SocioBrains

ETHNOSYMBOLISM AND NATIONAL STEREOTYPYNG

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ABSTRACT: The specific relationship between ethnicity and nation became an important issue for the main schools of research on nationalism, and the theoretical study of nationalism has recently provided the contextual framework within which this relationship has been analyzed. There is a tendency in the later sociological literature to consider these two approaches to ethnicity, nations and nationalism together.

KEY WORDS: ethnos, nation, nationalism, ethnocentrism, ethnosymbolism, transformation, theoretical construct, social categories, cultural continuity, social cohesion, national stereotypes and autostereotypes

Since the rise of the modernisation theory and later, the specific relationship between ethnicity and nation became an important issue for the main schools of research on nationalism, and the theoretical study of nationalism has recently provided the contextual framework within which this relationship has been analysed. Scholars and researchers are interested either in the mechanisms that create social cohesion among ethnically distinctive groups of people, a cohesion which attains a certain degree of intensity and makes these groups politically significant (sociologically oriented theories); or they examine the emerging loyalties to the state and their transformation from attachments to the previously existing ethnic formation (national integration theories). There is a tendency in the later sociological literature to consider these two approaches to ethnicity, nations and nationalism together (Brass 1974; Smith 1981; Eriksen 1993; Hutchinson, Smith 1994: 3-14, 47-48, 132-133, 160-161; Ibid., 1996: 3-16, 32-34, 133-134, 275-277; Guibernau, Rex 1997: 1-14.). Their combined application as a theoretical construct, and as a set of research trends, now seems the only reasonable context to discuss the problem in question. On ethnological level, these approaches have their theoretical significance in the establishment and a life-course of the other major concepts on ethnicity-nationalism and identity, those of *primordialism* and *modernism*, as well as in many other variations and combinations between them.

They all derive from a particular view on the phenomenon of ethnicity. One possibly appropriate definition that serves the analytical purposes of most empirical and some hypothetical situations, including the study of Balkan ethnicities and nations in time of their creation and early development, views ethnicity as a subjective category: as a state of mind or sense of identity that begins with objective cultural markers (set in the early stages of ethnic development), but which recognises that these markers are susceptible to disappearance and evolution, to change and variation, during time and according to the particular interests of the members of the ethnic formation, involved. This definition is designed to emphasise the cultural basis of ethnicity and therefore to distinguish this ethnic category from the other

social categories used in grouping peoples, such as race, gender, class, etc. The question to be answered at this level is: how does such a view on ethnicity affect the interpretation of ethnostereotypes or national images, their building and dynamics, and especially their relation to a nation-construction process?

BECAUSE of their complexity, it is difficult to fit national phenomena into accepted conceptualisations and established theories (for example, the nation as a mode of production, or the nation defined in class and economic terms, as a product of industrialisation, modernisation and progress, or of institutional and political conflicts). The problem becomes more complicated when trying to clarify the mechanisms involved in the formation of a nation and its identity including the ethno-images as psychological constructs accompanying the process of nation-creation. An approach labeled as *ethno-symbolism* was developed from the 1980s until recently, mostly by Anthony D.Smith and his followers, within the tradition of historical sociology. By stressing on cultural continuity from premodern times this approach could be applied also to the early national stereotypes and autostereotypes, and to the role of historically preserved and transferred cultural affiliations in their creation.

