

Daniela Kalkandjieva
'Roles, Identities and Hybrids' fellow 2005 – 2006

THE BIRTH OF NATIONAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN THE BALKANS

This study analyzes the establishment of the national Orthodox Churches¹ in the Balkans from the early nineteenth century to the end of World War II. It traces the major stages in the development of Orthodoxy, especially in the Balkans. It sheds light on the factors that brought about the group of national Orthodox Churches and influenced the intensity and main directions in their development. It is an attempt to overcome the stereotype image of the Orthodox Church as a socially immovable and conservative institution and to reveal her internal dynamics. According to the author, the national Churches appeared in the Balkans during last two centuries as a new type of Orthodox Church that is different from the medieval one. They are a modern phenomenon in the Orthodox world that needs special studies that will help for understanding the religious problems in the Balkans today.

I. The Orthodox Church: The Ambiguity of the Notion

The notion of Church is characterized by a high level of ambiguity. According to theology, the Church is the mystic body of Christ that unites the world of living and dead. It is a transcendental phenomenon with no limits in space and time. In the academic field, however, there is strong tendency in the different humanitarian disciplines to limit the notion of Church to her earthy dimensions. In addition, scholars cannot reach agreement about her nature. Sociologists consider the Church as a community with well-defined cultural, social, and other dimensions, whose members share the same religious values and beliefs. Lawyers emphasize her institutional aspects. Historians take an intermediate position. These, who explore the history of religious ideas, lean on theology. Those, who study the anthropological aspects of Christianity, refer to sociology and cultural studies. The researchers of church-state relations are concentrated on the canonical and legal aspects of the Church or on her links with politics and recently – with economics. The use of the term Church with a reference to Eastern Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, or Protestantism does not improve the situation. As a result, there is a high level of ambiguity in the notion of Orthodox Church, which is discussed in the next subchapters.

The Symphony

The notion of the Orthodox Church is often taken for granted. According to the Orthodox theologians, only this Church has preserved the purity of Christian teaching and dogma since the very beginning, while the Roman Papacy deviated from the true road and fell in schism.² This certainty, however, wanes when we discuss Orthodox ecclesiology. If we refer to “symphony” as a major principle of the church-state relations in Eastern Orthodoxy then we should postpone the birthday of its Church

¹ In this paper the term “Church” is capitalized when it refers to Church as an institution, while is written with small letters when it concerns parochial churches and religious buildings.

² See the entry “Pravoslavie” [Orthodoxy] in *Polnyi pravoslavnyi bogoslovskii slovar'*: *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'* [Full Orthodox Theological Dictionary. Encyclopedic Dictionary], vol. II, Reprint (St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo P.P. Soykina, 1872-1876), 1872-1876.

with six centuries. Its definition was given by Justinian I in his famous novella of 535.

The greatest blessings of mankind are the gifts of God which have been granted to us by the mercy on high: the priesthood and the imperial authority. The priesthood ministers to the things divine; the imperial authority is set over, and shows diligence, in things human; but both proceed from the same source, and both adorn the life of man.³

This diarchal model of church-state relations differs from that, adopted by the Roman Catholic world, in which the Church presides over the state.⁴ Another peculiarity roots in the concept of Byzantine emperor (*basileus*) which is distinct from that of the Western emperor. Being considered as Christ's vicar on the earth the *Basileus* was anointed with priestly power, while the Emperor was a secular ruler.⁵ This difference influenced also the concepts of the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Roman Pope that took shape between the ninth and eleventh centuries. The Patriarch was not able to implement any of the Church's decisions without the *Basileus's* consent,⁶ while the Pope became an "ultimate custodian of the Christian faith" in the West, especially after the Great Schism.⁷

At the same time, the symphony did not work so smoothly in practice as in theory and thus its applicability has been questioned several times.⁸ The most severe crisis of the Byzantine church-state diarchy was provoked by the fall of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade in 1204. Its essence is presented by Sir Steven Runciman:

There was an immediate constitutional problem, as on the fall of the city the Patriarch, John Camaterus, retired bewildered to Bulgaria, where after some hesitation he abdicated, giving no hint of his views about the succession. Theodore Lascaris, who had established himself as leader of the exiled Byzantines at Nicaea, then summoned a quorum of bishops to his capital. On his nomination they elected Michel Autorianus as Patriarch and the new Patriarch crowned Theodore Emperor. But could Theodore nominate a Patriarch before he was crowned Emperor? And could the Patriarch of Constantinople reside at Nicaea? The other Greek succession states were doubtful. The Grand Comnenus of Trebizond refused to acknowledge either the Emperor or Patriarch. He took the Imperial title himself and was crowned by his local metropolitan, whom he declared to be autonomous. The Despots of Epirus of the Angelus dynasty were equally unwilling to cooperate.⁹

In this way, the symphony lost its sacral meaning and became an issue of political expedience. This tendency was deepened after the capture of Constantinople by Ottomans (1453). It seems that the model of symphony is closely linked with the

³ Y. E. Karayanopoulos, *Politicheskata teoria na vizantiytsite* [Byzantines' Political Theory], translated in Bulgarian by K. Pavlikyanov (Sofia: Sofia University Publishing House, 1992), 77. See also, Milica Bakic-Hayden, "What' So Byzantine About the Balkans," in: *Balkans as Metaphor: Between Globalization and Fragmentation*, edited by Dusan I. Bjelic and Obrad Savic (Cambridge, Mass., London, England: MIT Press, 2002), 67.

⁴ One of the best analyses of the Byzantine model of church-state relations belongs to Gilbert Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre: Étude sur le "césaropapisme" byzantin* (Editions Gallimard, 1996).

⁵ Steven Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity: A study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1968)

⁶ Karayanopoulos, 80.

⁷ Aristeides Papadakis, "Church-State relations under Orthodoxy," In: *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Pedro Ramet (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1988), 43.

⁸ Karayanopoulos, 76-85.

⁹ Runciman, 64-65.

Byzantine experience, especially with the idea of Byzantium as the only empire that existed on the earth thanks to God's will. Therefore, it is problematic to what degree the model of symphony was applicable to the medieval states of Bulgaria, Serbia and Kiev Rus'. It is also questionable how reasonable is to refer to symphony as a traditional basis for church-state relations in the contemporary Orthodox states such as Greece and Bulgaria. Is it possible nowadays to translate the Byzantine notion of "the imperial authority" as a "state authority"? Such a transfer of terms from a past theocratic order to the present secular one brings about confusions and misperceptions. It could mislead contemporary policymakers and provoke religious conflicts or aggravate the existing ones.

The Counciliarity

The principle of counciliarity is another specificity of the Orthodox Church. According to it, none of the Christian Churches could introduce alone new teaching without consulting it with the others and without their agreement.¹⁰ Until the Great Schism, the principle of counciliarity gave priority to five churches that established the so called Pentarchy.¹¹ It included the patriarchates of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem.¹² The Pentarchy theory was based on Justinian's novellas and in Canon 36 of the Council of Trullo (691-692). Its definition is formulated by the Byzantine representatives in the Council of Constantinople (869-870).¹³

Like the five senses of the human body, (...), none of which has ascendancy over the rest, the five patriarchates were entirely independent from each other. Together they constituted the Church (designated as "Christ's body"), and were subject only to him as their head. Each was responsible for the administration of its own affairs, and no cleric in one patriarchate had the right to appeal above his own patriarch to another. All questions of common interest were to be steered by joint action of the five patriarchs as determined by themselves or their representatives. Decisions were to be rendered by majority vote, and no binding oecumenical ruling could be made, (...), except in this way."¹⁴

In this way, the five patriarchates had to play the major part in the formulation of Christian dogma.¹⁵ The principle of equality in the organization and administration of the Church, however, has been damaged many times. First, the rise of Islam in the Middle East brought about the decline of the patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem and their gradual subjection to Constantinople. The principle of counciliarity was additionally undermined by "the idea of the Church as monarchy,"¹⁶

¹⁰ Bishop Kalistos (Timoty) Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 50.

¹¹ See the announcement made by the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople regarding the denouncement by Pope Benedict XVI of Rome of the title "Patriarch of the West", published in *Europaica* (Bulletin of the Representation of the Russian Orthodox Church to the European Institutions) No. 101, 26 June 2006, available in: <http://www.orthodoxeurope.org>.

¹² The elevation of these five Churches to the ranks of patriarchates confirmed by the decisions of several ecumenical councils: Canon 6 of the First Ecumenical Council (about Alexandria, Rome and Antioch), Canon 3 of the Second Ecumenical Council (about the second place of the Bishop of Constantinople after the Bishop of Rome), and Canon 28 of the Fourth Ecumenical Council.

¹³ Evgraf Smirnov, *Istoria na hristianskata tsarkva* [The Christian Church's History], trans. N. A. Nachov, vol. 1 (Varna: 1899), 394-402.

¹⁴ Milton V. Anastos, *Aspects of the Mind of Byzantium: Political theory, Theology, and Ecclesiastical Relations with the See of Rome* (Ashgate Publications, Variorum Collected Studies Series, 2001). Used in Internet: www.myriobiblos.gr/texts/english/milton1_21.html.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Bakic-Hayden, 64.

adopted by the Roman popes, and the Great Schism (1054), followed by the capture of Constantinople by the Crusaders (1204).

Finally, the “ancient regime” of Christian world also shaken by the emergence of a series of new churches set up in Medieval Bulgaria, Serbia and Russia. They claimed to take the place of Rome, especially the Patriarchate of Tarnovo after 1204 and the Patriarchate of Moscow after 1453. In this way, the inability of Eastern Orthodoxy to apply the principle of conciliarity has preserved its teaching, dogma and liturgy nearly unchanged since the ninth century. This brings us to series of questions: How reasonable is to refer to “conciliarity” as a major feature of the contemporary Orthodox Church in her entirety?; Is it possible to combine the development of nationalism in the Balkans with Orthodox conciliarity? Does the principle of conciliarity play any role in the relations between the modern Orthodox Churches?

The Autocephality

The above-mentioned characteristics of the Orthodox Church reveal that the sixth-eighth century was a formative period for this Church as an institution. This timing, however, does not take into account the phenomenon of autocephality which has disappeared from Western Christendom by the tenth century.¹⁷ In general, an autocephalous Church has two rights: “to resolve all internal problems on its own authority, independently of all other churches” and “to appoint its own bishops, among them the head of the church, without any obligatory expression of dependence on another church.”¹⁸ Nowadays, however, there no agreement among the Orthodox Churches about the procedure of granting autocephality. Some of them have been considered autocephalous from the very beginning, e.g. the Churches of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem.¹⁹ There is also a group of Churches that have been considered autocephalous on the basis of “the ancient custom,” e.g. the Church of Cyprus in the East and the Church of Karthage in the West. All these autocephalities were confirmed by the ecumenical councils’ decisions.²⁰ The case of Constantinople was the only exception. This Church emerged under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of Heraclea and obtained its autocephality thanks to Canon 3 of the Ecumenical Council in Constantinople (381 CA) and Canon 28 of the Fourth Ecumenical Council in Chalcedon (451 CA).²¹

After the Great Schism, the theory of autocephality was further developed in the East by Nilus Doxoprates and Theodore Balsamon.²² According to the latter, this quality can be granted not only by the ecumenical councils, but also by the Byzantine *basileus*, who issued special novellas, i.e. decrees, or by the Mother-Church, who declared her consent in special thomes, i.e. certificates. The first type of autocephality was granted to the Georgian Church by Emperor Zeno in the fifth century and to Justiniana Prima, considered as a predecessor of the Archbishopric of Ohrid, in the

¹⁷ The issue of autocephality is mentioned by Pedro Ramet. See Ramet, “Autocephality and National Identity in Church-State Relations in Eastern Orthodoxy: As Introduction,” In: *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. P. Ramet, Series: Christianity under Stress, vol. 1 (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 1988), 3-19. This article, however, does not explain what autocephality means in Orthodoxy, nor it make difference between ecclesiastical autocephality and autonomy. It simply refers to autocephality as a kind of autonomy that creates conditions for linking nationalism with Orthodoxy.

¹⁸ John H. Erickson, *The Challenges of Our Past*, (Crestwood, NT: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1991), 91-92.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 95-96.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 95.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 96.

²² *Ibid.*, 93.

sixth century.²³ The second was granted to the Serbian Church in 1219 and to the Bulgarian Patriarchate of Tarnovo in 1235.²⁴ According to John Erickson, the last type was an innovation. The Serbian and Bulgarian Churches were not part of the Byzantine Empire, but belonged to separate sovereign states. Their autocephality was a result of bilateral negotiations between two secular governments and thus created conditions for linking the church autocephality with state sovereignty.

Whereas autocephality formerly had meant independence on strictly ecclesiastical level, now it meant political independence, expressed above all in the right to consecrate the *myron* needed for anointing an emperor. As one curious result of this virtual redefinition of terms, autocephality increasingly became (at least by the standards of previous centuries) conditional and partial, limited by treaty and juridically revocable. For example, in exchange for autocephaly the Serbian and Bulgarian churches both agreed to commemorate the patriarch of Constantinople first in liturgy and – at least in the case of Bulgaria – to pay him an annual tax.

Another feature peculiar to these new autocephalous churches is that the ecclesiastical recognition of their status came in the first instance from the Patriarch of Constantinople.... One element in earlier ecclesiology seems to have been maintained at least for a time: the ideal consensus represented by the pentarchy. St Sava's archiepiscopal consecration may very well have taken place as churchmen from far and wide gathered in Nicea in 1220 for the pan-Orthodox Synod which Theodore Laskaris had called in order to discuss possible negotiations with Rome. Better substantiated is the involvement of the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem in the decision to recognize the Bulgarian church as an autocephalous patriarchate.²⁵

In the end of the thirteenth century, the unusual functions of the Patriarch of Constantinople to grant autocephality brought about a new theory about his role in the Orthodox world. According to it, the Patriarch had been appointed by God to protect and guard the souls of all Christians. This meant that the Patriarch of Constantinople had replaced the Byzantine *basileus* as a leader of the entire Orthodox world ("oecumene") and symbol of its unity.²⁶ On the one hand, it meant that the crisis caused by the Fourth Crusade was overcome. On the other hand, the Church of Constantinople became less dependent on the canons, which were "products of and predicated upon the existence of one Christian empire" and thus were not able to provide adequate answers to the problems of the day.²⁷ Later on, this new expanded

²³ Ibid., 99-101.

²⁴ Ibid., 101-102. The Bulgarian case is more complicated. According to Bulgarian historiography, the Bulgarian Archbishopric, established in 870, was elevated into the rank of Patriarchate by Tsar Simeon in 917 or 919. This means that the Church became also autocephalous. This hypothesis, however, is not well supported by medieval sources. In canonical terms, such an act was purely political and had no effect on the entire Orthodox Church. There is a second theory, according to which, the Bulgarian Church was granted autocephality and the rank of patriarchate by the Patriarchate of Constantinople between 934 and 944. Some sources linked this act with the peace agreement, signed by Bulgaria and Byzantium on the occasion of the marriage of the Bulgarian Tsar Petar with the Byzantine Princess Irini. There is an opinion that this autocephality was abolished in 1018 when the Bulgarian Patriarchate, based then in Ohrid, was abolished. See Bistra Nikolova, *Neravniyat pat na priznanieto* [The Unequal Road of Recognition] (Sofia: IK "Gutenberg", 2001), 75-83. This Bulgarian viewpoint on is contested by Macedonia historians, who claim that this patriarchate was Macedonian. The sources also do not give enough evidence to make certain conclusions. Therefore, the author left this issue open for future research and discussions.

