

Zgodovinski časopis

HISTORICAL REVIEW

ZČ | Ljubljana | 77 | 2023 | št. 3-4 (168) | str. 239–491



Vid Žepič, *Ius publicum in iure privato. Javnopravne prvine v rimskem zasebnem pravu* • Dušan Mlacović, *Kartuzija Bistra in Koper v 14. stoletju* • Ādám Novák, *Seals of John and Ladislaus Hunyadi as the Counts of Bistrița (Beszterce) from the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia* • Anja Dular, *Frankfurtski knjižni sejmi in naši kraji* • Robert Devetak, *Razvoj slovenske prisotnosti v goriškem javnem prostoru pred prvo svetovno vojno* • Nade Proeva, *On rulers' titles and the names of Balkan peoples from the Middle Ages to modern times – Bulgari (Bulgarians), Bulgarini/Bulgareis (Bulgarinians/Bulgareians)* • Biljana Vankovska, *Historical Science in Chains: The Impact of the Bilateral Agreement Between Skopje and Sofia on Freedom of Academic Work*

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Ljubljana

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Redakcija tega zvezka je bila zaključena 10. oktober 2023.

Oblikovanje in oprema: Vesna Vidmar

Sedež uredništva in uprave: Oddelek za zgodovino Filozofske fakultete v Ljubljani,
Aškerčeva 2, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenija, tel.: (01) 241-1200,
e-pošta: info@zgodovinskicasopis.si; <http://www.zgodovinskicasopis.si>

Letna naročnina: za leto/letnik 2023: za nečlane in zavode 32 €, za društvene člane 24 €,
za društvene člane – upokojence 18 €, za društvene člane – študente 12 €.
Cena tega zvezka v prosti prodaji je 16 € (z vključenim DDV).

Naročnina za tujino znaša za ustanove 45 €, za posameznike 35 €
in za študente 25 €.

Plačuje se na transakcijski račun: SI 56020 1 000 12083935
Zveza Zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, Aškerčeva 2, 1000 Ljubljana,
Slovenija
Nova Ljubljanska banka, d.d., Trg Republike 2, 1520 Ljubljana LJBAS12X

Sofinancirajo: Publikacija izhaja s finančno pomočjo Javne agencije za raziskovalno
dejavnost RS

Prelom: ABO grafika d.o.o. – zanjo Igor Kogelnik

Tisk: ABO grafika d.o.o., Ljubljana, december 2023

Naklada: 500 izvodov

Zgodovinski časopis je evidentiran v naslednjih mednarodnih podatkovnih
bazah: Scopus, European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH),
Historical Abstracts, International Bibliography of the Social Sciences,
ABC CLIO, America: History and Life, Bibliography of the History of Art,
Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, Russian Academy of Sciences Bibliographies.

<http://www.zgodovinskicasopis.si>
info@zgodovinskicasopis.si



ISSN 0350-5774	
UDK	949.712(05)
UDC	

BULLETIN OF THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF SLOVENIA (HAS)

International Editorial Board: Kornelija Ajlec, PhD, (SI), Tina Bahovec, PhD, (SI), Bojan Balkovec, PhD, (SI) (Technical Editor), Rajko Bratož, PhD, (SI), Ernst Bruckmüller, PhD, (AT), Liliana Ferrari, PhD, (IT), Ivo Goldstein, PhD, (HR), Žarko Lazarević, PhD, (SI), Dušan Mlacović, PhD, (SI) (Deputy Editor-in-Charge), Božo Repe, PhD, (SI), Franc Rozman, PhD, (SI), Janez Stergar (SI), Imre Szilágyi, PhD, (H), Peter Štih, PhD, (SI) (Editor-in-Chief), Marta Verginella, PhD, (SI), Peter Vodopivec, PhD, (SI), Marija Wakounig, PhD, (AT)

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The editing of this issue was completed on October 10, 2023.

Design: Vesna Vidmar

Headquarters and Mailing Address: Oddelek za zgodovino Filozofske fakultete v Ljubljani, Aškerčeva 2, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia, phone: +386 1 241-1200, e-mail: info@zgodovinskiasopis.si; <http://www.zgodovinskiasopis.si>

Annual Subscription Fee (for 2023): non-members and institutions 32 €, HAS members 24 €, retired HAS members 18 €, student HAS members 12 €.

Price: 16 € (VAT included).

Subscription Fee: foreign institutions 45 €, individual subscription 35 €, student subscription 25 €
Transaction Account Number: SI 56020 1 000 12083935

Zveza Zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, Aškerčeva 2, 1000 Ljubljana,
Nova Ljubljanska banka, d.d., Trg Republike 2,
1520 Ljubljana LJBASI2X

Co-Financed by: Slovenian Research Agency

Printed by: ABO grafika d.o.o., Ljubljana, December 2023

Print Run: 500 copies

Historical Review is included in the following international databases: Scopus, European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH), Historical Abstracts, International Bibliography of the Social Sciences, ABC CLIO, America: History and Life, Bibliography of the History of Art, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, Russian Academy of Sciences Bibliographies.

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UDC	

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Razprave

Nade Proeva

On Rulers' Titles and the Names of Balkan Peoples from the Middle Ages to Modern Times

Bulgari (Bulgarians), *Bulgarini/Bulgareis* (Bulgarinians/Bulgareians)

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On Rulers' Titles and the Names of Balkan Peoples from the Middle Ages to Modern Times

Zgodovinski časopis (Historical Review), Ljubljana 77/2023 (168), No. 3–4, pp. 406–433, 109 notes

Language: En. (Sn., En., Sn)

This paper deals with a neglected issue in historiography: the manner of naming people in the medieval multi-ethnic states on the example of *Bulgari* (Bulgarian), *Bulgarini/ Bulgareis* (Bulgarinians / Bulgareians, as well as with the practice of claiming rulers' titles in the Middle Ages and with the name of Macedonians in medieval sources. The misinterpretation of legal state names (Bulgarian, Byzantine, Ottoman) as the race-related, ethnic designations of the Balkan peoples that were used until the creation of the modern nation-state is pointed out, as well the lack of studies on this issue.

Key words: *Bulgari* – Bulgarians; *Bulgarini/ Bulgareis* – Bulgarinians/Bulgareians; *Bugaria proprie dicta*, Macedonia/Macedonians; Samuel.

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O vladarskih nazivih in imenih balkanskih ljudstev od srednjega veka do današnjega časa

Zgodovinski časopis, Ljubljana 77/2023 (168), št. 3–4, str. 406–433, cit. 109

1.01 izvorni znanstveni članek: jezik En. (Sn., En., Sn.)

Prispevek obravnava vprašanje bistvenega pomena, ki je v zgodovinskih raziskavah prejkone zapostavljeno: poimenovanje pripadnikov različnih etničnih skupin v srednjeveških večetničnih državah na primeru *Bulgari* (Bolgari), *Bulgarini/Bulgareis* Bolgarinci *Bolgarejci*, pa tudi način in obliko prisvajanja vladarskih nazivov v srednjem veku in z imenom Makedoncev v srednjeveških virih. Izpostavljena je napačna razlaga državnih imen (bolgarsko, bizantinsko, otomansko) kot rasnih, etničnih oznak balkanskih ljudstev, ki so se uporabljala do nastanka modernega naroda, ter pomanjkanje študij o tem vprašanju.

Ključne besede: *Bulgari* – Bolgari; *Bulgarini/ Bulgareis* – Bolgarinci/ Bolgarejci; Makedonija/Makedonci; Samuel.

In written sources from the Middle Ages, the entire population of the central part of the Balkan Peninsula from Mount Pindus in the south to the Sava and the Danube in the north, from the Black Sea to the east, to Durres and Ohrid to the west, is referred to by the terms Bulgaria and Bulgarians, including – for a very long time – Macedonia itself. And instead of explaining the meaning and reasons for using these terms for Macedonia and the Macedonian Slavs at the time, until recently Macedonian historians either kept silent, or, when referring to Macedonia, replaced them with the name Macedonians/Macedonian State, which has been rightly assessed as a correction, i.e., an alteration of historical sources. On the other hand, from the Bulgarian point of view modern-day Macedonians are Bulgarians.¹ So the Bulgarian historians interpret this designation exclusively as ethnic, equating the name of the Bulgarian state/states with the present-day Bulgarian state and with the modern, national meaning of the name Bulgarians, which is unacceptable for the Middle Ages. The fact is that in the Middle Ages there were no established nations that could be identified with contemporary nations, as nations are modern constructions. Of course, both approaches are wrong, and it is necessary to clarify what this designation means and to define what "Bulgarians" meant in distinct contexts and in different historical periods.² Namely, it is undeniable that it had different meanings, depending on the historical circumstances, context and time to which it referred.

The lack of analysis on this issue favors the claims of the Macedonians' neighbors, who without any critical distinction accept the manner of naming the people in the Middle Ages, aiming to prove that today there is neither a Macedonian nation nor an indigenous Macedonian language. Namely, no other Balkan nation has been so vehemently and fiercely denied and challenged by its neighbors, and still is, with the tacit support of European powers. The Bulgarian view is that modern-day Macedonians are Bulgarians because in medieval sources the population of Macedonia is often, although not always, referred to as Bulgarians. Macedonia

This article is a revised form of the first chapter of my book published in Macedonian with summaries in English and French, Проева, Триптих, pp. 11 – 22.

¹ But one could just as well say that Bulgarians are Macedonians!

² An explanation of the meaning of the designation Bulgarians was first given in 2000 in my preface to the Macedonian translation of the travelogue on the Aegean part of Macedonia, published in 1859 by Delacoulonche, *Mémoire sur le berceau macédonien*, Делакулонш, *Лулката на македонската државност*, pp. 8 – 16; then in my book *Триптих за*, pp. 11 – 22. This paper is much larger in volume and more elaborate than the two previous ones.

was absorbed by the Bulgarian state in the second half of the 9th century, and in time the name of Macedonia and the ethnic names of its many Slavic tribes were disregarded and omitted. This designation remained in the sources longer than other designations because Macedonia was alternately under Byzantine and Bulgarian rule, its powerful neighbors.

