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Emancipation through Education: Some Bulgarian Experience since the 19th Century

During the 19th century, popular in the Bulgarian historiography as national Revival, a growing number of Bulgarians got acquainted with the achievements and values of the contemporary European societies. More intensive trade relations, contacts with the newly established diplomatic representations of the Great Powers in the Ottoman Empire, European voyagers, Catholic and Protestant missions in South-Eastern Europe, education at European universities were the main channels through which the impact of the French revolution and modern ideas in political, economic and cultural life penetrated the Balkans.¹ The urban space with specific communication facilities in the first place functioned as the most influential site of transmission. The Western model, which won recognition in a prolonged and complex process, not without contradictions, embodied for the enlightened Bulgarian elite the prospects for the future development and the negation of the rejected Ottoman domination. Its features – intensive urbanization, parliamentary democracy, sustained technological transformations, multiplication of communications, compulsory and common accessible education – made a significant part of the projects for national emancipation. In the rhetoric of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, adoption of the Western model of social development was declared the way for the Bulgarians to take their place among the civilized, prosperous or just enlightened nations and to be part of the modern world.²

Emancipation in this case was understood as overcoming the complex Ottoman heritage associated with Orientalism. A second line of development confronted Greek religious and educational influence which dominated Bulgarian intelligentsia till the mid of the 19th century. Thus, national education seemed to be committed to change the cultural belonging of the Bulgarians and to perform

1 "Balkans" and "Balkan" are used as synonyms for South-Eastern Europe and South-Eastern European without any derogative connotations inherent in some texts of Western authors. See Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York – Oxford, 1997).

2 See Veska Nikolova – Dimitur Sazdov (eds.), *Programi, programni dokumenti i ustavi na burzhoaznite partii v Bulgariya* (Sofia, 1992).

the shift from the Balkan-Oriental model to the European one. It concentrated the efforts and the will of the enlightened elites to change the status of the nation and to approach the achievements of modernity in the states which shaped the image of Europe.³ Several public celebrations related to education not only mobilized the social energy for this but also promoted national self-esteem. The biggest among them is the day of the Saints Cyril and Methodius, the creators of the Cyrillic alphabet, celebrated since 1851/57 as the Day of Bulgarian Education and Culture and of Slavic Literacy. A particular hymn of the Saints Cyril and Methodius was created in 1892 by Stojan Mihailovski and the music to it by Panaiot Pipkov in 1900. The hymn is played in every Bulgarian school throughout the world on 24 May. Hundreds of schools, the National Library in Sofia and the University in Veliko Turnovo added the names of the two saints to their names. The day of the Seven Saints – Cyril, Methodius, Kliment, Sava, Gorazd, Naum, Angelarius – is intended to outline the specific Bulgarian contribution to the preservation of the Cyrillic alphabet and the old Slavic literature. Explicitly celebrated are: the Day of the peoples' spiritual leaders, the Day of St. Kliment Ohridski, patron of the Sofia University which became the day of all Bulgarian university students at the beginning of the 20th century.

This is just one of the many occurrences of a specific affinity for education in Bulgaria formed through the last one and a half centuries. Reports of foreign observers in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries indicate this peculiarity. Felix Philipp Kanitz, Austro-Hungarian traveller, geographer, ethnographer and journalist during the 1860s and 1870s, pointed out in his *“Donau-Bulgarien und der Balkan”* that the Bulgarians have a strong natural inclination towards learning. He supported this statement not only by his personal experience in different towns and villages but also by impressive examples of donations made by wealthy Bulgarians for promoting national education.⁴ Analogous observations were also made by Count Zichy, an Austro-Hungarian ambassador to Constantinople in 1874, although he put them into a diplomatic context: the aspirations of the Bulgarians for progress and education are so evident, and anyone who would offer them a possibility to satisfy this striving will have their affection and gratitude. The Czech historian Konstantin Jireček, invited as an expert and later minister in the Bulgarian Ministry of Education during the early 1880s, a man extremely critical of the political elite, of urbanization and living conditions in Sofia at that

3 Angel Dimitrov, *Uchilishteto, progresut i natsionalnata revoliutsiya: Bulgarskoto uchilishte prez Vuzrazhdaneto* (Sofia, 1987); Nikolai Genchev, *Bulgarsko vuzrazhdane* (Sofia, 1978); Nikolai Genchev, *Bulgarskata vuzrozhdenska inteligentsiya* (Sofia, 1991); Raina Gavrilova, *Vekut na bulgarskoto duhovno vuzrazhdane* (Sofia, 1992); Nikolai Aretov – Raia Zaimova (eds.), *Modernostta vchera i dnes* (Sofia, 2003). For a more general view on this issue see in Serge Latouche, *Die Verwestlichung der Welt* (Frankfurt am Main, 1994).