A.SMITH'S view on the relation between ethnicity and ethnic loyalties to a nation expressed in his book *The Ethnic Revival in the Modern World* (1981) was widely discussed in the literature of the 1980s and 1990s. The author modified here his earlier ideas about ethnocentrism, nationalism, and social change, in which he minimised the relationship between ethnicity, nation and national movements. In his 1981 analysis, he was concerned predominantly with the cultural and social roots of national identity and consciousness. Without directly emphasising the mechanisms and ways ethnicity participates in the creation of a nation, A.Smith obviously views the ethnic culture as main such mechanism. In this context, he concurs with E.Gellner, who noted that a nation could only arise when a high culture is established, when the population of an ethnic formation is relatively culturally homogenous and when there is a sufficiently wide-ranging stable education system, which allows all members of this formation the possibility of gaining access to that culture. The socio-cultural barriers at the nation-formation level are rendered unimportant by cultural homogenisation in modern industrial society (Gellner 1983: 57; 95). A.Smith argued further, that the past form of ethnicity is a site for such cultural homogeneity and continuity. In this 1981 work (and emphatically in his 1991 book on *National Identity*), he approached nations and nationalism as collective cultural phenomena. From this time and clearly in his later work, he interpreted national identity as a "multidimensial concept [that includes] a specific language, sentiments and symbolism." (Smith 1991: Intro., VII). He saw ethnic identity as grounded in the sense of sharing a common origin, regardless of common genealogical facts. His original idea was the suggestion that ethnic awareness has existed throughout history, but that it was given fresh impulse and strength during the eighteenth-century Age of Reason. The intelligentsia, the author believed, particularly educators, publishers, writers, etc, were the disseminators of what he called "ethnonational idea". Defending this thesis, he in fact comes close to the primordial view of ethnicity, while also pointing to the activating and mobilising role of intellectual elites in the ethnic reemergence. He evidently seeks to synthesise this main idea in the book's title, which suggests that preexisting ethnic cultural ties reappear again on a new stage during the European Enlightenment. The main attributes of the ethnicity in the particular meaning as an essence of "culturally dominant elements", include: 1. a collective proper name; 2. a myth of common ancestry; 3. shared historical memories; 4. one or more differentiating elements of common culture; 5. an association with a specific 'homeland'; and

6. a sense of solidarity among major sectors of the population (Smith 1986: Ch.2). Indeed, when A.Smith speaks of "ethnic revival", he finds evidence for it in past and present history, language and religion, economic change and social structures, historical mythologies, the legitimating of monarchs and states, and the relations between bureaucracies and intelligentsia and their interplay, etc.[1] The respective parts of his book are literal model-directions for the study of all Balkan ethnicities in general, also of each one in particular.

THE problem with this (and with all other) classifications of ethnic characteristics or attributes is that, distinguishing between the conditions (1) and factors (2) of an ethnic formation, and reaching to an all-valid versatile subordination of these characteristics, is not possible. For the researcher it is clear that they are in mutual interdependence, historically dinamic, and modifiable. Some of them are conditions for the creation of a group but also its markers, the results of that creation. For instance, the common territory is a necessary condition for the ethnicity, but the adopted, tightly inhabited and socially and economically organised territory is its marker. The characteristics of a group are evolving in the specific process of its establishment and development, are gaining wider meaning, and are slowly being transformed from factors for its creation into markers for its existence. That is to say, such classifications are not equally valid in the enormous variety of situations. Hence the belief that each empirical study should work out its own approach to ethnic characteristics deriving from the concrete historical and social context. However, this expanded enumeration by Smith (1981, 1986), however, reveals the wider meaning he gave to *ethnicity* and *ethnic* than was accepted in the early 1980s.

THE argument that nations and nationalism frequently (if not generally) arise out of a context of preexisting ethnic ties and sentiments is presented also in A.Smith's *The Ethnic Origins of the Nations* (1986). Here he pays detailed attention to the mechanisms of their construction and change. According to him, nations should be viewed as an almost ineffable symbolic construct, inspired with the power and drama of the religious and mythical. In this meaning, ethnic sentiment is a major element of the *conscience collective*; it is religion and mythology, which provide the driving force, the *mythomoteur,* of group identification and formation. Through the passion and symbolism of myth and shared customs and beliefs, A.Smith insists, nations must constitute or reconstitute their ethnicity. The complex of these "myths, memories, values and symbols" -- that is to say, the culture -- is the 'core' of ethnicity, and it is durable enough to sustain it through a long period until it emerges into the modern world (Smith 1986: 15-16). During the process of nation building, it is transmitted through and between the members of ethnic formation and down through the generations. This view closely resembles that of Y.Bromley, and this similarity is mentioned in some recent historiographical overviews (Banks 1996: 132; Tzaneva 2000: 5-25).