First of all, it should be clarified that there are, in fact, several stages of the medieval states or rather several medieval states named Bulgarian, after the constituents of the ethnolinguistic group *Bulghars*, *Bolghars*, *Bolgari* whose language was Ugro-Turkmen. In the second half of the 7th century one part of this Turkic semi-nomadic group, referred to in scholarly literature as the Proto-Bulgarians,³ settled in the plain between the lower course of the Danube and the Balkan mountain range (the ancient Roman province of Moesia Inferior), where they formed a state with its center at Pliska, designated *kaghanate* according to the reigning title *khan*. This Danube *kaghanate* (681–864) then spread far to the south and the west and grew into a tzardom with a dominant Slavic population, in which the so-called proto-Bulgarian element shrank, and become a principality with its center in Preslav. After Christianization, and the proclamation of the Bulgarian Patriarchate (in 944),⁴ the official language of this second phase (864–971), or better said of the first Bulgarian state of Byzantine-Christian model and from then tzardom, became Byzantine Greek. Unlike the initial *kaghanate*, a pagan state, this one was Christian and arranged according to the Byzantine model, as a tzardom,⁵ with the recognized title βασιλεύς (earliest in 927), but was destroyed by the Byzantines in 971. At the time of its greatest expansion, this Byzantino-Christian state of Bulgarian name stretched from the Black Sea in the east, through the central part of the Balkan Peninsula, to the central part of the Adriatic coast. The last *basileus* of this state was Boris II (969–971), who was captured and taken to Constantinople by the Byzantine emperor Joannes I Tzimiskes (969–976), who in 971 formally deposed him, depriving him of the title, stripped him of his insignia as symbols of sovereign right (*regalia*), placing them in the Church of St. Sophia,⁶ out of gratitude for the victory. At the same time, he abolished the Bulgarian Patriarchate, which was at the time based in Dorostol, and annexed Bulgaria. The next state, the so-called Samuel's (976–1018),⁷ was created in Macedonia by completely

³ For the first Bulgarians and the different Bulgarian states, their creation and model see Стојков, Царство, етницитет, наследства, pp. 113 – 137; and pp. 119 – 122 on the proto-Bulgarian.

⁴ On the Christianization of the Bulgarians and the creation of a Bulgarian Church, see Коматина, Црквена политика Византије, pp. 196 – 220; 236 – 260, 344 – 252.

⁵ Since the state model is different, it might be more correct to consider it separately from the *kaghanate* — the first state of the Bulgarian name.

⁶ Scylitzae, *Synopsis historiarum*, 310.

⁷ When Macedonia was part of the Bulgarian state, Samuel was a Bulgarian bolyar. Bolyar (българ) is a Turkmen(ian) designation adapted to Slavic languages (Byzantine Greek *oi boliádes*) for members of the local nobility, the upper class of feudal states, the highest rank immediately after the prince.

new rulers – Cometopoules, the four sons of the *komes* Nikola⁸ who had nothing to do with the previous, extinct Bulgarian dynasty,⁹ which created new political and religious centers – political in Prespa: *Prespa... ubi et curia imperatoris* (sc. Samuel) *erat, imperatoris curiam* (sc. venit) *in loco qui Prespa dicitur*,¹⁰ and then in Ohrid, the latter also being the seat of the archbishopric. The last medieval state (1185–1396), created again in *Bulgaria proprie dicta* by the Assenid dynasty¹¹ with its center in Trnovo, was destroyed by the Ottomans under whose rule it was until 1878, but remaining under Ottoman sovereignty until 1908 as an autonomous principality. In Bulgarian historiography these states are treated as a continuation of the first, initial one, although there is a discrepancy between them not only in terms of dynasties (from khan Krum 681 to Boris, II i.e., from 864–971, Samuelians 971/76–1018, to the Assenid appeared in 1185), but also territorial, as seen from the capitals: Pliska/Preslav – *Bulgaria proprie dicta*; Prespa/Ohrid – Macedonia (971/76–1018), Trnovo – *Bulgaria proprie dicta*, and an even greater chronological gap (from 1018 to 1185 and during the Ottoman rule 1396–1878, i.e., 1908), with a view to proving the continuity of the medieval states with the modern Bulgarian state both in the state-legal and in ethnic terms.

After the 9th century (when with the spread of Bulgarian state of Byzantine-Christian model to the west and south, Serbia, Macedonia,¹² Thessaly, and Albania came under the rule of Bulgarian Tsar Boris / Michael, 852 – 889), the term Bulgarians began to be used for all the Slavic and non-Slavic population, as well as for that in the Macedonian sclavinies (*sclaviniae*),¹³ according to the practice of employing the name of the state for the peoples therein. Thus, even after the defeat and abolition of the Bulgarian state by the Byzantine Empire, Byzantine and post-Byzantine historians, through inertia continued to use the term Bulgarians as a general designation for these diverse peoples in all these regions.

After the death of the Bulgarian Tsar Petar and the capture and dethroning of his successor (Tsar Boris II, 969–971) by the Byzantine emperor Joannes Tzimiskes (969–976), Samuel, one of the four *Comitopouloi*, who started an uprising (*apostatesantōn*)¹⁴ in Macedonia, took advantage of the situation, cut it off from the previous Bulgarian and Byzantine authority and created his own state with its center in Prespa and Ohrid (Macedonia), and not in *Bulgaria proprie dicta*, nor in the

⁸ Nikola was one of the most powerful comets in Bulgaria: ἐνός τῶν μέγα δυνηθέντων ἐν Βουλγαρία κομήτων; ἐνός τῶν παρά Βουλγάρους μέγα δυνηθέντος κόμητος. Cometopoules, Kometopouloi (Κομητόπουλοι), from κομητοπούλος, son of komes (κόμης, komēs) – governor of the administrative unit – kometates.

⁹ Boris was killed, his brother Roman castrated, and therefore unfit to be the sovereign.

¹⁰ *Gesta regum slavorum presbiteri Diocleatis*, 333, 338.

¹¹ The Assenid dynasty, probably of Vlach origin according to Nicetas Choniates and Frankish historians.

¹² The exact year is not known, but in 886, Ohrid and Devol were already under Bulgarian authority.

¹³ *Sclaviniae* are small independent tribal principalities. See Stoykov, Some observation, pp. 33–58.

¹⁴ Characterised as a rebellion/apostasy (ἀποστασία) by the Byzantine writers.

former capital, Preslav, as before. That it is not a question of the restoration of the abolished Bulgarian state, by some supposedly western Bulgarian tribe, as some, mostly Bulgarian historians claim, can be supported by few facts. The first is that the north-eastern parts of the former Bulgarian state (those between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains) were annexed by Samuil to his state as many as ten years after his coming to power, i.e., after the battle against Byzantine ruler Basil II (at Serdica, 986).¹⁵ The second and even more important is the fact that after his defeat (in 1014) by the Byzantine emperor Basil II Macedonia was not included in the *theme*¹⁶ of the “Danube cities”, which concerned the earliest, real, Bulgarian state (*Bulgaria proprie dicta*), but in a new, separate *theme* referred to as “Bulgarian” with its center in Skopje.¹⁷ This shows that after Peter’s death the state disintegrated into at least two parts: the earliest Bulgarian part (*Bulgaria proprie dicta*) and Sclavinia. That it was not a question of renewing the previous Bulgarian state can also be seen from the creation of a new ecclesiastical organization. According to the ideological premise, the formation of a new state consisted in having its own religious seat (a cathedral) with the relics of some famous saint. In this case, these were the relics of Saint Achilles, of which Samuel took possession during the conquest of Larissa in 985 and placed in the new sumptuous basilica on the small island of Mala Prespa, called St. Achilles to this day.¹⁸ If the Bulgarian state had been restored by relocating the state, as well as the religious center to the west, the relics would have been transferred from the former church headquarters in Dorostol/Preslav, where Samuel very probably proclaimed himself Tsar, after the battle of Serdica.¹⁹ But no source mentions the transfer of relics from there, although the Bulgarian Church was abolished after the defeat in 971, and its hierarchs left Dorostol, the former church headquarters, moving, i.e., “fleeing” westwards to areas outside the Byzantine rule and under Samuel’s authority.²⁰ As for the name of the church of Samuel, it is necessary to refer to the Byzantine monk, Neilos Doxapatris, who in 1142/33 compiled for the Sicilian king Roger II (1095–1154) a list of patriarchates, *Notitia Episcopatum*, in which he wrote that this Patriarchate was an autocephalous archbishopric with more

¹⁵ In that battle, Samuel seized the royal tent and treasure but there is no information whether (ca. 997) he was crowned with the imperial insignia and whether this crown was found among the crowns of pearls seized in the Ohrid treasury after his defeat by Basil II and the capture of Ohrid in 1018 (Skylitzes, 358. 14–359. 16; cf. Cedrenus, II, 468: στέματα ἐκ μαργάρων καὶ χρυσοφείζ ἐσθῆτας), see Византиски извори, p. 15.

¹⁶ θέμα, *théma*, θέματα, pl. *thémata*, were the districts of the Byzantine Empire, which replaced the previous provincial system of the Roman Empire. Despite significant changes to the original thematic system, the term remained in use as a provincial and financial constituency until the very end of the Empire.

¹⁷ This theme covered the core of Samuel’s state from Voden in the south, Ohrid in the west, to Serdika in the east and Sirmium in the north.

¹⁸ From 1913 the island belongs to the Republic of Greece. The names of the episcopal sees written on the preserved walls of the half-ruined church obviously refer to the Ohrid Archbishopric; see A. Grabar, *Deux témoignages archéologiques* 1964, p. 163.

¹⁹ Стојков, Крунисувањето на Самуил, pp. 73–92, overview of the different opinions on the date and place of the coronation, pp. 74–76.

²⁰ As in the city of Voden, Moglen etc., see Ферлуга, Византијски извори, III, p. 64.

than 30 dioceses, including Ohrid, and that it was called Bulgarian after it had been ruled by the Bulgarians²¹ – this is obviously the period of the Assend dynasty because before that there had been no Archdiocese of Ohrid – it was founded by Samuel. This indicates that the Ochrid archbishopric, i.e., Samuel's Church, was different from the Bulgarian patriarchate. And the question that arises is: How can we speak of the same medieval Bulgarian state if we have two autocephalous churches with two church seats and two state capitals more than 1,000 km apart? That Samuel did not act as a restorer of the previous Bulgarian state can be seen from his titles which reflected the new situation – namely, in addition to the title of Czar (*Caesar*), he borrowed the title of *samodržec* (*autocrator*) from the Byzantine titulation. It should also be noted that in Byzantine sources Samuel is not referred to as *Tsar* like the previous Bulgarian rulers Peter and Boris II, which means that he and his state were not considered as a continuation of the previous ruling dynasty and state. This fact explicitly shows that the two countries (the previous Bulgarian state and that of Samuel bearing the Bulgarian name according to the well-known state-political practice in the Middle Ages) had different destinies and histories.²²

Samuel took on the imperial title of the Byzantine *basileis*, probably between 986 and 989, just as the Bulgarian ruler Simeon I (893–927) had done previously.²³ From the objection to the appropriation of this title in the letters of the Byzantine emperor Romanus I, of 925 and 926, we see that Simeon had made himself emperor (*basileus*) of the Bulgarians and Romans (the seals feature the title *Basileus of the Romans*) and that his title was not recognized.²⁴ After having established his own state, Samuel also proclaimed himself emperor: “*quidam Samuel qui se imperatorem vocari iussit et...*”,²⁵ a title which, according to some authors, was later recognized by the Pope of Rome, but there is no conclusive evidence. An excellent and detailed analysis of this issue was carried out by S. Stoykov, who convincingly suggests that Samuel appropriated the title of the Bulgarian tsars just after the occupation of the north-eastern parts of the Bulgarian state, i.e., after the victory at the Bulgarian gorge (Trajan Gates), east of Serdika in 986, and that he did so in Preslav, the center of, in that time, the abolished Bulgarian state.²⁶ It is believed that the reference to the usurpation of imperial insignia in a poem written by Joannis the Geometer, dated 969–971, refers to Samuel.²⁷ This symbolic act of coronation in the previous Bulgarian capital demonstrates that Samuel's goal was obviously

²¹ See *Византиски извори*, pp. 362 – 364, translation of the sources with comments).