4 Felix Kanitz, *“Donau-Bulgarien und der Balkan: historisch-geographisch-ethnographische Reisetudien aus den Jahren 1860-1875”*, Bd. 1-3, Leipzig 1875-1879, pp. VI, 87, 159, 208, 217, 234, etc.

time, admired the apparent endeavours of the Bulgarians to be enlightened and to develop.⁵ Almost thirty years later, Harry de Windt, an English officer and traveller, reflected in his book "Through Savage Europe" the great aptitude for learning, books, newspapers showed by the Bulgarians.⁶ The explicitly positive disposition towards promotion of education and culture as a peculiarity of the Bulgarian nation is stressed also by several German and Austro-Hungarian military observers during the Balkan Wars and World War I.⁷ These impressions by foreign commentators in the long period from the 1860s to World War I display a sustained trend with a relatively high social value.

After the re-establishment of the autonomous Kingdom of Bulgaria in 1878, efforts of state, municipalities, economic and political elite to demonstratively turn to the European patterns and standards affected first of all town planning, construction and architecture. New cultural institutions occurred which were not existing by that time – publishing houses, libraries, museums, institutions of higher education, theatres. In the first decades after the liberation, European experts were invited to carry out these changes. This had a long-term social effect outlining the direction for the future advancement. As public discourse on modernization or "Europeization" as opposed to the prior compulsory imposed Ottoman pattern concerned the means and ways of realization but not its sense, it could be regarded as a principal consensus.⁸

Beyond the nation-building role, education has another role – to disseminate knowledge and skills and thus accelerate economic development. It promotes economic progress in general and industrialization in particular as far as both are intellectual activities based on acquisition of knowledge and technical methods. In this context, education is regarded a significant factor of production next to land, capital and work. This view of most of the leading activists of the Revival is a further explanation for the special attention they paid to it. Comparable indices of education in Bulgaria during the long 19th century – state funding per capita, number of teachers per 1000 inhabitants, share of children in the age between 5 and 15 years *regularly* going to school – were approaching the respective average values in Europe and were among the best in South-Eastern Europe.⁹ They reveal

5 Konstantin Jireček, *Bulgarski dnevnik 1879-1884. Tom I. Plovdiv* (Sofia, 1930).

6 Harry De Windt, *Through savage Europe being the narrative of a journey throughout the Balkan states and European Russia* (London, 1907), pp. 218, 234-235.

7 Mechthild Golczewski, *Der Balkan in deutschen und österreichischen Reise- und Erlebnisberichten 1912-1918* (Wiesbaden, 1981), pp. 33, 176.

8 Roumiana Preshlenova, "Challenges of Liberty. Shaping Identifications in Bulgarian Urban Space after 1878. - "We" and "The Others": Modern European Societies in Search of Identity", *Studies in comparative history, Studia historica LIII, Acta Universitatis Carolinae. Philosophica et Historica 1-2000*, Praha, 2004, pp. 103-115.

9 Holm Sundhaussen, „Alphabetisierung und Wirtschaftswachstum in den Balkanländern in historisch-komparativer Perspektive“, in Norbert Reiter – Holm Sundhaussen (eds.), *Allgemeinbildung als Modernisierungsfaktor. Zur Geschichte der Elementarbildung in Südosteuropa von der Aufklärung bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Balkanologische Veröffentlichungen 23) (Berlin, 1994), pp. 21-36.

a strategic investment whose maximal accelerating effect was expected in years to come.