²⁵ Erickson, 107-108

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 109-110.

authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople facilitated the transformation of his Church under the Ottomans as *millet-bashi* of the Orthodox subjects.

Orthodoxy's Respect to the Native Language

Finally, I will discuss the popular view about the special respect paid by the Orthodox Church to the native language since early times. It has been often used in Eastern Europe as an argument for the more democratic nature of Orthodoxy in comparison with Catholicism. In fact, this view is quite limited. It is spread mainly among the Orthodox Slavophone nations, while is absent among the Greek and Arab speaking ones. The same is valid for the Orthodox Romanians. To a great degree this idea was a product of the nineteenth century Russian Slavophilism. Its present influence among most Orthodox countries in Eastern Europe roots also in the Stalinist propaganda during the last months of World War II. The latter promoted the idea of the democratic nature of the Orthodox Churches in order to discredit the Vatican as Hitler's ally and after 1947, as an supporter of Western imperialism.²⁸

The concept of a close link between Orthodoxy and vernacular is influenced by modern historiography that tends to read the Medieval Age through the glasses of nationalism. According to the author, the Slavonic alphabet was not invented in order to protect the political and cultural sovereignty of Medieval Bulgaria, but was rather a project initiated by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in order to strengthen its influence in the West. Therefore, St. Cyril and St. Methodius did not go the neighbor Bulgarian lands but went to Great Moravia and Panonia. Moreover, in the dispute over the use of Slavonic alphabet for the ends of liturgy, their major opponent was not the Papacy but the German kings and bishops. Most Soviet and Bulgarian scholars, however, omitted these aspects during the Cold War. Due to ideological reasons, they often "forgot" to mention that the new alphabet was recognized and blessed by the Roman Pope before being introduced among the Slavs in Central Europe. In this way, the pre-1989 historiography tried to hide the internal link between the nineteenth century geopolitics of Christendom and the issue of Slavonic alphabet.²⁹

The next part of my argument is based on the recent works on Slavonic liturgy as a mixture of Byzantine with Latin elements.³⁰ In the second half of the ninth century, the new liturgy had no intention to enhance the Eastern-Greek or the Western-Latin tendency in Christianity. In fact, it suggested "a third way" between the Byzantine and Roman ecclesiastical models that took into consideration the new states taking shape in Medieval Europe.³¹ There were such developments among the Italian Greeks as well as in the lands under the Papal jurisdiction until the twelfth century.

²⁸ This issue is explored in details in my dissertation on "Ecclesio-Political Aspects of the International Activities of the Moscow Patriarchate, 1917-1948" (CEU, Budapest, 2004).

²⁹ A scientific and de-ideologized approach to this issue can be read in the book by Liliana Simeonova, *Diplomacy of the letter and the Cross: Photios, Bulgaria and the Papacy, 860s-880s* (Amsterdam: A.M. Hakkert Publisher, 1998).

³⁰ Maria Schnitter, "Bogomilstvoto – mitove i fakti" [*Bogomili movement – myths and facts*]. Under print in: *Slavjanski dialozi*, vol.4, Plovdiv, 2005.

³¹ The "third way" hypothesis is developed on the basis of the analyses of manuscripts, found in Sinai, most of which are published. See: I.C. Tarnanindis, *The Slavonic Manuscripts discovered in 1975 at St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai* (Thessaloniki: 1988); Ibid., "Liturgiyata na sv. Petar po sinayskiya rakopis No 5N" [St. Peter's Liturgy in accordance with Sinai manuscript No. 5N], in: *Srednovekovna hristiyanska Evropa: Iztok i Zapad* [Medieval Christian Europe: East and West], ed. V. Gjuzeev, A. Miltenova, (Sofia: 2002), 213-219. See also: Stefano Parenti, *Influssi italo-greci nei testi eucaristici bizantini die „Fogli Slavi“ die Sinai (XI sec.)*, in: *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 57(1991), 165-167; Riccardo Piccio, "Pravoslavno slavyanstvo' i 'rimsko slavyanstvo' – literaturno-istoriografski vuprosi" ["Orthodox Slavdom" and "Roman Slavdom" – literary and historiographical issues], in: *Pravoslavnoto slavyanstvo i starobulgarskata kulturna traditsiya* [Orthodox Slavdom and

We also should not forget that the negative attitude of the Latin Church to the teaching of St. Cyril and St. Methodius appeared only after the Great Schism.³² As a result, “the third way” did not bring reconciliation between Rome and Constantinople but developed into an alternative of the Byzantine tradition. It was fostered by the Slavonic alphabet. The latter did not require the knowledge of Greek and thus isolated the Slavs from the West, where there was no such break with the Hellenistic tradition.³³ The adoption of the Slavonic liturgy by Medieval Bulgaria, Serbia and Kiev Rus’ was a result of concrete historical circumstances and could not be defined as an inherited feature of Orthodoxy. At the same time, we should not diminish the impact of the use of Slavonic language as a means of Christianization by the Bulgarian tsars, Serbian kings and Russian princes. It should be stressed that this was a policy promoted by the state which marked a shift from the tradition of the ancient patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Constantinople and Rome to recognize only Hebrew, Latin, and Greek as liturgy languages.

Orthodoxy and State Sovereignty

The Bulgarian experience had an enduring effect on the evolution of Christianity in Eastern Europe also in the sphere of church-state relations. Being situated in “a zone of clash of Churches” Medieval Bulgaria invented various ways for preserve her integrity.³⁴ They began with the introduction of the Slavonic alphabet and liturgy and passed through a self-proclaimed patriarchal dignity and the wars with Franks and Byzantines in the ninth-tenth century. Another Bulgarian contribution was the principle of concurrence between the state and ecclesiastical borders. It was a novelty for the Orthodox world that contradicted to the theory of the one Christian Empire on the earth. Still, under specific historical and geo-political circumstances that appeared after the ninth century, it was adopted by most Eastern European countries.

In the case of Bulgaria, Tsar Simeon transgressed against the canons and elevated the local Church into a patriarchate (919). His policy of promoting full political and ecclesiastical independence brought about the concept of “tsar” as an institution similar to that of the western emperor.³⁵ In the realm of Christian cosmogony, it also challenged the theory of Pentarchy with its notion of autocephality.³⁶ This tendency

Old-Bulgarian cultural tradition] (Sofia: 1993), 35-137; Ibid., “Questione della lingua e Slavia cirillomethodiana,” in: *Studi sulla questione della lingua presso gli slavi (a cura di Riccardo Piccio)* (Roma: 1972), 7-112.

³² Our modern notion about the liturgical and dogmatic homogeneity of the Roman Catholic Church does not fit to the ninth century realities. We often tend to forget that there were many forms and degrees of pluralism in the Christian world before 1054.

³³ Petar Bitsilli, *Osnovni nasoki v istoricheskoto razvitie na Evropa, ot nachaloto na Hristiyanskata era do nashe vreme* [Main directions in the historical development of Europe from the beginning of the Christian era to nowadays] (Sofia: 1993), 11-13.

³⁴ In this respect the clash of Rome and Constantinople is well presented by the discussion on the jurisdiction over the new Bulgarian Archbishopric hold after the Council of Constantinople (869-870). See Nikolova, *Neravniat pat na priznanieto* (Sofia: IK “Gutenberg, 2001).

³⁵ The Slavonic institution of “tsar” differed from both the Byzantine “*basileus*” and the Holy Roman “emperor.” According to the Byzantine principle of symphony the State and the Church were interdependent. The *basileus* appointed the patriarch, while the patriarch anointed the future *basileus*. Moreover the *basileus* had priestly power, which the holy Roman emperors had not and thus were secular rulers. Meanwhile, Bulgarian tsars mixed the two doctrines. They were not able to follow the Byzantine model, according to which there was only one *basileus* on the earth. They acted more as secular rulers but differ from the western ones by their pretensions to have power over their local Church. About the Byzantine model see the mentioned monographs by Karayanopoulos and Runciman.

³⁶ According to some concepts, developed in second half of the nineteenth century, only the Churches, included in the Pentarchy, have the right to be autocephalous. There are even cases when the

was interrupted by the Byzantine conquest of Bulgaria (1018). Two centuries later, however, it was restored by Bulgarians and adopted by Medieval Serbia and Kiev Rus. In this way, a new group of Orthodox Churches appeared – the “local” (*pomestni*) ones. In the Balkans, their jurisdiction was directly linked with the political power of the corresponding ruler and covered the whole territory of his state.³⁷ In this way, any change of the latter brought about a change in the former. The local churches’ hierarchy existed in symbiosis with the ruling dynasties of the independent states that surrounded Byzantium and thus supported their states against the Constantinople claims for political and religious supremacy in Eastern Christendom. These Slavonic medieval Churches are quite different from the national ones, which ecclesiastical borders tend to include the corresponding nation in its entirety.

The Role of the Orthodox Church in the Medieval Age

The short review of the features of Eastern Orthodoxy in the Medieval Ages reveals a series of tensions between its theological and ecclesiastical aspects. On the one hand, the content and principles Orthodox teaching, dogma and liturgy were fixed in the period between the fourth and thirteenth century and since then had not been experienced significant changes.³⁸ Moreover, in the first centuries of Christianity the term “orthodox” was used mostly in a binary opposition to heretical and only after the Fourth Crusade the notion of Eastern Orthodoxy was included in a new binary opposition to Roman Catholicism, regarded as schismatic.³⁹

At the same time, the outer organization of the Church and her relationship with the worldly powers have not stopped her development, but moved her through various transformations. After the Great Schism, the Orthodox Church adopted a new role in addition to the previous ones. If her previous activities were dominated by transcendental tasks, i.e. to prepare the community of believers for God’s Kingdom, after 1054 she obtained new ones – ideological, i.e. to fight Roman Catholicism as a schismatic deviation from true Christianity. The concepts of Orthodox ecclesiology that took shape between sixth and ninth century were changed in the thirteenth century. They have been challenged once more by the Ottoman invasion that divided the Orthodox world into two parts: one dominated by the Orthodox tsars of Russia and the other – by the infidel ruler of the Ottoman Empire. In the second case, the Orthodox Church became a guardian of the religious identity of her believers ruled by Muslim authorities.

In short, this summary reveals that despite its formative role for the development of the doctrines and institutions of Eastern Orthodoxy, Byzantinism is a different phenomenon and the former could not be limited to the later. It is especially true for the institutional aspects of Orthodox Christianity that experienced a series of changes in time and in space. There are considerable differences between the concept and

Patriarchate of Constantinople has been denied the right of autocephaly by the Churches of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. Their major argument is that their Sees have been established by one of the twelve Holy Apostles, while that of Constantinople - by secular authorities.

³⁷ After the Mongol invasion and the collapse of Kiev Rus’ the political division of the Russian principalities did not have similar parallel at ecclesiastical level. In this case, the Metropolitan of Kiev split in two parts that had different developments: one under the Catholic kings of Polish-Lithuania and the other under the Orthodox princes and tsars of the Muscovite state. See A.V. Kartashev, *Ocherki po istorii Russkoy tserkvi* [Essays on the Russian Church History], vols. 2 (Moscow: Terra, 1992).

³⁸ Hugh Wybrew, *The Orthodox Liturgy: The Development of the Eucharist Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite* (London: SPCK, 1989). Used the Bulgarian translation by I. Merdjanova (Silistra: 2002), 196.

³⁹ About the early meaning of the term “orthodox” see Douglas C. Macintosh, “The Idea of Modern Orthodoxy,” In: *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (Oct., 1911), 479.

practice of the Orthodox Church before and after the Fourth Crusade (1204) as well as in the different geo-cultural areas, e.g. Byzantium, Middle East and the Medieval Slavonic states. All these observations have to be taken into consideration, when we discuss the birth of modern Orthodox Churches, which is often stereotyped by the Balkan national historiographies. In this respect, especially dangerous is the tendency to establish a direct relationship between the medieval period and the modern one by presenting the national Orthodox Churches as undeviating successors of the medieval ones. The neglect of the impact of the Ottoman experience over the contemporary practices and institutional characteristics of Balkan Orthodoxy is socially harmful as well.

II. The Impact of the Ottoman Rule on Balkan Orthodoxy: General Remarks

The previous part of this study reveals that the principles of symphony, councilarity and autocephality in the Eastern part of Christendom had deviated from the earlier canonical tradition long before the Ottoman invasion in the Balkans. Since 1204, their functioning has been subordinated to the political exigencies of the moment.⁴⁰ This tendency increased after the fall of Constantinople (1453) when the survival of Eastern Orthodoxy gained priority over the purely doctrinal and theological issues. In the new circumstances the Orthodox Church in the Balkans experienced a series of transformations, provoked by the fact that

1. this Church was not able to function without the recognition of the Sultan, i.e. a non-Orthodox and even non-Christian authority;
2. the introduction of the *millet*-system destroyed the remnants of autocephality and councilarity in the Balkans.

A Pseudo-Secularization of Balkan Orthodoxy

The fall of Constantinople destroyed the balance between *sacerdotium* and *imperium* and thus brought the Byzantine symphony to an end. The Third Rome claims of Moscow also did not transfer the priestly power of the Byzantine *basileus* to the Russian tsars. In the Balkans, the pre-1453 mutual respect and interdependence between Church and State, based on Orthodoxy, was replaced by a ‘misalliance’ between the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Sultan. It was facilitated by several factors. One of them was the thirteenth century decline of the notion of *basileus* as God’s vicar on the earth and the representative of all Orthodox people before God.⁴¹ The trauma of the Fourth Crusade also disposed the Patriarchate of Constantinople to support the infidel invaders against the Western Christians. The most important, however, was the fact that the Sultan as a new ruler of Constantinople did not need the Church as a source for his legitimacy. At the same time, he was conscious about her importance in domestic and foreign affairs, especially in the Ottoman wars with the Catholic West.⁴² As a result, the previous religious division between the East and the West in the Christian world was aggravated by new political and cultural developments.

⁴⁰ Erickson, 109.

⁴¹ In the end of the thirteenth century, the Ottoman danger restored for while the notion about Byzantium as “a universal empire responsible for the unity of the Christian world.” This tendency was expressed by Patriarch Antony IV, who stated that the Byzantine emperors “confirmed the true faith in all Oecumene ... [as well as] the pronouncements of the divine and sacred canons concerning true doctrine and the government of Christians.” See John Meyendorff, “Was ever a “Third Rome”?” Remarks on the the Byzantye legacy in Russia,” In: *The Byzantine Tradition after the Fall of Constantinople*, ed. by John J. Yannias, (London: University Press of Virginia, 1991), 45.

⁴² Olga Todorova, *Pravoslavna tsarkva i balgarite, XV XVIII vek* [The Orthodox Church and the Bulgarians, XV-XVIII centuries], (Sofia: Akademichno izdatelstvo “Prof. Marin Drinov”, 1997), 53.