²² A detailed overview of the various theories about the creation of Samuel's state was given by Ферлуга in *Византијски извори*, III, n. 11, pp. 60 – 63.

²³ But despite this, Simeon held the title of archon until 913: on the seals he was referred to as the archon of Bulgaria; see Йорданов, *Корнус на печатите*, pp. 40 – 43.

²⁴ This royal title appropriated by Simeon I was officially bestowed on his son Peter after 927 and was carried on by his successors until 971. Different opinions about Simeon's titles in Стојков, Бугарскиот етнос, pp. 63 – 86, n. 93.

²⁵ *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina*, XXXIII.

²⁶ See discussion on this in Стојков, Крунисувањето на Самуил, pp. 85 – 92.

²⁷ See Ioannis Kyriotes Geometres, a tenth-century poet (Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. 106; *Византијски извори* Vol. III, pp. 28/29, n. 22).

to secure the legitimacy of his state, using the previous state-legal status of the Bulgarian state to which Macedonia had belonged at the time of Boris I/Michael (852–889), from 886 at the latest. It is well known that at that time only the rulers of Rome and Constantinople had the right to hold or recognize for someone the title of emperor, *imperator*, ie., βασιλεύς, so the reason for such an act of Samuel is more than intelligible – to gain legitimacy by appropriating the previous status of the dethroned Bulgarian Tsar Boris II.²⁸ The appropriation of the Bulgarian title had resulted in the naming the subjects of his country as Bulgarians, and in this sense the names Bulgaria and Bulgarians are provisory. And as P. Stevenson rightly points: “*the practice of claiming the title of emperor of the Bulgarians, therefore, has no ethnic significance.*”²⁹ Before the Ottoman period and after the Eastern Roman Empire, the longest state and ecclesiastical tradition of Balkan Slavs was that of the first Bulgarian state of Byzantine-Christian model, 864–971, (the oldest founded by the so-called Proto-Bulgarian in 681 was pagan), and the Serbian, created just before the middle of the 9th century was on the periphery of the south Slavic world. Consequently, the name of the Bulgarian state (derived from the designation *Bulghars* – Bulgarians) was used in a political sense for the entire population of the Western Balkans that was included in Samuel’s state. That this is so is obvious from the data in the extensive biography of St. Clement, written by Ohrid’s Archbishop Theophylact (who lived in the 11th and at the beginning of the 12th century) in which he wrote the following: “... and quite simply Clement left us Bulgarians everything related to the church which glorifies the memory of God and the saints...”³⁰ Theophylact, who was of Greek origin, from the island of Evia, repeats the same thing in a letter addressed to the Byzantine Empress Maria “And so, now I return to the Bulgarians, as a true citizen of Constantinople, but strange as it is, also a Bulgarian.”³¹ So, this designation, apart from the initial ethnic meaning, had a state-legal meaning, indicating the state affiliation. This self-inclusion of Theophylact among the Bulgarians reveals the inertia of Byzantine writers, given the fact that from 1018 Macedonia was not under Bulgarian but under Byzantine rule. Due to custom, however, in Byzantine and post-Byzantine sources the designation Bulgarians, from the previous state name, was still in use.³² Such an example of the appropriation of a previous state-legal tradition was the Bulgarian prince – *archon* Simeon I, who between 914–924, probably after 919,

²⁸ Thus the Croatian historian Ivo Goldstein noted that: “The state of Samuel of the Macedonian Slavs, which gratefully took over the state and imperial tradition of the Bulgarian emperors”; “took on the Bulgarian imperial crown”. See Goldstein, *Hrvatski Rani Srednji*, pp. 335, 346.

²⁹ P. Stephenson, *Byzantium’s Balkan Frontier*, p. 61.

³⁰ Expanded Biography of Clement of Ohrid in the so-called *Moscopolite Collectanea* (the biographies of five saints printed during 1741 and 1742 in Moscopole). The transcription of the five biographies, and translation into Macedonian with comments was made by X. Меловски, *Москополски зборник*, Vol. 1. 1, quotation on p. 157, and commentary on the designation Bulgarians on p. 93, English translation of the quoted sentence, is mine (NP).

³¹ Gauthier, *Théophilacte d’Achrida*, p. 14; *Patrologia graeca*, 126, 504, C.

³² See Меловски, Св. Наум, in *Москополски зборник*, Vol. 1. 1, p. 248.

relying on the existing tradition, proclaimed himself king (*basileus*) of the Romans, and was on the seals referred to as the *Tsar* of the Romans, Συμεὼν ἐν Χριστῷ [τῷ] Βασιλεῖ[ύς] Ῥωμέων.³³ But this does not mean that he and the Bulgarians are Romans (or Greeks, as the term *Romei* is misinterpreted, because *Romaioi* is also a state legal term, not an ethnic one). A similar example is the Byzantine emperor Basil I (811–886), who was probably of Armenian-Slavic origin but was named Basil I the Macedonian because he was born in the Byzantine *theme* of Macedonia, and, accordingly, the dynasty (867–1056) was called Macedonian, which does not mean that the rulers and the Byzantine Empire were Macedonian! These examples explicitly show that the designations of medieval multi-ethnic states did not have ethnic, but rather administrative, i.e., political content and meaning. There are other such examples in the near vicinity. The continuator of the works of Joannis Skylitzes wrote that in 1072 the rebels against Byzantine rule in Macedonia³⁴ sought and obtained the consent of King Michael VII Douka (1071–1078), to co-operate with them and to give them his son Constantine – also named Bodin – to make him *tzar* of Bulgaria (καὶ συνεργῆσαι δοῦναι τε αὐτοῖς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ, ὡς ἂν αὐτὸν βασιλέα Βουλγαρίας ἀνακηρύξωσι καὶ τῆς ἐκ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐλευθερωθεῖεν καταδυναστείας καὶ βαρύτητος...) and thus free themselves from Byzantine cruelty. Prince Constantin-Bodin was proclaimed the emperor of Bulgaria and renamed Peter, according to Petar Deljan, the leader of the previous uprising in 1040/41, but that does not imply that the Dukljans are Bulgarians or Macedonians. Later, in official documents, the Serbian *Tsar* Stefan Uroš IV Dušan (1331–1355), was referred to as Serbian, as well as the Bulgarian and Macedonian *tsar*³⁶ – as in his famous Code (Dušan's Code), promulgated in Skopje (21 May 1349); again, this does not mean that *Tsar* Dušan and the Serbs are Bulgarians or/and Macedonians!

One of the most obvious examples of the use of the state name for different peoples in medieval multiethnic states in the Balkans is the Roman Empire, divided in two in 395. The official name for the eastern part, the so-called Byzantine Empire, derived from Byzantium, the previous name of his capital Constantinople, a name that prevails in scholarly literature, was the Roman Empire: Βασιλεία Ῥωμαίων / *Basileia Rhōmaïōn*, in Greek; *Imperium Romanum*, in Latin. According to the state name, all peoples, regardless of their ethnicity, including the Greeks from Late Antiquity, were named as *Romaioi* (Ῥωμαῖος / *Rhōmaïos*), i.e., Romans. This appellation was taken over and used by the Ottoman Turks until the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, so that all the inhabitants of this part of their Empire, were referred to as *Rummilet*, which literally means Roman people, after the name of the previous Eastern Roman Empire, i.e., Byzantine. Thus, in travel documents

³³ Иван Йорданов, *Корпус*, p. 48 – 53, 11 seals with the title *basileus* of the Romans.

³⁴ *Византијски извори*, Vvol. III, no. 7, p. 177 and 181 (This is the uprising led by Bodin and George Wojtech).

³⁵ *Византијски извори*, vol. III, no. 7, p. 179. Here, Bulgaria is the name of the *thema* that covered the nucleus of the state of Samuel.

³⁶ This Code is preserved in several manuscripts: Grabalski, Ravanički, Sofiski, Rudnički, Jagichev and Karlovački, see Соловјев, *Законик цара Стефана*, so it is evident that it is not a forgery or error of the scribe.

until 1900, Serbs were registered as *Rumeliotes*.³⁷ Of course, it does not follow that all these peoples were the same in the ethnic sense of the word, that is, one and the same people!

Throughout history, from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the new Age, there are other examples of the borrowing and use of previous titles and ethnic symbols in other parts of Europe, not only in the Balkans. The Frankish ruler Charlemagne, whose capital was Aachen, was crowned as a Roman emperor in Rome in 800 (in St. Peter's Cathedral, by Pope Leo III). Considered the successor to the Western Roman Empire, the German state in the Middle Ages was named the Roman Empire, and its rulers (Otto I, 936–973, Otto III, 983–1002) were “*German-Roman*” emperors. The rulers of the Habsburg dynasty who ruled from 1438 to 1740 also bore the title of *Holy Roman Emperor*, and the country was named the *Holy Roman Empire*, which does not mean that the Franks and Germans were the same or had the same origin as the population in the ancient Roman state!

Thus, in Byzantine, post-Byzantine and Latin sources, even after the collapse of the “Bulgarian” states, for the entire Balkan Slavic population, in addition to the original designation Slavs/Scythe, the Bulgarian designation is applied. In the Thessaloniki Legend (from the 11th/12th centuries) it is said that St. Cyril (826/7–869) went to the large country populated by the Slavic peoples, who are called Bulgarians (*ѣзики словинскыѣ, се рекше българе*),³⁸ and again in the legend of the prophetic Sybil: “*a’ родъ словѣне, рекше българе*”,³⁹ which explicitly shows that it refers to all Slavic peoples. In the biography of St. Gregoriois Hagiorites (first half of the 11th century, Georgian and Latin versions are preserved),⁴⁰ a Georgian monk and *hegoumenos* (abbot) of the Georgian monastery of Ivirion (Ιβήρων) on the Sacred Mountain (Mt. Athos), hence the name Gregory of Iveria, it is said that in the village of Livizdia (Libyzasda) of Mount Athos there live “Bulgarians who were called Slavs” (*Bulgari qui Sclavi apellantur*). The Latin syntagm shows that the Greek phrase found in the extensive biography of St. Clement in the Moscopolis collection „... τὸ τῶν Σθλοβένων γένος εἶτ οὖν Βουλγάρων... should also be translated as “*the race of the Slavs, who are (called) Bulgarians*.”⁴¹ H. Melovski explained: “...Macedonia being taken from Byzantines and incorporated within the Bulgarian state, the name Bulgarians was used for the Southern Slavs.”⁴² These examples serve as a more than

³⁷ The document in the political archive of Moscow, op. 482 d. 26,229. For a copy of this document, I thank Prof. Dr. Vlado Popovski, Faculty of Law “Iustinianus Primus” – Sts. Cyril and Methodius, Skopje.

