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Conceptions of Decay in Czech and  
Bulgarian National Mythology

by

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Б б	B b	П п	P p
В в	V v	Р р	R r
Г г	G g	С с	S s
In Ukrainian and Belarusian	H h	Т т	T t
Г г	G g	Ѡ ѡ	Ć ć
Ґ ґ	Ġ ġ	У у	U u
Д д	D d	Ў ў	Ŭ ŭ
Ђ ђ	Đ đ	Ф ф	F f
Е е	E e	Х х	Kh kh
Є є	Ie ie	In Serbo-Croat and Macedonian	H h
Ё ё	E e	Ц ц	Ts ts
In Belarusian	Io io	In Serbo-Croat and Macedonian	C c
Ж ж	Zh zh	Ч ч	Ch ch
In Serbo-Croat	Ž ž	In Serbo-Croat and Macedonian	Č č
Ж ж	J j	Ш ш	Sh sh
З з	Z z	In Serbo-Croat and Macedonian	Š š
С с	Dz dz	Щ щ	Shch shch
И и	I i	In Bulgarian	Sht sht
In Ukrainian	Y y	Ъ ъ	'' '' *
І і	Ī ī	In Bulgarian	Ǻ ǻ *
In Ukrainian and Belarusian	I i	Ы ы	Y y
І і	Ī ī	Ь ь	' '
Й й	I i	Ѣ ѣ	Ie ie
Ј ј	J j	Э э	E e
К к	K k	Ю ю	Iu iu
К к	K k	Я я	Ia ia
Л л	L l	Ѧ ѧ	Ŭ ŭ
Ль ль	Lj lj	Ѣ ѣ	Iŭ iŭ
М м	M m	Ө ө	F f
Н н	n n	Ѵ ѵ	Y y
Нь нь	Nj nj		

\* Transliterated in middle of word.  
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Degeneration is an explanatory instrument that helps disperse and sustain fear.<sup>1</sup> Nineteenth-century national mythopoeia, the Czech and Bulgarian included, was focused on the creation of a sense of national belonging; in other words, it had to posit mythologies of generation. The idea that something needs to be created and preserved as a defence against others, for example other nations, however, suggests an immanent threat that it could be or had been subjected to infection, decay – or death. In this thesis I will focus on the employment of ideas of degeneration in the generation of the new myth of belonging to the Czech or Bulgarian nation. Notions of generation are dependent on notions of femininity, the conception, birth and preservation of the offspring; my argument is that femininity has always played the major role for generation and for degeneration, from the Book of Genesis (which provides a myth not only of generation but also of degeneration, fall and decay) onwards and that this had a profound impact on National Revivals.

The story of the expulsion from Eden gave birth to analogous stories. Humanity was inevitably degenerate, since it started with the expulsion of the Garden of Eden, and, eventually, as a result of reproduction by means of miscegenation, the coition of the sons of God and the daughters of men, humankind has been by nature in a state of degeneration. Notions of decay or of its approximate synonyms, fall, decline, degeneration, or decadence, were part and parcel of the idea of existence, especially corporeal existence.<sup>2</sup> The very idea of corporeality comprises the idea of the body's deterioration and

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<sup>1</sup> William Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture, and the Novel*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p.2.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Gilman informs us that the word 'decadence' was first used in the eleventh century in mediaeval Latin documents, Richard Gilman, *Decadence. The Strange Life of an Epithet*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1979, p.36. See also the 'Introduction' to Liz Constable, Matthew Potolsky and Denis Denisoff (eds), *Perennial Decay. On the Aesthetics & Politics of Decadence*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999, p.2.

decomposition.<sup>3</sup> That was the experience of every human individual. In late Classical Christian philosophy, the major attribute of the body was sin: it was the product of Original Sin and the source of further sins. With the beginning of modern scientific analysis during the Enlightenment the approach to degeneration changed and in the course of the nineteenth century this approach became distinctly medical. None the less, sexual deviation, which was the subject of some nationalist writing, while still approached generally theologically as heresy in the early nineteenth century, soon became a symptom of disease rather than an object of moral or theological disapprobation. Nineteenth-century thinking tended to concentrate on either the notion of the perfectibility of man or the inevitability of decay or on the apparent contradiction between perfectibility and decay. Writers imagined both the progress of humanity (thanks to advances in science) and humanity's decline: science and especially advances in medicine increased the survival of the unfit; advances in medicine meant removing people from the process of natural selection.

Although most studies of decay/degeneration start with the middle of the nineteenth century, Gilman in his fundamental work on 'decadence' traces the history of the concept from Antiquity.<sup>4</sup> He points out that seeing the present as worse compared to the past is a component of any myth of a Golden Age, and

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<sup>3</sup> For ideas of corporeality, although not ideas of decay, see Bryan Turner, *The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1984, pp.8-9.

<sup>4</sup> Even scholars who devote their studies to late nineteenth-century degenerationism refer to Gilman's work, see for example Charles Bernheimer, *Decadent Subjects: the Idea of Decadence in Art, Literature, Philosophy, and Culture of the Fin de siècle in Europe*, edited by T. Jefferson Kline and Naomi Schor, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002 or his entry 'Unknowing Decadence' in *Perennial Decay*, where apart from the already cited introductory essay, the following entries also draw their definition of decadence from Gilman: Marc A. Weiner, 'Opera and the Discourse of Decadence' and Liz Constable, ' "Ce Bazar intellectuel": Maurice Barrès, Decadent Masters and Nationalist Pupils'. On the whole, authors who deal with literature draw on Richard Gilman, while historians (Daniel Pick) or sociologists (Robert Nye) normally do not.

what we might facetiously call a moral gold-standard existed in all known early civilisations. Gilman draws on examples from Ancient Greece and Rome (Plato and Horace).<sup>5</sup> The Romans' ideas of decline, for example, contain some of the ideas that were later employed by nationalists. They also believed that contact with strangers could bring corruption.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the Romans created a cult of what was thought to be primarily Roman, free of foreign influence; this cult was mainly of the Roman past, but, as Gilman notices, instead of cherishing what had been valued, 'classical societies [...] found themselves valuing what had been preserved.'<sup>7</sup>

The Romans whose decline gave rise to later theories of decay, had a full-blown mythology of decay; this mythology was eventually copied by later scholars or men of letters, aiming to create their own national traditions. Hence, for the propagators of nationalism and of the concept of national decay, the destiny of Rome could serve as a paradigm.

The difference between the ideas of Classical and Christian (or, indeed, Muslim or Jewish) philosophers, was that in Antiquity there was no clear idea of a 'golden future': Classical philosophers nostalgically combined the past with the present and saw no refuge or hope in the future. Judaism, Islam and Christianity, on the other hand, had the idea of Eden as the previous perfect

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<sup>5</sup> Gilman, *Decadence*, pp.40-41, 45, 49.

<sup>6</sup> In Roman comedies, Gilman asserts, the Greeks were portrayed as people who had fallen due to their lack of morality; the Romans portrayed them as 'evil,' or even 'perverse': therefore contact with them could only bring corruption of the Romans' morality. The fall of the Greek empire was, then, attributed to the decline of the Greeks' morality. Contacts with other peoples, for example with those of Africa and the Near East, created among the Romans the belief that foreigners had strange habits concerning food and sexuality, and hence they believed that foreigners were effeminate. Christianity also came from East, and it, according to Gilman, was seen by the Romans as effeminate religion, because of its notions of forgiveness, humility and compliance. *Ibid*, p.48.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p.52.

stage of humanity. Judaism, Christianity and Islam also contained the idea of 'golden future', that is, of Heaven.<sup>8</sup>

### **1. Cycles of civilisations**

The concept of the 'fall' or 'decline' of ancient civilisations occupied the minds of early modern thinkers. Giovanni Battista Vico (1668-1744) and Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) explained the fall by the ageing of a society: they believed that society's life like the lives of human beings had different stages of maturity. Vico was of his age in that he believed that a divine purpose was evident in mankind's history and its various stages.<sup>9</sup> He believed in an ever increasing knowledge and understanding of the world, and that human beings initially unconsciously, but eventually consciously, determined their own history and the level of their mastery over nature.<sup>10</sup> Any such conception of progress contains a belief in perfectibility, and thus a belief in a 'golden future' in this world that is dependent upon the deeds of people in the present. Unlike the Ancient and modern thinkers, however, Vico rejected the idea of a 'Golden Age' in the past.<sup>11</sup> Vico and his disciple Herder believed that societies moved cyclically, from ages of poetry (Vico's term), typical for the unsophisticated imagination of simple, near barbarous societies, to stages of abstraction, possible only after society has achieved a certain stage of sophistication. If, however, people ceased to abide by their laws, they were in danger of reversing the process of progress and regressing into a stage of a 'second barbarism of reflection'. This meant that a society had lived to its maximum level and was doomed to crumble; from its ruins, however, a new society would start a

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p.40.

<sup>9</sup> Giovanni Battista Vico, quoted in Isaiah Berlin, *Vico and Herder. Two Studies in the History of Ideas*, London, Hogarth, 1976, pp.34-35.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p.35.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p.49.

movement out of barbarism into sophistication.<sup>12</sup> Although not seeing the decline of civilisations necessarily as bad, Vico's idea that a civilisation is doomed to decline and then to live through a stage of barbarism, echoed the pragmatic notion of the inevitability of decay employed by Ancient and mediaeval philosophers alike. The new element was the belief that the decay could be redeemed. The Old Testament idea of the connection between the deeds of the parents and the fates of the children underwent a transformation during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: while the foundation of the religious idea was that children were paying for their parents' sins with their suffering, in the eighteenth and nineteenth century the idea was that children biologically inherited the sins of their parents. That is, not the punishment, but the sin itself became hereditary. The moral was inseparable from the biological.

## **2. From cycles to ordering the races**

Theological thinking played a role during the Enlightenment, not only in the idea of redemption and a golden future, but also in race theory that emerged in the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>13</sup> Following Carl von Linné's (1707-78) idea of a chain of beings in 'God-given' order, other scholars attempted to order mankind. Enlightenment thinkers wrote both on the cyclical development of societies, and on the idea that certain parts of humanity must have remained fixed at an early state of the cycle while others had advanced. Hence the Enlightenment provided material for racial stereotyping. Although David Hume (1711-76) agreed with Vico and Herder that societies went through stages of childhood, youth and manhood, he expressed a conviction that the most flourishing period of a given society does not necessarily mean a period in

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.63.

<sup>13</sup> On the role of religion during the Enlightenment see Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment. The Rise of Modern Paganism* [1966], New York and London, Norton, 1995.



which the population will enjoy the best physical health and 'power of generation'. Thus he helps open the path to the myth of the noble savage, since he claims that physical strength and intellectual abilities do not necessarily go together.<sup>14</sup> Hume explains his belief that certain peoples are at a more primitive stage than the Whites by reference to the climatic conditions that they live under; hence his notion that 'negroes and in general all other species of men' as products of hot climates are 'naturally inferior to the whites.'<sup>15</sup>

The beginning of biology during the Enlightenment also led to thinking in racial terms.<sup>16</sup> For example, Georges Louis Leclerc Buffon (1707-88) drew analogies between human beings and the animal kingdom, and believed that if not cross-bred, human beings degenerate.<sup>17</sup> Taken a step further his work would constitute an early study on the breeding of races. He was the first to use the term 'degeneration' regarding the origins of species.<sup>18</sup> He also thought of degeneration as a process that would take place if precautions were not taken. Since eighteenth-century biologists and anthropologists wanted to find the reason for the difference between human 'races' they set out to establish whether all humanity had descended from one human couple. For those who believed in human descent from one couple, the monogenists, Whites were

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<sup>14</sup> David Hume, 'Negroes ... naturally inferior to the whites', an extract from 'Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations' (1748) reprinted in Emanuel Chukwudi Eze (ed.), *Race and the Enlightenment*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1997, p.30.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p.33.

<sup>16</sup> For a history of biological thought, see Emanuel Rádl, *The History of Biological Theories*, transl. from the German by E.J. Hatfield, London, Oxford University Press, 1930 or Andrew Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 2001. I will be using the terms 'biology' and 'anthropology' referring to the Enlightenment in accordance with the usage of my sources; under anthropology most scholars of the period mean physical anthropology or historical biology.

