

PAGINA TÂNARULUI CERCETATOR

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PUBLICATION OF DOCUMENTS BY THE BULGARIAN HISTORICAL ARCHIVE UNTIL SEPTEMBER 9, 1944

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Rezumat

Publicarea documentelor de către Arhiva Istorică a Bulgariei până la 9 septembrie 1944

După Eliberarea Bulgariei (1878) de sub jugul otoman, oamenii de știință au început căutări de documente privitor Renașterea Bulgară. Trebuie remarcat faptul că până la mijlocul secolului XX în Bulgaria nu exista o legislație de arhivă, precum și instituții de arhivă specializate care să se ocupe de tema prezentată. În acest timp s-au format colecții de arhivă în instituții de artă, științifice și de altă natură. Cea mai mare organizație a fost – Biblioteca Națională din Sofia. Publicarea documentelor și materialelor de arhivă în Bulgaria în acest timp a fost împărțită în două perioade. Prima etapă, acoperă perioada de la Eliberarea Bulgariei din 1887 până în 1908, când s-au făcut primele încercări ale specialiștilor și amatorilor de a publica documente de arhivă. Se caracterizează prin publicarea documentelor în edițiile periodice. A doua etapă se asociază cu apariția în țara noastră a primei colecții de documente din 1908. Publicarea documentelor despre Renașterea bulgară după eliberare a fost opera foștilor participanți la mișcarea revoluționară națională, printre care se remarcă figurile lui Zahari Stoianov, Stoian Zaimov, Nikola Obretenov și Kiriak Tănkov.

Cuvinte-cheie: Renașterea bulgară, publicații, colecții de arhivă, documente de arhivă.

Резюме

Публикация документов Историческим архивом Болгарии до 9 сентября 1944 г.

После Освобождения Болгарии (1878) от османского ига ученые задались целенаправленным поиском и публикацией документов о болгарском Возрождении. Следует отметить, что до середины XX в. в Болгарии отсутствовало архивное законодательство, а также специализированные архивные учреждения, которые занимались бы данной темой. В этот период формировались объемные архивные коллекции в культурных, научных и других учреждениях. Самая большая организация находилась в Национальной библиотеке в Софии. Издание архивных документов и материалов в Болгарии в это время было разделено на два периода. Первый охватывал этап от Освобождения Болгарии в 1887 г. до 1908 г., когда были предприняты первые попытки специалистов и любителей публиковать архивные документы по теме болгарского Возрождения. Для него характерны документальные публикации в периодической печати по истории. Второй этап был связан с появлением в Болгарии первого сборника документов 1908 г. Публикация документов о Возрождении после Освобождения – заслуга бывших участников национально-революционного движения, среди которых вы-

деляются фигуры Захари Стоянова, Стояна Заимова, Николы Обретенова и Кириака Цанкова.

Ключевые слова: болгарское Возрождение, публикации, архивные коллекции, архивные документы.

Summary

Publication of documents by the Bulgarian historical archive until September 9, 1944

After the Liberation of Bulgaria (1878) from the Ottoman yoke the beginning was set for a purposeful research and publication of documents about the Bulgarian Revival. It should be noted that until the middle of the twentieth century, Bulgaria lacked archival legislation, as well as specialized archival institutions, which caused irreparable damage to the Bulgarian archival heritage. During this period, archival collections were gathered in cultural, scientific and other institutions. The largest of them was at the National Library in Sofia. The publication of archival documents and materials in Bulgaria during this period was divided into two stages. The first stage covered the period from the Liberation of Bulgaria in 1887 to 1908, when the first efforts were made by specialists and amateurs to achieve some organization in the publication of archival documents from the Bulgarian Revival. It was characterized by documentary publications in periodicals and history journals. The second stage was related to the appearance of the first documentary collection in our country in 1908, which was a more complex form of publication of written historical sources. The publication of documents about the Revival after the Liberation was the work of former participants in the national-revolutionary movement, including Zahari Stoyanov, Stoyan Zaimov, Nikola Obretenov, Kiriak Tsankov.

Key words: Bulgarian Revival, publication, archival collections, archival documents.

After the establishment of the Archives Department at the National Library in Sofia and the transfer of the Archive of the Revival from the National Ethnographic Museum in 1924, it became the largest archive in the country and served as a state archive until 1951. Documents and materials about the Bulgarian Revival and the new Bulgarian history are collected and stored in it. The interest in the Revival documentary heritage in the period until 1944 is traditionally strong not only on behalf of scholars professionally engaged with history, but also on behalf of the amateur historians. The publication of some of the more important documents from this period is also essential for providing the much-needed source base for research, as at that time the majority of them were

scattered in different parts of the country and were preserved by private individuals.