³⁸ Иванов, *Български старини*, p. 282.

³⁹ Милтенова, Тъпкова-Заимова, *Историко-апокалиптическата книжнина*, pp. 255, 264, 269.

⁴⁰ The biography was written posthumously by someone named George the Little, or George the Priest. English translation with commentary in Grdzeldidze, *Georgian Monks*; French translation in Martin-Hisard, *La vie*, p. 63, & 36, 790.

⁴¹ Prologue to the extensive biography of Saint Clement, in X. Меловски, *Москополски Зборник*, p. 105 text in Greek, comment in note 235.

⁴² Меловски, *Москополски Зборник*, p. 135, n. 235 (in Macedonian, English translation of the quoted sentence, is mine).

obvious proof that one is a state-legal and the other a race-related, ethnological designation. Macedonia was included in the Bulgarian state in the second half of the 9th century, and over time the name Macedonia and the ethnic names of its many Slavic tribes were omitted. Thus, over time, the name of Macedonia and the ethnographic names of its Slavic tribes have been suppressed, being replaced by the administrative name Bulgarians. In contemporary Byzantine sources, besides the general term Slavs, all the peoples of the countries belonging to the State of Samuel extend from the Danube and the Sava in the north to Larissa in the south and from the Adriatic Sea in the west to the Black Sea in the east: Serbs, Greeks, Vlachs, Armenians, and others were traditionally called Bulgarians,⁴³ but this does not mean that everyone there was ethnically Bulgarian. Thus, describing the first Crusade (1096–1099), William of Tire wrote: “...*ita ut confusus provinciarum nominibus et terminis, totus iste tractus, qui in longitudine habere dictur iter dierum triginta in latitudine vero decem, vel amplius Bulgaria dicitur: miseris Graecis ignorantibus quod hoc ipsum nomen eorum protestetur ignominiam.*”⁴⁴ Namely, to Byzantine authors, the cultural and state criterion more important was than the ethnic. And travel writers in the late Middle Ages until modern times did not understand the difference between the Slavic peoples and used, par inertia, the name Bulgarians. Consequently, in the 17th century Joseph Georgirenes⁴⁵ wrote that in the monastery of Chilandary (Hilandar monastery, founded in 1198 by the Serbian ruler Stefan Nemanja and his son Saint Sava, whose relics are located there) on the Holy Mountain (Mt Athos), the monks sung prayers in the Bulgarian language.⁴⁶ The same inconsistency when naming peoples can be found among Byzantine authors for other Slavic tribes. Such fluctuation is observed in the naming of the other tribes – Serbian and Croatian. Thus the successor of Skilica in the story of the uprising of Gjorgji Vojtech and Konstantin Bodin in 1072, wrote that: the people of the Serbs who are also called Croats: τὸ τῶν Σέρβων ἐθνὸς οὐς καὶ Χορβάτας καλοῦσι.⁴⁷ This demonstrates that at this time the process of the differentiation of Slavic tribes was not completed and that the path to the maturation of nations was protracted, lasting until modern times.

Post-Byzantine authors, both Greek and Latin, however, distinguish between early, i.e., proto-Bulgarians and Macedonian Slavs named as Bulgarians after their incorporation into the Bulgarian state. From Latin sources, it is worth mentioning the so-called *Chronicle of Bar* (lat. *Regnum Sclavorum*), written by the anonymous archbishop of Bar, named Pop Dukljanin (Priest of Dioclea or Duklja), probably in the second half of the 12th century.⁴⁸ In this chronicle, Pope Dukljanin uses two

⁴³ Kedrenos, *Chronica*, II, 476, 4; Komatina, *Pojam Bugarske*, pp. 41 – 56.

⁴⁴ Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, 201, p. 254: Guilelmi Tyreusis historia rerum transmarinarum.

⁴⁵ Born on the island of Melos, became a monk on Mount Athos and archbishop of Samos.

⁴⁶ Georgirenes, *A description of*, p. 11.

⁴⁷ *Византијски извори* III, p. 177, no 7, see also Радојчић, Како су називали Србе, p. 1 – 15.

⁴⁸ *Gesta regum slavorum presbiteri Diocleatis*, written on the basis of the older Slavic compositions from the 11th and 12th centuries, see critical editions: Шишић, *Летопис Попа Дукљанина*, Београд – Загреб, 1928; V. Mošin, *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina*, Zagreb 1950.

names: *Bulgari, orum* (Bulgarians), and *Bulgarini, orum* (Bulgarinians).⁴⁹ He wrote that Samuel was the king of the Bulgarinians “*Samuel Bulgarinorum imperator...*”,⁵⁰ while Peter and Simeon are named as Bulgarian emperors “*Bulgarorum imperator Petrus*” – Peter, the king of the Bulgarians.⁵¹ Samuel is first mentioned in connection with his rebellion against Byzantine rule and his taking of the imperial title: among the tribe of the Bulgarinians a certain Samuel rebelled and ordered that he be called king: „*Eo tempore surrexit in gente Bulgarinorum quidam Samuel qui se imperatorem vocari iussit...*”;⁵² then in connection with his war with Vladimir in Dalmatia,⁵³ and when Vladislav is mentioned as the only surviving descendant of Samuels’s genus: „*Imperator Bulgarinorum mortuus est...*”⁵⁴ The fact that Samuel was called the king of the *Bulgarinians* several times, and not just once, shows that this is not due to a mistake by a scribe. The same distinction is found in the biography of St. Nahum (9th–10th century): the designations Βούλγαροι (Bulgarians) and Βούλγαρεις (nominative) from Βουλγαρέων (Bulgareians).⁵⁵

From Latin sources, we should also mention the French song (La chanson de Roland), written in old French from the late 11th and early 12th centuries⁵⁶ on the Carolingian knight, Count Roland.⁵⁷ When enumerating the military detachments of Saraceni commander Baligant the people of Samuel, i.e., the people of Samuel’s state (*et la sedme est la gent Samuel*) are mentioned, and the Bulgarians are referred to on the occasion of Charlemagne’s death (*e Hungre e Bugre e tante gent averse*).⁵⁸

Macedonia was named a Bulgarian country after the 9th century, when it came under Bulgarian rule. Until then, in the Byzantine chronicles, to refer to Macedonia and its population, the designation Slovinia (Σκλαβινία, *Sclavinica terra*)⁵⁹ and the general race-related, ethnological name Slavs (Σκλαβινοί) were mainly used, name that until the arrival of the Bulgarians on the Balkans, were used for the whole

⁴⁹ This has already been noted by Прокић, *Постанак једне словенске*, p. 306.

⁵⁰ *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina*, XXXIII, XXXVI, XXXVII.

⁵¹ *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina*, XXX.

⁵² *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina*, XXXIII: *Eo tempore surrexit in gente Bulgarinorum quidam Samuel qui se impertorem vocari iussit et commisit praedia multa cum Graecis proiecitque eos ex tota Bulgaria ita ut in diebus cuis Graesi non auderent propinquare illus.*

⁵³ *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina*, XXXVI: „*Tempore itaque eodam, dum Vladimirus essat afdolenscens et regnaret in loco patris sui supradictus Samuel Bulgarinorum imperator; congregatao magno exercitu, advenit in patribus Dalmatiae, supra terram regis Vladimiri*”

⁵⁴ *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina*, XXXVII: „*Imperator Bulgarinorum mortuus est et reges huius terrae mortui sunt*”.

⁵⁵ Меловски, *Москополски зборник*, p. 76 (text in Greek), p. 84 (translation in Macedonian), p. 93/4 (comments). The author translates the name as Бугарјани (Bugarjani), which is also correct.

⁵⁶ On the epic poem see Drašković, *La chanson*, pp. V – XIV; Gregoire – Keyzer, *La chanson*, p. 287.

⁵⁷ Roland was governor of the Marches de Bretagne district, killed in the battle of Roncevaux Pass in 778.

⁵⁸ *La chanson de Rolland*, Laisse CCXXXIII, verse 3244 (*la gent Samuel*) ; laisse CCIX, verse 2922 (*Bugre*); Радоичић, *Le gent de Samuel*, p. 117.

⁵⁹ The open vowel “o” of the Old Slavic language in Greek is transcribed as “a”.

Balkans, including Hellas,⁶⁰ to the Peloponnese in the south: “*ad urbem Monafasiam (Μονεμβασία) in Sclavinica terra*”.⁶¹ For instance, Pope Gregory VII referred to the King of Zeta, Michael VII of Duklja (1071–1078), as “King of the Slavs”. Although Byzantine authors did not seek to distinguish different and numerous Slavic tribes, they did record the names of certain Slavic tribes of Macedonia. Thus, in the work about the conquest of Thessalonika, Joannis Kaminiates, a Thessalonian priest from the 10th century, does not mention Bulgarians in Macedonia at all, but mentions the names of different tribes such as Δρουγουβίται, Σαγουδάτοι, Στρυμονίται,⁶² and of course the general name Σκλαβηνοί or Σκλαβινοί.⁶³ Moreover, the author of *Miracles of Saint Demetrius* also mentions the Slavic ethnonyms: Drogovitai (Δραγοβίται), Sagudatai/Sagudates (Σαγουδατες), Velegezitai/Velegezites Βελεγεζίται/Βελεγεζήτες), Vaiunitai/Vaiunites (Βαΐουνήτες) and Berzetai/Berzites (Βερζήτες).⁶⁴ And again in the sources about the creation of the Bulgarian *kaghanate* in the Balkans in 681, for the population in Thrace, the southern part of present-day Bulgaria, only Slavs – the general race-related, ethnological name – is used,⁶⁵ and only once seven genres (*genus*) without names are mentioned⁶⁶ – a designation that indicates the social order rather than the different tribal names. Information on socio-political organization in the Middle Ages is often partial and comes from later and/or non-indigenous sources.

The Slavic population in Macedonia was organized into territorial entities, a kind of principality, in Byzantine sources referred as Σκλαβηνία/*Sklabēnía*, latin *Sclavinia*.⁶⁷ One of the oldest sources for this designation is the legend of the miracles of St. Dimitrios of Salonika.⁶⁸ Byzantine sources often distinguish *Bulgaria* from the *Sclavinia* in Macedonia. Thus in 687, Theophanes Homologetes Confessor (7th century) mentions Sclavinia separately from Bulgaria: Σκλαουινίαν καὶ Βουλγαρίαν,⁶⁹ or again: τὰν κατὰ τὴν Μακεδονίαν Σκλαουινίαν,⁷⁰ i.e., *Sclavinia in Macedonia*, which in Latin translation reads “*Slavinias penes Macedoniam*”,⁷¹ which explicitly

⁶⁰ Theophanis *Chronographia*, pp. 456, 33.

⁶¹ *Miracula Sancti Demetri*, Acta SS. Die 2 iulius p. 504.