<sup>17</sup> Buffon's *Histoire naturelle* appeared between 1749 and 1804. He was a supporter of the theory of climate and believed that if Blacks were to live in Europe and eat European food, they would become white and civilised. Hannah Franziska Augstein, 'Introduction' to Augstein (ed.), *Race. The Origins of an Idea, 1760-1850*, Bristol, Thoemmes Press, 1996, p.xiv; hereafter Augstein, 'Introduction'. For Linné, see her 'Introduction' and Eze (ed.), *Race and the Enlightenment*, pp.10-15.

<sup>18</sup> Eugene Talbot, *Degeneracy. Its Causes, Signs, and Results*, London, Walter Scott, 1898, p.5.

placed on top of something similar to a pyramid of being.<sup>19</sup> Other 'races', according to these, had changed as a result of the different climatic conditions they lived under. Thus, to a degree, they had degenerated from the white state, but the process was not irreversible. Other monogenists, for example James Cowles Prichard (1786-1848) or John Hunter (1728-93), believed that the original couple was black; hence Whites demonstrate an advance in humanity since Creation, unlike Blacks, who could be seen either as left behind at an earlier stage or as degenerate.<sup>20</sup> Buffon influenced many early biologists, for example, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840), a thinker admired by the Czech Revivalists František Palacký (1798-1876) and Pavel Josef Šafařík (1795-1861), who, however, questioned Buffon's belief in hybridisation<sup>21</sup>; on the other hand, Eberhart August Wilhelm von Zimmermann (1743-1815) and John Hunter questioned his monogenism.<sup>22</sup> Kant and Herder could serve as an example how monogenists differed concerning the concept of race. While Kant defined the differences between 'races' and 'species', claiming that there were five races of men differing from each other by colour, Herder objected to the idea of separating people by colour.<sup>23</sup>

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) wrote on the different stages that societies went through. He perceived contemporary Germans to be in a state of decay, the reason for which, he

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<sup>19</sup> Augstein, 'Introduction', pp.xii ff; Nancy Stepan, 'Biology and Degeneration: Races and Proper Places', in J. Edward Chamberlin and Sander Gilman (eds), *Degeneration. The Dark Side of Progress*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1985, pp.99-100.

<sup>20</sup> Augstein, 'Introduction', p.xiv. Even Herder toys with the idea of the original man being black, since Blacks have taken most from the 'source of life, the Sun', Herder, 'Organization of the Peoples of Africa' extract from *Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind*, in Eze (ed.), *Race and the Enlightenment*, p.71.

<sup>21</sup> Robert B. Pynsent, *Literary History as Nation-Building: Czech Literary Historians 1790s-1890s*, TS, p.32.

<sup>22</sup> Augstein, 'Introduction', p.xvi.

<sup>23</sup> George Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution. A History of European Racism* (1978), New York, Fertig, 1997, pp.30-31, see also Eze (ed.), *Race and the Enlightenment*, pp.2-5, 38-78.

believed, lay in egoism. Because of egoism his contemporary Germans have lost their independence to Napoleon. And although in his earlier lectures, *Die Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters* (Characteristics of the Present Age, 1804-05), he expressed a belief that humanity's path is progress, his *Reden an die Deutsche Nation* (hereafter *Addresses*) give the impression that he had lost this belief; there, however, he pointed out the reasons for decay and the path to regeneration.<sup>24</sup> On the whole, since William Jones (1746-94) had discovered the link between Sanskrit and European languages in the 1780s, a new path for speculation on the potential decay of language was open.<sup>25</sup> Fichte developed a nostalgic comparison with a previous state of the German language in an original fashion: instead of praising past languages for their antiquity, he praised continuity. Not using their native German caused decay not only of the language, but also of the morality of individuals. The Germanic tribes who had chosen to use Latin, or neo-Latin, languages were, according to Fichte, suffering such linguistic, and therefore moral, decay.<sup>26</sup> The people who remained in the fatherland and spoke German throughout (and without resorting to French words in their German) are able to understand any concept in any language better than those who had not. The cure for degeneration that Fichte

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<sup>24</sup> 'At some point within the three years that have gone by since my interpretation of the present age that epoch [the third epoch according to his classification] has come to an end. At some point self-seeking [selfishness] has destroyed itself, because by its own complete development it has lost its self and the independence of that self; and since it would not voluntarily set itself any other aim but self, an external power has forced upon it another and a foreign purpose' Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation*, edited and introduced by George Armstrong Kelly, New York and Evanston, Harper & Row, 1968, p.1. In his *Characteristics* Fichte maintains that society goes through the following stages: 'original innocence (prehistory, linked to preconsciousness); an age of blind faith and obedience (corresponding roughly to history until the Enlightenment); "the age of complete sinfulness" (the present, but also, dialectically, "the epoch of liberation"); an age to come when reason will be grasped as "knowledge"; and a final age of "reason as art."' Kelly, 'Introduction', p.xx. One notices that decline is not at the end of the cycle, but in the middle: decline must be overcome in order that one reach the final stage.

<sup>25</sup> See Augstein, 'Introduction', p.xxi.

<sup>26</sup> Fichte, *Addresses*, pp.58-59.

proposed was education according to Pestalozzi's method, and in the mother tongue. The notion of establishing education in the mother tongue formed a part of the ideology of central and east European nationalisms. In Fichte's view, different nations could be seen as belonging to different linguistic stages in their national lives. Fichte's notion helped support the gradual reaction in the Habsburg Monarchy to the impact of the 1770s and 1780s centralising laws that imposed the German language for secondary education and all levels of bureaucracy.

Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769-1860) expressed views similar to Fichte's, except he was not concerned with language, but with the preservation of the national blood. In his *Geist der Zeit* (The Spirit of the Times, vol. I, 1805), Arndt claimed that a mixing of one's blood with that of a foreigner could bring only degeneration. Such was the case, for example, of the Habsburg dynasty, which had, in his view, degenerated because of 'frequent intermarriages and thenceforth no great man was produced by this family'. He ascribed degeneration not only to the mixing of blood, but also to wars, which cause the spilling of the nation's, and, as in the Spanish case, the nobility's, blood. This resulted in the 'degeneration' of the 'lofty spirit of the nation' into 'indifference and apathy', and thus 'the arts and the ancient splendour of the Spanish nation became gradually extinct'.<sup>27</sup> Degeneration may be followed either by regeneration or by extinction. In the case of Spain, Arndt claimed that one could still find non-degenerate individuals who resembled physically what the Spaniard used to be in the past, since:

If you trace back for two thousand years the physical and intellectual character of the Spanish nation, you will find that it ever was invariably the same. Where the Spaniards are

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<sup>27</sup> Ernst Moritz Arndt, *The Spirit of the Times*, translated by Peter Will, London, Thiselton, 1808, p.9.

not degenerate, there you will discover tall, slender, and nervous bodies, agile and strong at the same time. Their free and serious physiognomy displays a broad and lofty forehead, large black and sparkling eyes, a beautiful nose, and manly lips, with a lion's chin.<sup>28</sup>

Similar qualities of virility comported with new German nationalist ideas of what the qualities of a good German should be; and these were adopted by east European nationalisms.<sup>29</sup>

Arndt dealt with the two major elements in early race theory: the notion that racial difference could be explained by differences of environment, and the danger of miscegenation. Arndt's contribution to the so-called theory of climate comprised his claim that the cold climate in the north did not allow the Swedes to degenerate.<sup>30</sup> The cold climate, and Scandinavian founders, however, did not prevent the Russians from degenerating. Within three generations the blood of the founder of Rus', Rurik, was dissipated in Slav veins; the 'Russians' mixed with many other peoples, such as Slavs and Mongols.<sup>31</sup> Arndt was convinced that great nations never appeared out of a mixture of many tribes, although it was possible to have a great nation composed of two or three tribes. His evidence involved the claim that Rome and Byzantium had fallen after they allowed miscegenation in their cities. He supported his theory further by claiming that people in border areas were visibly more degenerate than the people from the heart of any state. Because of their 'mixture of heterogeneous parts' the Russians degenerated from their original Scandinavian stock, and that

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>29</sup> For German nationalism and manliness, see George Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Modern Europe*, New York, Fertig, 1985, passim. Mosse's *The Nationalisation of the Masses*, New York, Fertig, 1975 deals with a similar subject and discusses Arndt, although mainly as a poet.

<sup>30</sup> 'Their national character is still what it formerly was, and their climate and country do not permit them to degenerate.[...] This nation cannot be destroyed, neither must it be destroyed [...] The improvers of human race ever came from the south, but thence also issued its despoilers; whereas it was from the north that her avengers and deliverers proceeded.' Arndt, *The Spirit of the Times*, pp.15, 16. The cold climate of the Polar regions, in Hume's view, has caused the underdevelopment of its inhabitants, see Hume, 'Of National Characters' in Eze (ed.), *Race*, p.33.

<sup>31</sup> Arndt, *The Spirit of the Times*, p.19.

was apparent in their bodies and physiognomies. Although they had strong bodies, they were 'rarely nervous and athletic'; their heads were small, 'rarely having a lofty forehead'. Their frequent mixing of blood resulted in their difference from the rest of the Slavs, who, unlike the Russians, possess nervous energy.<sup>32</sup> Thus, Arndt blended race theory and anthropology with the notion of decay, creating a system in which a given climate could prove either detrimental to a nation (Russia) or beneficial (Sweden). Phrenology was established by the time he was writing, and he was developing phrenologists' theories, according to which one could draw conclusions about the character of a person on the basis of external characteristics.<sup>33</sup> That external characteristics revealed the morals of individuals and races was the basis of race theory. In addition, Arndt asserts that cities, and their mixed populations, are to be blamed for the fall of empires. All Arndt's notions on race, miscegenation and cities play a part in east European nationalisms, and in degeneration theory.<sup>34</sup>

The polygenists did not believe that humanity descended from the same couple and for that reason they could justify slavery. By the seventeenth century Isaac La Peyrère (1596-1676) had argued in his *Prae-Adamitae* that

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.32-35.

<sup>33</sup> For example, by then the Dutch anatomist Pieter Camper (1722-89) had asserted the importance of facial angle for judging the stage of advancement of human beings. Also Johann Gaspar Lavater (1741-1801) asserted the correspondence between the external features and moral qualities. Although even contemporary scientists did not entirely agree with his theory, and many of them rejected it, his views found resonance in popular thinking. See Augstein, 'Introduction', pp.xx-xi.

<sup>34</sup> Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802) had taken the ideas of degeneracy and heredity a step further: he argued that hereditary diseases are caused by excitability, or, by alcohol. Although caused by personal action (that is masturbation or drinking), the harm could be undone, if rules of hygiene were observed in everyday activities and in choice of spouse. His disciple Benjamin Rush, more or less accurately, asserted that epilepsy and insanity were hereditary. Talbot, *Degeneracy*, pp.7-8. The ideas of the phrenologist Franz Joseph Gall (1758-1828) and his disciple J.C. Spurzheim contributed towards the notion of the alterability of human faculties. Although these two scholars were convinced that mental qualities, including temperament, depended on the shape of the skull, they believed that the qualities of the brain could be changed by the exercise of virtue. An individual could change the quality of his/her brain and, it would be possible for this change to be inherited by his/her offspring. Robert A. Nye, 'Sociology: The Irony of Progress', in Chamberlin and Gilman (eds), *Degeneration*, p.51.

human beings existed before Adam, and that Cain, after being expelled by his people for the murder of his brother, had chosen his wife from these pre-Adamites. Blacks were descended from these pre-Adamites.<sup>35</sup> For polygenists different 'races' were different species. The polygenists' argument was based on the fact that, however much time Blacks spend in a European or North American climate, they do not change. The polygenists altered Buffon's definition of a species. For Buffon, if two individuals could produce fertile offspring they belonged to the same species. Since the offspring of mixed marriages between Blacks and Whites produced fertile offspring, the polygenists suggested that further generations would grow less and less fertile and extinguish themselves, unless the offspring of the mixed marriage did not cross back with a full-blooded member of one of the races.<sup>36</sup> To denote these mixed marriages nineteenth-century scholars used the term 'miscegenation'.<sup>37</sup>

In the nineteenth century conceptions of decay, decline and fall were gradually transformed into conceptions of degeneration. As Gilman and Chamberlin put it, degeneration was conceived of as the 'dark side of progress'. In theological terms, the degenerate were the damned, and the non-degenerate (the fittest) were the elect. Degeneration, as Gilman and Chamberlin observe, was conceived as having a dual nature, of a process and a force: degeneration causes further degeneration.<sup>38</sup> For biologists, some races were degenerate by virtue of not being of one specific race, that is, the White race. This view was held, for example, by Georges Cuvier (1796-1832), the doyen of French

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<sup>35</sup> Later, Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782) combined polygenism with the racial theory of climate. Augstein, 'Introduction', p.xiv.