According to official statistics, literacy in Bulgaria doubled from 27% to 52% from the late 19th century to the eve of World War I. This positive although insufficient progress can be attributed to the priority given to education. The existing network of primary schools was extended, and many buildings for them were constructed voluntarily by the population. In addition, a number of professional schools have been established immediately after 1879: several pedagogical courses and colleges, the Military School in Sofia (1878), the Handicraft School in Kniazhevo (1883), the first Academy of Trade in Svishtov (1884-1885), agricultural schools with model farms in Obratzov Chiflik near Rousse and in Sadovo (1883). In the next years, the Art School in Sofia (1896), the state school for deaf-and-mute students (1898), the Academy of Music in Sofia (1904), the first school for blind students (1905) appeared. Between 1893 and 1905, 56 private girls' schools were established as well. On the eve of the World War I, there were already 4,033 schools in Bulgaria, and 37 of them were full high schools. The Ministry of Education took up the administration of and the control over all educational institutions in the country with the laws from 1891 and 1909. In the school year 1909/1910, only 22% of the obligated children did not go regularly to primary and secondary schools, which were free of charge.¹⁰ Many foreigners, mainly Slavs from the Habsburg Monarchy, were invited to teach and organize education in Bulgaria.¹¹

The idea of the establishment of an own university or higher school was welcomed by many prominent Bulgarians during the Revival. Among them were Vasil Aprilov, Ivan Bogorov, Konstantin Fotinov, Gavril Krustevich, Ivan Seliminski, graduates from prestigious European universities. The founders of the Bulgarian Learned Society (1869) in Braila, the Bulgarian Community in Constantinople and the Bulgarian Exarchate, established in the Ottoman capital in 1870, shared the same vision. But there were not enough resources to achieve this goal under the conditions of the alien rule. After the liberation, the first Bulgarian prince Alexander von Battenberg and the Czech professor Konstantin Jireček, minister of education in 1881-82 became the protagonists of a higher school. Indeed, the first Bulgarian Higher School was founded in 1888, only a decade after the reestablishment of the state and renamed university in 1904. The biggest personal donation ever made in Bulgaria was explicitly aimed at this goal – the establishment of a national higher school. Evlogii Georgiev, considered the wealthiest Bulgarian in the 19th century and one of the most generous partisans of national education and enlightenment, granted a site of 10,200 m² in the centre

10 Nikola Vankov, *Istoria na uchebnoto delo v Bulgariya* (Sofia, 1930), pp. 86-109; Veliko Iordanov, *Materiali za izuchavane na uchebnoto delo v Bulgariya. Kn. II. Razvitiye na nasheto uchebno delo ot Osvobozhdenieto do voinite (1878-1913)* (Sofia, 1925).

11 Angel Penev – Petur Petrov, *Chuzhdentsi – prosvetni deitsi v Bulgariya* (Sofia, 1988).

of Sofia and 800,000 francs for the construction of the building for the Bulgarian university in 1896. He also donated 6,000,000 francs for the establishment of a technical university in his will.¹²

It is true that till 1918 the university remained incomplete in terms of the classic pattern having only a Physical-Mathematical, Historical-Philological and Juridical Faculty. The decision of 1897 to establish an agricultural department at the university and that of 1917 to open a medical faculty did not change this situation. Furthermore, there were fewer graduates from this university than the Bulgarian students educated abroad in the same period. But the very existence of the university at that time demonstrated a shift to other, non-Oriental models of development. Consequently, the share of people with a university or higher school degree increased especially among the political elite: in the Constituent Assembly there were just 20% of people with such education in 1879, this percentage rising to 31% in 1899, and to 43% in 1908.¹³ There were of course critical opinions on the state of education and even on the very existence of the university in Bulgaria. The same year when Harry de Windt praised the Bulgarians for their studiousness, a debate developed on the occasion of the university crisis in Sofia in 1907. The social legitimacy of the institution was contested in the press by prominent intellectuals, such as Stoian Mihailovsky, Dr. Momchilov and Krustiu Krustev because of the immaturity of the nation. The lack of adequate material resources for the development of the Sofia University was also underlined. The main motif for the establishment of the Sofia University was interpreted by its critics like this: "People do not want to remain beneath Belgrade, Bucharest or Athens, so the university opened for parade, for luxury".¹⁴ In his response to such criticism, the already mentioned Konstantin Jireček, at that time professor at the Vienna University, pointed out: "If there are small universities in Athens, Corfu, Zagreb, Belgrade, Bucharest, and Jassy, why not have one in Bulgaria as well?"¹⁵

A specific form of emancipation occurred also with regard to Russian education, which was among the measures for creating a network of supporters for Russian political ambitions among the Slavic population in South-Eastern Europe. After the Crimean War, numerous scholarships were provided for young Slavs at Russian schools and universities. On the other hand, Bulgarian students sent to universities and higher schools in Central and Western Europe did not

12 Elena Statelova, *Evlogii Georgiev i svobodna Bulgariya* (Sofia, 1987); Elka Drosneva (ed.), *Daritelite Evlogii i Hristo Georgievi* (Sofia, 1998).