A.SMITH'S 'ethno-symbolic' perspective on ethnicity and nation, especially in its recently revised version (Smith 1996: 371-388), is well suited to the study of emerging identity, and the participating process of ethnostereotyping. This perspective deals with the continuity between premodern and modern ethnosocial establishments, and with the means by which, using ancient materials, modern nations are created and extend themselves in history. It presupposes that the cultural characteristics which are the content of ethnicity are built in their

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[1] At this point he followed in expanded manner the conception of his famous teacher H.Seton-Watson, who listed four factors in the process of formation of national consciousness in the following order: "State, Geography, Religion and Language" (Seton-Watson 1965: 4-10).

main cultural dimensions -- language, religion, traditions, and historical memories -- in the early stages of ethnogenesis, and developed later in accordance with the accelerating integration of the people involved. This is the reason why in the ancient world nations could not be established: the tribal and feudal fragmentation of territory, state, and other interests hindered rather than encouraged contact among groups and individuals who therefore could not share their language, memories or experiences, nor overcome the local or regional dimensions of their thinking to develop a sense of similarity and integration. National identity is not only an elite credo: the ideas of sameness and distinctiveness and the loyalties based on them must be shared both by a set of relatively isolated urban intellectuals and by peasants, who continue for a long time to identify either, with their region of birth or residence or with religion. The overcoming of clan or regional loyalties is a protracted process, made possible only through intensification of contacts among people, i.e. through increased social mobility.

THE crucial process that stands out here is *communication*. The ancient and medieval world lacked the necessary level of communications among the people from same ethnic group for them to begin identifying themselves in national categories. One specific example of this idea was provided by Lerner in the 1960s, when he revealed the role of literacy, empathy and the mass media in the process of the "achievement of mobility" by the ethnic group. This mobility, consisting of different kinds of communication, is necessary for the group to enter the political arena and to announce its political demands. Later K.Deutsch, pointing again to the role of communication, suggested that modernisation does not refer primarily to the entrance of large number of people into the political scene but to the creation through communication of a new knowledge of the world, a new set of aspirations, visions and statuses, together with an intensive network of shared memories and messages among the members of the group. These communications intensified the integration of the society; they eventually are the link between its economic status and the processes of ethnic formation. The character of the internal ties in a given society marks the level of its social, political, economic and cultural development; it also signifies the stage of ethnic development in this society, evidencing the readiness of ethnic group to enter into those relationships that characterise nationhood. What must be studied in this process is the growth of "loyalties transcending those of primary groups". This general view of K.Deutsch -- ethnicity as a network of communication that seeks to ascertain how culture, religion, language, and other *symbolic codes* bind the members of communities together and this connection is transferred through the generations, is still considered working. Nevertheless, if those loyalties only extend through time, what process functions as a vehicle for this transformation and how exactly does it occur? One possible thesis can be, that ethnicity participates in the modernisation process -- the construction of a nation, through some of its historically created loyalties that are being transformed from a latent into a manifest stage if are in accordance with the members' interests. The metamorphoses of these loyalties and affiliations, their contingent ascendancy and their role in national identity mark the stages in nation's creation. Further is an attempt to illustrate this process textually and contextually on the development of early Bulgarian ethnostereotypes.

DISPASSIONATE analysis of national identities in the Balkans during the XIX c. – time of their creation, is a problem of current interest because of the close similarities with contemporary processes there. Some scholars hold that we are facing today a reemergence of the XIX-century Balkan revival, of which ethnic renaissance is an inseparable part. Unlike that earlier revival, this modern renaissance of ethnic solidarity and sentiment, A. Smith suggests,

"has taken its cue from a romantic nationalism, [which] though often aggressive and fanatical, has tried to channel the passions and claims it unleashed into the creation of a new global political order based upon the 'nation-state'" (Smith 1981:XII). When speaking, writing or thinking of the Balkans, starting from the period of the Enlightenment, continuing through the whole XIX and XX c. and even stepping into the XXI c., such characteristics are most frequently in use: *constant turmoil, confrontation prevailed, balkanisation, doomed peninsula, political, ethnic and religious intolerance, wild backwardness, hatred spreaded among the Balkan peoples.* This way of thinking is of course based on the initial and further developed Balkan stereotypes themselves.