<sup>36</sup> Stepan, 'Biology and Degeneration: Races and Proper Places', *passim*.

<sup>37</sup> Gilman, 'Sexology, Psychoanalysis, and Degeneration: From a Theory of Race to a Race to Theory', in Chamberlin and Gilman, *Degeneration*, p.77.

<sup>38</sup> Chamberlin and Gilman, 'Introduction', in Chamberlin and Gilman, *Degeneration*, p.xii.

biology. Cuvier believed that nothing could change the colour or the shape of the skull of the Blacks, and hence nothing could change their moral characteristics either.<sup>39</sup>

The nineteenth-century development of the racial theory of climate gave birth to the idea of an immanence of degeneracy within a given race. When members of that race were removed from their natural environment, they degenerated. Thus Blacks taken to America or Whites living in Africa were in danger of degeneration. The degeneration of the Blacks in America, especially of those freed from slavery, lay chiefly in their being particularly susceptible to venereal disease, because of their excessive sexual drive. They were also prone to criminality. The combination of inappropriate climate, disease and freedom that was unsuitable for them led some American scientists to believe that the freed Blacks would become extinct within a few generations.<sup>40</sup> By analogy, Whites who lived in Africa were in danger of degeneration because of the inappropriate climate. In *The Races of Europe* (1899) William Ripley (1867-1941) argued that moving to a southern climate resulted in alcoholism, which, in turn, caused 'sexual profligacy': the heat causes 'surexcitation of the sexual organs' and thus promiscuity. Parallel to their unnaturally increased sexual drive the Whites' fertility diminished, and biologists appealed for more Whites to go to regenerate those in the colonies.

Drawing on evolutionist views, nineteenth-century biologists argued that the more sophisticated an organism, the less adaptable it was. Hence, the Whites' inability to adapt was seen as evidence for their advanced stage of

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<sup>39</sup> Stepan, 'Biology and Degeneration: Races and Proper Places', pp.97-98.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p.101.



development, in comparison with the Mongols, or the Jews.<sup>41</sup> As Augstein points out, the Jews were used as an example supporting the opposing theories of those who supported the racial theory of climate and of those who rejected it. For the former, the Jews changed colour according to the place where they lived; for the latter, they never changed their appearance.<sup>42</sup>

Race theory had a major impact on the development of degeneration theory. One of the supposed 'fathers' of race theory, Joseph Arthur Gobineau (1816-82), was also one of the fathers of degenerationism. In his *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (1853) Gobineau derived his ideas of superior and inferior races from Gustav Klemm, who distinguished between 'active' and 'passive' races.<sup>43</sup> For Gobineau degeneration is synonymous with the pollution of blood.

The word *degenerate*, when applied to a people, means (as it ought to mean) that the people has no longer the same intrinsic value as it had before, because it has no longer the same blood in its veins, continual adulterations having gradually affected the quality of that blood. In other words, though the nation bears the name given by its founders, the name no longer connotes the same race; in fact, the man of a decadent time, the *degenerate* man properly so called, is a different being, from the racial point of view, from the heroes of the great ages. I agree that he still keeps something of their essence; but the more he degenerates the more attenuated does this 'something' become. The heterogeneous elements that henceforth prevail in him give him quite a different nationality – a very original one, no doubt, but such originality is not to be envied. He is only a very distant kinsman of those he still calls his ancestors. He, and his civilization with him, will certainly die on the day when the primordial race-unit is so broken up and swamped by the influx of foreign elements, that its effective qualities have no longer a sufficient freedom of action. It will not, of course, absolutely disappear, but it will in practice be so beaten down and enfeebled, that its power will be felt less and less as time goes on. It is at this point that all the results of degeneration will appear, and the process may be considered complete.<sup>44</sup>

The idea that a society's or an individual's body could be incurably infected regardless of the lack of apparent symptoms during the first generation, led to

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<sup>41</sup> Ripley, for example, claims that Teutons managed worse in the tropics than the other White peoples, such as Latins, or generally darker races. Within the French nation, moreover, there was a distinction of adaptability to the tropics: the Germanic northerners could not adapt well, while the Provençals adapted better, which in Ripley's view, was possibly due to their intermixture with Jews. *Ibid.*, p.104.

<sup>42</sup> Augstein, 'Introduction', p.xix.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xxxi. Léon Poliakov is clearly right that, regardless of the various suggestions for the possible sources Gobineau could have been using, he was writing about ideas that had been in circulation for a good while. See Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth. A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe*, translated by Edmund Howard, New York, Meridian, 1977, pp.233-34.

<sup>44</sup> Michael D. Biddis (ed.), *Gobineau. Selected Political Writings*, London, Cape, 1970, pp. 59-60.

the 'institutionalization of fear' which is what degeneration was according to Chamberlin and Gilman.<sup>45</sup> Fear of bodily or national infection lies behind Gobineau's work: he equated the nation to a body. The only difference between a nation and a human body Gobineau could see was that when a nation aged, it could not preserve its form, while individuals could. Gobineau's theory shares Arndt's basic idea that miscegenation is an agent of degeneration. Moreover, although Arndt made a lame attempt to appear unprejudiced towards individual nations, he was convinced that each nation had a different value and that some nations were incapable of achieving what others could.<sup>46</sup>

Writing after Arndt and before Gobineau, in 1822, William Lawrence wrote of intermarriage between Blacks and Whites as 'unnatural unions'. In his view, although such unions were beneficial for the Blacks, they caused the degeneration of the Whites. Moreover, Black blood 'stained' the Whites and even when the offspring crossed back with Whites beyond the point where one could recognise that there had been a mixing of blood, this mixing was apparent because of the distinctive smell of such offspring.<sup>47</sup> Thus, the person to whom the invention of degenerationism is normally ascribed, B.A. Morel, was merely

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<sup>45</sup> Chamberlin and Gilman, 'Introduction', p.xiv. They add that fear is contagious: 'It infected the air and poisoned the wells', *ibid*.

<sup>46</sup> 'I am not an advocate for that inhuman system of the specific difference inherent in various human races; yet, who can deny that certain nations by birth and organisation are nobler than others.' Arndt, *The Spirit of the Times*, p.32.

<sup>47</sup> Lawrence's views influenced other polygenists, such as Epiphalet Nott (1773-1866), who in 1843 claimed that the product of the union between Blacks and Whites was a hybrid, 'a degenerate, unnatural offspring, doomed by nature to work out its own destruction', since the offspring of mixed marriages had a much shorter life-span than was typical for either of the parents' 'species'; mulatto women were often less fertile than pure-race women, or infertile. Nott also believed that a perfect blend between two races was impossible, that the characteristics of one of the races would on occasion come out more distinctly. Stepan, 'Biology and Degeneration', pp.106-08. Nott's belief that more fertile offspring could be the result of the mixing of closer races, such as the darker Europeans and the Blacks, was shared by Meigs, whose work *Indigenous Races of the Earth* (1857) combined Nott's beliefs in the infertility of mulattos with Arndtian ideas of the cities as places where such unions were most frequent. Bénédict Augustin Morel's tract on degeneracy appeared in the same year as Meigs's work on races.

lending theoretical support to a view that had been in circulation for some time.

Morel asserts:

The clearest notion we can form from degeneracy is to regard it as a *morbid deviation from an original type*. This deviation, even if, at the outset, it was ever so slight, contained transmissible elements of such a nature that anyone bearing in him the germs becomes more and more incapable of fulfilling his functions in the world; and mental progress, already checked in his own person, finds itself menaced also in his descendants.<sup>48</sup>

Morel uses the imagery of Genesis in claiming that the degenerate bears the marks of his fall.<sup>49</sup> These marks are soon to be called stigmata by such as Moreau and Talbot.

As Gilman points out, Gobineau and Morel equated class and race and considered marriages between different classes to be as detrimental to the offspring as marriages between different races, considered them factors of degeneration.<sup>50</sup> Stepan suggests that race theory ‘was a science of boundaries between groups and the degenerations that threatened when those boundaries were transgressed’. Boundaries between classes were, she maintains, equally stable as those between races, and their crossing was doomed to be reflected in degeneration.<sup>51</sup>

In the course of the nineteenth century the parallels perceived between body and society became increasingly medicalised. In *Die Cellularpathologie in ihrer Begründung auf physiologische und pathologische Gewebelehre* (Cellular Pathology, 1859) Rudolf Virchow (1821-1902), for example, drew parallels between the interaction of cells in the body, on the one hand, and the interaction of citizens in a state, on the other. In state and body alike disease could have external causes, ‘irritation’, or internal causes, which he named

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<sup>48</sup> B.A. Morel, *Traité des Dégénérescences physiques, intellectuelles et morales de l'espèce humaine et des causes qui produisent ces variétés malades*, Paris, 1857, p.5., quoted in Max Nordau, *Degeneration*, London, Heinemann, 1895, p. 16.

<sup>49</sup> Gilman, ‘Sexology’ in Chamberlin and Gilman, *Degeneration*, p.73.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p.77.

<sup>51</sup> Stepan, ‘Biology and Degeneration’, p.98.

‘degeneration’.<sup>52</sup> Hence, the idea that organic bonds existed between the members of a society was no longer just a metaphor; it was supported by medical evidence.

In his *Origin of Species* (1859), Charles Darwin (1809-82), elaborated ideas of heredity and evolution. His views on the evolution of species, the survival of the fittest, and his assertion that phylogeny repeated ontogeny had enormous resonance among future degenerationists. His notions of natural selection and a sexual selection designed to produce healthy offspring, however, resembled conceptually the thought behind Robert Burton’s assertion two hundred years earlier, namely, that people show great concern when it is a question of choosing partners for their horses, but are not particularly careful when it is a question of their own offspring.<sup>53</sup> Although Darwin had considered atavism pathological, the actual conception of degeneration in animals was popularised largely by Edwin Ray Lankester’s (1847-1929) *Degeneration* (1879). Although eighteenth-century biologists had recognised that there were three different possibilities of development: evolution, stasis, or degeneration, Lankester was

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<sup>52</sup> Gilman, ‘Sexology’, p.75.