⁶² Ioannis Caminiatae *De expugnatione Thessalonicae*, 8, 81 – 82; 38, 61 – 62.

⁶³ Ioannis Caminiatae *De expugnatione Thessalonicae*, 20, 74, 80; 20, 6; 25, 53.

⁶⁴ *Miracula Sancti Demetrii* II, 1; II, 4.

⁶⁵ In the short history of the Patriarch of Constantinople Nicephorus (Sancti Nicephori Patriarch Constantinopolitani *Breviarium Rerum*) for the events from 602 – 769, it is written that: they (the Bulgarians) also reduced the power of the Slavs, who resided there in the country of Thrace: κρατούση δε καὶ τὸν παρωχημένων Σκλαβένων ἐθνῶν, *Breviarium Nicephori*: 40.11; τὰ ἐπὶ Θράκης χωρία, *Breviarium Nicephori*: 40.14.

⁶⁶ Theophanes *Chronographia*, written during the years 810 to 815, by Theophanes the Confessor.

⁶⁷ More on Sclavinia in historical sources see Malinovská, Geographical concepts of Sclavinia, pp. 60 – 65.

⁶⁸ *Miracula S. Demetri*, Acta SS IV, Die 8 Octobris, 162, 174 and others. For different opinions on the chronology see Stojkov, Some observations on, p. 33-58; Stojkov, The term Sclavinia, pp. 413 – 433.

⁶⁹ Theophanis *Chronographia*, t. I, 347.

⁷⁰ Theophanes *Chronographia*, t. I, 430.

⁷¹ Anastasius Bibliothecarius, Theophanis *Chronographia* II.

shows that the ethnographic name of the population in Macedonia was Slavs, and that means that it was not the same as those people named Bulgarians. The south-western part of Macedonia, now in R. Greece was, until the beginning of the 20th century, referred to as *Sclavicia* (Σκλαβικία), a designation derived from the name of the population το τῶν Σκλαβινῶν ἔθνος (the people of the Slavs), in the nominative case Σκλαβινοί / Σκλαβοί – *Sclaveni*, Slavs. The Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913–959) wrote that ἐσθλαβόθη δε πάσα χώρα, which actually means that the whole country (Hellas) was “Slavisized/S<k>lavonised”.⁷² This is confirmed by the 10th century epitome of Strabo’s Geography: “... now Scythians-Slavs inhabit all Epirus and almost entire Greece, the Peloponnese and Macedonia.”⁷³ The interpretation of some, mainly Greek historians that the name Σκλαβινοί meant slaves and that the whole country (Hellas) was enslaved, is wrong. The name in Latin sources was *Sclavini* / *Sclavi*, and not *servi*. What is more: the country cannot be named after the word for a slave! An obvious argument to that is the name of the metropolitan archdiocese of Voden(a) and *Sclavicia* recorded by the French classicist A. Delaculonche, a member of the first generation of the French School of Archaeology, who wrote that even today (mid-19th century) the title of metropolitan bishop of the metropolitan of Voden(a) (ancient *Edessa*) reads: „ὁ πανιερότατος καὶ θεοπρόβλητος μητροπολίτης τῆς ἀγιωτάτης μητροπόλεως Βοδένων καὶ Σκλαβίτισης”, ὑπερτίμιος καὶ ἐξαρχος Μακεδονίας πρώτης.” i.e., “... metropolitan of the Holy Metropolis of Voden and Sklavicia the most respected and exarch of Macedonia Prima”.⁷⁴ A church organization cannot have a slavish name, i.e., be named after the word denoting a slave. This name was used until 1926, when the Greek authorities renamed by law both the personal names of the Slavic population and the non-Greek, Slavic and Turkish toponyms.⁷⁵

Thanks to the classicist manner of the Byzantine and post-Byzantine authors who used archaic names even after the settlement of the Slavs in the Balkans, especially during the classicism of the second Renaissance, the ancient names of the Balkan peoples were revived. Thus, according to the classicist tradition, the subjects of Samuel, whose state included different nations, were designed as Mysoi, Scythians, Macedonians, etc. Leo Deacon (10th/11th century), writing about the siege of Basil II of Serdica in 986 literally wrote that “... *he gathered an army and quickly went against the Mysoi who harmed the Roman state and ruthlessly plundered the areas of the Macedonians (ta tôn Makedonôn)*”,⁷⁶ in which the difference

⁷² Constantinus, *De thematibus*, 53, 18.

⁷³ Muleris, 1861, p. 574.

⁷⁴ See Делакулонш, *Лулката на македонската*, p. 233 and 255/6. Translation from French (A. Delaculonche, *Mémoire sur le berceau macédonien.*) in Macedonian with annotations by N. Proeva.

⁷⁵ Law on renaming the names of people and places. See Official Gazette of Greece no. 332, of 21. XI. 1926. On the policy of the Greek state towards the domestic population in the part of Macedonia appropriated after the Balkan wars see Proeva, *Modern Macedonian myth*, p. 172–177.

⁷⁶ Leo the Deacon, 10th century historian, Leonis Diaconi, *Historiae libri X*, ch. 8. See *Византијски извори*, III, p. 15.

between the Bulgarians (Mysoi) and the Macedonians is obvious. The syntagm *ta tôn Makedonôn* obviously refers to the population in Macedonia. In a letter, Theophylact of Ohrid in 1106 wrote of “*the landscapes of our Macedonia*”,⁷⁷ although at that time Ohrid was in the *theme* named Bulgarian, and the name Macedonia was given to the *theme* encompassing area around Edirne, which shows that, with the disappearance of the ancient Macedonian state, the name Macedonia did not disappear, as well as pointing to the continuity of the name Macedonia for the country. Regardless of the circumscriptions of the Byzantine administration, and subsequent changes in political control, two ancient names, that of the Hellenes and that of the Macedonians, have remained to this day as the name of modern peoples instead of the medieval names *Romaioi* and Slavs – presumably for the reason of their glorious past.⁷⁸ The land of Macedonia was still recognized as such by the peoples from Late Antiquity who lived there and by inhabitants who settled there in the Early Middle Ages and mingled with them, as well as by European travelers.

There are also numerous documents in which Macedonians are mentioned alongside other Balkan peoples. Here mention will be made of only a few documents issued from the chancellery of Leopold I (1658–1705), the Holy Roman Emperor of Hungary, Croatia and Bohemia, kept in the Military Archives of Vienna, Austria. With the written proclamation (*Litterae invitatoriae*) of 6 April 1690, Leopold I called on the Balkan peoples (from Albania, Serbia, Moesia, Bulgaria, Silistra, Illyria, Macedonia, Rascia) to join together to fight against the Ottomans while he was at war with France in the Netherlands and on the Rhine.⁷⁹ The second is a letter (dated 31 May 1690, Laxenburg, ad mandatum sac. caes. maiestatis proprium) allowing the people of Bulgaria, Serbia, Macedonia and Albania to fight against the Turks under the imperial flag.⁸⁰ In these documents, Macedonia is listed along with Bulgaria and Illyria, which disproves the claims about the alleged Bulgarian and Illyrian (presumed Albanian) character of Macedonia and its population in the Middle Ages. This distinction between Macedonians and Bulgarians in an official document is noteworthy.

In those circumstances, Leopold I, by letter dated 26 April 1690, placed the Macedonian people (*gens macedonica*) under the protection of the imperial crown with a recommendation to the military commanders not to attack the mentioned Macedonian people or to cause them any inconvenience, but to protect, defend, and assist them at all times and in every circumstance, as reads his letter: ... *praefetam gentem macedonicam universam in genere et specie in gratiam nostram caesarem ac regiam hisce clementer suscipimus at acceptamus, omnibus et singulis nostris officialibus bellicis benigne demandantes, ut repetitam gentem Macedonicam in nullo modo infest-*

⁷⁷ Византијски извори, III, p. 288 (letter no. 22).

⁷⁸ The general ethnological name related to the race of the Slavs (Sclaveni, Σκλαβοί) as a national name is preserved only for the Slavic tribes of the present-day Republic of Slovenia, and that of Slovakia, but many areas from the Baltics to the Balkans are still called S<c>lavonia.

⁷⁹ Костић, О постанку и значењу, p. 151 – 152; Радонић - Костић, Српске привилегије, pp. 25 – 27 (transcription), pp 89 – 90 (Serbo Croatian translation), Fig. I – IV and Fig. 7.

⁸⁰ Радонић, Прилози за историју, p. 56/7, no XXXIV. Bestallungen, no 2609.



EXTRACTUS PUNCTORUM PRIVILEGIALIUM.

UTPOTE:

P E R S O N A L I U M,

Realium, Protectionalium, ac Donationalium Venerabili Orientalis Ecclesiae Graeci Ritus Clero, totique Inclytæ Nationi Illyrico-Rascianæ per Divum olim Romanorum Imperatorem, & Hungariæ Regem LEOPOLDUM Annis 1690. 1691. & 1695. clementissime colatorum, JOSEPHUM vero 1706. & CAROLUM VI. 1713. & 1715. gloriosissime reminiscentiæ Romanorum Imperatores, & Hungariæ Reges, ac modo feliciter regnantem Cæsareo-Regiam Majestatem MARIAM THE-

RESIAM Anno 1743. benignissime confirmatorum, & medio Excellarum Cancelliarum Intimæ Aulicæ, Aulæ-Bellicæ, & Regiæ Hungarico-Aulicæ emanatorum.

Ad demissam supplicationem Beatissimi Patriarchæ, Metropolitæ, & Archi-Episcopi, Domini ARSENI JOANNOVICH, totiusque Cleri & Nationis Graeci Ritus per sequentes Deputatos & Plenipotentarios suos ad id specialiter delegatos, quippe PAULUM NEMADOVICH Episcopum tunc Carlostadiensem, jam nunc Archi-Episcopum & Metropolitam, & Sacratissimarum Cæsarearum, & Regiæ Apostolicæ Majestatum Consiliarium Intimum, JOANNEM GEORGIEVICH eo tum Archi-Diaconum Patriarchalem, nunc vero Episcopum Caransebesiensem, ARSENIUM WUICH Vice-Colonellum olim Confini Tybiscani, & ANDREAM ANDREOVICH eorum Domini Uffesiani Carloviczenis Administratorem modo emeritum Poliz Petrovaradiensis Præfectum Impetratorum.

Diploma Privilegiale Leopoldinum per Intimam Aulicam Cancellariam Anno 1690. expeditum continet sequentia.

imo. **N** OS LEOPOLDUS DEI Gratia Romanorum Imperator semper Augustus, Germaniæ, Hungariæ, ac Boheimæ Rex &c. Promittimus vobis per Universam Albaniam, Serviam, Mysiam, Bulgariam, Sillistriam, Illyriam, Macedoniam, Rasciam constitutis Populis, aliisque Provinciis a Regno Nostro Hungariæ dependentibus, Nobis qua Regi Hungariæ de Jure subjectis, & legitime subjiciendis, servata imprimis Religionis suæ, eligen-

Fig 1. Invitatory letter of Leopold I for the Balkan peoples.

