, *Pârvjat Bâlgarski Narodni Sâbor v Carigrad (Materiali za istorijata mu)* [The First Bulgarian National Assembly in Istanbul (materials for its history)] *Biblioteka* 7 (1896), pp. 51–52.

⁶ For the text of the Statute of the Exarchate, see *Pravilnik na Pârvija Bâlgarski Ĉarkovno-Naroden Sâbor*, [The Statute of the first Bulgarian Church National Assembly]. Istanbul, 1871, HRISTO TEMELSKI (ed.), *Ĉarkovno-Narodniyat Sâbor 1871 g. Dokumentalen sbornik no sluĉaj 130-godišnina ot Pârvija Ĉarkovno-Naroden Sâbor*, [The Church National Assembly of 1871: Collection of documents on the occasion of the 130th anniversary of the First Church National Assembly]. Sofia, 2001, pp. 426–457. We employ Temelski’s edition as our basic source for presentation of the Assembly’s proceedings. For the Assembly of 1871, see the introduction by Temelski in the same edition, as well

critical turning-point between the recognition of the Exarchate on behalf of the Ottoman state and the announcement of the Schism, i.e., the condemnation of the Exarchate by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in September 1872.

In theory, the view has been expressed – and this has been the traditional position of Bulgarian national historiography – that the formation of a Bulgarian church within the framework of the Ottoman Empire was the result of a process that began with the recognition of the Greek Autocephalous Church in 1850. The splitting of the Orthodox millet through the gradual parceling out of the Empire by the nationalist movements which erupted in its European territories inevitably led to the creation of nationalized ecclesiastical bodies which were forced to confront the problem of their degree of dependence on the Great Church.⁷

Bulgarian historiography has generally dealt with the founding of the Exarchate by the imperial decree of February 1870 as a Promethean moment of national awakening.⁸ For its part, Greek historiography dealt with the

as ZINA MARKOVA, *op.cit.*, pp. 31–46, ILIYA TODEV, *Dr. Stojan Čomakov (1819–1893)*. Sofia, 2003, vol. I, pp. 343–48, and the classic work of T. ST. BURMOV, *Bálgaro-gárčkata čarkovna raspira*. Sofia, 1902, and especially pp. 487–501.

⁷ During the 1830s and 1840s, the Bulgarian nationalist movement had insisted on the spread of schools at which Bulgarian would be taught, and on imposing Slavonic as the language of the Divine Liturgy in the churches. In the 1850s, however, with the support of the Bulgarian community of Istanbul, the goal shifted to the adoption of the demand for an independent church. On this issue see O. MAZDRAKOVA – CARDAROVA, “The political struggle of the Bulgarian people for legitimate national representation, 1840s - 1860s”, *Etudes Balkaniques* 1 (1996), pp. 58–79.

⁸ Of course, there is a very substantial relevant bibliography in Bulgarian historiography. See among others *Bálgarskata pravoslavna carkva i osvoboždenieto na Bálgarija ot Osmansko robstvo*. Docum.sb. po slučaj 110g. ot osvoboždenieto. [The Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the Liberation of Bulgaria from Ottoman Slavery. Collection of documents on the occasion of 110 years from the Liberation]. Sinod. Izd., 1989; NIKOLA NAČOV, *Pogled vārhu dejatelnostta na Bálgarskata Ekzarhija, 1878–1902* [A view on the activity of the Bulgarian Exarchate, 1878–1902]. Sofia, 1902; KIRIL, PATRIARCH BÁLGARSKI, *Graf N.P. Ignatiev i bálgarskijat carkoven vāpros. Izsledvanija i dokumenti*, [Count N. P. Ignatiev and the Bulgarian Church Question. Studies and documents]. Sofia, 1958; KIRIL, PATRIARCH BÁLGARSKI, *Bálgarskata ekzarhija v Odrinsko i Makedonija sled Osvoboditelnata Vojna 1877–1878* [The Bulgarian Exarchate in Adrianople and Macedonia after the War of Liberation 1877–78]. Sofia, 1961, and last but not least Z. MARKOVA, *Bálgarskata Ekzarhija, 1870–1879*. In the Greek bibliography, see CHRYSOSTOMOS PAPA-DOPOULOS, *H Εκκλησία της Βουλγαρίας (865–1938)* [The Church of Bulgaria (865–1938)]. Athens, 1957; P. MATALAS, *Έθνος και Ορθοδοξία. Από το «ελλαδικό» στο βουλγαρικό σχίσμα* [Nation and Orthodoxy. From the “Greek” to the Bulgarian Schism]. Athens, 2002, and, for an interesting case of a Bulgarian writing in Greek, GEORGI VELICKOV, *H Βουλγαρική Εξαρχία κατά τις βουλγαρικές και ελληνικές πηγές (1870–1945)* [The Bulgar-

1872 Schism, i.e. the rejection of the Bulgarian Exarchate by the Local Synod convened at the Patriarchate, as the apogee of the ecumenical nature of the latter, given that it was accompanied by the rejection of the “heresy” of Nationalism (“*Ethnophyletism*”).⁹ To be sure, these are two balanced and comparable lenses through which one may normalize the history of the nineteenth century with ease, while maintaining the advantage of ignoring internal contradictions among the great adversaries who assisted in their formation. It is entirely characteristic that the most important work concerning the creation of the Exarchate in Bulgarian historiography, that of Zina Markova, does not even refer to any of the key lay members of the opposing side.¹⁰ The reasons for this are clear: contacts between the two sides were not limited to negotiations to solve the matter of the Exarchate’s establishment; one may also discern a process of organizing interests of either an inter-communal character (between Greek Orthodox and Bulgarian interest groups), or ones directly related to the broader Ottoman political framework.

However, while they ignored their opponent in exemplary fashion, their opponent also served as a theoretical negative archetype to rally against: in the case of the Bulgarians, for instance, the Assembly of 1871 was the perfect example of the liberal-democratic spirit triumphing against the “innate” conservatism of the functioning of an institution that was by nature pre-modern, viz. the Ecumenical Patriarchate,¹¹ while in the case of the Greeks

ian Exarchate according to the Bulgarian and Greek sources (1870–1945)] - unpublished dissertation, Thessaloniki, 1999.

⁹ See PASCHALIS KITROMILIDES, “‘Imagined Communities’ and the origins of the National Question in the Balkans”, *European History Quarterly* 19:2 (1989), pp. 149–92.

¹⁰ Apart from a single reference to the role of Alexandros Karatheodores, son of Stephanos Karatheodores in MARKOVA, *op.cit.*, p. 50.

¹¹ Markova, for instance, considered the fact that the electoral principle thoroughly dominated the Statute of the Exarchate as proof of its liberal spirit (“*One great accomplishment of the Statute of the Exarchate is the electoral principle [изборното начало], which is the foundation of the entire organization of ecclesiastical administration. No one, from the top tier to the bottom, is appointed. Everyone is elected, including the clerks of the Exarchate.*”) The electoral principle is expressed: a) in the plan for periodic election of the Exarch (“... through periodic change, the potential for strong personal rule is precluded and the collective principle of government is guaranteed”), b) in the participation of the lay element in the choice of metropolitans (Krāstevič himself noted during the negotiations that “*The bishop who is to rule over a province must be elected by that province: that is the basic electoral principle*” (Temelski p. 261), and c) in the increased participation of the lay element in the central administration of the Exarchate, including in mixed provincial councils; see MARKOVA, *op.cit.*, p. 44. Markova also believes that the later amendments to the Statute (which was ratified in 1883 by the Bulgarian state), es-

the repulsion of Bulgarian nationalism is in itself proof of Hellenism's ecumenical character.¹²

The issue's complexity was, of course, a given. In the Bulgarian case, the demand for the creation of an independent church was not based on any pre-existing territorial fragmentation or on the prospect of creating an independent nation state (though the parties involved would have liked to prepare the ground for this). Rather, it was the desire for independence from the ideological and cultural domination of the Patriarchate, which both moderate and radical Bulgarian nationalists claimed was exercising undue pressure on Slavophone populations in the Balkans (the abolition of the Archbishopric of Ohrid in 1767 was still being interpreted at the end of the nineteenth century in terms of national subjugation).¹³

pecially those that were enacted during the 1890s, were a gradual reversal of this liberal spirit ("... and the periodic change of Exarch becomes a life term [*Ποжизненост*], the participation of the laity in the administration of the Church was limited through the termination of the Exarchate's lay council and a shift in the provincial councils from a mixed to purely clerical makeup"; MARKOVA, *op.cit.*, p. 44–45). It is interesting that Markova sees the gradual submission of the Bulgarian Church to the Bulgarian State as undermining the liberal spirit of the Statute. This is why she makes a distinction between the formation of the Bulgarian Church in the 19th century and the establishment of the Greek, Romanian, Serbian, and of course Russian Churches, as examples of nationalized (and therefore state) apparatuses.