<sup>53</sup> ‘So many several ways are we plagued and punished for our fathers’ defaults; in so much that Fermelius truly saith: “It is the greatest part of our felicity to be well born, and it were happy for human kind, if only such parents as are sound of body and mind should be suffered to marry.” A husbandman will sow none but the best and choicest seed upon his land, he will not rear a bull or a horse, except he be right shapen in all parts or permit him to cover a mare, except he be well assured of his breed; we make choice of the best rams for our sheep, rear the neatest kine, and keep the best dogs, *quanto id diligentius in procreandis liberis observandum!* And how careful, then, should we be in begetting our children!’, Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, [6th edn, 1652, part i, sec ii, mem. i, sub. sec. vi], quoted in Talbot, *Degeneracy*, pp.3-4. As Talbot observes, there is little difference between his contemporary degenerationists and Burton. Burton also argues that in the past people used not to allow people with hereditary diseases to reproduce: men would be castrated, women would be kept away from men, sickly children would be killed. In the case that a woman with hereditary disease reproduced, she and her child would be buried alive. Talbot justly notices that the spreading of such stories of the past created the belief in the perfect primeval man, compared to whom contemporary men were degenerate (*ibid.*, pp.4-5). The comparison between the careful choice of a partner for a horse and the negligence towards the choice of partner for human beings is echoed in the Bulgarian Revival by Ivan Bogorov (1820-92) and in the Czech *fin-de-siècle* degenerationist thinker Břetislav Foustka (1862-1947).

the first to consider evolution and degeneration as polar opposites. Lankester defines degeneration as a 'gradual change of the structure in which the organism becomes adapted to *less* varied and *less* complex conditions of existence'.<sup>54</sup> Lankester drew parallels between the degeneration of organisms and the degeneration of Rome: because of their affluence, people in Rome became less and less able to look after themselves, they became less adapted to the society they lived in, and for this reason, became degenerate. Lankester's definition and his inclusion of ancient Rome into his biological analysis constitute an example of the movement of the 'degeneration' idea from a matter of belief to a matter of the scientifically demonstrable. None the less, even though degeneration could be scientifically demonstrated, it remained an evaluative concept. Lankester's definition appealed to the degenerationists' interpretation of the *Fin de siècle* as a period when, although external conditions were improving, people were less able to endure hardship than their predecessors, who had lived under natural conditions (that is, outside the city). This sounds like neo-Rousseauism, except that degeneration theorists medicalised and racialised Rousseau. Because of the advanced state of medical science, however, individuals who would not have survived in rural conditions, now survived; natural selection had been impeded and thus medicine was handicapping society's march towards ever greater progress. Břetislav Foustka, who wrote a critical history of the idea of degeneration, also complains that society's resources are devoted to the less worthy, and are therefore wasted; if

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<sup>54</sup> Lankester, *Degeneration*, London, Macmillan, 1879, p.32. Lankester also spoke of decay of language, although as a zoologist he was not convinced that decay of language can be any more than a metaphor.

the number of the less worthy decreased, resources could be focused on the worthy.<sup>55</sup>

Writing eighty years after Arndt, Max Nordau considered degeneration to be caused by elements similar to those described by Arndt: large cities and miscegenation, as well as the overstimulation of the senses that brings about neurosis and the deterioration of moral standards. Nordau was strongly influenced by Cesare Lombroso and acknowledged his theory that criminality was congenital and was distinguishable in human beings' facial features - an idea common in race theorists in that they, too, maintained that internal qualities were perceptible in external features.<sup>56</sup> Inspired by Nordau and Lombroso, Eugene Talbot set out to influence teachers and parents, by instructing them on how to recognise degeneracy. Naturally, he was also concerned with heredity: 'The guiding principle adopted has been that the factors of degeneracy affect in the ancestor the checks on excessive action acquired during the evolution of the race, thus producing a state of nervous exhaustion. The descendant in consequence is unable to reach the state of the ancestor thus nervously exhausted'.<sup>57</sup>

Towards the end of the century in *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886), Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1840-1902) reversed Virchow's views on the relation between man and society: Virchow used biology to draw conclusions about society, where Krafft-Ebing used observation of society to draw biological conclusions.<sup>58</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century, organicist thinking about

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<sup>55</sup> Břetislav Foustka, *Slabí v lidské společnosti. Ideály humanitní a degenerace národu*, Prague. Laichner, 1904, p.2.

<sup>56</sup> Nordau, *Degeneration*. The work is dedicated to Cesare Lombroso, the author's 'Dear and honoured Master'.

<sup>57</sup> Talbot, *Degeneracy*, pp.viii-ix.

<sup>58</sup> Gilman, 'Sexology', pp.77-78.

societies did not differ from Ancient organicist thinking. Krafft-Ebing is important for my argument not only on account of his analysis of deviation as an expression of degeneration, but also because he reaffirmed the notion of modesty as the biological norm for sexual behaviour; immodest sexuality was deviant, and it was typical of non-European races. Krafft-Ebing, then, made modesty a racial characteristic and because Islam allowed polygamy, also a religious characteristic; this represented his elaboration on the theory of climate.<sup>59</sup> Gilman observes that towards the end of the nineteenth century, degeneration was considered a (sexual) 'pathology that was specific to the Other'.<sup>60</sup> It differed according to how the 'Other' was defined – if the Other was a primitive society, degenerative sexual practices would normally include masturbation, homosexuality and promiscuity. If the 'Other' were degenerate members of the observer's (that is, advanced) society, their chief deviation/degenerate behaviour would most probably be prostitution.<sup>61</sup> Gilman argues that the concept of degeneration was transferred from the private sphere (masturbation) to the public (prostitution) with the work of Freud. Although this view is not shared by other scholars, a general trend of placing degenerative

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<sup>59</sup> 'The presence of shame in the manifestations and exercise of the sexual functions, and of modesty in the mutual relations between the sexes are the foundations of morality. Thence arises the desire to cover the nakedness ("and they saw they were naked") and to perform the act in private. The development of this grade of civilisation is furthered by the conditions of frigid climes which necessitate the protection of the whole body against the cold. It is an anthropological fact that modesty can be traced to much earlier periods among northern races.' Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, translated from the 10th German edition by F.J. Rebman, London, Rebman, 1901, pp.2-3. See also 'From the moment when woman was recognised the peer of man, when monogamy became the law, the Christian nations obtained a mental and material superiority over the polygamic races, and especially over Islam.', *ibid.*, p.5. Herder also writes on modesty as being naturally characteristic to higher organisms: among plants the genitalia are the flowers, but the more sophisticated the organism, the more concealed the genitalia are, as is the case for example with the elephants, which also seek a concealed place for coition, see Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, Wiesbaden, Fourier, 1985, p.79.

<sup>60</sup> Sander Gilman, 'Sexology', p.83. On the whole, within Western civilisation, the heterodox (for example, heretics) was normally considered sexually deviant.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p.87.

practices in the public sphere does occur in the course of the nineteenth century. This transformation corresponds with the general shift of attention from the degenerate to degeneration itself towards the end of the century.<sup>62</sup> Modern Czech and Bulgarian *belles-lettres* catch up with that trend only when it is already in the public sphere, in other words when Bulgarian and Czech culture have become self-confident.

Although it is impossible to claim with any certainty what influence the individual thinkers behind race and degeneration theory had upon the Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists, one can safely assume that even if Revivalists were not familiar with specific thinkers, most of them were familiar with the general intellectual atmosphere at the time. The purpose of this thesis is not so much to trace the influence of degeneration theory on the Czech and Bulgarian Revivals as to point out the similarity in mentality and way of argumentation between Revivalists and degeneration and race theorists. It is certain, for example, that both Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists knew the works of Herder. Among the Czech Revivalists, Jan Kollár (1793-1852) devoted some sonnets to Herder, and Jungmann (1773-1847) translated parts of his *Ideen* (although no translation was necessary for Czechs since all Revivalists were bilingual (Czech and German)).<sup>63</sup> The Bulgarian Revivalists could have known him either through Jungmann's translation, or through the translations in Russian which appeared

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<sup>62</sup> Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration. A European Disorder, c.1848-1918*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989, p.5.

<sup>63</sup> See Jan Kollár, *Slávy dcera*, Prague, Otto, 1903, (I,64) p.67, and (IV, 100), p.365. (*Slávy dcera* is a collection of sonnets that consists of a prelude and five cantos. Hereafter the Roman number will represent the number of the canto, and the Arabic number – the number of the sonnet in this edition.) See also Josef Jungmann, *Překlady*, vol.2, Prague, SNKLHU, 1958, pp.430-31. Jungmann romanticises Herder's image of the Slavs and thus his version immediately became popular among the Czech Revivalists. Although Kollár and Šafařík were far more concerned with the Slavs as a whole than with the Czechs or the Slavonic speakers of their native Upper Hungary (today's Slovakia), they were leading figures in the Czech language Revival.



in 1804, 1826, 1828, 1840 or in Serbian which came out in 1816, 1832, 1834.<sup>64</sup> Fichte's works were also available in Russian, since German philosophy did see an increased influence in Russia at the turn of the eighteenth to nineteenth century.<sup>65</sup> Arnaudov is among the very few authors to write of the impact of Herder and Arndt on the Bulgarian Revival, and he asserts that Bulgarian Revivalists were aware of their work through the mediation of Russian.<sup>66</sup> In brief, although it is probable that Bulgarian and Czech Revivalists and later nationalist writers did not know all works published on race or degeneration theory, their work was informed by the ideologies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

### 3. Degeneration and nationalism

The history of race theory and degeneration theory are, as we have seen, linked, and they have a strong impact on the three major ideologies that gained prevalence during the nineteenth century and shaped the twentieth: nationalism, feminism and socialism. Degeneration, in its broader meaning as a myth of decay, is a frequent component of nationalist ideologies. My argument here is

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<sup>64</sup> I draw my knowledge of the translations of Herder's *Ideen* from Peter Drews, *Herder und die Slaven. Materialien zur Wirkungsgeschichte bis Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Munich, Sagner, 1990, pp.223-24

<sup>65</sup> Pustarnakov argues that although French philosophy had always played an important role in Russia, at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries, German philosophy was much more influential than French. Works by Kant, Fichte, and Hegel were translated, and although Fichte may have not been the most popular among these philosophers he was popular enough to be used as the emblem of a philosopher in Pushkin's satire on philosophers. See W. F. Pustarnakov (ed.), *Filosofia Fikhte v Rossii*, St Petersburg, Russkii Khristianskiy gumanitarnyi institut, 2000, pp.13-14, 32.

<sup>66</sup> Normally, when Bulgarian scholars write about Herder and the Bulgarians (or the Slavs) they focus on what Herder knew about the Slavs. For example, Stefan Stanchev, 'Herder i slaviansvoto', *Ezik i literatura*, 1973 (1), pp.1-10 deals chiefly with what Herder knew about the Slavs. For the Bulgarians' knowledge of Herder and other German philosophers, see Mikhail Arnaudov, *Tvortsi na bǎlgarskoto vǎzrazhdane. Pǎrvi vǎzrozhdentsi*, Sofia, Nauka i izkustvo, 1969, pp.12-13, 49. Arnaudov also sees the influence of Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852), the originator of the idea of founding gymnast societies as a means of strengthening the body of the nation (through strengthening the bodies of the individuals). Jahn was popularised among the Czech-reading audience through Jungmann's translation of his work. See Jungmann, *Překlady*, vol.2, Prague, SNKLHU, 1958, pp.415-18.

influenced by Anthony D. Smith's suggestion that a successful national ideology contains a myth of a Golden Age (and possibly a myth of ethnic election), an idea of a long-term dwelling in a territory considered sacred, a myth of the decay of the nation (which he phrases as 'a yearning to recover and realize the spirit of one or more Golden Ages, epochs of communal heroism and creativity') and faith in the 'regenerative power of mass and individual sacrifice'.<sup>67</sup> Although I give examples of all four of these elements of national ideology in the Bulgarian and Czech National Revivals, my argument is that in creating their national myth, Bulgarians and Czechs needed the idea of decay, of a vision of the corruption of their national body, and, in both cases, national ideology was intended as a prophylaxis against possible further decay and any modifications of past infections. I will not be arguing that in order to create a sense of belonging to a nation one needs other nations.<sup>68</sup> Not the reflection of, but infection from, other nations, is the principle that will be under consideration here. I will be looking at the mutations of the idea of infection of the national body from general ideas of the ageing of bodies and societies to ideas of corruption arising from contact with other nations and the hereditary consequences of such contacts. I will draw attention to the employment of biological and medical concepts in Czech and Bulgarian nationalist writing. These concepts were not necessarily influenced by degeneration theory directly.

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<sup>67</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, p.255.

<sup>68</sup> This approach is known as 'transactionalist' and its supporters claim that a nation/group needs the concept of the 'Other' in order to define itself against this 'Other'. In theories of nationalism it is developed by scholars dealing with the creation and maintenance of borders between groups/nations, such as Frederick Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, Oslo, Oslo Universitetforlaget, 1994 and, more recently, Danielle Conversi, in his 'Reassessing Current Theories of Nationalism: Nationalism as Boundary Maintenance and Creation', in *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, vol.1 (1), Spring 1995, pp.73-85.

but appeared to be based on so similar an apprehension of society that they look forward to full-blown degenerationism.