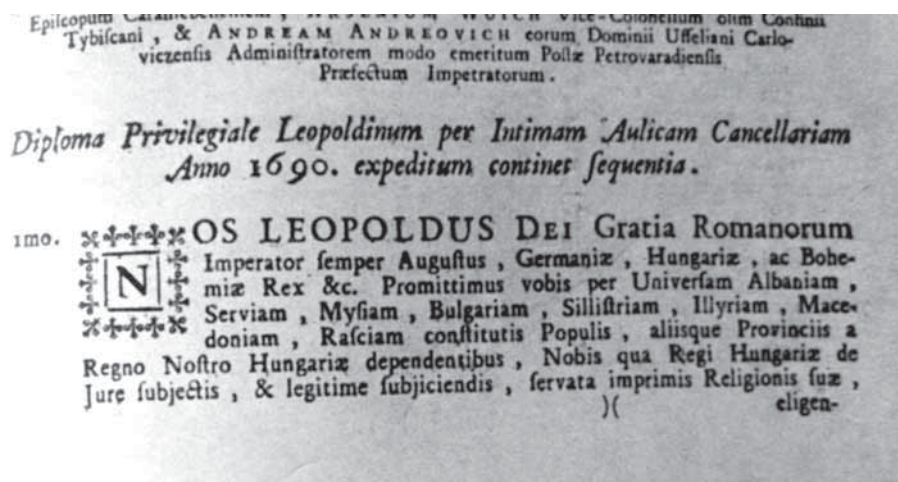


Fig. 1a. A detail of the Invitory letter

ent neque molestare prassumat.⁸¹ The letter is a response to a request made by two residents of Macedonia, Marko Kraida, whose birthplace was Kožani (*Marco Kraida Cosanae*),⁸² and Demetrius George Popovik (*Demetrium Georgium Popowik*), whose birthplace was Macedonian Salonikai (*in Saloniki macedonica natos*), both of whom were of “Macedonian descent” (*macedonica natos*). It follows from this letter that there is no doubt that they were ethnic Macedonians (which is actually obvious from the Slavic name of the applicant, although the other name is not completely legible), and not about some “geographical dwellers,” inhabitants of a geographical territory named Macedonia, as some authors contend to minimize this and other similar data.

Even more numerous are Russian documents mentioning Macedonians. On 3 March 1711 the Russian Tsar Peter I addressed a manifesto to: “all Christians of Greek and Roman law in Serbia, Slavonia, Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina” for the fight against the Turks.⁸³ The correspondence of the metropolitan bishop of Cetinje Vasilije Petrović with Russian officials from 1752 to 1759, has also been preserved, mentioning Macedonians (*Македонане*) in parallel with Albanians (*Алванези*), Bulgarians (*Болгари*), Serbians (*Серви*), Bosnians (*Боснаки*).⁸⁴

During the Russo-Turkish War of 1768–1774, the Russian Admiral G. T. Spiridonov, in his appeal to the Balkan peoples of 12 (23). IX. 1771, to fight for the liberation from Ottoman domination, addressed the Slavs, Greeks, Macedonians, Albanians and Roumeliotes,⁸⁵ which at the same time shows that the Macedonians

⁸¹ Protectionales pro gente Macedonica ad partes caesareae maiestatis transeuntes, exp. 26 apr 1690, Bestallungen, no 260, see Radonić, *Prilozi za istoriju*, p. 52 – 53, no XXXI.

⁸² Kožani, is a town in south-western Macedonia, now in north-western Greece.

⁸³ Костић, *Култ Петра Великог*, p. 92.

⁸⁴ Вуксан, *Преписка митрополита Василија*, letters nos. XXXI, XXXII, XXXVI, XXXVIII, LXII.

⁸⁵ Арш, *Некоторые соображения по поводу "Греческого проекта*, in Хитрова (ed), *Век Екатерины II*, p. 70.

tains ihm einzuführen selbst versprochen — in specie den
 Pal Deak dass er die erste person nach ihm sein solle,
 auch zu dem ende, des Pal Deaks schwester, des Budai
 Lazar hinterlassener wittwe die ehe versprochen habe.

Ратни Архив у Бечу, сент. 1702. Exp. Prot. No. 244.

XXXI.

Беч, 1690. 26. април.

Заштитно писмо цара Леополда I. за народ у Македонији, који
 се ставља под његову заштиту.

Leopoldus etc.

Notum hisce facimus exposuisse nobis ambos Macedones Marcum Craida (?) Cosanae et Demetrium Georgium Popowik in Saloniki macedonica natos, qualiter nam gens Macedonica intuitu justissimae causae nostrae et feruore atque zelo erga seruitia nostra serio cum affectu inclinet, ab immani turcico jugo in deuotionem nostram transeundi, dammodo gratia et protectione nostra secunda redderetur. Quare ex innata benignitate et qua nobis sanctaeque religioni christianae affectos protegendi ferimur clementia moti, praefatam gentem macedonicam universam in genere et specie in gratiam nostram caesaream ac regiam hisce clementer suscipimus et acceptamus, omnibus et singulis nostris officialibus bellicis benigne demandantes, ut repetitam gentem Macedonicam in nullo modo infestent neque molestare praesumant, verum pro viribus in omni occasione et occurrentia protegant, defendant et eidem hunc in finem assistant, eandemque de amplioribus gratiis nostris caesareis et regiis juribusque et libertatibus suis conservandis omnino securam et certam reddant, et casu quo aliqui ex eadem gente subductu praefatorum capitaneorum nostrorum signisque nostris

Fig. 2. Transcript of the Letter of protection of Leopold I for the Macedonian people (26 April 1690).

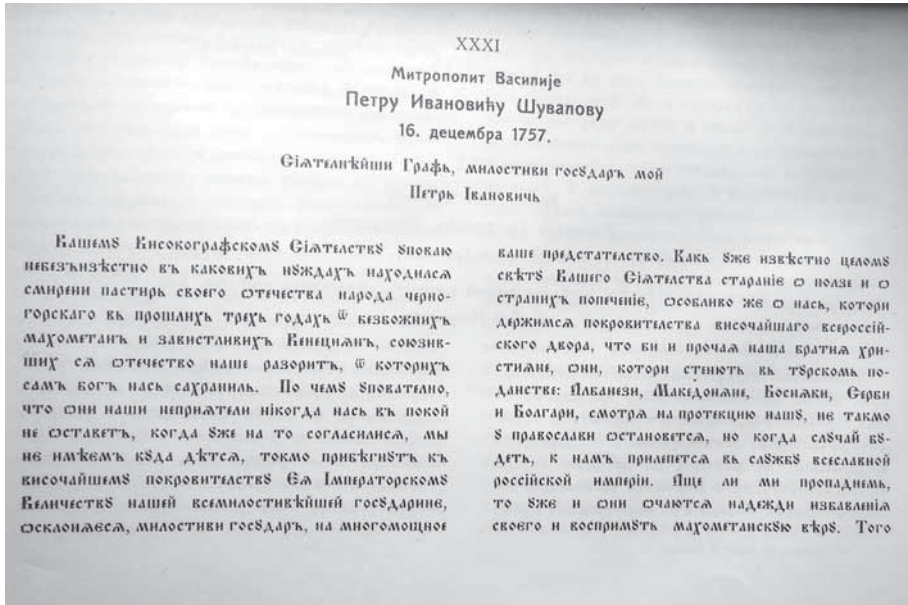


Fig. 3 Letter (16 December 1757) of the metropolitan bishop of Cetinje Vasilije Petrović.

were not equated with the Greeks and Albanians. According to the proposal of the Russian Empress Catherine II (1762–1796), in the letter of 10 (21). IX. 1782 addressed to the Austrian Emperor Joseph II for the establishment of an Empire of Balkanic peoples, to be named the Greek Empire, in which Bulgaria, Macedonia, and part of Albania were to be included too,⁸⁶ Macedonia was not identified with Bulgaria. Additionally, there are more data on the subject. After the fall of Macedonia under Ottoman rule, and especially after the unsuccessful uprisings of Skenderbeg in 1443–1479, and that of Karpoš in 1689, as well as after the Austro-Turkish war in 1740, the population emigrated en masse to the north (to Vojvodina, Austria-Hungary).⁸⁷ From there, due to the attempt to catholicize them and due to the abolition of the border land, the so-called *Vojna krajina*, the military border area defended by the Slavic settlers, these peoples relocated again, this time to the Orthodox East – Russia, especially in the time of Russian Empress Elisaveta Petrovna (1741–1761). Thus, a certain Johan Chorwath, a Hungarian form of the name “Jovan”, son of Samuel, who is recorded to have been a Cincar from Macedonia: „a

⁸⁶ Арш, Некоторые соображения по поводу "Греческого проекта в Хитрова (ed), *Век Екатерины II*, p. 74.

⁸⁷ In 1689 the Austrian General Silvio Piccolomini set out to conquer Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia in a counter-offensive against the Ottoman army; then the Karpoš Uprising broke out in the northern part of Macedonia, but it was suppressed the same year. Subsequently, a large number of Macedonians, along with the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija (KosMet) led by Patriarch Arsenij Charnoević, emigrated north of the Sava and the Danube. After that, an Albanian population from the mountainous parts of Malesia immigrated to these abandoned parts of KosMet and north-western Macedonia.

оной *Харватъ из Македониѣ цинцаръ*“⁸⁸ attained the rank of a major in the land militia of the Austrian army in Pomorišje.⁸⁹ Given the Russian spelling of the name *Харватъ*, which is not the same as Horvat, John or Jovan was very likely from (H) arvati, present-day Arvati.⁹⁰ After the peace concluded in 1699 in Karlovci between Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, and following the abolition of the military unit of Moriška and Potiška Vojna Krajina, Jovan Šamov Horvat sent a letter to Count (*graf*) Mikhail Petrovich Bestuzhev-Rumylin, the Russians ambassador to Austria, requesting permission for the Serbian, Macedonian, Bulgarian and Vlach peoples to move to Russia. Having received the approval letter (of 25 December 1751), he organized the migration and a large Orthodox, predominantly Slavic population, but also Albanians, Vlachs, Greeks, settled along the lower reaches of the Dnieper River.⁹¹ According to his plan and at the behest of Empress Elisaveta Petrovna, the settlements were built, the region was called Slavo-Serbia and New Serbia, the Serbs being the most numerous,⁹² but there are villages bearing Macedonian names (*Nov Polog, Skopsko selo, Makedonsko selo, Kumanovo*, etc.), which still exist in Ukraine,⁹³ and mobile regiments according to ethnicity: Serbian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, etc. The Macedonian regiment was formed on 10 May 1759 and existed until 28 June 1773; the soldiers were recorded as Macedonians.⁹⁴

The Macedonian regiment is listed as the sixth on the register with the names of the regiments. Each regiment had its own flag, seal, coat of arms, and uniform of a different color.⁹⁵ Only the Macedonian regiment had a coat of arms with a display of weapons: a helmet/cap and two long spears; the Macedonian soldiers, besides the curved sword, also carried spears.⁹⁶ It should be stressed that the weapon displayed on the coat of arms is not a weapon of that time, but a traditional one. Both spears are of the sarissa type, used by the ancient Macedonians. In addition, there is a hat placed on the spears that resembles a helmet with paragnatids shown raised up like the ancient Macedonians wore.