¹² See for example GEORGIOS METALLENOS, *Εκκλησία και Πολιτεία στην Ορθόδοξη Παράδοση* [Church and State in the Orthodox Tradition]. Athens, 2000. But even in cases where some writers would like to maintain a critical stance towards the phenomenon of national antagonisms, the process of mirage remains powerful: for example, in the case of P. Matalas (*Nation and Orthodoxy*), where the adoption of the rival nationalism's arguments strikes one as a critical assessment of the arguments of Greek national historiography. However, it is difficult to reduce the complexity of the Ottoman environment to positions, such as the announcement of the Schism by the Patriarchate constituted a manifestation of Greek nationalism. On this issue, see D. STAMATOPOULOS, "Ο Μ. Γεδεών και η επαναδιοργάνωση του οικουμενιστικού μοντέλου" [M. Gedeon and the re-negotiation of the model of Ecumenicalism], in Μνήμη Άλκη Αγγελού. *Τα Άφθονα Σχήματα του Παρελθόντος: ζήτησεις της πολιτισμικής ιστορίας και της θεωρίας της λογοτεχνίας*, Πρακτικά Επιστημονικής Συνάντησης [In Memoriam Alkis Aggelou. Multiple Schemas of the Past: Quests in cultural history and theory of literature], Conference Proceedings, Thessaloniki 2004, pp. 377–387.

¹³ See for example the speech of Gavril Krâstevič in the Exarchate's Assembly, H. TEMELSKI, *op.cit.*, pp. 195–196. For the history of the Archbishopric of Ohrid, see IVAN SNEGAROV, *Istoriya na Ohridskata Arhiepiskopiya* [History of the Archbishopric of Ohrid] vol. 2. Sofia, 1925 [reprinted by the Publishing House of the Academy "Prof. Marin Drinov", Sofia, 1995]; ALEKSANDAR MATKOVSKI, *Crkovni davacki (kilise resimleri) vo Ohridskata Archiepiskopija (1371–1767 godina)* [Ecclesiastical tributes (kilise resimleri) in the Archbishopric of Ohrid (1371–1767)] (Makedonska Akademija na Naukite i Umethnostite

In theory, the model that the Bulgarians should have followed in this course was that of the Greek Autocephalous Church, basing their effort on ideological arguments similar to those offered by Theokletos Pharmakides in 1833.¹⁴ But the absence of the underpinnings of a nation-state, and, even more, the dominant model for the organization of Ottoman society based on separation into religious communities (millets),¹⁵ led the leaders of the Bulgarian nationalist movement to follow a course which resembled to a far greater extent the reorganization of the Orthodox millet which had taken place in 1858–1860. In brief, we could say that the basic risks involved in founding the Greek Autocephalous Church were the subjugation of the Church to the State through the declaration of the King as symbolic and administrative Head of the Church, and the imposition of a synodal model, where all the provincial metropolitans would be represented in rotation. By contrast, in the reforms of 1858–1860, although the synodal principle prevailed in order to displace the old system of Gerontism,¹⁶ the important goal was the introduction of lay individuals into the administration of the Patriarchate: in some fashion, the imposition of political control would be assured not through the direct subordination of the Orthodox millet to the state (given that the state was a Muslim one), but by “secularizing” its institutions. The degree of the millet’s autonomy vis-à-vis the Ottoman state was a matter open to negotiation.

Thus, in 1871, the internal structure of the Bulgarian Exarchate in Constantinople was based on earlier attempts to reorganize and institutionalize the millets, as these had been attempted within the framework of the Tan-

1971) [Macedonian Academy of the Sciences and the Arts 1971]; SOTIRIOS VARNALIDES, *Ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αχρίδος Ζωσιμάς (1686–1746) και η εκκλησιαστική και πολιτική δράσις αυτού* [Zosimas, Archbishop of Ohrid (1686–1746): his ecclesiastical and political activity]. Thessaloniki, 1974.

¹⁴ CHARLES A. FRAZEE, *The Orthodox Church and independent Greece, 1821–1852*. London & Cambridge 1969.

¹⁵ B. BRAUDE & B. LEWIS (eds.), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Function of a Plural Society*, vol. 2. New York, 1985, ERYILMAZ BILAL, *Osmanlı Devletinde Gayrimüslim tebaanın yönetimi*, [The administration of the non-muslim subjects in the Ottoman state]. Istanbul, 1996².

¹⁶ On the system of Gerontism, that is, of the standing Holy Synod consisting of the *Gerontes* (metropolitans of the bishoprics near Constantinople), see TH. H. PAPAĐOPOULLOS, *The History of the Greek Church and people under Turkish domination*. Brussels, 1952, pp. 39–60.

zimat reforms,¹⁷ and not, of course, on the organizational model of the Greek Church.

Although the Millet-i Assembly of 1858–1860 was the first opportunity for the Bulgarian nationalist movement to display its opposition to the Patriarchate (let us recall here the withdrawal of the two Bulgarian representatives of the provinces of Veliko Târnovo and Sofia from its proceedings), the agendas of the two assemblies were strikingly similar. Both dealt with the question of the means of electing the Patriarch (or, in the other case, of the Exarch); with the degree of the lay participation in the election; with the preservation of the institution of life terms for these two supreme spiritual leaders; with the separation of “spiritual” competencies from those called “material” (i.e., administrative and economic), and with the creation alongside the Holy Synod of a mixed body in which lay individuals would participate. The agendas were the same, but the solutions to the various issues differed considerably. An initial evaluation as regards the secularization process, which is our main concern here, is that in the first case (that of the Orthodox millet), this process appeared to be dawning, while in the second (that of the Exarchate), it prevailed.

Apart from their common agenda, the two Assemblies shared something else: an important political figure within the Bulgarian community of Istanbul, Gavril Krâstevič.¹⁸ Krâstevič, a jurist and journalist who held the high-

¹⁷ For the reforms’ process in the Rum millet, see D. STAMATOPOULOS, *ibid.*; PARASKEVAS KONORTAS, *Οθωμανικές θεωρήσεις για το Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο, 17^{ος} – αρχές 20^{ου} αιώνα* [Ottoman views on the Ecumenical Patriarchate, 17th – early 20th century]. Athens, 1998, 148–64; for the Armenian millet, VARTAN ARTINIAN, *The Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire, 1839–1863*. London, 1970; and for the Jewish, KARMI ILAN, *The Jewish Community of Istanbul in the Nineteenth Century: Social, Legal and Administrative Transformations*. Istanbul, 1996.

¹⁸ Gavril Christides or Krâstevič, whose real name was Gandju Baev, was born in Kotel, Bulgaria, in 1817. In 1835 he went to Istanbul, where he was under the protection of Stephan Bogoridi, a hellenized neo-Phanariot who was descended from the same place (Kotel). He had been the teacher of Bogoridi’s children, and had studied at the school of Xerokrini (Kuruçeşme) headed by Nikolaos Logades. He had studied law and literature in Paris at the same time as Nikolaos Bogoridi, son of Stephan. He returned from Paris in 1844 and was appointed Stephan Bogoridi’s deputy on Samos, when Bogoridi was Prince of the island. In 1850, when Bogoridi lost this post, Krâstevič returned to Istanbul, where he was hired as a professor of Commercial Law and president of the Commercial Court; see TONČO ŽEČEV, *Bâlgarskijat Velikden ili Strastite Bâlgarski* [The Bulgarian Easter or the Bulgarian Passions]. Plovdiv, 1985², pp. 232–33, pp. 236–37. After the creation of the independent Bulgarian state, Krâstevič returned in Plovdiv and held many state posts, foremost among which was his brief tenure as General Governor of Eastern Rumelia (1884–85). For a particularly interesting dissertation on this period in his career,

est positions in the Ottoman Empire, took an active part in the 1858 Millet-i Assembly's proceedings up until the end, although not representing any of the districts of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. And that was not all: in the initial formation of the Mixed Council in 1862, he participated as the elected representative of the Arnavutköy suburb ("Megalo Revma" for the Greeks), together with an important Neo-Phanariote, Pavlos Mousouros. Krâstevič was elected at a moment when reactions by the Bulgarian community to the Patriarchate were reaching a climax (as early as spring 1861, after the rejection of the first plan for a solution to the problem proposed by then-Patriarch Joachim II).¹⁹

Krâstevič was also at the helm of the Assembly of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1871. He was essentially the framer of most of the Statute's articles, and dominated discussion following the corresponding proposals. In actuality, then, in 1871 he played the role which Stephanos Karatheodores, the distinguished philologist, theologian, and personal physician to Sultan Abdul Mecid, had assumed in the 1858 Millet-i Assembly. But while in 1858 Krâstevič was clearly on the side of the reformers, in 1871 his stance was characterized within the Bulgarian community as "conservative".²⁰ This was also why he was accused of being a "dictator" by other delegates like

see ŽORŽETA DIMITROVA NAZARSKA, *Iztočnorumelijskijat Dâržavnik Gavril Krâstevič (1879–1885 god)* [The statesman of the Eastern Rumelia, Gavril Krâstevič (1879–1885)], unpublished dissertation, Sofia, 1996. He died in Istanbul in 1898.