AN *ethnic stereotype* is a generalized representation of an ethnic group, composed of what are thought to be typical characteristics of its members. As it was correctly said in the introduction of one recent study on the subject: "Confronting and comparing different types of national stereotypes is a way the peninsula can be understood not only in historical but also in psychological perspective" (Stefanov, Robev 2001). The quoted study raises and discusses further interesting and all vivid questions like: "Were Bulgarians really always hating the Greeks, disliking the Turks, fond of the Serbs and mocking the Romanians? Did the Greeks abhor the Turks, demonstrate superiority over the Bulgarians, compromise the Serbs and neglect the Albanians? Were Albanians all the time feuding with the Serbs and admiring the Turks? Did the Romanians always try to lie on the Others? Were the Serbs as wild as they were imagined?" These portraits of the neighbors have always attracted scholarly attention, and gave reason to a huge number of studies on the field of Balkan stereotyping. The literature suggests generally, that the process of Balkan stereotyping is mainly determent by the past and current political situation, and the place and role the neighbors have in it (Banac 1993-1994: 173-182; Cvijic C.1991).

THIS paper argues instead, that before realizing the social stands of the own and neighboring peoples and before reflecting them in ethnic stereotypes, there were certain cultural backgrounds for creating the stereotypes, and also certain similarities in the general cultural patterns in the region, that emerged and evolved both as organised and ordered attempts to cope with the natural environment and to facilitate social interaction with other people. Shaped by the material conditions of life in the Balkans and created upon religious foundations and the medieval cultural legacy, these patterns were rooted in the existential realities of all Balkan peoples' life in that specific environment. One can suggest a certain List of traditional cultural pre-requisites for national stereotyping in the Balkans in XIX c., which is illustrated further (predominantly by Bulgarian empirical data) within a frame all valid for the Balkans.

IN all Balkan cultures at that time, *family and kin collective* provided every individual with ethnic identity and membership, made him a Bulgarian, a Serb, a Greek, etc. In the family and among relatives this individual learned the language, acquiring through it the specific way of thinking and behaving. With the ritual of Holy christening, the Bulgarian became an Eastern Orthodox Christian, and in the family, he accepted the main religious dogmas and norms, the obligations of Christian behaviour and prayer, its notions of good and evil, sin and remission. The ethnic model of life as knowledge about nature and society, morals and ideals, as ideas about social positions, duties and rights and as popular customs and rituals, were all acquired in the family and kin circle, ideally to be again reproduced and repeated in the child's own prospective family. The Bulgarian family and kindred network achieved the socialisation of the individual, transmitting through the complicated mechanism of traditions indispensable

notions and norms of behaviour for the individual and for collective existence. In the immediate family, the person took on his first obligatory prescriptions and roles, which decided his position both in this smallest social cell and larger ones. What was once said about the Greeks was also true about the Bulgarians and all Balkan peoples, that "as an individual, he belongs to nothing, is part of nothing and can join no group". By setting a model of primary, enduring life-long loyalties, the immediate family provided the necessary foundation for the creation and existence of loyalties to all other broader social institutions, beginning with the kin and ending with the state. All these more inclusive loyalties were established upon the same basis of feelings: of love and attachment, subordination and duty, and the submission of personal goals to the demands of group membership.

OTHER social institutions to which Bulgarians and all Balkan peoples attached mass loyalties in the XIX c. were the *neighbourhood and village communities*. Based initially on territorial and professional grounds, they also often included -- because of the traditions of settlement's organisation at that time and later -- close or distant kinsmen. Similar circumstances of material life were not the only unifying reason for membership: elements of common rationalised interest were also presented. Serving as mediators between the official Ottoman administration and the population, these local institutions became schools for adopting and experiencing a collective responsibility and collective defence of mutual interests. They also served an important function regulating relationships among the members; neighbourhood and village communities balanced and adjusted coexistence among people.