On her turn, the Orthodox Church was not able to function without the Sultan's recognition. As far as the later had not the priestly dignity of a *basileus*, the legitimacy he gave to the Patriarch of Constantinople was purely secular. In this way, under Ottomans, the Orthodox Church was involved in secular affairs as never before. The Patriarch of Constantinople became "a lay administrator, obliged to organize law-courts and fiscal services and to give directives on secular politics."⁴³ Moreover, in a case of difficulties over the tax-collection, the Ottoman government "could ask the Church to punish recalcitrants with a sentence of excommunication."⁴⁴ These developments brought about changes in the structure of the ecclesiastical administration. It was opened for laymen, especially tradesmen of Greek origins, who enhance the secular and even brought mercantile spirit in church affairs. Soon the Patriarchal See became an object of selling and buying relations. In order to take the Patriarchal See, a metropolitan needed not only to be elected by the Orthodox bishops but also to be appointed by the Sultan. The applicants tried to guarantee their successful promotion by offering subornations to the Ottoman rulers. The first who used this method to win the Patriarchal See in Constantinople was Simeon I (1472-1575).⁴⁵ Gradually this fashion was adopted by the bishops, who began to redeem the eparchies for which they applied from the Ottoman authorities. This pseudo-secularization⁴⁶ of the Orthodox Church under the Ottomans was additionally enhanced by the introduction of the *milet* system, which transformed the Patriarch of Constantinople into the head of all Orthodox subjects of the Sultan. It also stimulated the spread of the ecclesiastical power of Constantinople over the patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem.⁴⁷ In the pre-Ottoman period these Churches were administrated and protected by the Byzantine *basileus*, while being equal with the Patriarchate of Constantinople in ecclesiastical terms, but in the new conditions their autocephality was suppressed and became nominal. In this way, the Patriarch of Constantinople became a kind of heir of the Byzantine *basileus*.⁴⁸ The inferior position of the Middle East patriarchates was also a result of the Ottoman efforts to centralize the government of the Orthodox ecclesiastical structures in order to facilitate their control.⁴⁹ The same happened to the Balkan Orthodox Churches: the Patriarchate of Tarnovo, the Patriarchate of Ipek, and the Archbishopric of Ohrid.

⁴³ Runciman, *The Orthodox Churches and the Secular State* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, Auckland University Press, 1970), 29.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, *The Great Church*, 174.

⁴⁵ Todorova, 55.

⁴⁶ The author calls this phenomenon "pseudo-secularization," while other authors speak about a kind of secularization. For example, Yannis Stavrakakis defines the position of the Orthodox Church under the Ottomans as "a religious/secular institution." In his article "Politics and Religion: On the "Politicization" of Greek Church Discourse," In: *The Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, Vol. 21 (2003): 165.

⁴⁷ Runciman, *The Great Church*, 167.

⁴⁸ Runciman, *The Great Church*, 175. In the sixteenth century this situation changed. The notion of Moscow as a center of the only true Christian empire "led to the protection of Eastern Christians, to the colonization and Christianization of territories located to the East, and finally influenced the Muscovite diplomats to an attitude marked by pride in their relations with the sates of the West." See William-Kenneth Medlin, *Moscow and East Rome: A Political Study of the Relations of Church and State in Muscovite Russia* [These presentee a la Faculte des Lettres de l'Universite de Geneve pour obtenir le grade de Docteur es Sciences Morales], first edition 1952, (Hyperion Press, Westpoint, Connecticut: 1992), 78-79.

⁴⁹ Runciman, 176.

Therefore, one can conclude that to a great degree the expansion of the Patriarchate of Constantinople was conditioned by the Ottoman invasion.⁵⁰

The pseudo-secularization of the Orthodox Church under Ottomans was also a result of the changed religious model that replaced the previous hegemony of Eastern Orthodoxy with a kind of “pluralist equilibrium.”⁵¹ On the one hand, it offered a greater degree of religious freedom than in the pre-Ottoman times. On the other hand, it is different from the contemporary notion of pluralism because the millet model linked the belonging to a particular religious tradition with the system of state and church taxation. The “pluralist equilibrium” was not aimed at establishing equal rights of the Sultan’s subjects without regard of their religious identity, but regarded Christians and the other non-Muslim population as “taxable assets” that had to guarantee the better quality of life of the people, belonging to the rulers’ religion.⁵² The fact that the choice of religion had a direct influence on the quality of life brought about a doze of relativism in the attitude to religion in the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, the suggested term “pseudo-secularization” does not mean a decline of religion among Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire. Despite some restrictions and changes, the Orthodox Church preserved her competency in many traditional spheres such as religious discipline, family affairs and marriage. At the same time, under the Ottoman rule the Orthodox faith became a source not only of religious but also of social identity.

Orthodoxy in the Era of Empires

A close look at the ecclesiastical monopoly of Constantinople over the Orthodox population in the Ottoman Empire reveals its weakness and instability. The new rulers developed a flexible policy to the subjected peoples. Sometimes they supported the centrifugal forces in the Orthodox community instead the centripetal efforts of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. In 1557, the Ottomans allowed the Serbs to restore their Patriarchate of Ipek as an autonomous Church. After the Serbian uprising of 1737, however, they became more favorable to the Patriarchate of Constantinople and closed their eyes for its interference in the internal affairs of Ipek. In 1766, this

⁵⁰ To a certain degree the Ottoman expansion in the Balkans interrupted the thirteenth century new practice of self-granting autocephality. In the second half of the fourteenth century, Balkan political separatism was no more followed by ecclesiastical separatism. In the 1370s-1380s, the eparchies in the Bulgarian successor-states, the Vidin Kingdom and Dobruzha Principality, left the Patriarchate of Tarnovo but instead of proclaiming autocephality they moved under Constantinople. In this way, on the eve of the fall of Constantinople, its Great Church was in a process of restoring its canonical status and influence over Balkan Christianity. See Ivan Snegarov, *Istoria na Ohridskata arhiepiskopia* [History of the Archbishopric of Ohrid], vol. 1 “Ot Osnovavaneto i do zavladyaneto na Balknaskiya poluoostrov ot turtsite” [From its establishment to the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans], 2nd edition (Sofia: Marin Drinov, 1995), 331.

⁵¹ Resit Ergener (Bogazici University), *Economic Rationale of Religious Tolerance: Policies of the Ottoman Sultan vs. the Pope*, paper delivered at the third Annual Conference on religion, economics and Culture (Kansas City, October 22-24. Available in: <http://gunston.doit.gmu.edu/liannacc/ERel/S2-Archives/REC04/Erenger%20-%20Economic%20Rationale%20of%20Religious%20Tolerance.pdf>. According to Ergener, “Islam ... was provided as a public good to the faithful. The equivalent of tithes, church dues, marriage fees, sale of relics or indulgences, had no place in the Islamic practice. More members for Islam meant more recipients of a public good and it was in the interest of the Muslim establishment to limit the number of entrants to Islam – by allowing conquered religious groups to continue with their practice.” If the Christian Church “sought for monopoly power in the religious market place and did its best to eliminate all its rivals,” “Islam relied on members of other faiths to continue to exist, to pay for the joys that the victorious faithful would enjoy.” Therefore, it will be a mistake to identify the Ottoman type of religious pluralism with the modern notion of religious pluralism.

⁵² Ibid.

Serbian Patriarchate was abolished.⁵³ In next year, the same happened to the Archbishopric of Ohrid, a previously independent Orthodox Church but situated on the endangered western Ottoman borders. The same logic can be seen in the cases of Wallachia and Moldova. Their Metropolinates were under the jurisdiction of Constantinople, but were autonomously govern by native bishops most of the time. After their support for the military raids of Peter the Great to the river of Prut in 1711 both Churches were submitted to Greek prelates of Phanar, who introduced Greek liturgy there.⁵⁴

The increased ecclesiastical domination of Constantinople did not root in Orthodoxy but was determined by the Ottoman political interests. This development was not an exception. By the eighteenth century the geography of Eastern Orthodoxy came in harmony with the imperial division of the Old World. The Orthodox population in Russia was first under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow then under that of the Russian Holy Synod. The Orthodox people in the Ottoman Empire subjected to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, while in the Habsburg – under the Metropolitan of Karlovtsi.⁵⁵ The last one was established in the end of the seventeenth century by Emperor Leopold I, who offered asylum to thousands of Serbian refugees after his war with the Ottomans. In 1710, the new Metropolitanate was granted autocephality by its Mother-Church, i.e. the Patriarchate of Ipek.

In this way, the medieval tendency of Eastern European Orthodox Churches to follow the political geography of the region was restored. In the eighteenth century this model was adapted to the new imperial division of the world. In each empire, a centralized Orthodox structure continued to exist or was set up under the direct supervision of the corresponding secular ruler. There were, however, novelties. One of them was the shift from the sacral to the secular functions of the new rulers. They were not even Orthodox in the case of the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg dynasty. In Orthodox Russia, the Synodal reform of Peter the Great replaced the sacral person of patriarch with a collegial body supervised by the Emperor himself. In this way, the relations between the “head of the state” and the “head of the church” lost their sacral meaning and became bureaucratic. Meanwhile, the Orthodox headquarters in the two Christian empires were secluded from the capital cities of Vienna and St. Petersburg. Such a distance was not necessary for the Ottomans, whose ruler was not Christian and the Orthodox Church represented one of the *millets*. In these conditions, Orthodox Christianity was not able to develop a *de facto* universal Church at an institutional level despite its universal teaching. On the contrary, the medieval interdependence between the Orthodox patriarchs and the state rulers was transformed into a direct supervision over the former by the latter, i.e. Orthodox caesaropapism was a new development linked with the imperial division of Eastern Europe. It is also very important that to stress that in these empires, Orthodoxy did not enjoy the full monopoly from the medieval times but co-existed with other recognized or even dominating religions.

The three imperial models of Orthodoxy shared also other common features. Each one of the three Orthodox Churches was institutionally subordinated to the

⁵³ Charles Jelavich, “Some Aspects of Serbian Religious Development in the Eighteenth Century,” In: *Church History*, vol. 23, No. 2 (Jun., 1954): 148.

⁵⁴ K. E. Skurat, *Istoriya pomestnykh pravoslavykh tserkvey* [History of Local Orthodox Churches], vol. 1 (Moscow: Russkie ogni, 1994), 184-185.

⁵⁵ More specific was the situation of the Orthodox population in the Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom that was ecclesiastically subordinated to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. After the partitions of Poland, the western part was joined to the Orthodox community in Austro-Hungary, while the eastern was subordinated to the Patriarchate in Moscow.

corresponding emperor without regard of his personal confession (Orthodoxy, Islam or Catholicism) or ethnic origin. The church councils were convoked only with the ruler's consent. The election and appointment of the head of each Orthodox Church also depended on the latter. The imperial and church territories tend to coincide only in Russia, while in the Ottoman and the Habsburg empires the ruling dynasties preserved the Orthodox dioceses within their traditional borders or even reduced them, when their flock was joined to Islam, e.g. Bosnia, or to Catholicism, e.g. Croatia. The internal organization of the imperial Orthodox Churches did not take into account the existing ethnic differences among the Orthodox population in the three empires. The clergy in these Orthodox Churches occurred under the double supervision of their canonical hierarchy and the corresponding imperial authorities. On the one hand, the Orthodox clergy had to foster the religious devotion of their believers. On the other, it had to control the loyalty of their flock to the rulers. In all the empires the lower ranks Orthodox clergy, especially priests, preserved their ethnic diversity, while the hierarchs were characterized by a high level of ethnic and linguistic homogeneity. Therefore, every imperial Church imposed a specific language for the needs of liturgy and ecclesiastical administration. It was Church-Slavonic in Russia and Austro-Hungary, while Greek (i.e. *katharevusa*) dominated in the Ottoman Empire.

In comparison with the two other imperial Orthodox Churches, the Patriarchate of Constantinople took an intermediate position. It was not linked with the ruler's religion and the majority of population, i.e. the Russian case, nor was open to dialogue with the Catholic Church, i.e. the Habsburg case. Moreover, due to different geo-political and historical factors, this Patriarchate established closer relations with the Russian Orthodox Church than with the Metropolis of Kalovtsi. As a result, the conflict between Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism deepened. The fact that the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Metropolis of Karlovtsi represented subjected peoples, who were ethnically and religiously different from their rulers, made these Churches more vulnerable to the traps of nationalism.

The above-mentioned features, however, worked differently in the three empires, partly due to the disproportions in their socio-economic progress. The religious homogeneity between the ruling and ruled classes in Russia, combined with the agrarian nature of its society postponed the rise of nationalism there.⁵⁶ On the contrary, the industrialization and the religious and ethnic heterogeneity of society in Austro-Hungary speeded up the development of nationalism. Meanwhile, the enlightened Habsburg monarchs gave constitutional guarantees and allowed the institutional expression of the different national and religious identities by a series of reforms. In this way, they prevented the eruption of sharp conflicts in the religious sphere and postponed the politicization of religion or its appropriation for national or nationalistic ends.

With regard to nationalism the Ottoman Empire took an intermediate position. It was religiously heterogeneous as Austro-Hungary, but its society was agrarian as in Russia. Still the Ottoman state was more vulnerable to western economy. The Patriarchate of Constantinople had also different experience from that of the other imperial Churches. Its lands had never been secularized as it happened in Russia and Austro-Hungary. It also seems that until the nineteenth century the Orthodox Church in the Ottoman Empire enjoyed greater economic freedom than her two sister-Churches. Moreover, the schools of the Orthodox communities in the Ottoman

⁵⁶ Ernst Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1983). Used the Bulgarian edition trans. Albena Znepolska, (Sofia: Sofia University Publishing House, 1999), 16-29.

Empire were free from the Muslim state control. These features determined a different intensity and ways of interaction between Orthodoxy and nationalism in the nineteenth century Balkans.

III. The Impact of Nationalism⁵⁷ on Balkan Orthodoxy

Many scholars regard nationalism as an outcome of the cultural changes that followed the transformation of agrarian societies into industrial ones.⁵⁸ This approach, however, could not explain the advance of nationalism in the Balkans. In this respect, more appropriate seems the idea of V. Roudometof, who distinguishes two types of nations. The first is developed within the discourse of *citizenship*, where “membership of a nation is fundamentally political and pertains to the rights and obligation of a citizen vis-à-vis the political community to which he or she belongs.”⁵⁹ The other is linked with the notion of nationhood and fits better to the Balkan conditions. According to Roudometof, *nationhood* implies the employment of particularistic criteria – most often derived from the local culture – nationhood, the nation is an entity constructed in terms of genealogical or cultural ties of a particular ethnic group or ethnic community. In this sense, membership of the nation entails participation in a specific culture. [...] Nationhood implies a complex of ideas and mentalities concerning the politicization of cultural life.⁶⁰

Another important difference between the two discourses concerns the notion of ethnicity. It is a complimentary category within the concept of citizenship, while providing in that of nationhood “the very foundation of national identity, in which cultural markers (religion, language, folk culture) are elevated to determinants of the legitimate membership of a nation.”⁶¹ Roudometof adds that the combination of this process with the creation of social bonds brings about a different kind of national identity, where an ethnic community is politicized. This definition needs an important remark. The birth of the Balkan type of national identity passed also through a process of ecclesiastical institutionalization.

Orthodoxy's Sin of Nationalism

Nowadays, the majority of peoples in East Europe perceive the local Orthodox Churches as a repository of their nationhood. This attitude is shared by many researchers of the region. Vjekoslav Perica considers that “in the Orthodox world, the Church, ethnic community and state grow together.”⁶² Nicholas Dima expresses an opinion that in the Orthodox tradition “the church organization accommodates itself to the political organization of the nation it serves.”⁶³ Peter Sugar supposes that the Orthodox Church is more suitable for the role of a nationalist institution than the

⁵⁷ In this paper the author uses the definition of nationalism suggested by E. Gellner as “merging between culture and state”. E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), 23.