¹⁹ D. STAMATOPOULOS, *op.cit.*, p. 175.

²⁰ H. TEMELSKI, *op.cit.*, p. 18. In the course of the assemblies, a good deal of tension arose, chiefly resulting from the activities of the Bulgarian-Greek Committee, whose goal was to balance relations between the Patriarchate and the Exarchate. Two lay representatives participated in this Committee: Krâstevič and Hadži Ivan Penčovič. Its other members, however, were unaware of these activities; consequently, when they learned of them, they asked the two for an explanation. But they did not receive satisfactory replies, and this led to new conflicts and the protraction of proceedings. In any case, it is characteristic of Krâstevič's stance more generally that even on the eve of the Schism, in early September 1872, representatives of the "moderates" from both sides attempted to avoid a definitive break. For example, Krâstevič and Glovančo efendi had a meeting with the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Cyril II, the only one of the patriarchs who refused to sign the terms of the Schism, in order to achieve some sort of compromise. This meeting became the subject of a harsh critique by the newspaper *Courier d' Orient*, which represented extreme nationalist tendencies on the Bulgarian side (and Dr. Stojan Čomakov especially). See the newspaper *Vyzantis*, nr. 554, 5 September 1872. The two Bulgarians had also had contact during the previous period with the Patriarch of Antioch and the Archbishop of Cyprus. See Historical Archive of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs/1872, 76/1, document nr. 2510, I. Kallergis to the Minister of Foreign Affairs I. Spiliotakis, Neochorion (Yeniköy), 24 August 1872.

Nikola Pârvanov, representative of Vidin.²¹ It was also a consequence of the fact that Krâstevič had to confront the enormous influence exercised on the members of the Clerical-Lay Assembly by the physician Stojan Čomakov, perhaps the most prominent representative of the Bulgarian nationalist movement's radical tendency during the 1860s.

Krâstevič, together with Hadži Nikoli Minčoglu, Dimitraki Teodorov, Nikola Mihailovski, and the Assembly's five clerics (Ilarion Lovčanski [Metropolitan of Loveč], Panaret Plovdivski [Metropolitan of Plovdiv], Paisii Plovdivski [Metropolitan of Plovdiv], Antim Vidinski [Metropolitan of Vidin], and Ilarion Makariopolski [Bishop of Makariopolis]²²) were firm supporters of the supremacy of the "spiritual/clerical principle" (Духовното Начало) over its lay counterpart (this is why Temelski uses the term "conservative" to describe them). Opposing them were the "democrats/liberals" among whom Stojan Čomakov was a leading personality. Temelski characterizes this Assembly's part as "democratic-liberal stream".²³ The wing of "liberals" supported the unity of the "material and spiritual" (вещественото и Духовното) – a position essentially placing the former in the service of the latter.²⁴ The Millet-i Assembly of 1858–1860 had also dealt with this conflict.

The two assemblies: a comparative analysis

The key issue put forward was whether the clergy of the Exarchate would continue to maintain the leading role they had held during previous centuries within the framework of the Orthodox millet. The clergy defended their leading role with arguments similar to those employed by the clerics of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, viz. that the domination by the laity of the internal affairs of spiritual organizations such as the Church was nothing but a means of undermining of Orthodoxy along the lines of the Protestant model. This argument had been formulated by conservative clergy (chiefly, but not ex-

²¹ ZINA MARKOVA, *op.cit.*, p. 40.

²² The ideological transformation of Ilarion is worth mentioning: once a leader of the radical circles in the 1840s and 1850s, this old classmate of Stojan Čomakov at the Academy of Theophilos Kairis on Andros became a companion of G. Krâstevič and a pillar of the Russian Embassy under Count Ignatiev in the mid-1860s. On the Bulgarian students at Kairis's Academy, see N. DANOVA, "Une page des relations réciproques bulgare-grecques en XIXe siècle: les élèves bulgares de Theophilos Kairis", *Etudes Balkaniques* 3–4 (1995) pp. 82–110.

²³ H. TEMELSKI, *ibid.*

²⁴ Temelski at this point follows Zina Markova's analysis of the Assembly's ideological wings, *op.cit.*, p. 41.

clusively, Russophiles), for example by Gregorios VI (Patriarch of Constantinople when the Exarchate's Assembly was being held at Ortaköy), against the recognition of the Greek Autocephalous Church in 1850.²⁵ It had also been employed by Russian politicians and members of the Russian intelligentsia, (like Andrej N. Muravjov), against the Millet-i Assembly decisions to institute lay participation in the Patriarchate's administration.²⁶ Therefore, arguments were easy to find – except that they belonged to the repertoire of those whom the Assembly of 1871 had defined as its enemies.²⁷

At the Millet-i Assembly, the reformers achieved a great deal in terms of lay participation: they succeeded in establishing a Mixed Council which assumed control of the “material” affairs of the Patriarchate; they managed to make the Council responsible for the adjudication of legal, political, and other matters; and they achieved lay participation (representatives from Istanbul and the provinces) also in the second stage of the Patriarch's election.

However, the clericalist wing blocked the reformers' proposal that the election of the Patriarch could be depended on the definitive decision of a mixed clerical-lay assembly. On the contrary, the final stage of election was assigned to the Holy Synod: that is, instead of the Holy Synod proposing three candidates and the clerical-lay assembly deciding who would become Patriarch, as the theorist of the reforms Stephanos Karatheodores had suggested, the solution which won out was for the mixed assembly to propose, and the Holy Synod to elect, the Patriarch.²⁸

It was only natural that the precedent set by the Millet-i Assembly would be repeated in the case of the Bulgarian Exarchate. Indeed, the “conservatives” in the Exarchate's Assembly attempted to strengthen the role of the

²⁵ Gregorios VI. condemned the attempt at the Ecumenical Patriarchate's legitimization of the Church of Greece as “hidden Lutheran-Calvinism,” because the petition for autocephaly was not submitted by representatives of the Church of Greece, but rather by the Greek government; see GEORGIOS METALLENOS, *Ελλαδικού Αυτοκεφάλου Παραλειπόμενα* [Unpublished Documents of the Greek Autocephalous]. Athens, 1989².

²⁶ It is telling that Sokolov considers this particular incident as the beginning of attempts by “Protestanto-Islamism” to undermine the prerogatives of the institution of the Patriarchate through “reforms”. See I.I. SOKOLOV, *Konstantinopolskaja cerkov v 19veka. Oput istoričeskago izsledovanija* [History of the Church of Constantinople in the 19th century: an attempt at historical study] vol.1, Saint Petersburg, 1904, p. 715.

²⁷ Thus Paisii, Metropolitan of Plovdiv, one of the clergy who had been subjected to disciplinary measures by the Patriarchate because he had supported the formation of an independent Bulgarian church – even though he was not of Bulgarian descent – characterized this stance as “schismatic” and of “Protestant” origins, H. TEMELSKI, *op.cit.*, p. 18.

²⁸ D. STAMATOPOULOS, *op.cit.*, pp. 86–91.

Holy Synod. Their basic argumentation concerning the Protestant character that the Exarchate would assume if lay predominance were imposed managed to bypass objections from the “liberals” in regard to the enhanced role the “conservatives” were pursuing for the institution of the Holy Synod.²⁹

Concerning the procedure for electing the Exarch, there was a great deal of discussion, and there were many opposing views: the “liberals” insisted that both clerical and lay electors be elected directly by the Bulgarian people. In contrast, the “conservatives” – with Krâstevič in the lead – insisted on a two-stage electoral process, which in the end prevailed, though with increased lay presence.

Although liberals like Čomakov may have considered Krâstevič’s intervention to be a conservative choice which obstructed direct involvement by the laity in the election of the Exarch, from the point of view of the 1858 Assembly the solution provided by the Church National Assembly seemed like the fulfilment of the reformist vision. For Krâstevič had succeeded where Karatheodores had failed: he had managed to impose a mixed clerical-lay assembly’s control over the final phase of the election process, legitimising this choice as flowing from the spirit and the letter of the Holy Laws in the process.³⁰ In contrast, Karatheodores had defended the same

²⁹ According to the Statute, the Holy Synod controlled questions of a dogmatic and religious nature, but a significant portion of the responsibilities of the clergy, including wills, divorces, bequests, oversight of educational affairs, the language taught in schools, etc., passed into lay control. Also, according to Article 134 of the Statute, which was finally approved by the Assembly, the Exarchate’s highest organ was the Mixed Clerical-Lay Council, which was renewed every four years (at the same time the Exarch was elected). Finally, strict control was imposed over Church incomes, and a large proportion of these went toward the support of schools and philanthropic foundations. However, the “liberals” yielded on a critical point relating to the formation of provincial mixed councils. According to Temelski, their yielding is expressed in Article 3 of the Statute: the Holy Synod would maintain the exercise of spiritual power, and each province would be administered by a metropolitan. But in Article 12, liberals managed to achieve the formation of only one decision-making center/council instead of two (as the conservatives wanted): that is, there would be a mixed provincial council, on which the laity would outnumber the clergy. The goal, naturally, was for the clergy to be subject to the decisions of the laity, since the latter held the majority in the provincial councils. Correspondingly however, the lay element was also strengthened in the Exarchate’s Central Mixed Council (from four members foreseen in the Draft, the number of lay members on this body rose to six in the Statute; cf. Article 8).