#### **4. The context**

Under the terms 'corruption', 'degeneration' or 'decay' I will understand what has been succinctly delineated by J. Peter Euben: a process, that, if left to develop, will inevitably destroy the body in which it is developing, whether an individual human body, a people, or the body politic – this will result in the loss of the individual features of the body. Euben also employs the term decadence for corruption, and he defines decadence as 'a wasting away or wearing down [and therefore] a loss of health and power'. He brings, however, a new element into his definition: that decay changes the perception of time; the state of decay makes the person/society blighted and therefore perceives time as if it had been stopped, had slowed down or, indeed, sped up. The notion of the rhythm of time changing, or being artificially slowed down, plays a part in both Czech and Bulgarian National Revivals. Corruption also involves lack of integrity, which makes individuals and societies susceptible to alien influences and therefore infection. That is, as Euben recapitulates, 'Corruption is not only the absence of an element or principle; it may involve the presence of some foreign element that debases or undermines the whole.'<sup>69</sup>

Notions that difference is potentially infectious and can bring with it a lack of integrity, that is, degeneration, is one of the topics of Sander Gilman's writing. His approach to racial, psychological and sexual difference has been a

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<sup>69</sup> J. Peter Euben, 'Corruption' in Terrence Ball, James Farr and Russel L. Hanson (eds), *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989, p.222.

starting point for my thesis: he studies difference as pathology.<sup>70</sup> Mary Douglas's ideas of order have also had a considerable impact on the conception of this thesis, especially when I deal with blood and with cities. In her view pollution and corruption are both expressions of disorder, or of dirt: 'Dirt offends against order. Eliminating it is not a negative movement, but a positive effort to organise the environment'.<sup>71</sup> Corruption is internal dirt that may eventually manifest external symptoms. Gilman's definition of pathology as 'the line drawn between the good and the bad' is conceptually similar to Douglas's view.<sup>72</sup> Susan Sontag looks at illness as the opposite of order, as does Michel Foucault.<sup>73</sup> Daniel Pick has studied the idea of degeneration in France, Italy and England starting from the mid-nineteenth century and concentrating on the turn of the century. He derives the beginning of degeneration theory from the work of Morel. I find his observation that 'there were always "actual", material references at issue in the pronouncement of degeneration', particularly useful for my study of myths of decay; the same point, naturally, applies to other myths and stereotypes – they are always grounded in a reality of some sort. Pick continues that regardless of the 'reality' of degeneration, 'it was inextricably bound up with, and fundamentally transformed by, the pathologising language in which it was conceived'.<sup>74</sup> He also observes a

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<sup>70</sup> Here I think of Sander Gilman's *Difference and Pathology. Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race and Madness*, Ithaca, NY and London, Cornell University Press, 1985 and his *Freud, Race, and Gender*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1993.

<sup>71</sup> Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger. An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* [1966], London and New York, Routledge, 2000, p.2.

<sup>72</sup> Gilman, *Difference and Pathology*, p.23.

<sup>73</sup> 'Illness is the night-side of life, a more onerous citizenship. Everyone who is born holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of the well and in the kingdom of the sick.' Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors*, New York, Doubleday, n. d. [*Illness as Methaphor* first published 1978; *AIDS and Its Metaphors* first published 1989], p.3. Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization. A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* [French original, 1961], trans. by Richard Howard, New York, Vintage, 1988.

<sup>74</sup> Pick, *Faces of Degeneration*, p.15.

tendency among medical specialists to see degeneration as a 'self-reproducing force' and therefore 'not the effect but the cause of crime'.<sup>75</sup> Pick associates degeneration with racism, claiming that degeneration should be perceived only as a trend in the larger experience of imperialism.<sup>76</sup> *Fin-de-siècle* France and the ideas of criminality and deviance constitute the subject of works by Robert Nye and Eugen Weber. Pick and Nye both study not deviance itself, but the 'cultural perceptions of deviance'.<sup>77</sup> Nye looks at the contribution of ideas of deviance to a revival of French nationalism, which after 1900 found expression in the formation of sports societies. While Nye looks at concepts of national decline and analyses the motives for the politicisation of deviance, Weber looks at the opposite side of decadence – how the actual poverty of the French resulted in crime.<sup>78</sup> The collection of essays on degeneration edited by Chamberlin and Gilman is probably the most informative work on the subject, since it looks at degeneration from the points of view of a number of disciplines. Although there is quite an extensive literature on degeneration, authors tend, quite understandably, to concentrate on the *Fin de siècle*, looking mainly at examples from France, Austria, Italy, or, less commonly, the United Kingdom.

Conceptions of decay and decadence (and Decadence) in Czech literature, almost exclusively in the 1890s, have been studied by Robert Pynsent:<sup>79</sup> I have attempted to use an approach similar to his on earlier Czech primary sources

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<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p.21.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.*, pp.27ff. 37.

<sup>77</sup> Robert A. Nye, *Crime, Madness, and Politics in Modern France. The Medical Concept of National Decline*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1984.

<sup>78</sup> Eugen Weber, *France: Fin de siècle*, Cambridge and London, Harvard University Press, 1986.

<sup>79</sup> Robert B. Pynsent, *Questions of Identity. Czech and Slovak Ideas of Nationality and Personality*, Budapest and London, Central European University Press, 1994. R.B.Pynsent (ed.), *Decadence and Innovation : Austro-Hungarian Life and Art at the Turn of the Century*, London, Weidenfeld, 1989.

and to compare those sources with nineteenth-century Bulgarian sources. As far as the analysis of Czech national mythology is concerned, the work of Vladimír Macura has been my starting point.<sup>80</sup> Among Bulgarian literary critics, I have used Inna Peleva's ideas on transformations of food and resultant transformations of corporeality; one may assert that her study actually concerns decay, since she analyses the transformation of the body from an eating subject into an eaten object. Although apparently an adherent of Herderian nationalism, and therefore asserting the existence of a national body and consciousness (a trap that Peleva, too, falls into), and also rather too keen on the notion of 'tradition', Nikolai Aretov's work constitutes one of the most imaginative analyses of the Bulgarian Revival.<sup>81</sup> In summary, I will endeavour to apply the methods of scholars who have studied conceptions of deviation (or order) and decline to Czech and Bulgarian national mythology during the two Revivals.

## 5. National Revivals

The idea behind the National Revivals of the Bulgarians and the Czechs was that the nation had to be regenerated because of its unnatural, decayed state.<sup>82</sup> The concept 'National Revival' (*národní obrození*) contains within itself a

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<sup>80</sup> Vladimír Macura, *Znamení zrodu* [1983], 2nd expanded edn. Jinočany, H&H, 1995. Macura, *Český sen*, Prague, NLN, 1998.

<sup>81</sup> Inna Peleva, *Botev: Tialoto na natsionalizma*, Sofia, Kralitsa Mab, 1998. Nikolai Aretov, *Bălgarskoto vāzrazhdane i Evropa*, Sofia, Kralitsa Mab, 1995 and Aretov, *Natsionalna mitologia i natsionalna literatura*, Sofia, Kralitsa Mab, 2006. Desislava Lilova's *Vāzrozhdenskite znachenia na natsionalnoto ime*, Sofia, Prosveta, 2003 is the most recent work on Bulgarian nationalism and the establishment of national schooling: although well organised and argued, it does not touch on decay. An overview of the historiography of the Bulgarian Revival is available in Roumen Daskalov's *The Making of a Nation in the Balkans*, Budapest and New York, CEU Press, 2004.

<sup>82</sup> I will be using the phrasing National Revival rather than Renaissance, the term Hugh Agnew uses. One cannot agree with his assertion that renaissance is a more accurate translation of the word *obrození*, because Renaissance suggests that the nation had died, that is had not had a 'high' literature before c. the 1770s. Hugh LeCaine Agnew, *Origins of the Czech National Renaissance*, Pittsburgh and London, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993, pp.9-10, 262.

foundation myth.<sup>83</sup> Although in the Czech case the label ‘National Revival’ (*obrození* – where ‘revival’ is analogous to ‘religious revival’ or ‘moral revival’) was not used before the end of the nineteenth century (when Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850-1937) used it in *Česká otázka* [The Czech Question], 1895), the idea of resurrecting the nation out of its unnatural condition was evident from the end of the eighteenth century onwards.<sup>84</sup> Similarly, the term linked to the Counter-Reformation period (1620-1770s), the reason for the need for the Revival, ‘doba temna/temno’ ‘dark age/darkness’ was not used before Alois Jirásek’s (1851-1930) novel *Temno* (Darkness, 1916) and applied only sparingly by scholars thereafter, however frequent it may have become in common parlance; nevertheless, the concept of a period of decay, or falling from previous heights, was present from the last third of the eighteenth century until, at least, the 1970s.<sup>85</sup> *Verfall* (decay) was the concept that Josef Dobrovský (1753-1829) used in his *Geschichte der böhmischen Sprache und Litteratur* (History of the Czech Language and Literature, 1792).<sup>86</sup> Most authors who treated the period employed the word *úpadek* (decay, decline), the Czech translation of *Verfall*. The idea of the need for regeneration comprised the

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<sup>83</sup> Robert B. Pynsent, ‘Resurrections of the Czech National Revival’, *Central Europe*, I, 1, 2003, p. 77.

<sup>84</sup> According to Alexandr Stich, after Masaryk Czech literary historians like Arne Novák used the term *obrození* instead of *probuzení* (awakening), *znovuzrození* (rebirth) or *vzkříšení* (resurrection), which were the terms in use before then. See Jan Lehár et al. *Česká literatura od počátků k dnešku*, Prague, NLN, 1998, p.175.

<sup>85</sup> While in the Czech case a work of *belles-lettres*, *Temno* defined the period of re-Catholisation as a dark age, in the Bulgarian of the same year (1916) in a piece of historical writing, Dimităr Mishev uses the term ‘dark age’ to denote a similar period, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, because that was a period of decay under a double yoke, Turkish and Greek. Later Vasil Zlatarski uses ‘dark age’ for the same reasons. See Daskalov, *Kak se misli bǎlgarskoto vǎzrazhdane*, Sofia, Lik, 2002, p.152.

<sup>86</sup> I will be using the Czech translation of the second of Dobrovský’s literary histories (1792) by Benjamin Jedlička in Josef Dobrovský, *Dějiny české řeči i literatury* (History of Czech language and literature), Prague, Československý spisovatel, 1951. Dobrovský separates the development of Czech language and literature into six stages, the last of which is from 1620 to the present day, and it is the period for which Dobrovský uses the word *Verfall*.

concept of decay that was essential to the late Enlightenment and Romantic nationalists' ideology.

In the Bulgarian case, the work of the Sub-Carpathian Ruthene Iurii Venelin (1802-39), *Drevnie i nyneshnie Bolgare v politicheskom, istoricheskom i religioznom ikh otnoshenii k Rossiianam. Istoriko-kriticheskiia izyskaniia* (Past and present Bulgarians in their political, historical and historical relation to the Russians, 1829), provided probably the first use of the word 'rebirth' 'vǎzrazhdane' (which is the word Bulgarians still use to designate the Revival) in Bulgarian.<sup>87</sup> Roumen Daskalov notes that Vasil Aprilov (1789-1847) used this word thirteen years later in his appendix to *Dopolnenie k knige: Dennitsa novobolgarskago obrazovaniia* (Appendix to the book: Morning star of the new Bulgarian education, 1842).<sup>88</sup> Actually, Aprilov uses the word in the main body of his *Dennitsa novobolgarskago obrazovaniia*, that is, in 1841, without reference to Venelin. When Venelin states that there is no need to speak of modern Bulgarian literature, because it has not appeared yet, he uses the Russian 'vozrodit'sia' (Russian for emerging, being born).<sup>89</sup> Venelin's subsequent work, *Zaradi vozrozhdenie novoi bolgarskoi slovesnosti ili nauki* (On the emergence of the new Bulgarian letters or scholarship, 1838) was translated into Bulgarian by Mihail Kifalov (1783-1868) in 1842 and by N.