⁵⁸ See Gellner's book as well as E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1990); J. K. Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991).

⁵⁹ Victor Roudometof, *Nationalism, Globalization and Orthodoxy* (Westport, Connecticut, London: Greenwood Press, 2001), 8.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁶² Vjekoslav Perica, *Balkan Idols: Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 7.

⁶³ Nicholas Dima, “Politics and Religion in Moldova: A Case Study,” In: *The Mankind Quarterly*, Vol. 34, Issue 3 (Spring 1994): 178.

Catholic or Protestant ones.⁶⁴ According to P. S. Ramet, “Orthodox churches have frequently assumed importance as nationalist institutions.”⁶⁵ George Mavrogordatos goes further and states that “Orthodoxy not only remained compatible with nationalism, but even became its champion.”⁶⁶

These statements, however, refer only to some institutional aspects of this Christian denomination. Moreover, they are not applicable to entire Orthodoxy, but to its development in a concrete geographic area – Eastern Europe and in specific historical periods. After the Cold War these observations have been spread over entire Orthodoxy as a specific Christian denomination. It has been accused not only of paying lip service to nationalism but also to communism.⁶⁷ In 1993, Samuel Huntington questioned the ability of Orthodox Christianity “to develop stable democratic political systems.”⁶⁸ Some EU leaders went even further assuming that East European communism was itself a product of pre-existing Orthodox mentalities.⁶⁹ In this situation, the Yugoslav wars were perceived as another manifestation of the malicious alliance between Orthodoxy and nationalism.

Such an approach, however, is misleading. It neglects the different natures of the two phenomena: Orthodoxy is religious, while nationalism is secular.⁷⁰ The former has century-long history, while the latter is modern experience. The very idea of “national religion” is a modern one. The same is valid for the notions of “Greek faith,” “Serbian faith,” “Bulgarian faith,” and the other national faiths invented in the last two centuries. Another important difference between both phenomena is that, historically (despite the ecumenical pretensions of Orthodoxy), the development of Orthodoxy has been concentrated in a specific geographic and cultural area, while that of nationalism has obtained global dimensions.⁷¹ There are, however, objective reasons for the existing fallacies about Orthodoxy. One of them is the underdevelopment of religious studies in this field. It impedes the accomplishment of balanced comparative research on the western and eastern forms of Christianity. This state of affairs explains the small number of such academic projects as well as their miscomings.⁷² Moreover, most of them are limited in time and space. Usually, the

⁶⁴ Peter F. Sugar, “The Historical Role of Religious Institutions in Eastern Europe and Their Place in the Communist Party State,” In: *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics*, ed. Pedro Ramet, (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 1989), 46.

⁶⁵ P. Ramet, “Autocephality and National Identity in Church-State Relations in Eastern Christianity: An Introduction,” *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century* ed. P. Ramet, Christianity under Stress, Vol. 1 Durham, London: Duke University Press, 1988), 6.

⁶⁶ George Th. Mavrogordatos, “Orthodoxy and Nationalism,” In: *West European Politics*, Vol 26, Issue 1 (Jan 2003): 128.

⁶⁷ According to Michael Radu, “the Orthodox Churches in Eastern Europe have long been openly and actively involved in national politics and are intimately and historically connected with the [Balkan] region’s dominant post-communist ideology – nationalism.” M. Radu, “The Burden of Eastern Orthodoxy,” In: *Orbis*, vol. 42, No. 2 (spring 1998): 283.

⁶⁸ Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations,” In: *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993, v. 72, No. 3 (p. 22) Used via EBSCO. 2002.

⁶⁹ Such statement was made in August 1993 by Mr. Willy Claes, then Foreign Minister of Belgium and Chairman of the EU Council of Foreign Ministers. See Costa Carras, “Byzantium as the Source of Modern Evil”. Paper, delivered at the University of Birmingham, Center for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Studies, December 1994.

⁷⁰ G. Mosse regarded nationalism as “secular religion.” George L. Mosse, *The Nationalism of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (Ithaka, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975).

⁷¹ Roudometof, 8,

⁷² The results of the best project on the three Christian denominations in the former socialist countries, named “Christianity Under Stress,” are presented in the three volumes edited by P. S. Ramet: *Eastern*

analysis of the interaction between Orthodoxy and nationalism is limited to one state and does not go earlier than nineteenth century.⁷³

One of the best studies on Orthodoxy and nationalism in Eastern Europe, conducted by P. Ramet, also suffers from such weaknesses. Despite the excellent knowledge in political and social sciences, it reveals a lack of experience in the field of Orthodox studies. According to Ramet, “the equation of religious unity with political unity and later with national identity became *raison d’être* for autocephality in the Orthodox world.”⁷⁴ This statement does not seem applicable to entire Orthodoxy because of the exclusion of the patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem as well as the Orthodox Churches set up in diaspora in the last century. It also neglects the ancient Christian origins of autocephality, which was abandoned by the Roman Catholicism in the Medieval Ages due to the Papal policy of centralization in Western and Central Europe. Moreover, before the Great Schism (1054), autocephality defined the status of a separate unit (Church) within the whole Christian Church. It also served as a referent point in the relations between the different Churches, autocephalous and autonomous. In fact, most scholars dealing with contemporary Orthodoxy do not distinguish between the two.⁷⁵ Such Orthodox terms and concepts need special clarification as it is done in the first part of this paper. It reveals that the link of autocephality with state sovereignty was recognized only in the thirteenth century in the Balkans. Interrupted by the Ottoman invasion, this relationship was restored in the eighteenth century within a framework of empires, inhabited by a considerable number of Orthodox subjects: the Russian, the Ottoman and the Habsburg. This new development, however, did not bound autocephality with the notion of national unity. On the contrary, the imperial order allowed a great doze of religious pluralism.

Therefore, the major thesis of this paper is that the contemporary symbiosis between the autocephalous status of a separate Orthodox Church and the national identity of the majority of the believers under her jurisdiction is a modern phenomenon, which is historically and geographically limited to the Eastern European areas dominated by Orthodoxy. It does not root in the Orthodox teaching that does not distinguish the believers on the basis of their racial, national, ethnic, or linguistic origins. It was facilitated by specific institutional forms of Orthodoxy such as the state Churches, established in Eastern Europe between the ninth and thirteenth century, but was

Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century, Christianity Under Stress, vol. 1, (Duke University Press: Durham, London, 1988), *Catholicism and Politics in Communist Societies*, Christianity Under Stress, vol. 2 (Durham, N.C. : Duke University Press, 1990); and *Protestantism and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia: The Communist and Postcommunist Eras*, Christianity Under Stress, vol. 3 (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1992). Another serious attempt was made by the same scholar in another volume of studies. See: *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and Eastern European Politics* , ed. by P. Ramet, (Duke University Press: Durham, London, 1989).

⁷³ The Serbian issues are discussed by Ivo Banac, “The Dissolution of Yugoslav Historiography,” In: *Beyond Yugoslav Politics, Economics and Culture in a Shattered Community*, ed. S. P. Ramet and Ljubitsa S. Adamovich (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1995), 40. The Bulgarian case was studied by Spas Raikin, while the Romanian – by Troud Gilbert in the volume *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and Eastern European Politics*, ed. P Ramet (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 1989). In the same book Ramet analyzes the Serbian case.

⁷⁴ P. Ramet, “Autocephality and National Identity in Church-State Relations in Eastern Christianity: An Introduction” Un: *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. P. Ramet, Christianity under Stress, vol. 1 (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 1988), 4.

⁷⁵ Not only P. Ramet, but also V. Perica tend to equalize both terms, e.g. the latter defines “autocephality” as “ecclesiastical autonomy.” See Perica, 7. In secular terms, such a view would mean that “the vassal state” and “the sovereign state” are the same categories.

brought about by nationalism.⁷⁶ At first glance, the national Orthodox Churches established in the Balkans during the nineteenth century seem to be the same with the medieval ones, but the analysis of their genesis and development reveals significant differences. The birth of the national Orthodox Church is discussed next pages.

The Rise of Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire

In 1766, the Patriarchate of Constantinople was allowed by the Ottomans to abolish the Patriarchate of Ipek. In the next year, the same happened to the Archbishopric of Ohrid. In this way, the last remnants of the medieval autocephalities in the Balkans were destroyed and the Patriarchate of Constantinople established full monopoly over all Orthodox subjects of the Sultan.⁷⁷ This ecclesiastical domination, however, was soon challenged by the rise of nationalism. As a result, the national Orthodox Churches appeared in the Balkans. They emerged in two ways. The first was linked with the national emancipation of the different Orthodox peoples in the Ottoman Empire, i.e. within the so-called *Rum millet*. It appropriated the church institution for the end of nation-building process and thus is defined as “ecclesiastical nationalism.”⁷⁸ The second took place in the areas, liberated from the Ottoman rule and thus is called “state Orthodoxy.” In these cases the young Balkan states tried to strengthen their political sovereignty by the means of a self-proclaimed autocephality of their Orthodox Churches.⁷⁹ Both models will be discussed below.

Ecclesiastical Nationalism⁸⁰:

Balkan Nations against the Patriarchate of Constantinople

The growth of nationalism in the Ottoman Empire challenged the priority of confession over ethnicity, guaranteed by the *millet* system. In the course of the nineteenth century the *Rum millet* fell apart giving birth to the modern Balkan nations.⁸¹ The loyalty to such imagined communities, defined in secular terms, became more important than the devotion to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which was compromised as an Ottoman institution.⁸² In the new conditions, the significance of Orthodoxy as a source of identity diminished. It made sense for the

⁷⁶ Paschalis Kitromilides, “Orthodoxy and Nationalism,” In: *Ethnicity*, eds. Hutchinson, John and Anthony Smith (Oxford: OUO, 1996), 202-208.

⁷⁷ The autocephaly of the Orthodox Churches, (re)established between 1930 and 1845, was achieved after negotiations between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Balkan governments.

⁷⁸ The term “church nationalism” or “ecclesiastical nationalism” is used by Ramet, but with different meaning. Ramet refers to the former in “Autocephality and National Identity in Church-State Relations in Eastern Christianity: An Introduction,” *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century* ed. P. Ramet, Christianity under Stress, Vol. 1 Durham, London: Duke University Press, 1988), 6. In this case the scholar stresses the support given by the Orthodox Churches to the communist regimes in Eastern Europe. According to Ramet, “ecclesiastical nationalism is often underpinned by the conviction that if the church is deeply rooted in the national ethos, then the national ethos, the national culture, cannot survive without the church.” *Ibid.*, 8. These observations, however, analyze the symbiosis between separate Orthodox Churches and the corresponding nationalisms *post factum*, while the present paper addresses its genesis. It raises the question: How the symbiosis between an Orthodox Church and the nationalism of its believers has appeared? What made it possible?

⁷⁹ P. Kitromilides, “Orthodoxy and Nationalism” In: *Religiya i politika na Balkanite* [Religion and Politics in the Balkans] ed. and trans. Ina Merdjanova, (Silistra: 2004), 185.

⁸⁰ The author uses the term “ecclesiastical nationalism” to define the process of the nationalization of the Orthodox Churches in the Balkans. See Kitromilides, 183.

⁸¹ Roudometoff, “From Rum Millet to Greek Nation,” p. 26-29.

⁸² Many Greeks and Bulgarians were excommunicated by the Patriarchate of Constantinople because of their liberal or national ideas, but they did not repent until the end of their lives. See Roudometoff, “From *Rum Millet* to Greek Nation,” 27. The number of secular books proclaiming the idea of national emancipation and attacking the Patriarchate of Constantinople has grown since the second half of the eighteenth century. *Ibid.*, 23-29.

new national elites only when promoted by a national Church and hierarchy.⁸³ This development brought about ecclesiastical nationalism as a specific type of nationalism, different from those in M. Juergensmeyer's classification that defines two types of nationalism – religious and secular. Despite their structural and functional similarity, they have significant differences.⁸⁴ The religious nationalists attack the political ideology of the state not its structure, while the secular ones fight against religion.⁸⁵ Juergensmeyer also mentions that in the countries where religious history is part of the national heritage Churches are often the most effective systems of communication and religious leaders – more effective than government officials.⁸⁶ Similar views are expressed by David Martin who writes that “an indissoluble union between church and nation arises in those situations where the church has been the sole available vehicle of nationality against foreign domination.”⁸⁷

In the Balkans, however, the work of the above-mentioned principle is complicated by the *millet* system and the ecclesiastical hegemony of Constantinople. The Orthodox peoples in these areas were not able to articulate their nationality politically due to the Ottoman rule, nor ecclesiastically due to the monopoly of the Patriarchate of Constantinople.⁸⁸ Another peculiarity roots in the fact that the rise of nationalism in the Balkans did not affect the confessional aspect of Orthodoxy, i.e. its teaching and liturgy, but only the institutional one. Therefore, the Balkan type of nationalism is identified as **ecclesiastical**. It was aimed at establishing a system of national Churches. Within the Ottoman Empire they served as a means for the emancipation of the separate Orthodox nations from the ecclesiastical monopoly of Constantinople, while in the liberated territories – as an additional guarantee for state sovereignty. By its emphasis on the institutional aspect of religion instead on the doctrinal one ecclesiastical nationalism made use of Church in secular terms. The new national Orthodox Church *de facto* ceased to be the body of Christ but was transformed into the body of nation.⁸⁹

The emergence of ecclesiastical nationalism was not provoked by the suppression of the Balkan peoples' religious identity, but by the lack of autonomy that would facilitate their intra-national communication. Its intensity depended on the degree of

⁸³ In comparison with Bulgarians, Serbs gave more priority to the native language than to the national Church. The reason roots in the different geo-political situation and historical development of each of these nations. A considerable part of Serbs lived in Austro-Hungary, where the idea of Yugoslavism rejected religion as a basis for national identity. Most Serbian nationalists linked the salvation of their nation with the west and opposed the political and religious influence of Russia. It is also important that since 1708 Orthodox Serbs had a second Church, based first in Krušedol and then in Karlovac (1713), Austria, which continued to exist after the annihilation of the Patriarchate of Ipek. This center of Orthodox Serbs was more open for dialogue with the West than with the patriarchates of Moscow and Constantinople. See Charels Jelavich, “Some Aspects of Serbian Religious Development in the Eighteenth Century,” In: *Church History*, vol. 23 No. 2 (Jun., 1954): 149-150. Meanwhile, Bulgarians were totally under the Ottoman rule and had no church institution from the end of the fourteenth century until 1870.

⁸⁴ Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1993), 16

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 36

⁸⁷ David Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), 228.

⁸⁸ In this respect Greeks were in best positions because of their pre-Ottoman affiliation with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Wallachs and Moldovians as well as Serbs were able to articulate their ecclesiastical affiliation despite some canonical and actual restrictions.

⁸⁹ Mavrogordatos analyses the link between national sovereignty and religion, but does not overcome the limitation of the term “religious nationalism”. See George Mavrogordatos, “Orthodoxy and Nationalism in the Greek Case,” In: *West European Politics*, Vol. 26, Issue 1 (Jan. 2003): 117-120.

ecclesiastical independence of each Orthodox nation. It was less developed among Greeks, Romanians and Serbs, whose medieval Churches survived almost during the whole Ottoman domination,⁹⁰ while reaching extreme forms among Bulgarians who had no church institution for about five centuries. Ecclesiastical nationalism is similar to the religious one in its attacks against political ideologies. In the Ottoman Empire, however, the former did not fight the ideology of the state but that of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. It also establishes a strong relationship with the native language, ethnicity and history of the different Balkan peoples. Its uniqueness roots in the use the Orthodox Church as an institution for legitimizing and defending national sovereignty.

The patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem were also affected by the development of nationalism.⁹¹ In comparison with the Balkans, however, it was rather specific. The hierarchy of these Churches was fully monopolized by Greeks who were also majority among the ordinary clerics there. Not less important was the fact that the Orthodox believers in the Middle East were a religious minority in a Muslim sea. In addition, these patriarchates had to compete with the Catholic proselytism in the region. Therefore their ecclesiastical nationalism deviates from the Balkan pattern. On the one hand, they fought against the Patriarchate of Constantinople and its Hellenizing policy. They also asked for liturgy in their native language – Arabic and national hierarchy. On the other hand, their ecclesiastical nationalism was more racial than ethno-national, i.e. Orthodox Arabs against Orthodox Greeks. It did not link the ecclesiastical emancipation of the Orthodox Arabs from the control of Constantinople with the idea of state sovereignty. Instead, the Middle East ecclesiastical nationalism paid more attention to canonical issues such as the suppressed autocephality of three patriarchates by Constantinople than to political issues. Therefore the major aim of ecclesiastical nationalism in the Middle East was to “restore” the Arab nature of the mentioned patriarchates and their hierarchies.

Case Study: The Ecclesiastical Nationalism of Bulgarians as a Form of Secularization

The Bulgarian case of ecclesiastical nationalism is unique due to the 5-century absence of Bulgarian Church under Ottomans.⁹² From the fifteenth century to 1850

⁹⁰ The case of Albanians was complicated by their conversion to Islam, and to a lesser degree to Catholicism which left an insignificant number of Orthodox Albanians, who had no independent Orthodox Church in the pre-Ottoman-times. Therefore the process of their emancipation from the Patriarchate of Constantinople began pretty late (after World War I and has not been accomplished until nowadays). The case of Macedonians is more complicated because the autocephalous Archbishopric of Ohrid has existed since the sixth century. The problem is that the territorial jurisdiction of this Church was spread over territories that were parts of different Medieval states and their population was under the influence of various of nationalisms. The population of Macedonia joined the Bulgarian movement for a national Orthodox Church and the majority of Macedonians passed under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Exarchate 1870-1919. Then they were divided between Greece and Yugoslavia and correspondingly under the jurisdictions of the Orthodox Church of Greece and the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The idea for restoring the autocephly of the Archbishopric of Ohrid appeared only after World War II but all the attempts for canonical recognition of this status have not been successful.

⁹¹ Skurat, vol. 2.

⁹² Olga Todorova mentions only three names of Bulgarian bishops before the nineteen century: the Patriarch of Constantinople Niphon II (1488-1490); the Bishop of Krupnik Yakov (in the 16th century), and the Bishop of Vratsa Sofroii (1794-1803). See Todorova, 122-123. Bulgarians had no bishop after Sofronii Vrachanski until 1850, when the Greek Bishop of Tarnovo Neofit consecrated the Bulgarian monk Ilarion Aksiopolski. In 1852, he consecrated the second Bulgarian bishop – Dorotey of Vratsa. Ivan Snegarov, “Bulgarian church-national struggle,” In: *Rodina* [Motherland] (Sofia) vol. 3 (1940): 82.

the native clergy of Bulgarians consisted of priests and monks. In a country, where not only the medieval state and church institutions were destroyed, but the nobility was also annihilated, this low rank clerics played the role of a cultural elite. In 1762, Father Paisii Hilendarski, a Bulgarian monk from the Athos monastery of Hilendar, wrote a small book entitled “Slav-Bulgarian History. He was the first who appealed for the restoration of the medieval Bulgarian state and patriarchate. These ideas had a great impact over his compatriots. His book was reproduced in hundreds hand-written copies that were read throughout all Bulgarian lands. His example was followed by many other Bulgarian clerics who created similar works.⁹³ By the mid-nineteenth century, however, the flag of ecclesiastical nationalism was taken by lay people. Priests moved to a second position, while monks lagged behind and even resisted the idea of restoring the Bulgarian Church. This phenomenon was an outcome of the changes in the social and ecclesiastical functions of Bulgarian clergy in the nineteenth century.⁹⁴

The most specific feature of Bulgarian clergy between the fifteenth and the eighteenth centuries was the social multi-functionalism of its representatives. They were not simply God’s servants but also teachers, translators, and writers. Still there were differences between the two groups of clergy. Priests often worked as craftsmen, shepherds or plough-men in order to support their families. They collected the taxes for the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Ottoman State. Therefore, they occurred under double subordination⁹⁵ which added ambivalence in their duties as a religious estate. The ‘secular’ duties made priests less pious than monks, whose prayers were perceived as a guarantee for the survival of Orthodox Christendom. Therefore, until the nineteenth century monks were considered more socially valuable than priests.

This state of affairs changed by the 1820s, when new procedures for priests’ inauguration were adopted. The previous custom of handing priesthood and parishes down from father to son was replaced by the election of priests by parishes. The local councils of elder men proposed to the corresponding metropolitan to ordain the elected person and paid for it. In this way, the new priests occurred under double subordination: in religious terms, they continued to be subordinated to the metropolitan, while in economic ones, they began to depend on their parish. In the course of the nineteenth century, the economic development and secularization pushed priests and monks out of the education system and many other spheres of the Bulgarian social life.

This role of local Bulgarian communities as a factor determining the social behavior of their priests was an outcome of the developments in the Ottoman Empire in the last decades of the eighteenth century. The political and economic disorder, provoked by the *kardzhalii* gangs, induced radical demographic changes in Bulgarian society.⁹⁶ A great number of peasants moved to the cities to protect their families from the *kardzhlii* terror. As a result, many villages disappeared while others were urbanized.

⁹³ For example, there is a similar book written by the monk Father Spiridon of Gabrovo, “Short History of Bulgarian Slavonic People.”

⁹⁴ The following paragraphs summarize the results of another study, accomplished by D. Kalkandjieva, and delivered as a paper on the social role of Bulgarian Orthodoxy Clergy in the nineteenth century at an international symposium (Frankfurt am Main, October 2004). The reference to that study offers important arguments for the thesis of ecclesiastical nationalism suggested in this study.

⁹⁵ In Orthodox countries priests are married and thus called “white clergy,” while monks who take an oath of celibacy are called “black clergy.”

⁹⁶ About the *kardzhalii* times see Mutafchieva, *Kniga za Sofronii* [Book about Sofronii] (Sofia: 1979) 100-103.

In the 1820s, the Ottoman authorities restored their control over the Balkan provinces and the Bulgarians lands experienced a rapid economic progress. The new conditions brought about dramatic changes in the status of white clergy. Their previous social multi-functionalism disappeared. Priests were no more able to levy taxes from their flock and thus were freed from the previous duty of tax-collectors. The Ottoman State changed its fiscal policy and transferred the collection of money from priests to municipal/village councils.⁹⁷ The Patriarchate of Constantinople also had difficulties to cover its expenses due to the political and economic instability in the Empire. It also lost the incomes from the liberated lands of the Kingdom of Greece. Therefore, bishops began to travel over their eparchies in order to collect the church taxes themselves.⁹⁸ This behavior exposed them to direct contacts with the believers and brought about conflicts between both sides. In the Bulgarian case, they were additionally aggravated by the difference in language and culture. In 1840, the Bulgarian citizens of Shumen allowed the newly-appointed Greek bishop to enter in the city only after signing a declaration to levy only taxes that had been fixed in advance.⁹⁹ Five years later, the citizens of Tarnovo sent a petition to the Sublime Porte with seven requests. The first of them was against the increased church taxes, collected by the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Only then Bulgarians asked for native bishops. They also required bishops to be appointed only with the consent of the Sublime Porte, i.e. Bulgarians look for guarantees from a secular non-Orthodox institution.¹⁰⁰ In this way, the financial pressure of the “Greek Church” firmed up the link between priests and believers in the Bulgarian parishes. It also increased the role of native language as a factor for national consolidation.

The economic and demographic changes in Bulgarian society also undermined the hegemony of priests and monks in school. It was challenged by the newly-emerged social group of secular teachers. “Theological treatises no longer were the sole text for instruction; they were being replaced in the new school with humanistic curriculums, including modern languages and sciences.”¹⁰¹ Meanwhile, the economic progress doomed the cell-schools to extinction. Bulgarians needed practical knowledge in mathematics, geography, biology, modern languages, trade, etc. First they found such secular education in the so-called Hellenistic schools where their children were trained in Greek. In the 1830s, the Patriarchate of Constantinople ordered the introduction of Greek in all Bulgarian schools.¹⁰² This act was rejected by Bulgarians as an attempt for their Hellenization. In order to avoid to such a threat, they continued to invite monks and priests to teach their children in Church Slavonic.¹⁰³ These clerics, however, were not able to provide the children with secular knowledge and practical skills. Moreover, their use of Church Slavonic and

⁹⁷ After the Crimean War (1853-1856) the non-Muslim nations in the Ottoman Empire received the right of self-government and presented before the state by their municipal authorities.

⁹⁸ Mutafchieva, 102.

⁹⁹ Snegarov, “Bulgarian church-national struggle,” *Rodina*, vol 3 (1940): 79.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁰¹ L. S. Stavrianos, “Antecedents to the Balkan Revolutions of the Nineteenth Century,” In: *The Journal of Modern History* Vol. 29, No. 4 (Dec. 1957): 345.

¹⁰² Romyana Radkova, *Balgarskata inteligentsiya prez Vazrazhdaneto* [The Bulgarian Intelligence during the Revival] (Sofia: 1986), 87.

¹⁰³ The Thessaloniki Annals of the guild of Bulgarian tailors give information about the appointment of a Russian monk (in 1833). He had to teach the craftsmen’s children in Slavonic. See: *Pisahme da se znae* [Written down to be known], (Sofia: 1984), 341-342.

vernacular in church and school was punished by the Patriarchate as an ecclesiastical crime.¹⁰⁴

After the establishment of the Kingdom of Greece and the schism with its Church (1833) the Patriarchate of Constantinople took measures to strengthen its positions in the Ottoman Empire. They were aimed at improving the training of Orthodox priests¹⁰⁵ as well as unifying the church services in all eparchies.¹⁰⁶ The reforms, however, had a second purpose. The young priests were obliged to pass additional training under the supervision of experienced Greek clerics.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, it was rejected by many Bulgarian priests who saw in it an attempt for Hellenization. In reply, the Patriarchate excommunicated or sent in exile those who hold liturgy in Church Slavonic or preached in Bulgarian. This policy, however, did not restore its previous authority.¹⁰⁸ Bulgarian communities responded with hundreds petitions to the Ottoman authorities to cancel the prohibitions, pronounced by Greek prelates over their native clergy.¹⁰⁹ The rejection of the Patriarchate to satisfy these requests enhanced the tendency of replacing clerics with secular teachers in Bulgarian schools. Being subjected to the Patriarchate, priests were not able to solve the problem with the use of Bulgarian language.¹¹⁰ Meanwhile, the emergence of the class of secular teachers offered new perspectives. Their major advantage was their independence from both administrations this of the Ottoman State and that of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Secular teachers contracted their appointments only with the municipal and village councils, while priests could not escape from the Church's supervision.¹¹¹ At the same time, the economic progress of Bulgarian society made priests more dependent on its parishioners, whose determined the standard of life of former. In this way, white clergy took a medium position between teachers and monks. Being fully subjected to the Greek hierarchy, black clergy gradually alienated from their compatriots. In the beginning, monks were removed from the system of education by the prohibition of the Patriarchate to use Bulgarian. Then, they lost their function as a link of Bulgarians with the world outside. This role was taken by teachers and newspapers.¹¹² In this way, the economic development deepened the

¹⁰⁴ There are many registered cases of ecclesiastical punishments pronounced by Greek bishops over Bulgarian priests for using their native language. The famous Bulgarian priest and teacher Andrey Robovski, who worked in the city of Elena in the first half of the nineteenth century, has been punished seven times for 15 years by his metropolitan. The priest was forbidden to take part in liturgy and to conduct and religious rites. In this way, he was also deprived from his church incomes. See: S. S. Bobchev, "Prinos kym istoriyata na bulgarskoto vuzrazhdane" [Contributions tot he history of the Bulgarian Revival], In: *Sborbik za narodni umotvoreniya, nauka i knizhnina* [Collection of folk tales, science and literature], vol. 3 (Sofia: 1905), 3-4.

¹⁰⁵ The Patriarchate of Constantinople introduced special criteria for ordaining priests. The requirements for joining monastery brotherhoods became more precise. For example, on 1 July 1867 the Rila monastery introduced new rules for accepting novices and monks. According to them, the applicant for monkshood had to be at least 20 years old, to have studied at an elder monk at least for three years, etc. See Tsankov, "New data...", 42.

¹⁰⁶ For example the Patriarchate ordered morning liturgies to finish by 2 p.m. in the winter, at 10 a.m. in the spring, at 9 a.m. in the summer and at 12 a.m. in the autumn. During the whole year the vespers were to be over by 11 p.m. Radkova, 89-90.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 96-98.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 12-17.

¹¹⁰ The role of native tongue for the political awakening of Balkan nations see Stavrianos, "antecedents to the Balkan revolutions of the Nineteenth century, p. 339

¹¹¹ Guentchev, 141.

¹¹² The first printed Bulgarian newspaper entitled *Lyuboslovie* [Philology] was issued in 1842. On 17 March 1863, in his letter to Neofit Rilski (a famous monk and teacher from the Rila monastery), Vasil

social differentiation between clergy and teachers as well as between priests and monks.

The rise of nationalism and the spread of secularism in Bulgarian society had a diminishing effect on the social role of Orthodox clergy. Being subordinated to the Patriarchate of Constantinople its Bulgarian representatives were more prone to the Hellenistic propaganda than any other social group. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Bulgarian monks were removed from the administration of the most important monasteries. At the same time, the Bulgarians who applied for ordaining were obliged to present their diplomas for successfully taken exams in Greek.¹¹³ In 1836, the Bulgarian monk Josif Sokolski opposed to this policy and established the first school for training of priests in native language.¹¹⁴ Although such attempts were doomed to failure by the Greek hierarchy, they had a profound effect on Bulgarian society. On the one hand, they nurtured its nationalism. On the other, they contributed to its secularization. By the mid-nineteenth century, the carrier of clergy became less attractive than the secular one. Only few Bulgarian graduates of Russian and Serbian ecclesiastical seminaries became clerics after their return home.¹¹⁵

The national church movement (1820-1870) catalyzed the social differentiation between white and black clerics. In the beginning, Bulgarian monks were inclined to support the demands of their compatriots for Slavonic liturgy and native metropolitans, but withdrew when the question of the restoration of the Bulgarian Church was put on the immediate agenda. At the same time, priests remained with their native people until the successful end of the national church movement (1870). This difference in the attitude of the white and black clergy stems out of their distinctive social positions. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the secularization strengthened the relations of priests with their compatriots, but isolated monks from laity. Moreover, the black clergy was fully dependent on the Patriarchate of Constantinople. For monks to join the Bulgarian church movement exposed at risk their clerical career.¹¹⁶ The choice of this option meant that they to become secular persons.¹¹⁷

The withdrawal of black clergy from the national church movement was not welcomed by Bulgarians, who developed different attitudes to priests and monks. In the case of former it was a kind of positive criticism, while it was strongly negative to monks. In some towns and villages, Bulgarians stopped donating to monasteries. There were even cases of ‘confiscation’ of monastery properties on behalf of the municipalities.¹¹⁸ Bulgarian newspapers depicted monks as people without social value, who spent their lives in debauchery.¹¹⁹ They were accused of being egoistic

Chomakov (a Bulgarian from the city of Panagyurishte) wrote that his compatriots did not need the saints’ lives told them by monks but newspapers because the latter provided them with information about the contemporary life. See Tsankov, “New data about the Rila monastery”, 34-35.