⁸⁸ Вуксан, Преписка митрополита Василија, p. 76, letter no LXII, from 11 December. 12. 1758.

⁸⁹ Mureş or originally Moris (Hungarian: Maros, Romanian: Mureş) is a river that originates in Transylvania, Romania. It flows into the river Tisza near Szeged in Hungary. The area along the river is called Pomorišje, and the name is related to medieval history.

⁹⁰ A village on the slopes of Baba Mountain in Dolna Prespa, the municipality of Resen. See Матковски, *Македонскиот полк*, p. 166.

⁹¹ On Macedonian settlers see Здравева, Преселници из Македоније, pp. 135 – 145.

⁹² Костић, *Насеља и порекло*, pp. 43 – 60.

⁹³ Skopivka, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast; Skopiivka, Kirovohrad Oblast; Makedonivka, Luhansk Oblast; Makedonivka, Donetsk Oblast; Makedony, Kyiv Oblast; Kumanivka, Kozeatın, Vinnytsia Oblast; Kumanivtsi, Vinnytsia Oblast.

⁹⁴ On the history of the Macedonian regiment see Матковски, *Македонскиот полк*, pp. 257–285, 249 (list). See review Troebst, *Südost Forschungen*, p. 386.

⁹⁵ Висковатов, *Историческое описание одежды*, p. 635.

⁹⁶ *Гербы Полевых и поселенных Гусарских полковъ с 1776–1783 г. in Висковатов, Историческое описание одежды*, part 13.



Fig. 4. Uniform of the Macedonian cavalry regiment (10 May 1759 until 28 June 1773).

Also the medieval European travelers who paint a portrait of the customs and political situation of the regions they passed through clearly distinguish Macedonia/Macedonians from Bulgaria/Bulgarians (and Greeks, Albanians). Bertrandon de La Broquière, who traveled in the Near East in 1432–1433, wrote in Middle French: « *Et quant je ouys cecy, il me sambla une chose bien merveilleuse et me souvint de la grant subgection en quoy le Turc tient l'empereur de Constantinoble et tous les Grecz, Macedoniens et Vulgaires et aussi le dispot de Rascie ...* »; « *Il y a aussi, comme j'ay dit par avant, beaucoup de Crestiens qui par force servent le Turc comme Grecz, Vulgaires, Macedoniens, Albanois, Esclavons, Rasciens et de Servie subjectz au dispot de Rascie et Wallaques, lesquelz, comme il m'a esté dit, s'ilz veoyent les Crestiens et par especial les François en grant puissance contre le Turc, ce seroient ceulx qui luy porteroient plus de dommaige et luy tourneroient le dos...* »⁹⁷

The use of different names, except for the Macedonians, is also found for the other Balkan peoples. Thus, the Bulgarians who started migrating to Romania from the Ottoman Empire in the 14th century, especially in the 16th century, were called Serbs, and in the 19th century the term *Bulgaro-Serb* or *Serbo-Bulgar(ian)* was used in Wallachia. These denominations were accepted by the settlers, as seen from their requests addressed to the state administrations, as well as from the toponyms whose integral part is - *srb*, - *srb*i. On the other hand, there are a small number

⁹⁷ *Voyage d'Outremer*, p. 216, 224 ; 199 (et par la Greece et puy entrasmes au pays de Macedoine); 208 (pays de Macedonie, de Vulgairie et de Rascie) ; 231 (la Vulgairie, Macedonie et la Greece).

of toponyms derived from the ethnonym Bulgari, a name which in the Romanian language took on the meaning of gardener, and even the verb *bulgari* was coined, meaning to cultivate vegetables.⁹⁸ In this case, too, the reason is obvious – in the period from the collapse of the medieval Bulgarian state in 1396 until the creation of the Bulgarian vassal principality in 1878, the ethnonym Bulgarians gradually lost its meaning to the benefit of the ethnonym Serbs, due to the role of the Serbian vassal principality created earlier (in 1815), as well as of Romania's relations with Serbia.

In medieval sources (Byzantine, Latin, Slavic) peoples are named either according to the state name, by the administrative unit of the Empire in which they were included, by the geographical name of the region where they lived, or by the names of ancient tribes that previously lived in these territories.

An obvious example of the use of “historical” names for the peoples of the Balkans are the Austrian documents of the 18th century, issued by the specially formed “Illyrian office”. In the first half of the 19th century, with the resurrected name of Illyricum, a prefecture created in Late Antiquity, the so-called “*Illyrian Movement*” was thus named. It lasted from 1830 to 1843 and was designed to work for the cultural and political unification of all southern Slavs and for the thesis that the Slavs are an indigenous people in this part. The Illyrian name was therefore synonymous with the South Slavic peoples! Under the name Illyrians, borrowed from historiography, all South Slavic peoples in the territory of the former prefecture of Illyricum were called “Illyrian people”, but this does not mean that they were ancient Illyrians!

When all is said and done, the question that many often ask is why in the end the name Macedonians and Macedonia prevailed, and not Slavs and *S<k>lavicia* / *S<k>lavinia* or Bulgarians and Bulgaria, names that were used in the past?

The name Slavs / *Slavinia* / *Slavicia* was gradually suppressed after the creation of the Bulgarian state (*kaghanate*) and, as can be seen from the writing of A. Delaculonche, persisted only in the southwestern part of Macedonia, (present-day north-western Greece) in both secular and ecclesiastical nomenclature until it was administratively replaced by the Greek authorities under the law of 1926.⁹⁹ The names Bulgaria, Bulgarians for Macedonia and Macedonians, on the other hand, could not survive because they were not ethnic but political denominations that disappeared with the disintegration of the prevailing political structure. This designation, however, remained longer, inter alia, due to the propaganda of the Bulgarian Church during Ottoman rule. Due to its geostrategic position, Macedonia remained under the rule of the Ottomans for the longest time and was constantly the target of the neighbors' propaganda (Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia). The later constitution of the Macedonian state and of the official codification of the vernacular Macedonian to a literary language, just after the Second World War, are by the neighbors intentionally interpreted as proof that the Macedonian identity and language are artificial.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Much more about it in Младенов, За етнонима сърби (sirbi), pp. 3 – 11.

⁹⁹ See Official Gazette of Greece, no. 332, of 21. XI. 1926 and footnote 75 above.

¹⁰⁰ On the reasons for the late codification of the language, and on the existence of national

The second, and very important reason for the longevity of the Bulgarian designation for Macedonians in the past is ecclesiastical and legal. Indeed, the territory of the Ohrid Archbishopric, which lasted until 1767, coincides with that of the Assenid Bulgarian state.¹⁰¹ Thus, in the Ottoman Empire, the religion was recognized, not the peoples – so after the Ottomans recognized the churches of the newly created, centrifugal principalities in the Balkans, all the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire were named according to their church affiliation: as Bulgarians exarchs (members of the Bulgarian Exarchate) or Greeks patriarchs (members of the Patriarchate of Constantinople),¹⁰² etc. Effectively, during the attempts of neighbors to appropriate Macedonia, the Macedonians more often sided with the Bulgarian than the Greek Church, which is understandable given that the Greek language was completely foreign and incomprehensible to them.

In the Ottoman period until the 19th century, i.e., until the creation of separate states, the designations Bulgarian and Greek had neither ethnic nor political significance. Thus the designation Bulgarians denoted the entire Slavic population in the Ottoman Empire,¹⁰³ while the designation Greek denoted all Orthodox Christians. Besides these basic meanings, both denominations also had a social significance: the Slavic population lived mainly in villages and engaged in agriculture, the Bulgarian denomination meaning peasant, while the Greek denomination was used for members of the trader class, who were mostly Greeks.¹⁰⁴

That the Macedonian population is not Bulgarian in the ethnic sense of the word can be seen from the written sources in which the language of the Pan-Slavic enlighteners, the holy brothers Sts. Cyril and Methodius (9th century), from Salonica,¹⁰⁵ is not called Bulgarian, as Bulgarian historians claim, but Slavonic i.e. *slava*, *slavonice lingua*.¹⁰⁶ It was the first codified Slavic language matching the speech of the Macedonian Slavs from the vicinity of Salonica, south Macedonia – homeland (*Urheimat*) of Slavic literacy. This Church Slavonic language, by impartial linguists, is rightly named as *Macedonic slavic*, or old Macedonian.¹⁰⁷ It is the Old Slavic language from the 9th century with which began the mass Christianization of the Slavic population not only in the Balkans but also in Eastern Europe, and the birth of Slavic literature. This literary Southern Slavic language became the *lingua franca* of all Slavic peoples until the 18th century.¹⁰⁸ Even in Romania, the Church Slavonic

identity in the 19th century among the present-day Macedonians, see Friedman, *Macedonian Language*, pp. 83–98. Reprinted in *Macedonian Review*, pp. 280 – 292.

¹⁰¹ See the details in P. Komatina, Појам Бугарске, p. 41 – 56.

¹⁰² Detailed processed by Минов, Бугарската пропаганда p. 208 – 222.

¹⁰³ Friedman, *Macedonian Language*, p. 84.

¹⁰⁴ Wilkinson, *Maps and Politics*, p. 147 (*Greek*), 148 (*Boulgarian*).

¹⁰⁵ *Salonica* (lat.), Σαλονίκη (Byzantine Greek), *Selânik* (turk.), Солун (modern Macedonian), Θεσσαλονίκη (modern Greek).

¹⁰⁶ *Gesta regum slavorum presbiteri Diocleatis*, 301, 304, 320, 393 – *slava lingua*, 327 – *slavonice lingua*.

¹⁰⁷ Mallory, Adams, *Encyclopaedia*, p. 301.

¹⁰⁸ In spite of this, in 2021, the Bulgarian Parliament shamelessly appropriated the Day of the Ppanslavic Educators – Holy Brothers Cyril and Methodius, May 24, declaring it a holiday of Bulgarian literature, education and culture.

language was not only used for worship, but also as a literary language until the 18th century. From 1862, the replacement of the Cyrillic alphabet with Latin began, and immediately afterwards (1870–1877) the forced Latinization, i.e., the cleansing from the Romanian language of Slavic words and the introduction of words of Latin origin at the expense of non-Latin words – most prominently Slavic, but also Greek, Turkish and other – was conducted by the Romanian Academy of Sciences in each newly published dictionary.¹⁰⁹ Over time, the modern Slavic literature developed from this Church Slavonic language, which can be seen from Church Slavonic sources adapted to the local spoken dialects, i.e. ancestral forms of the people for whom they were intended. Thus from the 11th/12th century there are Macedonian, Serbian, Bulgarian, Russian, Croatian and other redactions (recensions) depending on the author's native tongue. The creation of literacy in the Church Slavonic language prevented the assimilation of the Slavic peoples by neighbors who had strong state institutions (Byzantine in the south and German in the northeast) and, at the same time, enabled the creation and development of separate independent socio-cultural identities.