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<sup>87</sup> Regardless of his Subcarpathian descent, Venelin (born Georgi Hutsa) considered himself Russian; the Bulgarians he was in contact with also thought of him as a Russian. This is my reason for calling him a Russian, although he was born a Rusyn, was educated in Uzhgorod and Lemberg, and lived in Moscow. See Ivan Radev et al, *Entsiklopediia na bǎlgarskata vǎzrozhdenska literatura*, Veliko Tǎrnovo, Abagar, 1997, pp.160-62.

<sup>88</sup> Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation*, pp.11-12; the same work is available in Bulgarian, under the title *Kak se misli bǎlgarskoto vǎzrazhdane*, Sofia, Lik, 2002, here p.16.

<sup>89</sup> 'О Болгаской литературе нечего говорить, ибо она еще не возродилась' 'There is nothing to be said about Bulgarian literature, because it has not yet been born.' Iurii Venelin, *Drevnie i nyneshnie Bolgare v politicheskom, istoricheskom i religioznom ikh otnoshenii k Rossiianam. Istoriko-kriticheskiia izyskaniia*, Moscow, Universitetskaia tipografiia, 1829, p.19.



Daskalov Samokovets in 1860.<sup>90</sup> Both translators rendered Venelin's *vozrozhdenie* as 'vǎzrazhdane'; this, however, does not mean that they misunderstood Venelin's usage. It is more likely that they were introducing the Russian word into Bulgarian. Before them, Aprilov, for example, uses 'zarodish' or 'vǎzrazhdane' for the same concept, meaning emergence or appearance. 'Vǎzrazhdane' in the meaning of emergence was blended, however, with the word for resurrection, thus combining the ideas of emergence and rebirth that comprise the idea of Revival. This usage and meaning came into being during the period of Revival unlike in the Czech case, where only the concept of rebirth was present, but the modern term was the product of later ideologisation.

'Revival' similarly to its antonym, (moral) decay, was an evaluative term. 'Revival' was also a programme, something that needed to be achieved, and only those rare people who managed to achieve the ideal, were 'revived'.<sup>91</sup> This is illustrated, for example, in the following statement of Iliia Blǎskov (1839-1913), 'his words, his manners, his walk, his clothes, showed that he was revived and as the simple people say, he was not on his own.'<sup>92</sup> For Liuben Karavelov (1834-79) in his Novi Sad period, 'revival' (*vǎzrazhdane*) seems to mean the achievement of political independence. 'The young nation greets the spring, greets the new life and the new step in its historical revival,' writes Karavelov of the Serbs, after they have achieved their independence from the

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<sup>90</sup> Iurii Venelin, *Zaradi Vozrozhdenie novoi bolgarskoi Slovsenosti ili nauki* (On the emergence of the new Bulgarian letters and scholarship), translated into Bulgarian by Mihail Kifalov Tetevenets, Bucharest, Kopainig, 1842 and Venelin, *O poniknovaniia novobolgarskaiia pismenosti razsuzhdenie* (Reflections on the emergence of modern Bulgarian literature), 'bulgarianed' by H. Daskalov Samokovets, Constantinople, n.d. [1860].

<sup>91</sup> Daskalov, *Kak se misli bǎlgarskoto vǎzrazhdane*, p. 20.

<sup>92</sup> Iliia Blǎskov, *Zlochesta Krǎstinka* (Unfortunate Krǎstinka, 1870), in Iliia R. Blǎskov, *Povestvovania za Vǎzrozhdenskoto vreme. Izbrani proizvedeniia*, Sofia, BZNS, 1985, p.80.

Ottomans.<sup>93</sup> Thus, similarly to degeneration, revival was a term that denoted a quality, a process and a force.

## 6. The period covered

The Czech National Revival is commonly seen as having started in the 1770s and to have finished in 1848.<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, I will understand as a work belonging to the National Revival writings that are preoccupied with nation-building, whose main goal is not aesthetic but political. In certain cases, however, I will look at works that were conceived of in a non-nationalist way, but because of their reception and because the nationalist interpretations that attended them were considered not only scholarly, but also morally upright, and so were exploited by national propagandists. Here I am thinking of the works of Josef Dobrovský, who, although often not writing explicitly in support of a Czech national cause, was interpreted in nationalist terms. In other words, Dobrovský had chiefly a scholarly interest in Czech language and literature, but his studies nevertheless provided material for future nationalists. Dobrovský's providing Pelzel with an essay on correct prosody for the latter's grammar was, however, the act of someone promoting the writing of new literature in Czech. Influenced by Herder's views on the importance of language, Dobrovský codified the Czech language as he thought it should have been, that is, based on its printed form at the end of the sixteenth century: this in itself comprises an

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<sup>93</sup> Karavelov, however, continues with advice to the Serbs that they should become an example to the rest of the world and a pillar of civilisation. In this, regrettably, in Karavelov's view, they have a major obstacle. This obstacle is Vienna, which has sullied only the Serbs who live in the outer parts of Serbia, while central Serbia remains intact, healthy. The idea that the core of a nation could remain pure even if the periphery is corrupt is possibly borrowed from Arndt. Karavelov, *Kriva li e sãdbata?* (Is fate to be blamed?, 1869), in Karavelov, *Sãbrani sãchineniia*, vol.1, ed. by Docho Lekov, Sofia, Bãlgarski pisatel, 1984, pp.488-89.

<sup>94</sup> Or, as Pynsent points out, depending on the author, in the 1860s, or in 1918, or even 1945, see Pynsent, 'Ressurections', p.77.

idea of decay and nourishes future nationalist interpretations.<sup>95</sup> I will be looking mainly at works from the early nineteenth century, although I will be drawing examples from Dobrovský's *Geschichte der böhmischen Sprache und Litteratur* and from works by two much later authors, Josef Holeček (1871-1947) and Masaryk, essentially neo-Revivalist works that are concerned with Czechness and written at a time when degenerationism was in vogue. In both authors a sense of contemporary national decline is acute. I could have chosen, for example, Svatopluk Čech (1846-1908) or late Karolina Světlá (1830-99) for my neo-Revivalists, but the impact of Masaryk and Holeček's writing was far more lasting than that of the other neo-Revivalists – with the exception of Alois Jirásek (an historical novelist of little interest for my theme).

In the Bulgarian case, I will examine Paisii of Hilendar (1722-73), whose *Istoriia slavianobălgarska* (History of the Bulgarian Slavs, 1762) is frequently believed to mark the beginning of the Bulgarian National Revival. The pioneer of the view that the Bulgarian Revival began with Paisii was Marin Drinov (1838-1906), the first Bulgarian professional historian.<sup>96</sup> Many of the Revivalists themselves believed that the Revival had started with the 1820s reforms in the Ottoman Empire which allowed the Bulgarians to set up schooling in Bulgarian. This is why I take the 1820s as the beginning of the Revival, despite the fact that the focus of my thesis will be works from the 1830s onwards. The first Revivalist writers that I look at being the Neophyte of Hilendar-Bozveli (1775-1848), Vasil Aprilov, and Ivan Seliminski (1799-

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<sup>95</sup> In *Literary History as Nation-Building*, Pynsent argues that in periods of depression.

Dobrovský was nationalist, while, when not depressed, he was considerably less nationalist.

<sup>96</sup> In 1871 Drinov published in *Periodichesko spisanie* 'Otets Paisii, negovoto vreme, negovata istoriia i uchenitsite mu' (Father Paisii, his time, his history and his disciples) in which he asserted the importance of Paisii for the beginning of the Bulgarian Revival. See Marin Drinov, *Trudove po bălgarska i slavianska istoriia*, ed. by Vasil Zlatarski, Sofia, Dărzhavna pechatnitsa, 1909, pp.113-37.

1867). My reason for considering Paisii's work is that he was influential not at the time he wrote his *Istoriia*, not even after proto-Revivalists like Sofronii of Vratsa (1739-1813), copied it and read it to Bulgarian audiences. I do not wish to underestimate the influence Sofronii and his pupils had on the Bulgarian Revival, but it is certain that Paisii's history had an impact on the Bulgarian Revivalists only after it was published in 1844.<sup>97</sup> Because it was published over eighty years after it was written, it is likely that at the time it was published, *Istoriia* did not have any value as a source of information, but was rather a relic of the past that had an impact similar to the publication of newly discovered mediaeval texts or newly collected folklore.<sup>98</sup>

In the interwar period, the end date of the Revival was considered to be 1870, that is the achievement of an autocephalous church. Another frequent date to mark the end of the Revival, especially according to Marxist historians, is 1878, when the Bulgarians achieved independence after the Russo-Turkish

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<sup>97</sup> It was bound together with a history of the Bulgarian kings, and therefore became popularly known as *Tsarstvenik*, and published by the teacher, translator and believer in education in both Greek and Bulgarian Hristaki Pavlovich (1804-48) as *Tsarstvenik ili Istoriia bolgarskaia, koiato uchi ot gde sa Bolgare proizishli, kako sa kralevtstvovali, kako zhe tsarstvovali i kako tsarstvo svoe pogubili i pod igo popadnali, iz Mavrobira Latinskago, Baroniia, Ioanna Zonariia, Buefira Frantsuzkago, Teofana Grecheskago, Svetago Evtimii Tärnovskago, Svetago Dimitriia Rostovskago i drugih letopistsev sobrana*, Buda, 1844. See *Entsiklopediia*, pp.778-79. Daskalov, *Kak se misli*, pp.220-33. In his journalism Petko Slaveikov praises Paisii's work, especially in the cycle of stories 'Diado Decho' (Grandfather D., 1866) where Slaveikov creates a character, grandfather Decho, who is rich and has travelled around the world, but because he had read Paisii's history, he could never forget his nation. Diado Decho advises his audience on various subjects, not only on national questions. For example, he advocates personal hygiene, and tells his audience that they should wash every day if they want to be healthy. See Petko R. Slaveikov, *Sächineniia*, vol.4, ed. by Sonia Baeva, Petko Totev and Tsveta Undzhieva, Sofia, Bälgarski pisatel, 1979, pp.103-24.

<sup>98</sup> Paisii's *Istoriia* was eventually acknowledged to have comprised a national programme because of its appeal for the preservation of the language and Bulgarian ethnicity. The same appeals were made by the Czech Dalimil in the early fourteenth century, and Dalimil's work had a considerable impact on the writer's contemporaries and subsequent generations. Although Dalimil's chronicle was first published in 1620, the printing of its modernised version in 1786 inspired Czech Revivalists, as did the printing of Paisii's work: the printing of these two works, however, was an expression of the desire to revive the nation, that is, a Revivalist act. See R.B.Pynsent, 'Race, Estate and Downright Common Sense: Political and Social Comment in Pre-Hussite Czech Narrative Literature' in R.B.Pynsent, *Conceptions of Enemy. Three Essays on Czech and Slovak Literature*, Cambridge, Cambridge Associates, 1988, pp.3-30.

war.<sup>99</sup> I will not keep to these limits, since many authors who were writing during the 1860s and 1870s continued writing in the 1880s and 1890s without any marked change of style or nationalist ideology. The late nineteenth-century works of the Bulgarian 'classic' writer, Ivan Vazov (1850-1921) will be the last works that I discuss.<sup>100</sup> I consider Vazov a Revivalist because he wrote with the entirely Revivalist idea (similar to that of Jungmann and his disciples) of gap-filling, of producing in Bulgarian a sample of each genre and form employed in Western literature.<sup>101</sup>

Thus, in both the Czech and the Bulgarian case, I am looking at a period of roughly a century, although my aim will not be to create a comprehensive history of either the Bulgarian or the Czech Revival, but to treat a representative selection of works that have something telling to say about decay. My reason for concentrating on the nineteenth century regardless of the fact that the Czech Revival started earlier is that nationalism became a moral norm only in the early nineteenth century, although ideas on the centrality of nationality, some of them highly ideologised, had been in circulation before the nineteenth

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<sup>99</sup> This date, similarly to the start date of the Revival, was shifted according to what a particular author considered the most important feature of the Revival. For example, Mihail Arnaudov (1878-1978, a Ph.D. student of T.G. Masaryk's) shifted the end of the Revival to the end of the First World War, and eventually, to the end of the Second World War; his reasons in both cases were linked with the acquisition of territories by the Bulgarian state, territories which the propagandists claimed to be rightfully Bulgaria's own. Since the Communists could not glorify the acquisition of territories with the help of Hitler in the Second World War, they tended to use 1878 as the marker of the end of the Revival.