THE *professional organisations* with their role in public life, in education and culture, with their political activity provide an example of a mature social consciousness and allied behaviour among XIX-century Bulgarians. Through these organisations, the craftsman's group became a social force. In the conditions of late Bulgarian capitalistic development theirs was in fact the most advanced social group of interests (although not unique) that functioned -- accordingly to the principles of the *esnaf* -- as an autonomously, self governed and self controlled formal institution.

AS said, the Bulgarians in the nineteenth century transposed some elements of the loyalties they experienced in these group memberships into their newly developing ethnic images and stereotypes; the process mainly was the same among all the Balkan peoples, of course with the particularities due to their own historical and cultural differences. The continuities between the values sustained in those older institutions and the terms through which the now emerging states were popularly imagined can be seen in four main areas:

FIRST, the structure, role and social function of all the institutions mentioned were *subordinated to the group's interests*. Within them the population learned to live, think and act in the name of collective ideas and goals, now rationalised and placed above the interests of a single individual. Loyalty to an immediate family and to a family-kin was inherited as an obligation by a child at birth within a certain family group. From birth, many rituals were performed to transmit symbolically that loyalty to the newborn member; and throughout one's lifetime, at each stage of passage into a higher social level, the relevant rites included also elements that served to remind the person of his obligations and loyalties to a family and a kin. Some elements of these loyalties, undoubtedly *primordial* in their nature, were projected into the notion of Bulgarian ethnicity: the image of *common descent*, the image of home as a native place and homeland, the feeling of *togetherness* and *common fate* through the time, while some terms from the kin terminology were consistently used in the Bulgarian ethnic lexicon as

denotations for close relationship among the members of the ethnicity. In moral if not in political terms, Bulgarian ethnicity was the Bulgarian family and its obligatory solidarity writ large.

THE same feature also characterised neighbourship and village community. Loyalty was owed here, just as it was to one's family and kin: not to an abstract neighbourhood or village area, but to all its specific members. Here the level of members' voluntarism was higher than at the family level though participation was matter of circumstances as well as of choice; hence understanding a group's interests and the rational acceptance of a commitment to them was the principal motivation of the individual action of members. The same awareness of collective interests, responsibilities and joint objectives were the dominant motives for participation in the completely 'chosen' group memberships in the nineteenth century: the professional organisations of craftsmen in the towns, the *esnafi*. The obligations of group membership here were assumed consciously and voluntarily, as the exclusive result of personal understanding and acceptance. Educated to think in broader social categories, the members of the *esnaf* were psychologically and motivationally preadapted for membership and participation in the emerging new social formations based upon rationalised group interests, which relied on common characteristics.

SECOND, *all of the social institutions of traditional culture discussed above were to some degree authoritarian and hierarchical*. There was always a person or group of persons (husband-father, eldest son, eldest people, eldest craftsmen, prominent villagers, priest) chosen because of their qualities (age, experience, honesty, truthfulness, material wealth, professional knowledge) who took decisions and controlled their implementation. Beneath them, ordered according to the same criteria, were all the other members of the group. Membership in these groups entailed acceptance of the hierarchy and of one's status within it. The strong compulsory hierarchy, and obedience to the authority which Bulgarians were taught to respect and follow within the traditional cultural institutions, disciplined their sense of social order. Through the experience of group loyalties in these traditional social organisations, the Bulgarians were prepared to accept collective goals and group considerations on a higher level. They learned what it means to be part of a hierarchy, organised for one's own protection and defence; to be subordinated to an authority; to avoid personal preferences in the interests of the entire group; and make sacrifices in group's interest.