These examples show the intertwining of historical circumstances and therefore the destiny of the Balkan peoples throughout their history, from Antiquity to modern times and that the ethnic aspect in the Middle Ages presents a very complicated question that cannot be studied separated from each other. Also, it has been noted that the ethnic aspect in the Middle Ages is oversized and overemphasized. Namely, most historians approach the Middle Ages from the point of view of the national understandings of the 19th and 20th centuries. In particular, the imperialist understanding and attitude that has been influencing the interpretation of the history of the Balkan peoples is significant and potentially wrong in terms of true understanding of the ethnography, ethnonyms and cultural complexity of the Slavs. This should always be kept in mind when studying the history of the Balkan peoples in order to come to the correct conclusions.

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¹⁰⁹ Bogdan Oprea, *Relatinizarea limbii Române*, especially pp. 60–67. After the Second World War, under Soviet influence, a certain delatinization and “Slovenization” of the language took place.

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POVZETEK

O vladarskih nazivih in imenih balkanskih ljudstev od srednjega veka do našega časa – *Bulgari* (Bolgari), *Bulgarini/Bulgareis* (Bolgarinci / Bulgarejci)

Nade Proeva

Vprašanje pomena izrazov *Bulgari* (Bolgari) ter *Bulgarini/Bulgareis* (Bolgarinci/Bulgarejci) je v zgodovinskih raziskavah prejkone zanemarljivo. Pomanjkanje ali kar odsotnost tovrstnih raziskav je v prid trditvam makedonskih sosedov, ki so zlorabili v srednjem veku običajno prakso poimenovanja ljudstev po državni pripadnosti kot dokaz, da danes ne obstaja niti makedonski narod niti avtohtoni makedonski jezik. Makedonija je zaradi svoje geostrateške lege ostala najdlje pod osmansko oblastjo, poleg tega je bila ves čas tarča propagande svojih sosed (Bolgarija, Grčija, Srbija). Za Bolgare so današnji Makedonci dejansko Bolgari. Ključni argument za to trditev naj bi bilo dejstvo, da se v srednjeveških virih prebivalstvo Makedonije večinoma, nikakor pa ne zmeraj, označuje kot "Bolgari", po imenu države, ki je proti koncu 9. stoletja v svoj okvir zajela tudi celotno Makedonijo. To poimenovanje se je dlje obdržalo v času Otomanskega imperija, v katerem so prebivalstvo razločevali po verski in ne po etnični pripadnosti. Postopoma je ime Makedonija zatonilo v pozabo, prav tako so bila pozabljena tudi etnična imena njenih slovanskih plemen.

Območje Ohridske nadškofije, ki jo je ustanovil car Samuel (968–1014), je sovpadalo z območjem druge bolgarske države v času vlade dinastije Asenidov (1186–1395).

Po silovitem uporu v Makedoniji proti bizantinski oblasti, ki ga je sprožil leta 986 lokalni velikaš Samuel, se je v skoraj tri desetletja dolgi vojni izoblikovala država s središčem v Ohridu in Prespi in ne v tako imenovani Bolgariji (*Bulgaria poprie dicta*), ki se je razprostirala proti zahodu do Jadranskega morja (Drač), proti jugu v centralno Grčijo, na severu pa je mejila na Donavo. Samuel (976–1014) se je v času svoje dolge vlade oklical za cesarja Bolgarov, z namenom, da bi utrdil svojo vladarsko oblast. Sam naslov carja Bolgarov ni imel etničnega pomena ali etnične vsebine. Šele leta 1014 je bizantinski cesar Basileos II. (976–1025), ki se ga je zaradi njegove krvoločnosti prijel vzdevek "Bulgaroktonos" (ubijalec Bolgarov) zrušil Samuelovo državo. Glede vprašanja etničnosti je raziskovalec bolgarske zgodovine P. Stevenson zapisal: "*the practice of claiming the title of emperor of the Bulgarians, therefore, has no ethnic significance*".

To potrjujejo tudi drugi analogni primeri: bolgarski car Symeon 893–927) se je leta 925 razglasil za vladarja z naslovom *basileus*. Knez Konstantin Bodin iz Duklje na teritoriju Črne gore se je leta 1072 razglasil za bolgarskega carja in se preimenoval v Petra; Srbski car Štefan Uroš IV. Dušan (1331–1355) se je razglasil za carja Srbov in Makedoncev (Dušanov zakonik). Ti naslovi ne pomenijo, da so Bolgari postali *Romaioi* (Bizantinci) ali da so Dukljani postali Bolgari, niti ne pomeni, da so car Dušan in Srbi postali Makedonci.

Primeri izposojanja prejšnjih naslovov in državnih imen so poznani tudi v zahodni in centralni Evropi, ne samo na Balkanu. Vladarji nemške države iz dinastije Habsburžanov (1438–1740) so bili imenovani za cesarje "Svetega rimskega Imperija" kar pa ne pomeni, da je bilo prebivalstvo podobno kot v času cesarja Avgusta in njegovih naslednikov. Takšna praksa prisvajanja prejšnjega državnega izročila in poimenovanja ljudstva je bila običajna vse do nastanka modernih nacionalnih držav, saj v srednjem in novem veku do moderne dobe ni bilo naroda kot družbene kategorije, kot jo razumemo danes. Tako se je celotno prebivalstvo Vzhodnorimskega ali Bizantinskega cesarstva (395–1453) dokonca osmanske vladavine nad Balkanom imenovalo *Romaioi*. V 18. stoletju je bil v habsburškem cesarstvu ustanovljen ilirski urad, ki bi po naslovu sodeč ustrezal poznoantični Ilirski prefekturi; slednja je obsegala več kot dve tretjini Balkana in Podonavja. V prvi polovici 19. stoletja se je ustanovilo gibanje južnih in zahodnih Slovanov, ki se je imenovalo ilirsko gibanje; spet ilirsko ime samo po sebi ne pomeni, da bili Slovani stari Iliri!

Glede Makedoncev obstajajo dokumenti, ki omenjajo Makedonce poleg drugih balkanskih narodov: v korespondenci Leopolda I. (1658–1705), vladarja “Svetega rimskega imperija,” ki je vključevalo tudi Ogrske dežele, Hrvaško in Češke dežele. V pismu z datumom 26. april 1690 se nahaja odgovor na prošnjo dveh prosilcev, enega iz Kosane (?) in drugega iz Soluna, ki sta bila makedonskega porekla (*macedonica natos*). Dokument postavlja makedonsko ljudstvo (*gentem macedonicam*) pod cesarsko krono tj. zaščito. (slika 1); v razglasu (*Litterae invitatoriae*) z datumom 6. april 1690 se omenjajo pripadniki balkanskih narodov: iz Albanije, Srbije, Mezije (?), in Bolgarije; Srbi, Makedonci, Bolgarije Ilirije, in drugi., ki so se v času carice Elisavete Petrovne (1741–1761) naselili v Rusiji (!). Omenjajo se vasi, ki so nosile makedonska imena, kot na primer: (*Nov Polog, Skopsko selo, Makedonsko selo, Kumanovo* itd.); vojaki mobilnega polka so bili zapisani kot Makedonci.

Nekateri srednjeveški avtorji, tako grški kot latinski, so razlikovali zgodnje, “Prabolgare”, od makedonskih Slovanov, ki so jih po vključitvi v bolgarsko državo imenovali Bolgari. Anonimni dukljanski/dioklejski duhovnik Pop Dukljanin (*presbiter Diocleates*) je v svojih analih *Libellus Gothorum* ali *Regnum Sclavorum* iz XII. stoletja zapisal, da je bil Samuel cesar Bulgarincev/ (*Bulgarini*), medtem ko sta bila Peter in Simeon imenovana za cesarja Bolgarov (*Bulgari*), kar je pravilna ugotovitev: Peter je vladal v letih 927–969, njegov predhodnik Symeon pa v letih 893–927. V življenjepis svetega Klementa najdemo tudi razlikovanje med dvema populacijama: Βουλγαροι (Bolgari) in Βούλγαρες Bolgarejci), pri čemer se je slednji uporabljal za prebivalstvo v Makedoniji. V stari francoski Pesmi o Rolandu – *Chanson de Roland* (XI/XII stoletje) se poleg Bolgarov (*Bugre*) omenja tudi *Le gent Samuel* – Samuelovo ljudstvo, torej ljudstvo njegove države.

V starih bizantinskih kronikah se Makedonija imenuje *Sklavinia* ali *Sclavicia*, njeno prebivalstvo pa Slovani. Theophanes Homologetes Confessor (VII. stoletje) omenja Sklavinijo ločeno od Bolgarije. V vasi *Libyzasda* (Sv. Atos) so živeli Bolgari, ki so se imenovali Slovani “*Bulgari qui Sclavi apellantur*” (Sv. Gregorios Hagiorites, sredina XI. stoletja); ista sintagma rod Slovanov, ki se imenujejo Bolgari, je v obsežnem življenjepis sv. Klimenta Ohridskega. Očitno je, da je eno poimenovanje državnopravni znak, drugo pa njihovo narodnostno ime. Tudi ohridski nadškof Teofilakt, Grk z otoka Evia (Euboia) se je identificiral kot Bolgar, očitno kot državljani bolgarske države.

Staroslovanski jezik, ki se je uporabljal na območju Soluna v južni Makedoniji, njegovo govorno, pisno in literarno obliko sta priredila solunska brata sv. Ciril in sv. Metod, ki sta leta 863 začela z evangelizacijo med slovanskimi ljudstvi na Balkanu in v vzhodnem delu centralne Evrope (Moravska). V pisnih virih se jezik, ki sta ga uporabljala solunska brata in kasneje njuni učenci, označuje kot slovanski, nikakor ne kot bolgarski, Nepriistranski jezikoslovci označujejo ta jezik kot slovansko- makedonski ali kot staro makedonščino.

Z razvojem pismenosti v cerkvenoslovanskem jeziku v razdobju od XI–XII. stoletja so se izoblikovale makedonska, srbska, bolgarska, ruska, hrvaška in druge različice, odvisno od materinega jezika avtorja besedil. Obstoj cerkvenoslovanskega jezika z razvitim pismenstvom je preprečil asimilacijo slovanskih ljudstev s strani sosedov, ki so v tem času razvili močne državne tvorbe (kot sta Bizanc na vzhodnem Mediteranu in Karolinško cesarstvo srednji in zahodni Evropi in hkrati omogočili nastanek in razvoj ločenih samostojnih socialno-kulturnih identitet.

ISSN 0350-5774



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ZČ | Ljubljana | 77 | 2023 | št. 3-4 (168) | str. 239–491