<sup>100</sup> As a matter of fact, even the *fin-de-siècle* writer Pencho Slaveikov believed that the Bulgarian nation had not been created yet, therefore, the National Revival could not have finished. He supports his view on the basis of the fact that the Bulgarians still do not have a shared psychology and unified language. Therefore, they are only a people, material for the creation of a nation. See Pencho Slaveikov, 'Ezik i pravopis' [previously unpublished manuscript], *Ezik i literatura*, 1, 1994, p.114, quoted in Galin Tihanov, 'Zhanrovo saznanie, klasichnost i natsionalna traditsiia', in Aleksandăr K'osev (ed.), *Bălgarskiiat kanon*, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1998, p.150.

<sup>101</sup> One can claim that Pencho Slaveikov had similar ideas, but the leading principle with him was aesthetic, not national propagandistic; this is my reason for not including his works.

century.<sup>102</sup> Since Jungmann it has been the convention to date the beginning of the Czech National Revival to 1774, the year German was introduced as the chief language of schooling in Austria. I consider Czech works almost exclusively from the first half of the nineteenth century onwards because the first period of the Revival (normally judged as running from 1774 to 1805 or 1806) saw little original nationalist literature in Czech other than translations following the Early Modern sub-genre of 'defences of the Language'; the significant late eighteenth-century nationalists were chiefly scholars writing in German. I begin with Jungmann and his disciples because Jungmann was the first modern writer to set down a nationalist programme for the regeneration of Czech and Czech literature. I do, however, mention the works from the eighteenth century by the founder of modern Czech journalism and author of popular fiction Matěj Václav Kramérius (1753-1808), and cannot avoid treating Dobrovský, who wrote very little in Czech, and much of whose writing falls in the eighteenth century. Hence one of the main differences between the Czech and the Bulgarian Revival is chronological: when the Czech Revival was at its

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<sup>102</sup> Here I am thinking of the violently anti-German doctrine of 'Dalimil' and other mediaeval writers who followed his line, see Pynsent, *Conceptions of Enemy*. Apart from that, there is a large quantity of literature on national ideology: some authors believe that the first case of nationalism was England in the sixteenth century (see, for example, Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism. Five Roads to Modernity*, Cambridge and London, Harvard University Press, 1992). National ideology began to prevail in the eighteenth century in Europe, in France and the Habsburg Empire as well (see David A. Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France. Inventing Nationalism, 1600-1800*, Cambridge and London, Harvard University Press, 2001, *passim*, for early French nationalism; Uli Linke, *Blood and Nation. The European Aesthetics of Race*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999, takes a fresh look at early German nationalism, that does not concentrate only on Herder or Fichte). I do not wish to enter the debate between modernists, who believe that nationalism was a typically modern phenomenon (Gellner, Anderson, Hobsbawm for example) and primordialists (Armstrong, Hastings) here, since much has already been written. Instead I will consider the nineteenth-century manifestations of national propaganda and their use of pre-modern patterns (hagiography is an obvious example), symbols and works (when referring to earlier histories, for example Dalimil or Pulkava, or the Forged Manuscripts that were believed to have long preceded both Dalimil and Pulkava, *Rukopis královédvorský* and *Rukopis zelenohorský* (RKZ)).

peak, the Bulgarian was just beginning, and it reached its peak between the 1860s and the 1880s.

By looking at a Czech and a Bulgarian author from the eighteenth century I do not imply that their work is comparable. While Dobrovský was an Enlightenment man, Paisii knew nothing of the Enlightenment.<sup>103</sup> The printing of books in Czech had never ceased since the first incunabulum from the 1460s, while Bulgarian Revivalist books started off by being printed abroad.<sup>104</sup> The reason for my considering Dobrovský and Paisii does not lie in any similarity between the two, but in the fact that they have long been regarded as corner-stone figures in their respective Revivals.

In comparing the two Revivals I shall attempt to point out the similarities in modes of thinking in one Balkan and one central European nationalism. Another reason for the comparison is the influence the Czech Revival had on

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<sup>103</sup> Daskalov argues that Paisii did not know any works of the Enlightenment, and although his writing might have been influenced very generally by the European Enlightenment, his work is specifically Balkan, *Kak se misli*, pp.67-68. For his compilation Paisii used the histories by Catholic abbot Mavro Urbini/Orbini (d.1614), *Il regno degli slavi hoggi corrottamente detti schiavoni*, (1601) and by Caesar Baronius (1538-1607), *Annales ecclesiastici a Christo nato ad annum 1198* (1588-1607, 12 volumes). Urbini's work was translated into Russian in 1722, and this is the translation that Paisii used. Baronius's was translated in 1687 and then in 1719. Both Baroque authors were also known by Serbian scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although Paisii did use their works as sources of knowledge, he did not quote them directly, changing the content of his history in accordance with what he wanted to communicate (see B. Penev, *Istoriia na novata bălgarska literatura*, vol.1, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1976, pp.512-24). Paisii also used mediaeval Bulgarian sources. Although Paisii spent some time in Austria, even authors who consider him a corner-stone figure of the Bulgarian Revival do not claim that he absorbed current trends. Arnaudov, for example, often claims that Paisii 'sensed' the trends in western Europe at the time; he does not, however, claim that Paisii had any knowledge of the Enlightenment. Thus he compares Paisii's work to that of an early modern Bulgarian writer, Joseph the Bearded (1682/3 - 1759), who used to compile so-called 'damaskini' in his contemporary Bulgarian language. See Mikhail Arnaudov, *Tvortsi na bălgarskoto vāzrazhdane. Pārvi vāzrozhdentsi*, Sofia, Nauka i izkustvo, Sofia, 1969, pp.7-61, especially p.29.

<sup>104</sup> The first Bulgarian Revivalist book to be printed is Sofronii's *Nedelnik* in 1806 in Rymnik, Russia. Before that Bulgarian Catholics published works in Rome in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Later Petār Beron (1799-1871) printed his *Bukvar s razlichni poucheniia* (Primer with various lessons, 1824) in Brasov. Bulgarian Revivalists printed their works in Brasov, Buda or Pest, Belgrade, Kraguevac, Moscow, Odessa, Leipzig and elsewhere. Only in the 1830s were Bulgarian printing presses established on Bulgarian territory, the first in Samokov (1835). Bulgarians continued printing abroad, although in some cases Bulgarian émigrés owned the printing press they were using abroad. See Radoslav Radev, 'Pechatarskoto delo prez vāzrazhdaneto', in *Entsiklopediia*, pp.560-63.

the Bulgarian: many Bulgarian Revivalists read the works of Czech Revivalists, either because they were educated in Prague or Vienna (for example, Ivan Shopov), or because the ideas of the Czech Revivalists were popular in Russia, where a large proportion of the Bulgarian Revivalists were educated. Pavel Josef Šafařík's and Josef Kajetán Tyl's (1808-56) works were particularly popular among Bulgarian Revivalists. Marin Drinov, for example, uses Šafařík's *Slovanské starožitnosti* and the first Bulgarian playwright, Dobri Voinikov, was influenced by Tyl and even translated and bulgarianised Tyl's song 'Kde domov můj' (Where is my home?) from the play *Fidlovačka* (first performed 1834, published 1877), the song which was to become the Czech national anthem. Šafařík's work was known to Venelin, who decided to prove that the Bulgarians were Slavs, opposing Šafařík's opinion that they were Tatars.<sup>105</sup> As is clear from the full title of *Drevnie i nyneshnie Bolgare*, Venelin's work is intended to prove the links between the Bulgarians and the Russians. This could serve as evidence for one of the major differences between the Bulgarian and Czech Revival: while the Bulgarian Revival was initiated abroad and many Revival works were subsequently written abroad, the Czech Revival was home-grown, unless one discounts Upper Hungary.

## 7. Sources

I will concentrate on the authors I consider most influential during the Revival, although I omit a few who did have some influence either because they expressed similar ideas to those expressed earlier by other Revivalists, or because they were not concerned with matters of decay. I will be looking at

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<sup>105</sup> Šafařík claims that the Slavs have been absorbed by the Uralo-Finno-Ugric (*uralskočudský*) Bulgarians, who were not Slavs. See Šafařík, *Slovanské starožitnosti*, vol.2, Prague, Tempský, 1863, pp.160ff. He does, however, refer to the result of the mixture between the Ural and Slav tribes as 'Bulgarian Slavs'.



works of literature in the broadest sense, *belles-lettres*, journalism and historical works. I am not concerned with literary history or criticism; instead I will use literature as a source of ideas and ideology.

I consider works that treat the contamination or infection of the national body in four respects: the infection or contamination of the nation's blood, of language, religion and morals. Some authors, such as the Slovak Jan Kollár among the Czech Revivalists and Liuben Karavelov among the Bulgarian will appear in all chapters, because they treated all four aspects of national corruption. Although Kollár dwelt on the purity of the Slavs, the assertion of their innocence alerts the reader to the danger of their being corrupted. A follower of Herder, in his cycle of sonnets, *Slávy dcera* (The daughter of Sláva, published in ever longer versions 1821-52), Kollár created a picture of the suffering Slavs and pointed out the reasons for this suffering, as well as the means of its prevention and alleviation. Kollár's work was immensely influential among all Slavs because it portrayed the greatness of the one Slav nation, the greatness of its past, and its moral strength.<sup>106</sup> Although Karavelov was not always a supporter of the political programme of Slav Reciprocity, his work was read by Russians, Bulgarians and Serbs. Georgi Sava Rakovski (1821-67) also appears in all my chapters, because he wrote a great deal on the various means of corrupting the genuinely good Bulgarian stock; his placing the Bulgarians at the beginning of the world, making the Bulgarians the first nation, with the first language, having the first and best religion, had a considerable impact during the Bulgarian Revival, and led to the faking of a Bulgarian folklore tradition by Ivan Gologanov (1839-95). Rakovski was popular among

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<sup>106</sup> See Pynsent 'The Myth of Slavness: Pavel Josef Šafařík and Jan Kollár', in *Questions of Identity*, pp.44-99.

his contemporaries not only because of his scholarly and journalistic endeavours, but also because of his plans for the liberation of Bulgaria from the Ottoman rule. He was idealised later in the Revival, and Karavelov, for example, described Rakovski's life in his works, thus creating a martyr image of Rakovski. Antonín Žalud Vysokomýtský (1815-73) was popular for a brief period in 1849 and during neo-absolutism, but eventually forgotten; he was an author of popular history in the Revival who had a bold vision of Czech history, although it was not as bold as Rakovski's of Bulgarian history. Žalud also mentions many possible means of contamination of the national body, and so his writing will also appear in all chapters. Although one might argue that Rakovski and Žalud do not belong to the Revivalist norm, the popularity of their works says something of the mentality of readers enthused by the Revival. Apart from his etymological writing, Rakovski's ideas did form to a great extent the ideological backbone of the Revival. Rakovski's views were part of the nationalist programme before and after him: Vasil Aprilov before and Marin Drinov after him shared his views, for example, that an autocephalous Bulgarian Church existed during and immediately after Byzantine rule. Sofronii's work, although not widely popular, had a subtle impact on the Bulgarian Revival: Stefan Bogoridi (1780-1859), the Bulgarian benefactor who provided the land for the Bulgarian church in Constantinople, was Sofronii's grandson; and Rakovski, having been born in Kotel, as Sofronii and Bogoridi had been, was surrounded by people who had most probably heard Sofronii's sermons.<sup>107</sup> In a word, Rakovski, however eccentric, shared a great deal with mainstream Revivalists. In its misotheutism Žalud's work is similar to a large

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<sup>107</sup> For Stefan Bogoridi see Toncho Zhechev, *Bălgarskiiat Velikden ili strastite bălgarski*, Sofia, Narodna Mladezh, 1980, pp.36-55.

number of popular Czech historians from Dalimil onwards, and to Holeček's work at the end of the nineteenth century. Rakovski and Vysokomýtský's ideas represent, so to speak, the manure on which the mainstream authors grew their more or less elegant flowers. The work of the Bulgarian 'national poet', Hristo Botev (1848-76), will also appear in all chapters. The reason for my looking at Botev's works is simply that Botev was later ideologised as the national poet and therefore not to consider his portrayal of corruption would potentially be to omit conceptions of corruption that are still evident in Bulgarian nationalism today. The work of Dobri Voinikov (1833-78), a playwright who established the first Bulgarian theatrical troupe will also be discussed in all four chapters, although his plays will receive most attention in the chapters devoted to religious and moral decay.<sup>108</sup>

As regards ideas that were current among the Revivalists, but were not recorded in print during the Revival, I will look at the work of the Neophyte of Hilendar-Bozveli, who made a contribution to the beginning of the conscious attempts to achieve an autocephalous Church. Although most of his works were published only posthumously (and in all cases except 'Mati Bolgaria' (Mother Bulgaria, 1874), published only towards the beginning of the twentieth century, that is, when the Revivalists had become almost entirely a subject of scholarly study), his work as a teacher and priest influenced Revivalists such as Rakovski and Slaveikov. I shall also touch on the work of Dobri Chintulov (1823-86), whose writings were well known; although he published only three poems, his songs were sung over a long period before they were published.