¹¹³ Radkova, 87.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 91-92.

¹¹⁵ Ibid..

¹¹⁶ Tsankov, “New data...”, 26. Prof. Tsankov mentions several cases when monks from the Rila monastery were punished by their abbot for their participation in the Bulgarian church movement.

¹¹⁷ There are many documentary sources about the state of monasteries in the Bulgarian lands. During the years of the Bulgarian church movement they were not a calm place for prayers. Their brotherhoods suffered not only from financial problems, but also from the clashes between Greek and Bulgarian parties in them. See the Annals by Damaskin Hilendarets, published in *Written down to be known*, 342-348.

¹¹⁸ Tsankov, 29-30.

¹¹⁹ “Gde se vazpitavat kalugerite?” [Where do the monks receive their upbringing?], in (newspaper) *Macedonia*, 12 January 1871, No. 2, p. 2-3.

and immoral. According to Bulgarian intellectuals, the whole idea of monkhood was wrong. In their view, monkhood contradicted to the Christian ideas of love and brotherhood.¹²⁰ The way of life of monks was considered unnatural, because monks fled away from their fellows.¹²¹ This exclusion of monkhood from the nation is a specific feature of Bulgarian ecclesiastical nationalism, rooting in the five-century absence of native hierarchy. Still Bulgarian society preserved a doze of positive attitude to monasteries, perceived as cultural institutions.¹²² According to Bulgarian newspapers from that time, they had to be transformed into ecclesiastical schools or universities in order to remain socially valuable.¹²³ This secularist approach did not concern only the Bulgarian monasteries in St. Mount of Athos that were excluded due to their geographic position. On the one hand, they were situated on a holy land without any reference to the historical territory of the Bulgarian nation. On the other hand, their remoteness and multicultural environment did not allow their direct involvement in the national church movement.

The attitude of Orthodox Bulgarians to their hierarchy was quite specific. Before the Crimean War (1853-1856), Bulgarians had no native metropolitans, but three bishops, subordinated to Greek metropolitans. In the same period, most attempts of the Bulgarian population to remove the local Greek hierarchs failed.¹²⁴ Meanwhile, Bulgarians welcomed such non-Greek bishops as the Serb Stefan Kovachevich, who administrated the Bulgarian parochial church in Istanbul from 1851 to 1858.¹²⁵ This means that before 1856, Bulgarian national church movement was more anti-Greek, than nationalistic. Its major aim was the financial, hierarchical (i.e. to have native bishops) and linguistic emancipation from the Patriarchate of Constantinople. This was the purpose of the Bulgarian municipal body and parochial church set up in Constantinople in 1849. It was realized with the Sultan's consent. The Patriarchate also permitted Bulgarians to have liturgy in Church-Slavonic there.¹²⁶ At this stage, however, the Bulgarian ecclesiastical nationalism was developing within the Patriarchate of Constantinople and was aimed at cultural, not ecclesiastical autonomy. The Crimean war (1853-1856) launched a new stage in the national church movement. Its emphasis shifted from the cultural emancipation of Bulgarians within the Patriarchate of Constantinople to its ecclesio-national emancipation in a separate Church. To a great degree it was facilitated by the Hati Humayun of 6/18 February 1856 that granted the equality of Christian rights with the Muslims' ones in the Empire. It also allowed the self-government of local communities based on their religious and ethnic identity. As a result, the Bulgarian population set up its own municipal or village bodies that took care for the parochial churches and local schools. These municipal committees were run by rich Bulgarian tradesmen or distinguished members of the local guilds. In this way, the leadership of the national church movement moved from the hands of secular teachers and priests to those of petit bourgeois. Meanwhile, the Bulgarian municipal committee in Istanbul became a kind of coordinator of the entire church movement. Its leaders were lay Bulgarians

¹²⁰ "Proizkhozhdeniето na kalugerite" [The origins of monks], (newspaper) *Macedonia*, 15 September, 1870, No. 81, p. 1-2.

¹²¹ "Kalugerstovoto i kalugerite" [Monkhood and monks], *Macedonia*, 28 May 1870, No. 53, p. 3.

¹²² An article on the state of Bulgarian monks and nuns stated that they formed a separate class, which was completely alienated from their people and its national movements. See: "Nashite kalugeri i kalugeri" [our monks and nuns], (newspaper) *Istochno vreme*, 24 May 1875, No. 25, p. 1.

¹²³ "Monkhood and monks", *Makedonia*, No. 53, 28 May 1870, p. 3.

¹²⁴ Snegarov, "Bulgarian church-national struggle, *Rodina*, (1940): 75-85.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 84.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 83-84.

who started negotiating with the Patriarchate and the Sublime Porte. The few Bulgarian bishops were invited much later and were under constant lay control.¹²⁷

The reason for the limited role of Bulgarian episcopate in the national church movement rooted in the negative attitude to black clergy that limited the growth of native Orthodox hierarchy. The number of Bulgarian bishops increased from two to five in the period 1850-1870.¹²⁸ Still, if these bishops promoted the Hellenizing policy of Constantinople or overburden their flock with church taxes, they were treated as “Greeks” by their compatriots.¹²⁹ In the late 1850s, Bulgarians sent many petitions to the Sublime Porte and the Patriarchate of Constantinople with request to introduce fixed salaries for the Orthodox episcopate in order to stop the bishops’ practice of misusing church taxes for their own enrichment. According to Bulgarians, the Patriarchate was afraid of losing its control over them because they remain its major financial source after the liberation of Greece in 1830.¹³⁰ The establishment of an independent Bulgarian Church was regarded as a means to escape from the financial burden of the Patriarchate. This was the major argument of the Bulgarian protests against Constantinople until 1860.

During the Easter of 1860, the Bulgarian community in Istanbul initiated an act of division with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. It forced Bishop Ilarion Makariopolski to replace the name of the Patriarch, who had to be mentioned as a head of the Church during liturgy, with that of the Sultan. He also used the phrase of respect “to all Orthodox bishops” - a privilege of an autocephalous Orthodox Church.¹³¹ This was an impertinent act that symbolized the church independence of Bulgarians. It was against the canons. Meanwhile a petition was sent to the Sublime Porte with a request a Bulgarian Orthodox Church to be set up. In addition a committee of three lay people and two bishops was established to run the Bulgarian Church’s affairs. Moreover, it was a precedent in the Christian world. For the first time, a Muslim ruler was proclaimed as a head of a separate Church. No other Balkan ecclesiastical nationalism has reached such extremes.

Despite everything, the attempt failed. The guilty bishops were sent to exile, but the Patriarchate had to make concessions. It had to stop the Bulgarian attempt to achieve ecclesiastical emancipation by signing Union with the Roman Pope (26 March 1861). It was overcome with the help of Russian diplomats in the Ottoman Empire who organized the kidnapping of the Bulgarian Uniat Exarch Josif Sokolski to Russia in the summer of 1861. The Russian interests in this were not only political but also ecclesiastical. The Russian Holy Synod was afraid that the restoration of the Patriarchate of Tarnovo would raise the issue of the Georgian Church which autocephality and patriarchate was suppressed in the beginning of the nineteenth

¹²⁷ In October 1858, four lay Bulgarians took part in the church council, convoked by the Patriarchate of Constantinople to discuss the Bulgarian question. They were Stoyan Chomakov, Petko Slaveykov, Iliya Petrov and Nikoli Minchooglu. Snegarov, 86.

¹²⁸ Snegarov, “Bulgarian national church movement”, *Rodina*, (1940): 84-96. Between 1851 and 1858, Bulgarians had also two foreigners who served in Church-Slavonic – the Metropolitan of Plovdiv Paisii, who was of Albanian origins and the Serb Bishop Stefan (Kovachevich) in Istanbul. *Ibid.* 84.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹³⁰ The Bulgarian Revival Archives at the National Library St. Cyril and St. Methodius (BIA-NBKM) in Sofia, fund 113, archival unit 67, p. 90. Report by Hikola H. Palauzov concerning the Bulgarians’ request to establish their own independent Church, written in Constantinople on 20 April 1857.

¹³¹ Snegarov, 89.

century.¹³² Finally, to calm Bulgarians, the Patriarchate of Constantinople consecrated two Bulgarian bishops. These steps, however, were not enough. Between 1861 and 1870, Bulgarians look for an ecclesiastical autonomy within the Patriarchate of Constantinople. These efforts were doomed to failure by the advance of Greek and Bulgarian nationalism. It was also aggravated by the Great Powers' struggle over the Eastern Question. A solution was found in February 1870. The Sultan issued a decree for the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate as an autonomous body within the Patriarchate of Constantinople. It was not canonical, but a political decision. It did not restore the medieval Patriarchate of Tarnovo nor the Archbishopric of Ohrid as it was requested by Bulgarians. Instead a new institution was created. It was a deviation from the medieval practice to name a Church after the city where her headquarters were situated. The new body was named after the name of a nation. It was not restored by ecclesiastical means in agreement with canons, but by a secular authority – the Sultan. As a result, it deepened the national contradictions between Bulgarians and Greeks as well as between the Western Great Powers and Orthodox Russia. It also sowed the seeds of future discords among the Balkan Orthodox communities.¹³³

Other Models of Ecclesiastical Nationalism

The ecclesiastical nationalism of the other Orthodox nations under the Ottoman control was more modest than the Bulgarian one. The Greek, Romanian and Serb nations benefited from the survival of their Churches, despite the changes in their status and functions between the fifteenth and nineteenth century. The birth of the modern Romanian and Greek Orthodox Churches was less influenced by their ecclesiastical nationalism due to a series of factors.

The Serbian case has more common features with the Bulgarian one than those of Greeks and Romanians. The medieval Patriarchate of Ipek has been abolished and subordinated to Constantinople for two centuries: the first time – from 1463 to 1557 and the second – from 1766 to 1879. For the rest of the time, however, the Patriarchate restored its activities, thanks to Mehmed Pasha Sokolovich, a Serb by origins, who appointed his brother Makarios as Patriarch of Ipek. In this way, the damages caused by the Church's abolition were compensated to a great degree. Moreover, the Serb native hierarchy was preserved during the entire period of foreign domination. They also benefited from the second Serbian Orthodox Church, set up in the Habsburg Empire, i.e. the so called Metropolitane of Karlovac, that functioned in the period 1713-1918.¹³⁴ This institutional continuity diminished the influence of nationalism and secularization on the religious development of Serbian society in the nineteenth century. Having two politically divided ecclesiastical jurisdictions Serbs developed a more linguistic type of nationalism than an ecclesiastical one.

Another similarity shared by Serbs and Bulgarians is their fight against the policy of Hellenization of Constantinople and for the restoration of their patriarchates. In this respect, however, there are also considerable differences. One of them concerns the

¹³² BIA-NBKM (Bulgarian Historical Archive – National Library “St. Cyril and St. Methodius,” fund 113, archival uni 29, p. 1. Letter from the Bishop of Herson Dmitrii to Hikola H. Palauzov of 13 December 1860.

¹³³ The Bulgarian Exarchate was established on territories that had been parts of several medieval Orthodox Church for shorter or longer period.

¹³⁴ About the Serbian Church see Charels Jelavich, “Some Aspects of Serbian Religious Development in the Eighteenth Century” *In: Church History*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Jun, 1954): 144-152.

role of clergy in the nation-building process. Serbs did not distinguish priests and monks as Bulgarians did. Moreover, the Serbian episcopate preserved its influence over its laity and law-rank clergy during the whole period of foreign rule. In the nineteenth century, many Serbs went to study on Russian Orthodox seminaries and academies. The same was done by Bulgarians, but the follow-ups of this education were different. The majority of Serbian graduates joined to clergy upon their return home, while Bulgarians preferred secular professions due to the better social realization offered by them. In addition, Serbs became “outspoken partisans of Russia” and “strong champions of Orthodoxy against Catholicism.”¹³⁵ One of the reasons for these differences roots in the Ottoman policy in the two areas. The Sublime Porte supported the anti-Catholic attitudes in its western provinces, endangered by Austro-Hungary, while suppressing the pro-Russian movements in the Bulgarian lands, situated near the Straits. In this way, the Serbian type of nationalism had more emphasis on Orthodoxy and Slavophilism than the Bulgarian one.

Another important difference of the Serbian case concerns the language. The Serbian literary language so much Russified by the native clergy that some scholars found it more Russian than Serbian.¹³⁶ The growth of Serbian nationalism, however, introduced a new tendency. In the nineteenth century, the leadership of the movement for national unity and independence was taken by the Austrian Serbs.¹³⁷ The new national elite promoted the idea of Yugoslavism, embracing all South Slavs without regard of their religion (Orthodoxy, Catholicism or Islam). It connected the Serbian independence with the Catholic West instead with Orthodox Russia. Its supporters considered that “the domination of the church over national life” would undermine the Yugoslav unity.¹³⁸ In the new conditions, language became more important than religion as a factor of national identity. The Serbian language was considered corrupted with Russian words and thus had to pass through a process of purification. The role of Orthodoxy in society was partly rehabilitated after the restoration of the Serbian Church and the liberation of the Serbian State. In fact the fulfillment of the ideal of Yugoslavism and the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians reopened the alternative for increasing the role of Orthodoxy as the interwar period.

The Greek Orthodox Church was born thanks to the establishment of the Kingdom of Greece. It is a pure example of state Orthodoxy and will be discussed in the next sub-chapter. In the case of the Orthodox Greeks who remained under the Sultan’s rule, one can discover some features of ecclesiastical nationalism, especially after the Crimean War, when the Patriarchate used its position as an Ottoman institution to Hellenize Bulgarians through a system of Greek language schools and liturgy. Still this tendency of ecclesiastical nationalism did not reach extreme forms in the case of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Being conscious about its leading role in the Orthodox world, the hierarchy of this Patriarchate escaped to make any open statements in defense of nationalism. On the contrary, the church council convoked to discuss the Bulgarian Exarchate (September, 1872) condemned *philethism* as a heresy. According to its decision, Orthodoxy and its Church do not make difference between people on the basis of their race, ethnicity or language.

The Romanian Orthodox Church was also a result of state Orthodoxy rather than ecclesiastical nationalism. This Church was a successor of the Metroplimates of

¹³⁵ Jelavich, 147.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 147

¹³⁷ Ibid., 150.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 149-150.

Wallachia and Moldova that were not abolished but preserved their ecclesiastical autonomy during the whole period of foreign dominance. The Wallachian and Moldavian hierarchy has never lost its monopoly over the low-rank clergy and laity, even during the nineteenth century Greek-Phanar cultural invasion. The state traditions were not fully interrupted as well. The principalities of Wallachia and Moldova continued to exist as vassal lands of the Sultan. The nobility and the local administration were also preserved. Therefore, Romanian nationalism did not make use of the Church institution as it happened in the Bulgarian case. Still some parts of the Romanian nation developed a kind of ecclesiastical nationalism.