THIRD (and this is specific to the Bulgarian way of ethnostereotyping), yet contrary to their apparently authoritarian character, all these Bulgarian institutions were also *democratic,* open to influence, and within all of them the individual person was respected. This at least, was the tendency in the nineteenth century. Even in the most conservative unit, the family, changes occurred towards the democratisation of its ruling organs and in the strategy of its decision-making. Increasingly, the role of the individual was recognised and valued. An important sign of democratisation was the activation of people's participation in local affairs, in the family, and in village, town or professional groups. It was the place where the traditional local Bulgarian democracy resided.

FOURTH (also specific to the Bulgarians), each of those social institutions organised the well-known and familiar space for the people; it built a *barrier which outsiders had to cross when joining the group and the members when exiting it.* Characteristic of Bulgarian culture was the conditional character of these barriers. At each level, there were numerous possibilities for a 'foreigner' or 'stranger' to penetrate, in most cases regulated by tradition.

The perception of the 'foreigner' was milder than in other Balkan Eastern Orthodox cultures. As in all of them, Bulgarian standards of behaviour toward foreigners and the outside world were a function of their membership in their own traditional social organisations: other villages, other kin-groups, other communes, not to speak of people from other religions and ethnicities, were always viewed as differing from one's own, and possessing other characteristics. What differentiated Bulgarians was how these differing features were evaluated: Attitudes toward outsiders, presumed critical in Bulgarian culture, did not always lead to negative conclusions about the subjects of these characteristics. In some situations (especially in cases of a breakdown of a natural process of living and development: in birth rituals and folk medicine), the presence of a stranger was desirable; his role was sanctioned in favour to the group. This was strongly manifested in some specific forms of ritual kin-relations in the nineteenth century when a stranger, coming not from a neighbour village or town but from beyond the ethnic and religious frontiers, was considered suitable for acceptance in the 'own' group. Another manifestation of this cultural pattern of tolerance towards strangers was the evaluation of their moral and normative systems. Like all people, Bulgarians tended to assume that their values were universally applicable; the only true and right ones. However, this view was also open to compromises: for example, in the nineteenth century Bulgarian hospitality was frequently performed to accord with a stranger's rules and traditions, not those of the Bulgarian's own group. Though not numerous, such exceptions show that Bulgarian traditional culture at the time was not xenophobic one, providing some basis for reciprocal elements in national stereotyping as part of national identity.

BOTH the internally democratic and the non-xenophobic character of the discussed institutions were made possible because Bulgarian traditional culture included a strong sense of individual responsibility for behaviour; individual optation and qualification for group membership existed at all levels in social scale, except in the ascriptive *primary* groupings based upon real blood ties. This emphasis on individualism and individual dignity and choice did not contradict group loyalties, at least not to the same extent as in Greek society at that time. Many aspects of traditional common law viewed guilt as an individual responsibility, despite the overriding idea that all personal actions were encumbered, (i.e., protected and excused), by group membership. Even when errors and mistakes were not publicly admitted outside the group and a ritual and the group of a member accused of wrongdoing offered factual defence, the individual guilt within the group was still proclaimed and punished internally. Blame was not necessarily announced externally in all situations. The idea of the individual responsibility and guilt, which a member should feel for misconduct, coexisted with a sense of the unimpeachable reputation of the group and its members and of the shame, which individual wrongdoing brought to them all. We can make here some serious speculations about the building mechanisms of ethnic stereotypes among the different Balkan peoples, based upon the anthropological characteristics of their culture: mostly *shame-oriented* traditional culture of the Albanians and the Muslim population of the peninsula, the symbiosis between the *guild-* and *shame-oriented* cultural models that appear in some societies, in Bulgarian and partly in Greek one, etc. – one very promising approach in tracing the differences in image-building: Strong elements of both concepts were clearly present in these two cultures, making impossible any explanation of Bulgarian and Greek psychological features in simple terms of either shame or guilt, as was the case with some other Balkan peoples. Because of the presence of 'guilt'-impulses in Balkan East-Orthodox traditional cultures, social institutions were not as conservative as in neighbouring Muslim societies. Within certain limits, the individual had the right to express and defend in traditionally prescribed acceptable limits his own preferences,

even to the point of searching for new group identity. The same tendencies were also displayed in the XIX-century Bulgarian and Greek cultural and political organisations -- the urban communes, and the church-based educational and cultural organisations. As said, these organisations played a key role in the process of stereotype building as a creative element of national ideology and helped determine its characteristics.