³⁰ On the election of metropolitans, Krâstevič noted: “In this way, the Holy Synod makes three recommendations to the Church of Constantinople and the Patriarch, and he chooses one, and all these without the people. But the Church of Constantinople has no system. Everything is done for the sake of appearances. That is why the Bulgarians revolted.” (TEMELSKI, op.cit., p. 276). Although the electoral system described by Krâstevič is inac-

argument, but attempted unsuccessfully to convince the audience of the Patriarchate's Assembly (and apparently, himself, as the theological roots of his theoretical thinking are obvious) that the reform (i.e., the election of a Patriarch by a mixed clerical-lay assembly) was compatible with the Holy Laws – something not at all obvious to his interlocutors. Krâstevič's starting point had been the limit of Karatheodores' political and theoretical contributions. To a large extent, this difference is a result of asymmetry in the different power relations dominating each of the two assemblies. Yet it is clear that Krâstevič had in Karatheodores a model that he was willing to go beyond.

The Assembly also decided to reduce the pay allotted the clergy: bishops, metropolitans, and the Exarch. Ecclesiastical regions were finally divided into three categories (just as in the case of the Ecumenical Patriarchate), and the pay of metropolitans became dependent on their rank: 72,000, 54,000, or 45,000 piastres annually. In any case, precisely as the Patriarchate's Assembly had rejected the concept of a salary, so the Bulgarian Exarchs employed the concept of *dažba* (дажба = portion). The position of “conservatives” such as Krâstevič, Paisii Plovdivski, and Ilarion Lovčanski, was that this regulation would turn the priest into a “mercenary”. Krâstevič's intervention was decisive in the Assembly of the Bulgarian Exarchate's conforming to the spirit of 1858: agreeing with Paisii that the concept of a monthly “salary” was foreign to the custom of the Orthodox Church, he noted that the decision of the Patriarchate (of the “Greeks”) was correct in rejecting the term *maaş* (the Ottoman expression for “salary”), and in adopting the concept of “subsidy” (предоставяне), which the Bulgarians attempted to translate using the concept of “ration” [дажба, *dažba*].³¹ Naturally, the basic goal of this reform was the standardization of subsidies to the metropolitans so as to avoid financial irregularities in the future. The Mixed Provincial Councils were to determine the size of the subsidy in accordance with population data from each province. Krâstevič's proposal was for this to

curate (each metropolitan was chosen by the Holy Synod, and the only patriarch that dared put this system into question and attempt to reserve the final choice for himself was Joachim II, during his first term), his criticism of the Patriarchate is very interesting. The absence of any kind of “system” is essentially an accusation about the ultimate effectiveness of the reforms enacted after 1860. Krâstevič also condemned the practice of each province being represented by a single delegate at the patriarchal elections. More broadly, he was criticizing the rigged (predetermined) patriarchal elections, and referred to his experience of participating in two patriarchal elections, in which the candidacies were so numerous that the choice of the most appropriate person was made even more difficult.

³¹ H. TEMELSKI, *op.cit.*, p. 308.

range from 4 to 8 piastres per household. This of course meant that collecting the ecclesiastical revenues would continue the tradition of the Ottoman tax system, in which the taxable unit was the household (*hane*). The same had occurred in the case of the Patriarchate.

Krâstevič's whole argument was deeply influenced by the corresponding one elaborated by Stephanos Karatheodores. At that time, the Millet-i Assembly had discussed the topic in detail: the pressure of Bulgarian demands for the regularizing of clerical incomes in order to reduce abuses by the high clergy, especially in the Slavophone provinces, and above all the demand by the Ottoman government to control the Orthodox clergy's loyalty through payment of salaries, posed the issue in a very forceful manner. Originally, the reformers had received the proposal favorably, but they soon did an about-face when they understood that what was at stake was not only ensuring the employment status of the clergy, but also the management of the Church's enormous wealth – the logical trade-off the Patriarchate would have to make for the Ottoman state to incorporate Orthodox clerics into its state budget (precisely as had occurred in Greece and Russia). Karatheodores undertook to provide theoretical support for the Patriarchate's Assembly's rejection of the salary solution by developing a very interesting argument: the income received by the clergy should not be seen as a salary, but as a "gift" from the flock of the faithful to their priest. Krâstevič was certainly aware of this discussion, and while the Exarchate had nothing like the landed wealth of the Patriarchate, the standardization of incomes was certainly a victory. Nevertheless, it needed to be divorced from the concept of salaried employment.³²

The issue of whether or not the Exarch was to hold his position for life was also discussed. A secret ballot, finally, determined (by a vote of 45 to 28) that the Exarch would be elected at regular intervals and not serve for life. Krâstevič, naturally, supported the principle of serving for life. This is why, when he was called upon to sign the proceedings, in common with other conservatives like Minčoglu, Teodorov, and Mihailovski (Hadži Ivan Penčovič was absent), they disagreed with the point concerning the periodic alternation of the Exarch. In any event, on this matter the opinion of

³² D. STAMATOPOULOS, *op .cit.*, pp. 245–251. The Exarchate's Statute also foresaw salaries for the members of the Mixed Council: 18,000 piastres for members from Constantinople and 36,000 for those coming from the provinces. Those to be taxed included newly-wed couples (4 piastres) and businessmen (4 piastres). There was also the full range of occasional income, that is, from weddings, divorces, and so forth. The bolstering of education in the provinces (Kazas and Nahiyes) was also foreseen; this was something which had called forth intense disputes during the Millet-i Assembly of 1858–1860.

the clergy was divided: Ilarion Lovčanski, Panaret Plovdivski, and Paisii Plovdivski, while recognizing the periodic election was a new institution, did not consider it to be anti-canonical. As we will see below, this movement on behalf of the first cleric, Ilarion Lovčanski, could be seen as a remarkable (though finally ineffective) investment for his future.

Again, Krâstevič's disagreement was entirely explicable on the basis of what had transpired in the Patriarchate's Assembly of 1858: one of the Orthodox millet's demands for reform was that the frequent changes of Patriarchs should cease, and the principle of life terms be imposed. It is worth recalling that serving for life was one of the terms the Russian admiral Menčikov had placed before the Sublime Porte in his celebrated February 1853 mission to Istanbul – the delegation that was considered the prelude to the Crimean War.

Nevertheless, the establishment of the office of Patriarch for life in the text of the General Regulations did not necessarily mean realization of the desired goal – quite the opposite. Although the Millet-i Assembly recognized life terms, it nevertheless made it possible for collective bodies active in the Patriarchate – the Holy Synod and the Mixed Council – to undermine this policy. If a majority (two-thirds) of the membership in the two bodies (in practical terms, 8 out of 12 members) formed against the Patriarch, then it was possible to bring about his fall from power by citing various charges, usually related to his loyalty to Ottoman power. In fact, at the time of the Assembly of the Bulgarian Exarchate, there had already been three changes in Patriarch between 1862, when the General Regulations were ratified by the Porte, and 1871. And as we will see below, a fourth was being prepared during the summer of 1871.

Bulgarian nationalists lost no opportunity to condemn the ease with which Patriarchs rose and fell as a symptom of decay among the Orthodox clergy. This was also the reason why they were not persuaded by appeals to the Holy Laws by Krâstevič, Ilarion Makariopolski, Antim Vidinski, and other conservatives. Periodic election of the Exarch was a novel institution for the Orthodox tradition, and it is a very interesting indicator of secularization, which the Orthodox millet did not manage to achieve.

An interpretation of political networks

In 1860, a pamphlet circulated providing a response to the positions of Stephanos Karatheodores, and to his stance on the Bulgarian issue. The pamphlet was signed by Hadži Nikoli Minčoglu, representative of Veliko Târnovo in the Patriarchate's Assembly, but it would seem that the actual

writer was Gavril Krâstevič.³³ Many years later, Marko Balabanov, secretary of the Assembly of 1871 (a fact which would prove a major turning point in his career, as long as he abandoned his earlier “liberal” positions and joined the ranks of Russophile “conservatives”³⁴), revealed that the “Reply to the speech by Mr. Stephanos Karatheodores” was falsely claimed to be a translation from the Bulgarian. In actuality, the text had been originally composed in Greek, and its author had been Krâstevič.³⁵

This is quite surprising if one takes into consideration the fact that Krâstevič believed that it was possible to achieve a certain degree of Bulgarian ecclesiastical autonomy (though not independence) under the “Greek” clergy through the application of the principles of the Tanzimat and Hatt-i Hümayûn reforms. Therefore, he fully agreed with the views of the reformist wing of the Millet-i Assembly, and had just expressed these ideas in January 1860, almost at the same time as the publication of the pamphlet in answer to Karatheodores.³⁶

Clearly, Krâstevič would not have wanted to be exposed before the Patriarchate, with which he maintained relations of mutual respect. Nor would it have been good for the Bulgarian community of Istanbul to burn its bridges with the powerful figures of the Neo-Phanariote world.