This development took part mainly in the areas outside the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldova. Such an example is the Metropolate of Banat, set up in 1865 as an ecclesiastical organization of the Orthodox Romanians in Austro-Hungary. They were granted an internal autonomy on equal footing with that of Serbs, within the framework of the autocephalous Orthodox Church of Austro-Hungary, headquartered in Sremski Karlovci. The Romanian Exarchate, established at the Russian Synod during the Napoleon's wars (1806-1812), is another example for the respect to the national identity as a basis for the modern church-building process. Meanwhile, in the areas with mixed ethnical identities and ambiguity concerning the affiliation of the local population with a particular medieval state the restoration of the old ecclesiastical structures was complicated, e.g. the Archbishopric of Ohrid. It was reestablished only after World War II, but still has not received canonical recognition by the other Orthodox Churches. Similar were the reasons for the delayed the establishment of the Albanian Orthodox Church.

State Orthodoxy as an Attribute of Sovereignty;

The Nation-States against the Church of Constantinople:

The nineteenth century changes on the political map of the Balkans delivered the last blow on the ecclesiastical monopoly of Constantinople. The modern Balkan states, established between 1830 and 1878, guaranteed the independence of their nations not only in political but also ecclesiastical terms. Each of them set up its own national Orthodox Church. In the Bulgarian case the Church was established before the state, while in the Greek – the State preceded the Church. In many aspects, the formation of the national Churches of Serbs and Romanians followed the Greek model.

The Orthodox Church of Greece was established as a state institution by the Constitution, adopted in Epidaurus on 1 January 1822.¹³⁹ This act was not based on the Orthodox tradition, but was an innovation without any canonical or historical grounds. It was strongly influenced by the Protestant principle “*Cuius regio, eius religio.*” Its architect, Georg Von Maurer, was a member of the King's Otto entourage.¹⁴⁰ In the case of Greece, the state became the only source of legitimacy for the new Church. On the one hand, the Greek precedent was influenced by the church

¹³⁹ George Th. Mavrogordatos, “Orthodoxy and Nationalism” in the Greek Case” in *West European Politics*, Vol. 26 Issue 1 (Jan. 2003): 123-124. Still the author's view that “the status of the Eastern Church as a state church subordinated to the Caesar had been firmly established under Constantine the Great is wrong. His arguments are Protestant, not Orthodox. Neither Huntington's formula that “In Orthodoxy, God is Caesar's junior partner,” nor the Greek theologian statement of 1852, that “the Eastern Church is everywhere joined to the state” are correct from an Orthodox point of view. The former neglects the idea of symphony, while the second mixes up the ancient notion of state, i.e. the Byzantine Empire, with that of modern nation state. In this respect much more correct are the observations, made by Yannis Stavrakis, “Politics and Religion: On the Politicization” of Greek Church Dsource”, in: *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, vol. 21 (2003): 164..

¹⁴⁰ Stavrakakis, 165.

reform of Peter the Great. The synodal principle of church government¹⁴¹ was adopted not only by Greece, but also by the other Balkan countries.¹⁴² On the other hand, the Greek model of church-state relations inherited some Ottoman practices of subordination of the Church to the secular authorities.¹⁴³ It was not a return to the roots of Orthodoxy, but a deviation from them. It reminds the thirteenth century emphasis on political expediency concerning the status of the Orthodox Churches in the medieval states, independent from Byzantium. This is the logic behind the drive of the Orthodox Church of Greece for autocephality.

The Church of Greece was unilaterally proclaimed autocephalous by the Athens regency's declaration of July 23/August 4, 1833.¹⁴⁴ This radical step provoked the Patriarchate of Constantinople to declare schism over the new body. In the beginning, it had a positive effect for the liberated Greeks. It prevented the Sublime Porte from intervening in the domestic affairs of Greece by the means of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The same happened to Bulgarians after the schism of 1872. In long terms, however, these schisms had negative outcomes for entire Orthodoxy as well as for the particular nations. Greeks on the two sides of the border with the Ottoman Empire soon realized that the schism was adding a canonical division to the political one and negotiated its abolishment in 1850. In this way, the Patriarchate of Constantinople nominally recognized the principle of state Orthodoxy. It was observed until the Young Turks Revolution (1908). During this period all the territories, liberated from the Ottomans and joined to Greece, were assigned to the Archbishopric of Greece by the Patriarchate of Constantinople.¹⁴⁵

The transfer of jurisdiction, however, had some negative outcomes for the Great Church of Constantinople. It locked her power within the Ottoman Empire, binding its destiny with that the solution of the Eastern Question. This situation presupposed a parallel performance of both processes: the political dissolution of the Empire and the ecclesiastical disintegration of the *Rum millet*. Meanwhile, the Patriarchate of Constantinople faced the dilemma how to combine its duties of an Ottoman institution with its involvement in Greek nationalism, i.e. its support for the so called *Megali* idea aimed at the restoration of Great Greece. The crisis was deepened after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. On the one hand, the Patriarchate lost its role of an Ottoman institution. On the other hand, it was not able to preserve its See in Istanbul as a Greek national institution. The attempts of the Kingdom of Greece to secure its positions by keeping the Turkish minority in Western Thrace instead to exchange it for the Greek population in Turkey also did not help. In the 1920s,

¹⁴¹ The synodal principle is often interpreted by some scholars, including Orthodox theologians, as a kind of conciliarity but in fact it was influenced by the Protestant collegial system of government in the field of religious affairs.

¹⁴² About the Synodal system of Greece see Charalambos K. Papastathis, "The Hellenic Republic and the Prevailing Religion" in: *The Birgham Young University Law Review*, Vol 1996, Issue 4 (1996). Used via EBSCO.

¹⁴³ Mavrogordatos also mentions that the subordination of the Orthodox Church of Greece to a King, who was neither Greek, nor Orthodox but a Bavarian Catholic, is not "an anomaly with respect to the Ottoman past." Mavrogordatos, "Orthodoxy and Nationalism in the Greek Case", 124.

¹⁴⁴ Papastathis "The Hellenic Republic and the Prevailing Religion," EBSCO

¹⁴⁵ More complicated is the status of the so-called "New Lands" in Northern Greece, joined between 1912 and 1923, that are under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Dodecanese islands, joined in 1947, were not transferred under the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Church of Greece, but remained under that of Constantinople. This double division has been a source of many conflicts between the Patriarchate and the Orthodox Church of Greece as well as between the former and the Greek state. See Mavrogordatos, "Orthodoxy and Nationalism in the Greek Case", 124.

however, most of the Greeks in Turkey left the country under the pressure of the local authorities. In this way, the Patriarchate lost a half of its flock in Turkey.¹⁴⁶

The only chance for the Patriarchate to defend the location of its See was to raise canonical arguments. As a result, the Patriarchate developed the idea of its ecumenical role of Constantinople as the primary Church in the Orthodox world.¹⁴⁷ It was based on the special place of this Church assigned by the Pentarchy. According to it, the other Orthodox Churches had to pay not only honorable respect to the Patriarchate of Constantinople but also to its authority. This tendency received an international support by the Lausanne Treaty (1923). It was enforced by the western democracies in order to transform the Patriarchate of Constantinople into an Orthodox center coordinating the struggle against Bolshevik Russia. Still the Church of Constantinople “did not acquire a secure territorial base from which to exercise its nominally ‘ecumenical’ leadership.”¹⁴⁸ Therefore, every change in the geo-political situation in the region affected its situation. The Orthodox world also did not achieve a mutual agreement on this subject. The autocephalous Churches of Greece and Cyprus supported the idea of the ecumenical leadership in authority,¹⁴⁹ while most Slavonic Orthodox Churches opposed to it, especially during the Cold War period.

Despite the above-mentioned complications the Greek state has tent to link its national interests with the Patriarchate of Constantinople since 1850. On its turn, the Patriarchate has also claimed specific rights over the Archbishopric of Greece. This situation continues to create problems even today.¹⁵⁰ They are additionally complicated by the lack of a clear notion of national Church in the case of Greece citizens, who often regard the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Church of Cyprus as theirs, i.e. nationally Greek. The Patriarchate functions as a national Orthodox Church for the Greek diaspora, while the Church of Cyprus unites the ethnic Greeks in that state. The precedent of State over the Church did not allow the Greeks to establish a single national Orthodox Church as Bulgarians did. The canonical norms and the historical circumstances also did not allow such a development. It was impossible to suppress the ancient autocephalous Churches of Constantinople and Cyprus. Therefore, the functioning of the state principle was limited or changed by both – nationalism and Orthodox canons.

The secular authorities in Greece made a series of concessions to the nation’s faith. The Constitution of 1844 was amended, requiring the King’s successors to convert to Orthodoxy. This condition was met only in 1863, after the change of the ruling Bavarian dynasty with a Danish one.¹⁵¹ Similar processes took place also in the other Balkans states, who appointed western dynasties after their liberation from the

¹⁴⁶ Mavrogordatos, 132.

¹⁴⁷ In the authors’ view, Mavrogordatos is not correct when saying that “the rise of nationalism in the Balkans ... dealt a fatal blow to [the] oecumenical pretensions” of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Mavrogordatos, 127. These pretensions were provoked by the breakaway of the national Orthodox churches and the collapse of the Patriarchate as an Ottoman institution, but were developed in a specific doctrine by the Patriarchate in the 1920s. It defended the special authority rights of the Patriarchate in respect to the other Orthodox Churches. Such claims did not exist in the Orthodox Church past. According to canons, the other autocephalous Churches had to pay only honorable respect to the Patriarchate as “first among equals” but not to obey it because of its ecumenical position.

¹⁴⁸ Mavrogordatos, 131.

¹⁴⁹ Such were the Orthodox Churches of Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Poland, established after the liberation of their states from the Russian Empire (1918-1939).

¹⁵⁰ Mavrogordatos, 132-133. About the current tensions between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Orthodox Church of Greece see also Stavrakakis, “Politics and Religion: On the “Politicization of Greek Church Discourse,” 153-181.

¹⁵¹ Mavrogordatos, 125.

Ottoman dominance. In Romania and Bulgaria the second generation rulers had to convert to Orthodoxy. This act was considered “as a pledge of their adherence to their new homeland and a condition that would ensure the loyalty of their subjects.”¹⁵² Every Balkan nation-state protected its Orthodox Church “as a matter of self-preservation.”¹⁵³ Everywhere Orthodoxy was constitutionally declared as “the religion of the state.” All the oaths of governmental offices were administered by the head of the state Orthodox Church. The major Orthodox holidays became national holidays as well. In 1924, the adoption of new church calendar in Romania and Greece, removed the gap between the Church and the civil calendar.¹⁵⁴ Still it is worthy to mention that, the calendar issue did not bring about national divisions, but only religious ones.¹⁵⁵ At the same time, the Balkan monarchies were established under a secular constitutional system limiting the social role of the Orthodox Church. The latter was not able to control the secularization process often facilitated by the government’s policy towards religion. In short, the appropriation of Orthodox Church for national ends enhanced her secularization within the borders of every liberated Balkan state.¹⁵⁶

The principle of state Orthodoxy was adopted by Romanians who united the Metropolitane of Wallachia and the Metropolitane of Moldavia into a new Orthodox Church that corresponded to the unification of the former principalities. In 1863, the Romanian Prince Alexander Kusa confiscated the monasteries lands and their incomes were included in the state budget. Still one part of them went back to the Church in the form of salaries for her servants.¹⁵⁷ In this way, the Orthodox clerics were turned into officials, while the Romanian Orthodox Church “became a junior partner of the state.”¹⁵⁸ At the same time, this was not an attack against Orthodoxy or a particular Orthodox Church. In fact, it interrupted the flow of national incomes from Romania to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The loss of considerable amount of revenues experienced by the latter deteriorated its relations with the government in Bucharest.¹⁵⁹ In order to prevent the canonical obstacles for the normal functioning of

¹⁵² In this respect the Balkan countries do not make difference from the other European countries, where the sovereign “was not free to choose his religion.” See René Rémond, *Religion and Society in Modern Europe*, (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 55-56.

¹⁵³ Mavrogordatos, 125.

¹⁵⁴ In Bulgaria the new church calendar was adopted in 1968, while Serbia and Russian still observe the old calendar, being divided from the Western Christianity on such holidays as Christmas. The Orthodox Churches who adopted the new calendar came closer to Western Christianity. Still they continue to celebrate separately the Orthodox Easter and the so-called movable holidays connected with it. They share these holidays with the Russian, Serbian and the other old-calendar Orthodox Churches.

¹⁵⁵ Today, there are several old-calendar Churches in Greece and Bulgaria.

¹⁵⁶ According to Roudometof, the secularization of the *Rum millet* was strongly influenced by the Western Enlightenment. Roudometof, “From Rum Millet to Greek Nation,” 23. In my view, however, the impact of Enlightenment on the Orthodox population in the Ottoman Empire varied from community to community. The analysis also has to take into consideration the effects of “the strategy of indirect religious criticism” used by Voltaire “when he disparaged Orthodoxy in order to score against Roman Catholicism.” See Larry Wolff, *The Enlightenment and the Orthodox World: Western Perspectives on the Orthodox Church in Eastern Europe*, (Athens: Institute for Neohellenic Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2001), 211.

¹⁵⁷ Skurat, vol. 1, 189-199.

¹⁵⁸ Nicholas Dima, “Politics and Religion in Moldova: A Case Study” in: *The Mankind Quarterly* Vol. 34, Issue 3 (Spring 1994): 182. He uses as a source the History of the Romanian Church, i.e. *Istoria Bisericii Române*, vol. 2, Institutul Public și de Musiune Ortodoxă (București, 1958), 531-536.

¹⁵⁹ Dima, 181. Dima mentions that 20 % of the Romanian lands belonged to monasteries and a considerable part of their revenues were donated to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. According to Dima, the secularization of the church lands by the Romanian government deprived the Church of

his Church, two years after the secularization, Prince Alexander Kuza proclaimed her autocephality. The Patriarchate of Constantinople gave a canonical recognition of this act only in 1885. In this way, the Romanian Orthodox Church was subordinated to the interests of her nation-state. As in Greece, the Romanian Patriarchate automatically spread its jurisdiction over all lands newly-integrated into the state territory between the two world wars. The Church also took active part in the state policy of Romanizing the citizens of non-Romanian nationalities, incorporated in Romania after 1918. Many non-Orthodox Christians were converted by force to the majority religion. The Romanian Patriarchate became one of the major means for suppressing the centrifugal forces in the state and a guarantee for its unity until 1945.