BEFORE developing a sense of national belonging, the Balkan peoples experienced feelings of attachment and loyalty within their traditional cultures to various institutions. Loyalties to these social institutions of their traditional culture were linked directly, by the line of continuity, to the newer and broader collective categories up to the level of the nation and nation-state, where they created their self-image and the concept of their own cultural and psychological features. The Bulgarians in the XIX c. transposed and projected some elements of the loyalties they experienced in these group memberships into their national stereotypes. Loyalty to a neighbour at home was clearly transposed into the neighbouring people; they have developed proverbs as "The neighbour's dog is not barking at neighbours", "The neighbour is closer than relative" or "Wedding and burial are not possible without neighbours". Obviously, the neighbors in these last statements *are not behind the barrier, they do not have to cross it, to become "us"*. (But in another situation there are proverbs as "The neighbour's hen is bigger than our duck", "Lock the door for not to make your neighbour thief" or "The bad neighbour is doing harm through seven quarters", reflecting a somewhat negative view of the Other (Stefanov, Robev 2001).

IT is generally accepted, that the image of the Other is usually lacking objectivity, that empirical data is in all cases subjective, and thus the study of the tendencies in the formation of the national stereotypes has certain conditional character. To illustrate this, writings of some selected Bulgarian writers and activists during the time of nation-building in the XIX c. are examined (Aprilov 1968: 122-123; Bosvely 1968: 104-106; Karavelov 1966-1967: V. 5, 210-211; V. 6, 405-408; V. 8, 119-120, 172; Paisii 1972: 42-45; Rakovsky 1980: 46-47; Seliminsky 1979: 303-308; Slaveikov 1968-1971: V. 5, 254-257, 344-346; V.6, 49, 51-52, 340-341; Sofronii 1966: 22), that include subjective stereotyping opinions and views. What any one writer saw in external reality, including the ethnopsychological features of the ethnic groupings he observed, depended to a great extent on his own powers of observation, actual behaviour, education, and goals. Mostly compared to the Bulgarians (and present further) are the stereotyping portraits of the Greeks, Serbs and Turks.

ACCORDING to the writings studied, the ethnopsychological comparison between Bulgarians, Greeks and Turks was accomplished in different ways. The ethnopsychological portrait of the Turks was quite fragmentary. The authors limited themselves to conclusions about the character of the Turks' actions; their characteristics were described not abstractly but in actions -- they "kill unpunished", "burn books"; Turks took prisoners, tortured and violated Christians, called them "dishonoured" and "untruthful". Perceptions of Turks were shaped by their role in Bulgarian history. Not all sociocultural characteristics of the Turks featured in the picture Bulgarians formed of them, only those that had special salience in the contemporary historical context. Central here was the historical role of the Turks as destroyers of Bulgarian statehood and conquerors of the Bulgarian people. In opposition to those features, such Bulgarian characteristics as faithfulness to the religion and nationality are mentioned; in this way, the notion of a general difference between the conquerors and the suppressed was established in the minds of the latter. The negative attitude of the Bulgarians to the Turks was not directly declared; only a lack of friendly attitude is acknowledged. It is significant that the

psychological outlook of the Turks was less attractive to the Bulgarians than that of the Greeks. The position of the Turks as oppressors ethnically and religiously distinct from the Bulgarians left the Bulgarians only one way to define them, as "enemies". Their portrait was summarised, without any differences in social plan. A direct contrast between both nationalities may be seen in contemporary proverbs such as "The sick Bulgarian is drunk, the drunk Turk is sick"; or the attribution to the Turks of a general quality seen in opposition to those of the Bulgarians, such as "The Turk's friendship is to the knees" - i.e., they are not true friends. These view correlates directly with the characteristics given to the Turks in the folklore of the other Balkan peoples, as: "Uninvited visitor is worse than Turk", " If the wolves are in the forest, the Turks are in the village", etc. (Karavelov 1861: 10, 141).