13 Zina Markova, Elena Statelova, „Sotsiologicheskoprochuvane na sustava na Uchreditelnoto subranie“, in Georgi Vulkov (ed.), *Turnovskite zakonodateli. Iubileen sbornik* (Veliko Turnovo, 1980), pp. 26-27; Iordan K. Kolev, *Bulgarskata inteligentsiya 1878 - 1912 g* (Sofia, 1992), p. 74.

14 Pepka Boiadzhieva, *Universitet i obshtestvo: dva sotsiologicheski sluchaya* (Sofia, 1998), pp. 284-287.

15 Petur Miyatev (ed.), *Iz arhivata na Konstantin Jireček. Prepiska s bulgari. Dokumenti za obshtestveno-politicheskata i kulturnata istoriya na Bulgariya ot 1871 do 1914 godina* (Sofia, 1953), pp. 294-295.

receive scholarships from the respective country, except for a very small number of people. They were supported from native resources, such as wealthy parents, relatives, compatriots, communities, or Bulgarian charity associations, such as the “Blagodetelna Drouzhina” (Benevolent Society) in Bucharest or the Society “Napreduk” (Progress) in Vienna. These offset Russian educational activities to a significant degree. Bulgarian emigrant merchant colonies in Romania and Vienna used to finance young gifted men during their studies abroad. Significantly, they sent them predominantly to high schools and universities in the Slavic areas of the Habsburg Monarchy – Zagreb, Prague, but also Vienna. Before the establishment of a Bulgarian diplomatic office in Vienna in 1889, the firm of Nikola and Sava Panitsa performed such functions for Bulgarian students as well as for different missions defending the Bulgarian cause in the capitals of the Great Powers. They or other compatriots in Vienna met the students, accompanied them to the respective school or university, forwarded evidence for their progress and behaviour, and transferred their scholarships. From 1872 to 1881, the “Benevolent Society” for example financed totally the education of nineteen young Bulgarians either partly or by full scholarships. Nine of them studied in Austria-Hungary, six in Russia, two in Bulgaria, one in Paris and one in Munich. It is worth mentioning that the Society was known as one of the leading Russophile organizations of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie.¹⁶ Support for Bulgarian students predominantly in universities and higher schools in Central Europe corresponded to the respect and admiration for modern European progress in education, science and technology. This social mobilization to promote the status of the Bulgarian population and to foster modernization is admittedly a part of the complex nation-building process in South-Eastern Europe.

The balance of the two students’ streams – to Russia and to European universities, was more favourable to the second one, according to recent studies. Till 1878, 220 Bulgarians studied at Russian universities, most of them with a scholarship from the Russian emperor or from Slavic charity committees. Twice and a half more Bulgarian students acquired their higher education in other countries - 150 in Constantinople (not only at Ottoman institutions, but also at the famous American Robert College and Lycée Français in Galata), 160 in the Habsburg Monarchy, 70 in Romania, 70 in France, 45 in Germany, 30 in Greece, etc.¹⁷ This proportion repeats roughly in the educational profile of the Bulgarian governmental elite in 1879-1915. Less than one third of the ministers

16 Bulgarski Istoricheski Arhiv – Natsionalna biblioteka „Sv. Sv. Kiril i Metodii“, f. II B 9291, l. 134. See also Nikolai Zhechev, *Bucuresht – kulturno sredishte na bulgarite prez Vuzrazhdaneto* (Sofia, 1991), pp. 234-237.

17 Nikolai Genchev, *Bulgaro-ruski kulturni obshtuvaniya prez Vuzrazhdaneto* (Sofia, 2002), pp. 113-202. Data about Austria, The Czech Lands, Hungary and Croatia are summed up as these were parts of the Habsburg Monarchy.

in this period were educated in Russia and afterwards some of them also attended universities in Central and Western Europe.¹⁸

Enthusiasm for Russian educational institutions remained moderate also after the liberation in the course of the Russo-Turkish war in 1877-78, which strengthened some Russophile sentiments among the population. This trend remained continuous, despite sometimes changing political priorities of the Bulgarian governments. The share of state bursaries for students at Russian universities was diminishing. It dropped dramatically especially after 1886 when diplomatic relations between Sofia and St Petersburg were broken. During the whole period 1879-1909, the total number of Bulgarian state grants for foreign universities was around 600. Remarkably, 160 from them were intended for France, 140 for Austria-Hungary, 115 for Germany and only 76 for Russia.¹⁹ It would not be exaggerated to interpret the destination of state scholarships also as a tool for the country's emancipation from Russian hegemonic pretensions.