The first publications of documents from the Bulgarian Revival appeared in the 1860s and 70s in the Bulgarian periodicals (newspapers and magazines) of the time. Their selection was determined by the authors' aspiration for using them as an ideological basis for our national liberation movement (Neykova 2000: 292).

Documents were also published in the printed official publication of the Bulgarian Literary Society – the periodical, published in Braila from 1870 to 1876. The editors aimed to collect and publish documents and materials of the Revival period hoping to help the writing of the history of the Bulgarian Revival as well as to facilitate studies on the life and work of prominent Bulgarian Revival activists.

Thus, the journal marks the beginning of a more systematic search, collection and publication of documentary sources for the needs of Bulgarian historiography, particularly the period in question, which corresponds to the scholarly and educational tasks of the Bulgarian Literary Society (Neykova 2000: 293). The journal's capacity of fulfilling an objective of such scope is too small. However, due to the lack of optimal social conditions, the publication of documentary sources is very limited (Neykova 1981: 58).

In the light of the events following the Liberation and the restoration of the Bulgarian State, relatively more favorable conditions emerged which contributed for a more organized and more orderly development of Bulgarian culture and historiography, and therefore, to a more organized and orderly publication of the documentary heritage of the past. From 1878 to the early 1950s, many attempts were made for the discovery, study and publication of sources on Bulgarian history. However, the lack of funds and specialists were among the main reasons why this goal was only partially fulfilled.

The publication of archival documents and materials in Bulgaria during this period is divided into two stages. The first stage covers the period from the Liberation of Bulgaria in 1878 to 1908, when the first efforts were made by specialists and amateurs to bring about some organization in the publication of the archival documents from the Revival period. It is characterized by documentary publications in periodicals and historical journals. The beginning of the second stage is associated with the appearance of the first documentary collection in our country in 1908, which was a more complex form of publication of written historical sources (Neykova 1980: 57).

The earliest publications of documents from the Revival period after the Liberation appeared in the periodicals and were the work of former participants in

the national revolutionary movement, including Zahari Stoyanov, Stoyan Zaimov, Nikola Obretenov and Kiriak Tsankov. The aim of these publications was to popularize the idea of discovering and collecting Revival documents and materials in public archival collections (Neykova 1980: 58).

In 1883, Nikola Obretenov and Zahari Stoyanov appealed to the Ministry of Education to finance one of their exploratory tours along the Bulgarian-Romanian banks of the Danube River with the purpose of collecting documents about the national liberation movement. Although they did not receive aid from the state, they managed to carry out the planned expedition and found a number of valuable documents.

Stoyan Zaimov was also looking for documents concerning the struggles for national liberation as well as the exploits of individual participants, for his joint project with N. Obretenov, to publish a collection of documentary materials about the Bulgarian political and revolutionary organizations during the Revival period from 1866 to 1877.

Through the (*Bulgarian: Сборник за народни умотворения, наука и книжнина, Sbornik za narodni umotvoreniia, nauka i knizhnina*) Zaimov appeals to those who possess any kind of document – a private letter, a decree, a protocol, etc., to deliver them to him or to N. Obretenov. Because the documents they were looking for were scattered in different places, the making of a more complete collection turned out to be beyond the powers of the two enthusiasts. However, on the basis of the collected materials, Zaimov's personal memories as well as the memoirs of other figures, were written and published in 1895 in the work "The Past" (*Bulgarian: Миналото, Minaloto*), wherein some documents had been published (Neykova 2000: 295).

During this stage, the publication of documents was inspired not only by calls of individuals and private initiatives, but also by government initiatives. The Ministry of Education was directly involved in the publication of periodicals and documentary materials. The study of our Revival period became a national priority (Neykova 2000: 295).

In 1889, the *Sbornik za narodni umotvoreniia, nauka i knizhnina* was published by the Ministry of Education. Volume three of the aforementioned collection included a new section titled "Materials on the History of the Bulgarian Revival", the task of which was to serve as an archive of documents from the Revival. The aim was to collect as many documents as possible in order to facilitate the writing of monographs on the period of the spiritual and political Revival of the Bulgarian people. They realized that the bigger the collections of archival material, the easier it was to "systematize and collect them into one whole" (*Sbornik... 1890: 397*). This section existed until 1912 (Neykova 2000: 295).

Ivan Shishmanov, Minister of Education (1903–1907), was an active participant in the formation of specialized archival collections not only for the editorial board of *Sbornik za narodni umotvoreniia, nauka i knizhnina*, but also for some other institutions, including the School Museum at the Ministry of Education, the National Museum in Sofia (Neykova 2000: 296). Owing to Ivan Shishmanov's efforts, in 1906 the Archive of the Revival section was founded at the National Museum. However, during the first stage only individual documents from the Revival period appeared in periodicals and other publications (Georgiev 1970: 392).