THE ethnopsychological traits of the Bulgarians and the Greeks were compared at two levels, historical and contemporary. For the most of the Bulgarian writers quoted, the present day cultural and political confrontation of the two peoples had historical grounds. To identify them, the authors maintained an elemental-materialistic position, holding that the distinguishing psychological features of the peoples were determined by a concrete-historical causality. The Greek character was presented as containing mostly negative features, which were highlighted in contrast to those of the Bulgarians. Usually the characterological opposition was manifested through such mutually exclusive traits as: "simple-educated", "graceful-cruel", "fair-unfair", "pious-sly", etc. Sometimes the characteristics were given more detailed comments, for example that the Greeks are well educated but unfair and posses a predatory instinct, so that their culture brings more trouble than benefit - Paisii. To denote the Greek character, attributes with a negative nuance were usually involved, or else it was suggested that their positive features found negative expression in life. Such interpretations made possible the creation of false impressions about both one's own ethnicity and others that could lead to chauvinistic conclusions. But recognition and frequent mentioning in the sources of such Greek achievements as their high culture and contribution in the world civilisation -- as well as also their historical role in Bulgarian education and the positive evaluation of their attachment to the *patria* and compatriots -- show that these XIX-century Bulgarian authors did not maintain a consistently negative image of the Greeks as an ethnicity and young nation. Such a vision was more clear in the proverbs recorded in this time, where one specific feature was selected from the whole image of the Greeks, and, in accordance to the specifics of the genre, was absolutised and satirised: e.g. "Greek lies more than nine Gypsies", "Where Greek steps the grass stops growing", "Greek being a donkey cannot be ridden", "When the Greek lies, he does not believe himself" (Karavelov 1861: 23,113, etc.).

IN comparisons with the Turks, the Greeks were differentiated into distinct sub-groups. From the whole Greek community, those directly connected with their own spiritual and social oppression, the Greek-Phanariots, were detached. Some authors - V.Aprilov, P.Slavejkov, thought about this as temporary, something that would disappear with time. Also underlined was the lack of Bulgarian hatred for 'others' (ethnically foreign peoples), and their wish to develop mutual contacts of "historical and religious closeness". The absence of explicit ethnic prejudices in Bulgarian minds was reinforced by the lack of absolutisation of their own positive characteristics. They viewed themselves as possessing many positive features, but at the same time, it was also said, some did not love their homeland and their people, were limited in their social activity, and their social sense was underdeveloped. Bulgarians were susceptible to thinking of themselves in negative terms. From earlier periods the Bulgarians had a consciousness of their cultural supremacy, and of themselves and their

land as endowed with unique qualities; but this view was far from the Greeks' assumption that their land was the centre of the universe and they themselves were of a very special people When revealing the Bulgarian ethnopsychological self-portrait the most observers strived for objectivity. It was in any case obvious, that the evaluation of the own Bulgarian characteristic features, made by some prominent activists among them at that time, crossed each other with their idea what should those features be in the ideal case.

It is untrue to generalise that the stereotypical image of the Other was one and the same for the whole society, for every single social stratum in it. Although the image was from the period of the Enlightenment, formed mainly by the national intelligentsia and propaganda, it was never united and one-sided, moreover, it changed and differed through periods. The literature on stereotyping, however, shows that attitudes to outgroups are highly complex and differentiated. It has been suggested that the Bulgarian stereotyping can be viewed as "a strategy of successive approximations towards valuable generalizations in an environment of restricted information". It seems also true, that the process of image-building could be interpreted as a particular form of adaptive strategy for surviving and further developing, which is successful because it has its roots in the values of traditional culture. Studying the stereotypes, the ethnologists should aim at finding appropriate methods of analysis, which will take into account the social and political complexities and specifics, and not simplify them for the sake of model building and major generalizations.

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