The overall number of Bulgarians studying abroad was much greater than the one of state grants. Only in the academic year 1897/98, 1000 young people studied abroad according to the Ministry of Education. The data on particular universities also confirm this assumption: in 1913/1914, 330 Bulgarians were studying only at the New Brussels University, and further 80 in Vienna, where nearly 1000 Bulgarians have been ascertained up to World War I. In Zurich, some 220 Bulgarians were registered at the university by that time. The European universities played a crucial role for the Bulgarian development, which is evident also from the fact that the total number of their graduates (totally 1500 by 1909) exceeded many times the number of graduates at the Sofia University. Up to that time, only the number of probated diplomas from foreign universities was 1600. Most of them were obtained in Central and Western Europe: in France (318), in Switzerland (305), in Austria-Hungary (272), in Germany (225). The number of diplomas obtained in a small Belgium (162) is comparable to the number of those obtained in Russia (185).²⁰

18 Dobrinka Parousheva, *Pravitelstveniyat elit na Rumania i Bulgariya vtorata polovina na XIX i nachaloto na XX vek* (Sofia, 2008), p. 220.

19 Figures are rounded. Roumiana Preshlenova, *Po putishtata na evropeizma. Visshto obrazovanie v Avstro-Ungaria i bulgarite (1879-1918)* (Sofia, 2008), p. 273. Hereafter Preshlenova, *Po putishtata*. More details on state support in the initial years after the liberation see in Ivan Tanchev, *Bulgarskata durzhava i uchenieto na bulgari v chuzhbina 1879-1892* (Sofia, 1994), pp. 93-97.

20 Preshlenova, *Po putishtata*, pp. 56, 60-61; Alexandre Kostov, *Bulgariya i Belgia. Ikonomicheski, politicheski i kulturni vruzki (1879-1914)* (Sofia, 2005), pp. 69-70; Werner Zimmermann, „Serbische und bulgarische Studenten an der Universität Zürich bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg“, in Richard Georg Plaschka – Karlheinz Mack (eds.), *Wegenetz europäischen Geistes II. Universitäten und Studenten. Die Bedeutung studentischer Migrationen in Mittel- und Südosteuropa vom Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg* (Wien, 1987), pp. 250-251. Hereafter Plaschka – Mack (eds.), *Wegenetz*.

A high number of Bulgarians who studied in Central and Western Europe after 1878 is a phenomenon worth further detailed research. It is part of the increasing stream of young people attending universities as well as of a growing mobility and communication, which had clear analogies at least in Serbia and Romania.²¹ It could hardly be explained by Bulgaria's greater underdevelopment than that of other South-Eastern European countries. Its interpretation is inevitably embedded in, although not limited to the manifested efforts and measures of the elites to catch up with European developments. In the Bulgarian case, the correlation between the diminishing state bursaries for studying abroad and the growing number of Bulgarian students at universities and higher schools in Austria-Hungary since the late 19th century²² implies at least an autonomous development of the students' current. Whether state support was the prevailing source of study financing even in the years after the liberation is a question which demands further particular and wide-ranging research. Indicative in this respect are also data from the educational ministry on Bulgarian students abroad in 1881-1882. Almost two thirds of them were supported by their families and only 14% were holders of state grants. Not less striking is the fact that the share of students at the Sofia University in 1896-1914 financed by sources outside their families rarely exceeded 1%.²³ In addition, private donations for educational purposes and for regular scholarships²⁴ continued tradition from the previous period, despite the expectations of a decisive role of the "own" state. In this context, social mobilization seems to have had a much greater role in fostering education than it is usually accepted and the concept of a state-nourished intelligentsia needs a certain re-evaluation.