In 1905, the Archaeographic Commission in Bulgaria was established at the Ministry of Education. The draft regulations for its activities (preserved in the Prof. Shishmanov's personal fund) state that it "... will aim to arrange and publish a series of separate books in which texts (preferably originals) of historical and literary writing relating to Bulgaria's past and the Bulgarian fatherland will be included". The Archaeographical Commission managed to publish only three books and stopped its activities (Neykova 2000: 296).

The second stage of publishing archival documents covers the period between 1908–1944. The creation of the Archive of the Revival period and the development of historical research methods during this period created the conditions and prerequisites for more targeted research activities and the publication of documents on specific topics. Dimitar Strashimirov is an emblematic figure in this period. He made a great contribution to the discovery and collection of valuable documents related to the Bulgarian Revival period (Neykova 1981: 41).

In 1908, the Ministry of Public Education published the two-volume "Archive of the Revival" compiled and edited by D. Strashimirov, which was the first collection of documents related to the Revival period in post-liberation Bulgaria (Arhiv na Vazrazhdaneto 1908: 17). The first volume of this documentary collection, which was entirely devoted to the history of the national liberation revolutionary movement, included political documents collected mainly from the personal archives of Panayot Hitov and the Lovech archives of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee (BRCC) (Arhiv na balgarskite arhivi 2003: 341).

The documents used in compiling this first volume of the collection were part of the political department of the Archive of the Revival. The work and preparation of the collection, compared to the partial publications from the previous period, is significantly expanded and complicated. Many new moments are clearly visible, such as the selection of documents for publication, preparation of the text, compilation

of a reference apparatus for the collection and more (Neykova 1981: 44).

In the second volume of the collection included documents referring to the Unification of Eastern Rumelia with the Principality of Bulgaria (1885) Strashimirov emphasized that the benefit of publishing the documents was twofold: "a serious beginning of the study [...] of the period..." is being made" and "the Archive itself, which is little known, is being popularized with this volume" (Arhiv na balgarskite arhivi 2003: 13).

In 1929, D. Strashimirov published the collection "Vasil Levski. Life, deeds, sources", Volume I. The idea came from Vasil Levski Committee established in 1923 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Levski's death. The Ministry of Public Education supported it and assigned the preparation of the collection to D. Strashimirov. He undertook the task of finding, collecting and publishing in his collection all the known documents and materials about Vasil Levski.

Both collections of Strashimirov contain all known and documentary sources about the history of the national liberation revolutionary movement and about Vasil Levski's life and revolutionary activity. To this purpose, Strashimirov looked for documents not only in public but also in private archival collections.

During the second stage of the publication of archival documents in Bulgaria, the leading place is occupied by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS). It initiated the publication of Revival documents in its Collection of BAS (Сборника на БАН) and Journal of BAS (Списание на БАН). The documents published in them belonged to prominent Revival figures such as Vasil Aprilov, Neofit Rilski. However, unlike the documents published in the Periodical Journal (*Bulgarian: Периодично списание; Periodichno spisanie*) and *Sbornik za narodni umotvoreniia, nauka i knizhnina*, the documentary publications in the Collection of BAS and in the Journal of BAS are addressed mainly to specialists (Neykova 1981: 36).

During this period, the National Library in Sofia also continued to contribute to the enrichment of the printed source base of our historical science. As Maria Kuzmanova notes in her monograph on the history of archives and the organization of archival work in Bulgaria, the National Library publishes a significant number of important documents relating to the Bulgarian Revival. Archival materials were also published in the library's yearbooks. According to Kuzmanova, however, most of the publications did not meet the requirements for publishing archival documents (Mateeva 1966: 86).

The collections of documents from the period of the Bulgarian Revival, which were published between

1878 and 1944, were relatively small in number (Total 12). This can be explained by the fact that there were no professional archivists at the time and the collection of archives in Bulgaria was not based on scientific methods until 1951 (Neykova 1981: 40).

Due to the slow and unsystematic construction of public archival collections, the Revival documents were for the most part owned by private individuals or were located outside the country, which limited their availability for public use and publication.

To sum up, in spite of the limited access to archival documents in the period after the Liberation of Bulgaria from 1878 to 1944, laid the foundation for the discovery of a great number of documents related to the Bulgarian Revival. The publication of these documents was made possible thanks to the research work carried out both by professional and amateur historians. These activities were encouraged and supported by the Ministry of Education, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the National Library. The establishment of the Archive of the Revival in 1908 proved to be an important step on the way to the creation of the new institution of State Archive later in 1951.

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