³³ HADŽI NIKOLI MINČOGLU, *Απάντησις εις τον λόγον του κυρίου Στέφανου Καραθεοδωρή* [Reply to the speech by Mr. Stefanos Karatheodores]. Constantinople, 1860. This was a response to STEFANOS KARATHEODORES, *Λόγος επί τη αποπερατώσει των εργασιών της Εθνοσυνελεύσεως* [Speech on the completion of the National Assembly’s proceedings]. Constantinople, 1860.

³⁴ PLAMEN BOZINOV, *Marko D. Balabanov: Obšttestveno-političeski idei i dejnost (do 1878 godina)*, [Marko D. Balabanov: socio-political ideas and activity] – unpublished dissertation, Sofia, 1996.

³⁵ MARKO D. BALABANOV, *Gavriil Krâstovič* (Sofia 1914), pp. 252–53. A serious indication, even proof, of Balabanov’s testimony is that one could easily extrapolate from reading the text that its author was well versed in the Holy Laws and ecclesiastical legislation in general. As Balabanov says, the text exuded an air of “gentility” and “respect” towards his great opponent.

³⁶ Ἐκθεσις τῆς Επιτροπῆς τῆς διορισθείσης ὑπὸ τῆς Γενικῆς Συνελεύσεως τῆς 21 Φεβρουαρίου 1864 πρὸς διαφώτισιν τοῦ Βουλγαρικοῦ Ζητήματος [Report of the Committee appointed by the General Assembly of 21 February 1864 to illuminate the Bulgarian Question], 28 and 43, were reproduced passages from a pamphlet entitled “Bulgarian Literature” circulated by Krâstevič in January 1860. It includes the following: “... [ecclesiastical] independence is futile, as it contradicts Article II of the Hatt-i Hümayûn and the status quo of the Government”. Article II recognized the Patriarch’s right to rule over all Orthodox Christians in the empire, and not only over the “Greeks”.

However, if someone were to search for the true motives of Krâstevič's position, one would have to examine his fundamental perspective on the position of the Bulgarian nation within the framework of a unified Christian world ["ekumene³⁷"]: the amazing thing is that, in the early 1870s, his arch-enemy Čomakov had ended up defending the imperial Ottoman world³⁷ against the expansion of Russian influence led by Ignatiev, essentially contradicting the radical demands of earlier decades.³⁸ Those who had passionately supported ecclesiastical independence from the Patriarchate were cautious about national independence, if it was to be granted through the intervention of Russia.

These interesting mirages and changing stances remain largely unexplained or appear contradictory, even when taking into account the variable of intervention by the Great Powers (obviously executed through their embassies in Istanbul). What we must now consider is the role of interest groups, which were composed of members of both communities.

It is common for the recent historiography of both sides – Bulgarian and Greek – to interpret the political stances and behavior of each political agent within the complex environment of the Ottoman Empire, especially during the Tanzimat period, based on whether the agent defended or opposed the rationale of the reforms. As this criterion seldom proves adequate, historians resort to a further parameter: each agent's links to one of the Great Powers active within Ottoman territory. Rarely, however, do such analyses contain an effort to sort these players into interest groups, which might network according to their own rules – not necessarily opposed to, but possibly tangential or complementary to the positions of the major ideological blocs. Each interest group might contain persons with different ideological orientations, connections to different power centers, and dynamically diverse behaviors. Often, an interest group may include individuals who maintain friendly relations with the embassies of different foreign Powers, without this necessarily counteracting the activities of their other "comrades." Quite the contrary: this may be the only necessary and sufficient condition for securing the group's long-term interests.

It would be interesting, then, to examine through this lens the actions of the two chief actors of the 1871 Assembly, Krâstevič and Čomakov, as well

³⁷ A very good example of the opinions of Čomakov can be seen in his opening speech at the Exarchate's Assembly, see TEMELSKI, *op.cit.*, pp. 379–91, especially pp. 384–85.

³⁸ PLAMEN BOZINOV, "La mission diplomatique bulgare du 1876 et Dr. Stojan Čomakov – un conflit sans alternative", *Bulgarian Historical Review* 1–2 (2003), pp. 68–98.

as a third significant figure: the first Exarch in the history of the Bulgarian Church, Antim, Metropolitan of Vidin.³⁹

Gavril Krâstevič has sometimes been described by Bulgarian historians as a Russophile,⁴⁰ at other times, as a Turcophile,⁴¹ and sometimes even as both at once.⁴² But if we examine Krâstevič's participation in interest groups, we find something quite different. We have noted above that he took part in the formation of the first Ecumenical Patriarchate's Mixed Council in 1862, serving together with Dimitâr Geşoglu as a representative of the Bulgarian community in Istanbul. Krâstevič also took part in the elections of two patriarchs (1860 and 1863) as a lay representative and he returned in 1865 to the Mixed Council's service, at a time when Patriarchate's confrontation with the Bulgarian community had reached its height.

Krâstevič accepted the position of member of the Mixed Council upon the recommendation of the well-known Neo-Phanariote Pavlos Mousouros, brother of Konstantinos Mousouros. The latter was for many years the Ottoman Empire's Ambassador in London and was also Stephan Bogoridi's son-in-law. Krâstevič had earlier served as Bogoridi's deputy on Samos, where the latter was the Prince of the island. But what is interesting is that Bogoridi was the most important pillar of support for English policy within the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and by extension, the Orthodox millet. Inter-marriages among the Bogoridi, Mousouros, and Stourtzta families had extended the network of English (or better, pro-Western) influence even fur-

³⁹ For the first Exarch of the independent Bulgarian Church, see IV. ORMANDŽIEV, *Antim I Bâlgarski Ekzarh*, [Anthim I, the Bulgarian Exarch]. Sofia, 1928; KIRIL, PATRIARH BÂLGARSKI, *Ekzarh Antim (1816–1888)*, [Exarch Anthim (1816–1888)]. Sofia, 1956.

⁴⁰ Or, rather, as a member of that moderate section of the Bulgarian community of Constantinople which, due to its good knowledge of the Holy Laws and ecclesiastical culture, had aligned itself with the Russian perspective regarding the unity of the Orthodox world; see MARKOVA, *op.cit.*, p. 62.

⁴¹ TEMELSKI, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

⁴² ILIYA TODEV, *op.cit.*, vol. 1, p. 195. Todev, of course, tries to prop up his central argument by suggesting that during the 1860s (i.e., after the Russian defeat in the Crimean War, which signaled the partial reassessment of their dogma concerning fragmenting the Ottoman Empire) being simultaneously a Russophile and a Turcophile was not a contradiction. However, only after the death of Âli paşa in 1871, when the position of Grand Vizier was filled by Mahmud Nedim paşa, a politician with conservative opinions and pro-Russian sentiments, could we claim that one might display good relations with Russia without this interfering with his requisite loyalty to Ottoman authority. A thorough analysis of Mahmud Nedim's ideological background and his political confrontation with Âli paşa and Fuad paşa may be found in BUTRUS ABU-MANNEH, "The Sultan and the Bureaucracy: the Anti-Tanzimat concepts of Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Paşa", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22 (1990), pp. 257–74.

ther. Krâstevič maintained this relationship, especially with the younger brother, Pavlos, throughout the 1860s, when the latter rose to the position of Prince of Samos in 1867, which he retained until 1873.

Further incontrovertible proof of Krâstevič's cordial relations with this circle is provided by his short career in the autonomous hegemony of Eastern Rumelia, where he was called to serve by Alekos Bogoridi, Stephan's son, who held the position of the hegemony's governor in 1879. It is very interesting that both Alekos Bogoridi and Krâstevič satisfied simultaneously the requirements of Great Britain (Alekos Bogoridi's efforts at reform were doubtless inspired by the pro-Western influence of his family) and of Russia (Krâstevič's stance on the ecclesiastical question satisfied Russian policy and theoretically made the Bulgarian neo-Phanariote the pillar of the hegemony's administration after the Congress of Berlin⁴³). The coexistence of these two men offers an excellent demonstration of the tremendously dynamic nature of interest groups in the Ottoman Empire.

Krâstevič's close affinity to this circle was indisputable, and this is the only way to explain his stance towards Stephanos Karatheodores. Both Karatheodores and Krâstevič belonged to the same political camp, that of the reformers. Consequently, the disagreement between the two men is difficult to interpret if one's sole criterion is their alliance in the great undertaking of the Tanzimat reforms.