Serbia also adopted the principle of state Orthodoxy. The political autonomy given to the Principality of Serbia by the Sublime Porte in 1830 was followed by an ecclesiastical one. The latter was conferred by the Patriarchate of Constantinople on the Serbian Metropolis in 1831. After the Russian-Turkish war (1877-1878) the Serbian State obtained political sovereignty, while its Church became autocephalous. In the same way, the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians after World War I was followed by an ecclesiastical alliance. In 1919, the Serbian Metropolis and the Church of Montenegro into a single body considered a national Church of the South Slavs. It also incorporated the dioceses of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Bulgarian Exarchate and the Metropolis of Karlovac, included in the Kingdom after World War I. In 1922, it was elevated into a rank of Patriarchate. Sometimes, however, Serbian nationalism gained preponderance over the idea of Yugoslavism and then the Orthodox Church was used for promoting Serbian dominance over the other nationalities in the Kingdom. In addition, having longer institutional experience than the state, the Serbian Orthodox episcopate had more influence in the domestic affairs than the Bulgarian and Romanian ones.¹⁶⁰

The state principle deepened the crisis in contemporary Orthodoxy. It contributed to the “lack of corporate solidarity and discipline.”¹⁶¹ Still the state Orthodox Churches share a common feature that roots back in the ancient times. The rejection of the principle of separation in the church-state relations is the most peculiar of them.¹⁶² Such a separation took place only in the countries that fell under communism. Their model of separation, however, differs from the western one. The communist regimes have separated church **from** state, while the western democracies separate church **and** state. The Bolshevik model replaced the conjunction “*and*” with the preposition “*from*” in order to isolate religion from society. This was a completely new concept – a fact, which is often neglected by researchers. It was a development provoked by communist ideology, not by Orthodox teaching.¹⁶³ It became possible thanks to the absence of corporate solidarity in Orthodoxy. We can discover this not only in the case of communism, but also in the case of fascism, e.g. the appointment of

Constantinople from this money. Only after realizing that there is no chance to restore these incomes Constantinople agreed to grant autocephality of the Romanian Church.

¹⁶⁰ Skurat, vol. 1, 110-113, 126-127.

¹⁶¹ Mavrogordatos, 125. Mavrogordatos also claims that state Orthodoxy cause “a lack of doctrinal rigidity and consistency,” but the author of this article does not think it is true with regard to Orthodoxy’s teaching.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ This analysis on the separation issue was developed in a joined paper, written by D. Kalkandjieva and Maria Shnitter for the Symposium “Religion and European Integration: Religions as a Factor of Stability and Development in South Eastern Europe,” University of Maribor, Slovenia (6-8 October 2005). The paper entitled “Religion and Eurointegration: the Case of Bulgaria” will be published in a volume with the conference materials by the end of 2006.

Metropolitan Damaskinos as Archbishop of Greece by the Nazis in 1941.¹⁶⁴ At the same time, “the instrumentalization of the Church of Greece,” mentioned by Yannis Stavrakakis, did not bring about her transformation into “a branch of civil service,”¹⁶⁵ if we compare this case with that of the Churches in the former communist states. Otherwise, it was not possible for the Greek Archbishop to excommunicate the Prime Minister Venizelos in 1916¹⁶⁶ nor to intervene in the secular affair during the discussions concerning the religious affiliation in the Greek identity cards, introduced in the 1990s.

The Bulgarian Exception

The perception of the Exarchate by Bulgarians as a national institution rooted in their nineteenth century church movement. It started in the 1820s and finished on February 28, 1870, when the Sultan issued a *firman* [decree] for the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate. If the period of ecclesiastical nationalism contributed for the consolidation of Bulgarians, the Exarchate institutionalized them into a nation. The Exarch was a representative of the Orthodox Bulgarians not only before the Supreme Porte, but also before the Great Powers’ ambassadors in Turkey. This role was highly appreciated by the delegates of the first church-people’s council (1871), who decided to establish the Exarch’s residence in Istanbul. This act violated a canon forbidding more than one bishop to have his see in the same city. According to another canon, “the head of an autocephalous Church could not be regarded as such, if he is not a bishop of an eparchy in the territory of the same Church and particularly a bishop of the eparchy, in which the capital of the corresponding state is situated.”¹⁶⁷ This approach neglected the fact that the Exarchate was established as an autonomous body within the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate, i.e. it had no autocephality. It also ignored the lack of any Exarchal eparchy with Istanbul as a main city. There was only a Bulgarian parish there. Therefore the choice of Bulgarians was determined by pragmatic reasons with regard to the national cause. Only having his See in the imperial capital, the Exarch would be able effectively to defend the rights of his compatriots. Therefore, when the Constantinople Patriarchate accused Bulgarians in *philethism*, i.e. a betrayal of Christian faith for national ends, it was formally right in canonical terms.

At the same time, by its unofficial support for the *Megali* Idea the Patriarchate of Constantinople fell in the same sin as Bulgarians. Still its canonical privileges and the special status of an Ottoman institution allowed it to pursue its aims without violating canon law. Failing in its attempts to persuade their Exarch, to move his see to another city, the Constantinople Patriarchate convoked a church council which proclaimed the newly restored Bulgarian Orthodox Church a schismatic body (September 16, 1872). The Bulgarian laymen and clergy, however, regarded this as a victory because it made the Exarchate independent from the Patriarchate. Under these circumstances the former could not be a mediator of the Greek attempts for the assimilation of Bulgarians by the ecclesiastical means. This became clear in the case of Macedonia, where the population of several eparchies had to decide whether to accept the jurisdiction of the Exarchate or that of the Patriarchate. The vote for the schismatic Church was not a denial of Orthodoxy, but a rejection of any attempts to turn or to

¹⁶⁴ Mavrogordatos, 126.

¹⁶⁵ Stavrakakis, 165.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 166.

¹⁶⁷ *Protokoli na Duhovnata komisija za preglezhdane na Ekzarhiyskia Ustav i vsichki destvuvashiti do dnes vav vedomstvoto na Balgarskata pravoslavna tsarkva tsarkovni naredbi [Proceedings of the Church commission for revising the Exarchal Statute]* (Sofia, 1920), 7

present these people as Greeks.¹⁶⁸ As a result, Bulgarians began to consider the Exarchate's borders as the legitimate territory of their future independent state. Due to the above-mentioned historical, political and canonical reasons the Bulgarian Exarchate joined much latter and in several stages to the model of state Orthodoxy. This peculiarity stems from the role of the Exarchate as a political representative of the entire Bulgarian nation. The decisions of the Berlin Congress in July 1878 divided the Bulgarian population under the jurisdiction of the Exarchate into three parts: the Principality of Bulgaria, Eastern Rumelia (the present day southern part of Bulgaria without the region of Sofia) and Macedonia and Aegean Thrace. In this way, state Orthodoxy was first spread over the Principality and only after its union with Southern Rumelia – over the southern eparchies. During the World War II occupation of Vardar and Aegean Macedonia some elements of the Bulgarian state Orthodoxy were spread there as well.

The Bulgarian model of state Orthodoxy shared many common features with the other Balkan countries. Within the state territory, however, the tendency of state Orthodoxy prevailed and the Orthodox Church's activities were controlled by the Sofia government, e.g. the church budget, the role of church in school and education, the appointment (not the election) of religious hierarchs as well as the ordinary clergy, the secularization of church lands, etc. As in Greece (during the schism with Constantinople 1833-1850), the Bulgarian Constitution of Tarnovo (1879) declared that the supreme ecclesiastical power is a monopoly of the Holy Synod.¹⁶⁹ Its article 39 says:

In ecclesiastical terms, the Principality is an inseparable part of the Bulgarian church area/domain, which is subordinated to the Holy Synod as the supreme ecclesiastical power of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church wherever this power has been situated. Through the latter the Principality is in unity with the Ecumenical Eastern Church in everything concerning the faith.¹⁷⁰

The motives were similar to the Greek ones. After the Liberation of Bulgaria, the Exarch, the chief Bulgarian hierarch, remained in Istanbul. Moreover, he was appointed by the Sultan. Therefore, the Synod set up in Sofia consisted only of metropolitans whose eparchies were situated in the free Bulgarian lands, i.e. they were free from the interventions of both the Exarch in Istanbul and the Sultan. At the same time, after the death of Exarch Josif (1915), the Bulgarian Orthodox Church did not elect new one. Instead the Holy Synod appointed a temporary chairman to run the church affairs. It also preserved the Exarchal See in Istanbul. In this way, it postponed the need of recognition of the new Exarch by the Turkish government. The problem was solved in 1945, when the Exarchal See was moved from Istanbul to Sofia. In this was the territory of the Bulgarian Exarchate shrank to the state borders and ceased to create tensions in the inter-state and inter-church relations in the Balkans. This act also allowed the abolition of the schism over Orthodox Bulgarians in February 1945.

¹⁶⁸ Today, the fact that at least the two thirds of the population of the mentioned eparchies voted for the Bulgarian Exarchate and which is usually regarded as belonging of these people to the Bulgarian nation. At the same time, some contemporary Macedonian historians claim that this vote was a choice between the less and greater evil and that is not a satisfactory evidence for belonging the mentioned people to the Bulgarian nation.

¹⁶⁹ According to the regency's declaration of July 23/August 4 1833 issued in Athens, "the supreme Ecclesiastical power lies in the hands of the Synod." At the same time, the Greek Constitution stated that Greece is "inseparably united in doctrine" with the other Orthodox churches. See Papastathis, "The Hellenic Republic and the Prevailing Religion."

¹⁷⁰ Translated by the author.

In short, state Orthodoxy appeared in the Balkans between 1830 and 1945.¹⁷¹ Its development was limited by canons as well as by nationalism. Some modern Orthodox Churches continued to function as cults of the national community, e.g. the Bulgarian, the Romanian, the Serbian and the Macedonian Orthodox Churches, while others – as canonical bodies established by the ancient custom, e.g. the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Church of Cyprus.

A Typology of the Balkan National Orthodox Churches: Major Features

The birth of national Balkan Churches was facilitated by the decline of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. It was followed by a “nationalization” of its parts by various “territorial political communities.”¹⁷² In this way, the common faith of Orthodoxy was transformed into “community cults” of separate Balkan nations.¹⁷³ The Patriarchate was gradually dislodged by national Churches, perceived as successors of those, ‘absorbed’ by Constantinople during the centuries of Ottoman rule. For example, the new Churches of Serbia and Bulgaria legitimized themselves as successors of the medieval patriarchates of Ipek and Tarnovo. The modern Churches also provided the Balkan national movements with an institutional network of communication necessary for their success.¹⁷⁴ Their fight against the hegemony of the Patriarchate of Constantinople was inspired by the idea that the ecclesiastical independence was a guarantee for national sovereignty.

The tendency of appropriation of religion and especially its institutional forms is another characteristic of the national Balkan Orthodox Churches, established in the nineteenth century. In many aspects, they remind the medieval Churches of Byzantium, Bulgaria, Serbia, Russia, Wallachia and Moldova. In the pre-Ottoman times, however, the state was confessional¹⁷⁵ and its ecclesiastical borders depended on the political power of its rulers, while in the nineteenth century most Balkan nations had no independent states. Thus the territory of a national Church was determined by the dispersion of “her” nation. In the medieval times, an Orthodox Church spread her jurisdiction over all the subjects of a state ruler without regard of their nationalities. In the modern era, an Orthodox Church pretended to embrace all the members of “her nation.” Moreover, everybody who had occurred under her jurisdiction was named after the ethnos associated with the same Church. In this way, the modern Churches institutionalized the ethno-national differences among the Sultan’s Orthodox subjects and played an important part in the project for building nation-states.

The fact that some national Orthodox Churches appeared before the corresponding states burdened them with specific duties.¹⁷⁶ As a factor for national consolidation under foreign domination they had to preserve the national consciousness of their

¹⁷¹ 1830 is the year of the official recognition of the state independence of Greece, while 1908 – of Bulgaria.

¹⁷² Jose Casanova, “Beyond European and American Exceptionalism: Towards a Global Perspective.” Conference paper.

¹⁷³ The term “community cult” as opposite to “religion of salvation” is Weber’s classification, used in his *Social Psychology of World Religions*.

¹⁷⁴ In this respect the Greek case is more complicated. The Greeks who remained under the Ottomans after 1830, tent to appropriate the Patriarchate of Constantinople for their Hellenistic ends. There was an attempt to re-conceptualize the Patriarchate from an Ottoman institution to a national or even nationalistic one.

¹⁷⁵ About the confessional state see René Rémond, *Religion and Society in Modern Europe* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1999), 60-66.

¹⁷⁶ In this sense, the Orthodox Church of Greece is not a national one. It was set up as a state church from the very begging. This issue is discussed in the paragraphs bellow on state Orthodoxy.

flocks. As far as the Ottoman state did not develop an imperial educational system for its Christian subjects,¹⁷⁷ the new Balkan Churches were directly involved in the education and social prosperity of their nations. This feature distinguished them not only from the Catholic and Protestant churches in Europe but also from the Russian Orthodox Church.¹⁷⁸ To a great degree it was facilitated by the use of native language, especially by Orthodox clergy who taught in schools. On the one hand, this development restricted and/or transformed the nature of secularization in some spheres of life of the Balkan Orthodox people. On the other hand, the transformation of Orthodox Church into an attribute for nation's sovereignty intertwined the process of secularization with the development of Balkan nationalism, especially in the period 1821-1918.

This ethno-centric approach to nation also created discrepancy between the notion of church territory, perceived as national, and the actual territory of most Orthodox states after their liberation from the Ottomans. The Bulgarian Exarchate (1878-1945)¹⁷⁹ acted as a supplement of the state of Bulgaria for those parts of the nation who remained under the Sultan. In the case of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, who took care of the Greek population in the Ottoman Empire (1830-1922),¹⁸⁰ this tendency conflicted with its attempts to preserve its leadership in the Orthodox Church on canonical grounds. In this way, the Orthodox Churches were involved in the nationalistic policies of their governments by giving a 'sacral' meaning to imagined national borders. More specific was the situation in Romania and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians. The former preserved the autonomy of its Metropolitans of Wallachia and Moldavia without interruption, while the idea of Yugoslavism suppressed the impulse for ethnically oriented nationalism in the latter. Therefore the mentioned countries together with Greece developed the third tendency – that of state Orthodoxy. Bulgaria fully joined this tendency only in 1945.¹⁸¹

This briefly described picture of the birth of the modern Balkan Orthodox Churches reveals the significance of their interaction with nation and state. It questions some popular theses concerning the relationship between Balkan Orthodoxy and nationalism, modernization, secularization, etc. It reveals important aspects of the birth of national Orthodox Churches as a modern phenomenon. It also pays attention to some regional peculiarities that root in the history of the Balkan peoples. It points to the tensions between the unity in Orthodox teaching and the organizational and institutional discrepancy in the Orthodox Church that create difficulties in the process of her accommodation to the contemporary conditions of life and politics and vice versa.

¹⁷⁷ L. S. Stavrianos, "Antecedents to the Balkan Revolutions of the Nineteenth Century, *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Dec. 1957): 339.

¹⁷⁸ Martin, 1990, 294-205.

¹⁷⁹ The territory of the Bulgarian Exarchate, defined by the Sultan's decree of February 28, 1870, was politically divided in July 1878 between the Principality of Bulgaria, Southern Rumelia and Macedonia. Despite these changes and those that followed after the Balkan and world wars the Exarchate continued to exercise its jurisdiction or to claim its rights over these territories until 1945.

¹⁸⁰ In the mentioned period the Patriarchate of Constantinople acted as a national Orthodox Church for the Greek population that remained under Ottoman rule. These functions of the Patriarchate often entered in conflict with its duties as an Ottoman institution and created a lot of complications in its relations with the Sublime Porte.

¹⁸¹ The case of the Orthodox Churches of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania follow the Bulgarian model with a greater delay. The so-called autocephalous Churches of Macedonia and of Albania appeared in 1945. Their development was also influenced by the Cold War.

This text presents the unpublished result of research carried out at CAS. It has not undergone language editing and is not to be cited.