A striking parallel to the 19th century Bulgarian phenomenon of studying abroad can be found in a recent development. According to Eurostat, the number of Bulgarian students enrolled in foreign European tertiary education increased more than four times during the last decade – from 4,900 in 1998 to 22,600 in 2007 when the accession to the EU took place. Reportedly, further 20,000 Bulgarians comprise the third largest foreign students' group in the USA, after the Chinese and Russian ones. That means that about 15% of all Bulgarian students study at European or American universities. Whether this means striving for a faster integration into supranational developments, a new rationality or just

21 Plaschka –Mack (eds.), *Wegenetz*; Harald Heppner, "Führungsschichten und Staatswerdung am Balkan im 19. Jahrhundert", *Schriftenreihe des Instituts für Geschichte*. 2. Graz 1988, pp. 115-130; Љубинка Трговчевић, *Планирана елита. О студентима из Србије на европским универзитетима у 19. Веку* (Београд, 2003); Elena Siupiur, „Intellectual, elite, clase politice moderne în Sud-Estul European”, *Secolul XIX*, 2004; Wolfgang Höpken, „Die „fehlende Klasse“? Bürgertum in Südosteuropa im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert“, in Ulf Brunnbauer, Wolfgang Höpken, (eds.), *Transformationsprobleme Bulgariens im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Historische und ethnologische Perspektiven* (München, 2007), pp. 33-69.

22 Preshlenova, *Po putishtata*, pp. 273-276.

23 *Ibid.*, pp. 192-193, 200.

24 Veliko Iordanov, *Daritela po narodnata ni prosveta. Biografichni belezhki. Kn. I* (Sofia, 1911).

dissatisfaction with the national educational system and social environment is a matter of individual choice. Anyway, it reflects a new strong ambition to change the status quo.

Attractiveness of education of course has another perspective which was not always relevant to national sentiments. Studying at a university or a higher school was motivated by the unprecedented vertical social mobility also in egalitarian states like Bulgaria. In the late 19th century Bulgaria, where qualified experts in almost all professions were lacking, university diploma was a kind of permit for high social positions, especially in administration. "Learn for not have to work" is a saying that reflects the very positive attitude to intellectual, inclusively administrative professions as a way to avoid hard physical work. It is more or less a universal disposition. Even nowadays it exists among Bulgarian students (and not only among them). The official data at the beginning of the 21st century reveal a relatively high share of students in social sciences and humanities in Bulgaria – almost a half of all. Many of them enter a university or higher school without a clear orientation, they just choose an exam they consider easiest to pass. Therefore, there is still a deficiency of students in maths, natural sciences, computing, where just 5% of the students were enrolled in 2006.

In the process of nation building, the function of education as a means of accelerating economic development had a secondary importance. In this aspect, it has been regarded as a long-term investment in the future. The Bulgarian economy was based overwhelmingly on small-scale peasant agriculture like all other Balkan economies before the World War I. It was only beginning the process of industrialization, which was the hallmark of modern growth. Structural shifts of labour and financial resources into advanced technologies, which turn such growth into sustained development, were just starting to occur. A recent survey of Bulgarian statistical data reveals stagnation in per capita GNP from 1879 to the 1930s. Evidence is available of a new phase of intensification in agriculture from the 1920s onwards.²⁵ In this state of affairs, education could not do miracles. Compared to most of the states in Western and Central Europe at that time, Balkan economic achievements were very modest. In this sense, the process of their disputable modernization, often called Europeanisation or Westernisation, unavoidably acquires labels, such as partial and superficial. The very fact of a simultaneous transition from pre-industrial to industrial and from Oriental to European patterns made it much more complicated. The fact remains that the Bulgarian elite demonstrated its aim to follow the advanced European countries or rather to adopt some of their economic and cultural achievements and to adapt them to the specific, very unfavourable conditions as a basis for transformations toward the standards of contemporary industrial societies. The

²⁵ Martin Ivanov, Adam Tooze, "Convergence or Decline on Europe's Southeastern Periphery? Agriculture, Population, and GNP in Bulgaria, 1892–1945", *The Journal of Economic History*, 67, 3, 2007, pp. 672-703.

long 19th century momentum nurtured the prospect of modern development in the framework of the nation-state and gave that prospect an irrevocable place in the national consciousness.²⁶ What was expected from education – to prove a new cultural belonging and to publicly propagate it – has been achieved.

26 John R Lampe, “Imperial Borderlands or Capitalist Periphery? Redefining Balkan Backwardness, 1520-1914”, in Daniel Chirot (ed.), *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe. Economics and Politics from the Middle Ages Until the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley – Los Angeles: Oxford, 1989), p. 202.