The reformers' bloc comprised various interest groups, each with its own ideological orientation and different degrees of dependency on the powerful actors on the Ottoman political stage. For instance, the standoff between Karatheodores and Krâstevič (and essentially, the Mousouros family) may be interpreted in the context of then-Grand Vizier Mehmed Köprülü's regrouping of the English sphere of influence.

Stefanos Karatheodores, a longtime Russophile, was from the circle formed by Patriarch Gregorios VI during his first term (1835–40). Gregorios was well known for his friendly sentiments toward Russia; his first term was interrupted in 1840, after intercession by the English Embassy, when Gregorios interfered in questions of marriage and divorce among the British citizens of the Ionian Isles. However Karatheodores had begun in the mid-1850s to demand the enactment of reforms in the Ottoman Empire. He was now the personal physician of Sultan Abdul Mecid, and of Stephan Bogoridi himself. In the summer of 1859, however, the death of Bogoridi

⁴³ KIRIL, PATRIARCH BĂLGARSKI, *Graf N. P. Ignatiev*, p. 126; T. A. MEININGER, *Ignatiev and the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate, 1864–1872; a study in personal diplomacy*. University of Wisconsin, 1970, p. 137.

led to discord within the Anglophile bloc over who would govern it internally.⁴⁴

Consequently, the conflict between Krâstevič and Karatheodores reflects this internal rivalry at the beginning of the 1860s between the Karatheodores and Mousouros families over who would dominate in the pro-western wing of the Patriarchate. It is no accident that Krâstevič was among those accompanying Grand Vizier Mehmed Köprülü on his grand tour through the European provinces of the Empire in 1861,⁴⁵ while Pavlos Mousouros, in a letter written immediately after the election of Krâstevič to the Mixed Council in 1862 to his brother Konstantinos, referred to Krâstevič as „one of ours“.⁴⁶

However, as we have already noted, Krâstevič did not want to attack Karatheodores openly and assume the burden of signing the text. The reason was not only that this would mean a break in his relations with the world of Patriarchate. Karatheodores assumed the chief burden of theoretically and theologically legitimizing the reforms, which were pushed through according to the basic principles of the Hatt-i Hûmayün. Karatheodores had introduced all the major reforms in the Patriarchate: the change in the process of electing a Patriarch, in the constitution of the Holy Synod, in the subsidies to the archbishops, etc. This effort was too great to be disputed by Krâstevič, especially when he himself had used it as a model for composing the Statute of the Exarchate.

This would also seem to explain why he refused to sign the pamphlet against Karatheodores himself. When the Bulgarian community turned openly against the Patriarchate, he continued not only to keep his channels of communication with it open, but even to participate in its institutional bodies.

As noted, the attempt to rally the English sphere of influence was spearheaded by Mehmed Köprülü, since the intellectual offspring of the traditional representative of Anglophile politics Mustafa Reşit paşa (who had died in 1858) had turned to France. Âli paşa and Fuad paşa, who alternated throughout the 1860s in the roles of Grand Vizier and foreign minister, attempted to wean the Empire away from the monopoly of serving English interests, while also trying to develop their own network of influence within the Patriarchate. A powerful group of bankers, led by Georgios Zarifis and Christakis Zografos and originally formed largely due to the efforts of an

⁴⁴ D. STAMATOPOULOS, *op.cit.*

⁴⁵ ŽORŽETA DIMITROVA NAZÂRSKA, *Gavril Krâstevič: život meždu staroto I novoto* [Gavril Krâstevič: A life between the Old and the New] *Muhalo* 1 (1995), p. 50.

⁴⁶ D. STAMATOPOULOS, *op.cit.*

ŽORŽETA DIMITROVA NAZÂRSKA, *Gavril Krâstevič: život meždu staroto I novoto* [Gavril Krâstevič: A life between the Old and the New] and STAMATOPOULOS, *op.cit.*, pp. 175–76.

enemy of Stephan Bogoridi, Âli Paşa's equally Francophile friend Ioannis Psycharis, took on the task of counterbalancing the leadership role assumed by the Karatheodores and Mousouros families on the opposing side.⁴⁷

All this might not seem directly relevant to events in the Bulgarian camp – but such an impression could not be farther from the truth. This is not demonstrated by the example of Krâstevič alone. It was the same with his great rival at the Assembly of 1871, the physician Stojan Čomakov. In his letters (recently published by Iliya Todev⁴⁸), Čomakov shows that he was very familiar with the internal struggles among the Greeks.⁴⁹ It seems, in fact, that during his participation in the mixed Greco-Bulgarian committee appointed by Âli paşa in the mid-1860s, he had developed close relations with the “bankers’ party” led by Georgios Zarifis.

In general, Čomakov has been treated by Bulgarian historians as friendly to English policy. Plamen Bozinov quite recently attempted to interpret Čomakov's hesitation in embracing the Revolution of April 1876 as a result of his commitment to promote the cultural development of the Bulgarian nation in the framework provided by the Tanzimat stream of reforms, as advanced by two leading figures of this period: Âli paşa and Fuad paşa.⁵⁰

This argumentation regarding the attempts at reform may be compatible with a perspective of “inter-communal” alliances from the top. Indeed, it seems that the “bankers’ party” within the Patriarchate was manned during the 1860s under the protection of Âli paşa, even as that politician was supporting members of the radical Bulgarian wing, such as Čomakov,⁵¹ possibly in order to exert pressure on the “hard-line” clericalists of the Patriarchate.

⁴⁷ D. STAMATOPOULOS, *op.cit.*, pp. 62–67.

⁴⁸ ILIYA TODEV, *op.cit.*, vol. II.

⁴⁹ In a letter to his cousin Georgaki Stojanovic in Plovdiv, Čomakov refers to two “parties” operating within the Greek Orthodox community: that of the bankers, and that of the “phantasmagorians,” (“dazzlers”) led by the Karatheodores family. See ILIYA TODEV, *op.cit.*, vol. II, p. 338. This information provides impressive confirmation of the analysis of networks attempted in earlier works (see D. STAMATOPOULOS, *ibid*). As for the title “phantasmagorians,” it seems to be at least partly ironic, poking fun at the “aristocratic” Neo-Phanariote world represented by the Karatheodores family. Čomakov himself seems to have been closer to the leading figures of the bankers’ party, including Georgios Zarifis (see ILIYA TODEV, *op.cit.*, vol. II, p. 346), probably because its priority was not the arrangement of the Bulgarian question, but rather the progress on another important front: that of the confiscation of monastic properties on behalf of the Moldovalachian government (D. STAMATOPOULOS, *op.cit.*, pp. 266–270).

⁵⁰ PLAMEN BOZINOV, “La mission diplomatique bulgare du 1876 et Dr. Stojan Čomakov – un conflit sans alternative”, *Bulgarian Historical Review* 1–2 (2003), pp. 68–98.

⁵¹ ILIYA TODEV, *op.cit.*, vol. I, p. 190.

After all, that had been the professed aim of the “bankers’ party,” with one small exception: their goal had been to weaken the top clergymen who not only did not agree with the necessity of the reforms, but were actually an obstacle to the interests of their chosen patriarch, Joachim II (although Joachim II had also come from the ranks of the “hard-line” clericalists!). It is very interesting that these two segments of the two communities toughened their stance against their internal opponents immediately following the death of Âli Paşa in September 1871 (Čomakov against the Bulgarian community’s “conservatives” and the Greek Orthodox bankers against the “compromising” patriarchs: the Russophile Gregorios VI and his pro-western successor Anthimos VI), which soon resulted in an impasse. Schism now appeared to be the only solution. It is equally interesting that during the period of Eastern Crisis, just as Čomakov seemed to have resigned himself to the idea that the modern Bulgarian state would emerge with the help of Russia, Georgios Zarifis expressed his anti-Russian fears, and submitted in 1878 to the English embassy a plan for the union of the Ottoman Empire with the Kingdom of Greece (along the lines of Austro-Hungary) as the only solution that could curb Russian influence in the Balkans.⁵²

But what was the “Russophile” stance against their alleged opponents?

On 29 July 1871, a four-member delegation (composed of Krâstevič, Hadži Ivan Penčovič, Čomakov, and Čaloglu) submitted the Statute of the Exarchate to the Sublime Porte. Based on this document, though not agreeing to all its provisions, the Porte assented to the election of an Exarch on 11 February 1872. The next day (12 February), Ilarion Lovčanski (referred to as “Ilarion Loftsou” in the Greek sources), the candidate favored by Stojan Čomakov, was elected. The Exarchate-elect, however, as a protégé of the liberal radical wing, could not guarantee that the basic terms of Ottoman law would be followed, and was therefore forced to resign. Four days later, the election was repeated and the post filled by Antim, Metropolitan of Vidin.⁵³

According to Bulgarian historians such as Iliya Todev, the essential argument between Krâstevič and Čomakov at the Church National Assembly of 1871 actually reflected the disagreement between those friendly and those hostile to the Russian policy (Russophiles vs. Russophobes). So it was Count Ignatiev’s increased political influence that resulted in Lovčanski losing the position of Exarch, and in the ascension of a person closer to the wishes and

⁵² EVANGELOS KOFOS, “Το Ελληνο-βουλγαρικό ζήτημα” [The Greek-Bulgarian question], *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους* [History of the Greek Nation] vol. XIII, p. 317.

⁵³ Z. MARKOVA, *op.cit.*, H. TEMELSKI, *op.cit.*, p. 22.

political aspirations of Russia. In this sense, the 1871 Assembly seems to have moved events in the opposite direction from the Assembly of 1858–60, in terms of realignments among the various powers: for if the latter was a systematic (and ultimately successful) attempt by the Western-friendly faction within the Patriarchate to weaken the pillars of Russian policy in the top tiers of the millet (the powerful Aristarchis family in particular) – essentially, to consolidate the consequences of Russia’s defeats in the Crimean war and within the Patriarchate – the former resulted from the forceful return of the Russian element onto the Ottoman political scene. So, it is one thing to follow the evolution of the “secularization” process through the provisions in the final texts ratified at the two Assemblies, and quite another to judge the degree of secularization achieved by the reforms on the basis of the realignment of political power relations within the Greek Orthodox and Bulgarian Orthodox communities.

However, the question of the realignment of political power relations is always more complicated than it appears at first glance: for instance, as we have already mentioned, the undoubted leader of the 1858–60 reforms, Stefanos Karatheodores, was a traditional Russophile, and the same held for Georgios Zarifis and his father-in-law Demetrios Zafeiropoulos in the years before the Crimean War. In other words, in terms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the pillars of Russian policy were demolished by erstwhile Russophiles.

With the above in mind, the events of the summer of 1871 may be interpreted differently. Patriarch Gregorios VI, a traditional representative of Russian influence in the Patriarchate, was locked tightly into the mindset that the Patriarchate could not recognize the Exarchate unless it were ratified by an Ecumenical Synod. But it was impossible to summon an Ecumenical Synod, for numerous reasons, but chiefly because that would have necessitated the presence of the Russian Orthodox Church. Gregorios resigned permanently (following an earlier notice of resignation, which had been rejected) in early June 1871. This happened during the Assembly of the Exarchists, at a point when its proceedings had reached an impasse. This impasse was resolved with the acceptance of Gregorios’s resignation. Krâstevič, although a “Russophile”, followed a tough political line against Gregorios.⁵⁴ Of course, this should not surprise us, since the confrontation

⁵⁴ A particularly interesting exchange took place on 17 May 1870 (three months after the creation of the Exarchate) between Patriarch Gregorios VI. and a delegation of Bulgarians headed by Krâstevič himself. The latter’s tough stance against the Russophile Patriarch is one important characteristic of this discussion. The other is the manner in which the protesting Bulgarians attempted to determine the identity of this new people: their

over the founding of the Exarchate had reached its zenith. Nevertheless, there were some indications during the Church National Assembly that many of its members were interested in developments at the Patriarchate. For example, two of the leaders of the former radicals, Ilarion Makariopolski and Stojan Čomakov, spoke, out of the blue, positively of Patriarch Grego-

self-determination had not yet been disconnected from its religious dimension. The exchange went as follows:

Krâstevič: Now that the petition is over, these metropolitans, along with the laity, are ready to come and beg your forgiveness and blessing, so we can throw a shroud over the past.

Patriarch: Which metropolitans do you mean? Some of them have been excommunicated, and the others, who sent in their resignations, are in the provinces. I can have no contact with either group.

Our delegates [i.e., the Bulgarians]: You know Your All-Holiness that in this world there is no eternal communication (**свързване**) for him who begs forgiveness. *They have truly sinned, but they were not to blame for their sin. They were forced to follow the people, and the people wanted some justice.*

Patriarch: Which people (*narod*)?

Our delegates [i.e., the Bulgarians]: Those Orthodox Christians who comprise a whole people (*narod*) in European Turkey; they are called “the Bulgarian people.”

Patriarch: I recognize no Bulgarian people, nor its metropolitans, nor its delegates. I admitted you not as delegates but as private petitioners. I don’t consider the issue to be irresolvable, but I don’t recognize the *ferman*. The government cannot resolve an ecclesiastical matter. Since our two sides have been unable to agree, I have left the solution of the problem to a third-party “arbiter,” the Ecumenical Synod.

Our delegates [i.e., the Bulgarians]: We, as Orthodox Christians, would gladly welcome a third-party arbiter who would be impartial, holy, and inspired by the Holy Ghost. The right thing to do, seeing that we cannot agree, would be to call us and let us choose a third-party arbiter together...

[The delegates then attacked the Ecumenical Synod, arguing that it was not impartial. In what followed they sought the Patriarch’s forgiveness.]

Patriarch: I cannot forgive you; I must return this sacred trust as I received it.

Our delegates: Beware! Is that your answer to a nation of six million? Our words are their words.

Patriarch: I cannot.

Our delegates: Do not think that with your stance you will force the Bulgarian people to change the course of that which has already begun. *The people know they are Orthodox, and they will never abandon the Orthodox faith.* But they no longer wish to be enslaved by the Patriarchate.

Patriarch: [silence]Krâstevič: Get up, let’s go. We’ll have no further dealings with you.

The meeting with the Patriarch was discussed at the ad hoc assembly of 20 May; it probably took place on 17 May. See H. Temelski, *op.cit.*, p. 95; For the presentation of another version of this interesting dialogue, see NEOPHYTOS, METROPOLITAN OF DERKON, *Εργα τῶα* [Some of his works], Istanbul 1881, pp. 183–184.

rios.⁵⁵ And that seems at least contradictory for two graduates of Theophilos Kairis's school in Andros.⁵⁶ Kairis had been condemned as a theosophist and excommunicated by the Patriarchate during Gregorios's first term (1835–40). Furthermore, Gregorios had also been a relentless persecutor of Theokletos Pharmakides, who had provided the inspiration for the model of the nationalized church in the Balkans, and whose example was cited by many Bulgarian radicals in the Assembly. Therefore, these positive evaluations of Gregorios were probably only meant to be taken in their specific context. The radical Exarchists probably preferred that Gregorios remain on the throne, for that elevated their own position. If he were replaced by a more pliable patriarch, then Krâstevič's "moderate" political stance would probably prevail.

Gregorios was succeeded by Anthimos VI. Anthimos had been friendly to Stephan Bogoridi (he was elected under his protection for the first time in 1845), and, after the latter's death, to the Mousouros family. Pavlos Mousouros, having risen to become Prince of Samos in 1867, had the necessary clout to support Anthimos's election. Therefore, Krâstevič's tough stand against Gregorios in adopting the reformist agenda in its entirety can be explained within the context of a broader game of realignment of political power relations. Krâstevič was definitely involved in bringing Anthimos VI, the favorite of the Mousouros family, back to the throne. In doing this, he expected not only to reach a mutual solution to the Bulgarian Question, but also to present the Exarchate as an organization compatible with both the principles of Orthodox ecumenicalism and the type of reforms of which the Patriarchate had proved incapable.

⁵⁵ In the conversations regarding persons appropriate to the position of Exarch and the abilities they should possess, Ilarion Makariopolski claimed that "just as a young man may have skill and experience, we have the example of the current Greek Patriarch, who has shown exceptional abilities during his first term." (TEMELSKI 230). This positive assessment of Gregorios is particularly significant, for it comes, as noted above, from a former student of Kairis. On the other hand, Čomakov, intervening on the question of persons qualified to be Patriarch, argued that the people should also propose candidates, and reminded everyone that the Patriarchate itself contained an example of a candidate who was always disqualified from running (TEMELSKI p. 264). The cleric in question was Gregorios, who had been repeatedly disqualified from the elections after the interference of the English Embassy, from 1840 (when he was rejected, for reasons noted above) until 1867, when the exceptional political circumstances resulting from the Cretan Revolution of 1866–69 allowed for a confluence of Russian and Greek foreign policy.

⁵⁶ On Kairis's school, see the classic article by NADJA DANOVA, "Une page des relations réciproques bulgaro-grecques en XIXe siècle: les élèves bulgares de Theophilos Kairis", *Etudes Balkaniques* 3–4 (1995), pp. 62–110.

Certainly the fall of Gregorios resulted from the change of the Russian embassy's attitude against him: Ignatiev perceived the patriarch's weakness to manage further the Bulgarian question. Therefore, the oppositional attitude of figures like Krâstevič against him theoretically ensured the interests of Russia also. However, even if Gregorios was considered henceforth as played out, and it was certain that he would leave the throne, it was by no means clear who his successor would be. The fact that Anthimos, the candidate of Pavlos Mousouros, prevailed over the candidate of the "bankers' party", Joachim II, in the elections that followed is important in evaluating Krâstevič's intervention.⁵⁷

Preferential alliances were the norm not only for relations among the laity on both sides (Patriarchate and Exarchate), but also for relations among the clergy. In the archives of the Bulgarian Academy of Science, there is a letter from Neophytos, Metropolitan of Derkon, to the Metropolitan of Vidin (and later Exarch) Antim.⁵⁸ This letter is dated 27 May 1868. It is a reply to Antim's letter of 14 May, in which he bemoaned the conditions prevailing in his new province. Antim had been transferred on 13 April from Preslava to Vidin.⁵⁹ Neophytos's letter was supportive towards Antim regarding the

⁵⁷ A particularly valuable Greek-language source for this period is the work of Manuil Gedeon. Gedeon characteristically reports for the relation between Krâstevič and Anthimos VI: "In 1862, when the first "National" Mixed Council was formed after the ratification of the "saving the nation" General Regulations, we gave to the Bulgarians two seats, electing Gavrijl Krestidis or Hristidis or Kresteвиč, and the Dim. Geşoglu, but the latter was withdrawn immediately and only Krâstevič remained, who served once again during the years 1867–69 during the term of Gregorios VI, but also after the proclamation of the Schism, with his wife's demand – a beautiful Greek woman – arrived to the patriarch Anthimos VI and "kissed his hand" [«φιλήσας χέρι», M. Gedeon, *Μνεΐα των προεμού: 1800 – 1863 – 1913*, [A reference to that which happened before me: 1800 – 1863 – 1913]. Athens, 1934, pp. 294–295. What Gedeon presents as the demand of Krâstevič's spouse could be seen rather as a symbolic gesture of his subjugation to the patriarch Anthimos. This movement (particularly after the proclamation of the Schism in September 1872!) is something unthinkable in a context of a "national reading" of the Bulgarian neo-Phanariot activities.

⁵⁸ *Bălgarska Akademiya na Naukite. Nautsen Arhiv (BAN NA)*, Fond 144k, [Simeon, mitropolit Varnenski i Preslavski], no 1, a.e 1012. His most detailed biography by KIRIL, PATRIARH BĂLGARSKI, *Ekzarh Antim*, op.cit. For his election as metropolitan of Vidin, see, op.cit., pp. 252–267, and about his stance during the Assembly's meetings, op.cit., pp. 309–315.

⁵⁹ AIMILIANOS, METROPOLITAN OF MILETUS (TSAKOPOULOS), "Επισκοπικοί Κατάλογοι κατά τους Κώδικας των Υπομνημάτων του Αρχιεπισκοπικού του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου" (Catalogues of Bishops according to the Codices of Records belonging to the Archives of the Ecumenical Patriarchate), *Ορθοδοξία* 33 (1958) 12. At any rate, the fact the Neophytos's letter was found in the archives of Symeon, Metropolitan of Vraca and

problems he was apparently facing with his flock; the Patriarch and the Synod had also sent letters to the same end. So Antim was not only trusted by Neophytos – he was a clergyman to whom the Patriarchate itself was prepared to entrust serious problems in generally troublesome provinces. Neophytos notes:

“Τη προσίθημι μόνον, ότι η ικανή φρόνησις αυτής, αι πολλαί γνώσεις της, αι υγιείς αυτής αρχάς, και προ πάντων ο ένθεος ζήλος της συν τη απαιτουμένη καρτερία και υπομονή, θέλουσι την ενισχύση εις το να υπερπηδήση γενναίως πάντα τα προσκόμματα, και διαλύουση τας αναφυήσας δυσχερείας εχεφρόνως και συνετώς, αναλάβη στερρά τη χειρί τους οίακας του κλονουμένου σκάφους της θεοσώστου επαρχίας της, και καθοδηγήση το εμπιστευθέν αυτή λογικόν του Χριστού ποιμνιον εις οδόν σωτηρίας της ευαγγελικής χάριτος. Λίαν αγαπητέ και περισπούδαστέ μοι εν Χριστώ αδελφέ, και δεν αρνούμαι ότι ο αγών είναι μέγας· αλλ’ ως καλός στρατηγός, ου γαρ εκλείψουσι αγαθοί στρατιώται του Χριστού, τον αγώνα τον καλόν αγωνίσθητι, και εις τέλος απολάυσης παρά της Εκκλησίας την ανήκουσαν αξίαν αμοιβήν, ιδίως δε τον αμάραντον της αθανάτου δόξης στέφανον από του μισθαποδότου Θεού.”⁶⁰

Antim was working towards a sublime goal at this point, which could be no other than the preservation of the Orthodox flock’s unity under the aegis of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

So far, this might make sense, if one takes for granted the allegiance a simple cleric should demonstrate towards the will of the Great Church. There are two clues, however, which should disabuse us of our naiveté. The first is that this took place in May 1868, when the first plan for resolution proposed by Patriarch Gregorios had been rejected by the Bulgarian side and tensions were mounting. The second has to do with the sender of this letter. At this point, Neophytos was a key player in the developments at the Ecumenical Patriarchate. His ecclesiastical career had advanced tremendously during the 1860s. A protégé of the powerful banker Georgios Zarifis, he had

Preslava, means that Antim probably received it before setting off for his new province.

⁶⁰ “To this, I might only add that Your Reverence’s able mind, abundant knowledge, healthy principles, and above all divine zeal, together with the requisite perseverance and patience, will fortify you in boldly overcoming all obstacles, wisely resolving the difficulties that occur, assuming with a firm hand the helm of the shaking ship of your God-protected province, and guiding Christ’s rational flock along the road of salvation through evangelical grace. My most beloved and learned brother in Christ, I will not deny that the struggle is great; but as a good general fights the good battle (and there will never be a want of good soldiers of Christ), may you enjoy at last the reward you deserve from the Church, especially the eternally blooming wreath of immortal glory from God, who renders unto each his just deserts”.

entered the circle of Patriarch Joachim II, who had been the first patriarch elected based on the General Regulations in 1860.

However, the moment that Neophytos was elected Metropolitan of Derkon (which transferred him from the provinces to Istanbul itself), he led the radical ethnocentric circles in the capital, and was considered by the Russian Embassy and Count Ignatiev as the greatest threat to reaching a mutual agreement with the Bulgarians.⁶¹ Antim, then, was cultivating his relationship with Neophytos during a time when the latter had already risen to a dominant position in the extremist radical circles. The former, a “Russophile” according to Bulgarian historians, when elected Exarch, accepted the aid of a proven anti-Russian, a cleric who had in fact maintained a very hard line against the Bulgarian demands. And not only this; Neophytos’s letter to Antim also contains a personally handwritten note on the lower-right corner of the reverse, obviously added as a postscript. The note says:

“Ἐθεώρησα καλόν ὅπως διενεργηθῆ ἡ ἀπόφασις δια να τη ἐμβάζωνται κατὰ μήνα 2000 γρόσια. Στοχάζομαι δε ὅτι ἐπραξα καλῶς, καίτοι τη εἶναι γνωστή ἡ οικονομική κατάστασις των Πατριαρχείων. Ὅθεν υπομονήν και ἀνδρείαν.”⁶²

Thus the Metropolitan of Derkon was not merely offering consolation; he was also providing Antim with the financial support that would allow him to survive in an already hostile environment; the population of the province would probably not acquiesce to a bishop’s grant to a cleric who had been transferred there with the approval of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Such eclectic relations cannot be understood merely in terms of national mobilization (which is clearly the weakest variable in such a complex political environment), nor merely in terms of whether or not an actor sides with the reforms.

So, one might observe that the “Russophiles” in the Bulgarian community were developing relationships with elements on the other side – namely with the Patriarchate and the Greek Orthodox lay elite –, who not only were on poor terms with the Russian embassy, but were also expressing pro-Western political positions, whether Anglophile (Krâstevič and the

⁶¹ T. A. MEININGER, *The Formation of a Nationalist Bulgarian Intelligentsia 1835–1878*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Univ. of Wisconsin, 1974.

⁶² “I have thought it well that the order be executed to send you 2000 piastres per month. I think that I have acted rightly, although the financial state of the Patriarchate is well known to you. And so I urge you to show patience and courage”. For the letter of thanks on behalf of the Metropolitan of Vidin, see Neophytos, Metropolitan of Derkon, op.cit., pp. 257–258.

Mousouros family) or “anti-Russian” (the Exarch Antim and Neophytos, Metropolitan of Derkon, and therefore together with the bankers’ party and Patriarch Joachim II).

Nevertheless, much remains to be done in the way of historical research before we acquire a full picture of these crucial “inter-communal” relationships. It is certain, however, that anyone who wishes to put together a comprehensive interpretation of the events and actions of all figures during the critical period of the second phase of the Tanzimat needs a three-pronged approach. Beyond whether or not each actor supported the reform process, and beyond the role played by foreign embassies in the development of political life in the Empire, one must also consider the capabilities and aspirations of a complex, multicultural environment that had not yet been homogenized through nationalization, but was functioning according to its own logic of social and political networks.

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