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<sup>108</sup> His play *Krivorazbranata tsivilizatsiia* (Civilisation misunderstood, 1871) was popular during the Communist era and is still performed.

I will look at Božena Němcová's (1818-62) *Babička* (Grandmother, 1855) and the late Revivalist and early neo-Revivalist works of Karolína Světlá, since both blend in their works nationalism, feminism and a socialism of a sort, and, in the case of Světlá, from a strong religious anti-Catholic (with the probable exception of *Vesnický román*), and liberal anti-clerical stance.<sup>109</sup> I will also touch on the work of Eliška Krásnohorská (1847-1926), discussing her ideas on the legend of the Blaník Knights. The only Bulgarian woman Revivalist, Elena Muteva (1825-54), will not be discussed because her sentimental poetry does not bring anything new aesthetically; nor does it manifest any concern with decay.

For conceptions of language decay, apart from Dobrovský, I will look at Josef Jungmann, essayist, literary theorist, poet and lexicographer. I will touch on the works of the early Revivalist Šebastián Hněvkovský (1770-1847) and the critic and naive mid-Revivalist poet and librettist, Josef Krasoslav Chmelenský (1800-39). For Bulgarian I have to consider the work of Petko Rachev Slaveikov (1828-95), who was a central figure in the codification of the modern Bulgarian language. Slaveikov was among the most active Revivalists in Constantinople, published Bulgarian folk songs, and wrote and translated verse and fables. He took part in the Bulgarians' attempts to achieve an autocephalous Church, and expressed his views in the newspapers he edited. Thus, his works will be considered mainly in the chapters devoted to language and religious decay. The ideas of Ivan Bogorov and Nesho Bonchev (1839-78) will also form a part of the chapter on language decay. Bogorov published in

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<sup>109</sup> In her early works, for example, *První Češka* (The first Czech woman, 1861), *Na úsvitě* (At dawn, 1864). Světlá belongs to the tail end of the Revival. For the main body of her work, for example *Vesnický román* (A village novel, 1868), she is a Realist, with feminist and often nationalist inclinations. Towards the end of her life, when writing on 1848, for example, she might be called a neo-Revivalist, like Svatopluk Čech or Jirásek.

Leipzig the first Bulgarian-language newspaper, and eventually became one of the first language purists, while Nesho Bonchev was among the first Bulgarian literary critics. I will also touch on the work of Grigor Pärlichev (1830-93), a Greek poet who decided that his Bulgarian blood demanded he become a Bulgarian poet.

Among the Czechs I look at the works of Josef Linda (1789/92-1834), who was apparently a contributor to the fake *Rukopis zelenohorský* and *Rukopis královédvorský* (The Zelená Hora and Dvůr Králové Manuscripts, 'discovered' between 1816 and 1818), which were probably composed by Václav Hanka (1791-1861). These manuscripts represent the creation of a (fake) national past *par excellence*, and because the vast majority of Czechs believed in their authenticity, they shaped the way Czechs thought of much of their past for two-thirds of a century.<sup>110</sup> Linda includes quotations from these manuscripts in his play *Jaroslav Šternberg v boji proti Tatarům* (J.Š. battling against the Tatars, 1823), and he also wrote the first modern Czech historical novel, *Záře nad pohanstvím* (Light above heathendom, 1818), which, though barely noticed at the time of its publication, actually contained an assessment of the pre-Christian Czech past that eventually, with the help of the Manuscripts, became the norm. I shall concentrate on Linda's assessment of the corruption of the Czechs by religion, as maintained in his novel.

I take František Turinský's (1797-1852) verse drama *Angelína* (1821) because it constitutes a literary portrayal of race theory's principle that the more complex the organism the less adaptable it is to new conditions. I am also concerned with his influence on the far more widely read Josef Kajetán Tyl.

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<sup>110</sup> See Pynsent, *Literary History as Nation-Building* for a discussion of the influence of the Manuscripts during the nineteenth century.

Tyl's plays contained ideas on the decayed state of the Czechs, their morals, language and religion; therefore I deal with Tyl's plays when I consider language, religious and moral decay.

Vasil Drumev's (1840-1901) works will be discussed in the chapters on the decay of blood and the decay of morals, while Iliia Bláskov's (1839-1913) works will contribute to the discussion of the decay of religion and morals. Both writers were popular during the Revival, although not approved of by all Revivalists. For the discussion of decay of morals I will also touch on the work of Tsani Ginchev (1835-94), an author who published chiefly after 1878. I will briefly discuss Zaharii Stoianov (1850-89), a prolific writer of biographies and memoirs.

Moral decay is the preoccupation of the Moravian nationalist and physician, Josef Heřman Agapit Gallaš (1756-1840), who reeled out advice to his patients and fellow-citizens in primitive verse. His advice on healthy morals for healthy bodies among the Moravians will be discussed in the last chapter. For the discussion of the same subject in Bohemia I will touch on Josef Vlastimil Kamarýt (1797-1833), whose didactic verse is not much more sophisticated intellectually than Gallaš's. One of the first social novels, by the late Romantic Gustav Pfleger-Moravský's (1833-75), *Z malého světa* (From a small world, 1864) will also be discussed in the chapter on moral decay, since it exhibits the Revivalist mentality even though written after 1848.

I will also discuss a selection of works by the dramatist Václav Kliment Klicpera (1792-1859), the fiction writer, rhymster and parodist František Jaromír Rubeš (1814-53) and the fiction-writer Jan Jindřich Marek (Jan z Hvězdy, 1803-53). All three writers discussed topics that remained part of

Czech national mythology after the Revival, such as the marriage of the Duke Oldřich of Bohemia to the peasant Božena, to which Klicpera and Antonín Josef Zíma (1763-1832) each devoted a play, and the notion of the Czechs' innate musical talent, that was reflected in J.J.Marek's and Rubeš's short stories, both called *Harfenice* (The woman harpist). I will use Jakub Arbes's (1840-1914) discussion of morality in *Kandidáti existence* (Candidates for existence, 1877) as a bridge between the moral views expressed in the Revival and those expressed in the late nineteenth century by Holeček and Masaryk. *Lešetínský kovář* (The smith of Lešetín, 1883) by the neo-Revivalist Svatopluk Čech will have the same function. For expressions of antisemitism I look at the works of the late Revivalist *Trivalliteratur* writer Josef Václav Zimmermann (1804-77); antisemitism is barely expressed at all during the Revival proper, except right at the end in Karel Havlíček's (1821-56) journalism and, just before that, in Klicpera's *Izraelitka*. This form of racism gathers strength, however, after the partial emancipation of the Jews in 1848 and complete emancipation in 1867. In the Bulgarian Revival, Karavelov and Drumev appear to be the only antisemites.

## 8. Golden Ages, Dark Ages<sup>111</sup>

A perception of communal decay engenders nationalist movements. This perception is as old as east-central European literary culture; for example, it is, too, palpable in Dalimil:

Pak na velikú rozkoš se Čechy dachu,  
a proto o dobrém jménu nic netbachu.  
Staří jechu se doma jako vepři týti,  
mladí počěchu s ohaři honiti.  
Od toho časa šlechtici toho se přijechu,

<sup>111</sup> Sub-section title borrowed from Jay O'Brien and William Roseberry (eds), *Golden Ages, Dark Ages: Imagining the Past in Anthropology and History*, Berkeley and Oxford, University of California Press, 1991. Translation with minor alterations from Pynsent, 'Proto-Nationalism: The Example of a Czech Work from 1314', p.13.

ješto holoty dřev za úřad jmiechu.  
 Dřeve psy s holotami u vlastní dóm odlúčiechu  
 a sami čistý dóm jmějiechu.  
 Dřeve páni často sě sježdiechu,  
 o cti a o pokoji zemském mluviechu.  
 [...]

Ale tehdy páni holoty z sebe zčínichu  
 a v jednom domu s ohaři sě sbydliechu.  
 To sobě za kratochvil jmiechu a za čest velikú přijechu,  
 že jedno o ohařích zmluviechu.  
 [...]

A proto sě jechu ve zboží chuditi  
 a pro psí smrad brzo mřieti.  
 Od té doby lid silný věk krátký jmějieše  
 a nemocných v nohách mnoho bieše.

(Then the Czechs [the inhabitants of Bohemia] gave themselves up to luxury/ and, thus, paid no attention to their good name./ The old began gorging themselves like pigs at home/ and the young started hunting with hounds./ From this time on noblemen took on tasks/ which had previously been servants'./ Before, the dogs and the kennel-men had lived in their own segregated house./ and the nobles had their own house clean./ Before, lords had met frequently/ to discuss honour and the peace of the land./ [...]And now the lords made kennel-men of themselves/ and lived together with the hounds in the house./ They considered it amusing and a great honour /to talk about nothing but hounds/ [...] and so their possessions began to dwindle/ and they started dying young because of the dogs' stench./ Yes, from this time on a strong people had a short lifetime/ and many had game legs.)<sup>112</sup>

Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists' views of what was valuable in the past differed, as did their ideas of what was most decayed in the present. The difference between the authors' portrayals of the Golden Age indicates what a given author considers most precious in the past, and therefore what his contemporaries should try to restore or regenerate. The Czech Revivalists were more or less unanimous that after 1620 (the Battle of the White Mountain in which the Protestant Estates were defeated by a Catholic imperial army), the Czechs went into decline. In the Bulgarian case the decline had started earlier, when they fell under the Ottomans in 1396. The fact that for Czech Revivalists the 'decline' began after 1620, not after 1526 when the Habsburgs acceded to the Bohemian throne, marks one of the major differences between the ideas of Golden and Dark Ages in the two cases. Czech Revivalists show an interest

<sup>112</sup> Bohuslav Havránek and Jiří Daňhelka (eds), *Nejstarší česká rýmovaná kronika tak řečeného Dalimila*. Prague, ČSAV, 1958, p.134. I am using the translation from R.B. Pynsent, 'Proto-Nationalism: The Example of a Czech Work from 1314', TS.



mainly in cultural developments; that is, they generally do not consider 1526 a marker of the beginning of the fall, since in the sixteenth century Czech continued to be used as a language for literature, law and theology. One notes, however, that Palacký marks the final stage of Czech decay as starting in 1526. By contrast, the Bulgarians are focused on the independence of their state and the strength of their rulers to a greater extent than on the development of literature in Bulgarian. Thus, for the Bulgarians the five-hundred-years' sleep is mainly regretted because of the lost opportunities to achieve political independence; for this reason 1878 tends to be considered the end of this sleep.

Most Czech Revivalists, though not Dobrovský, considered at least one of the Czech Golden Ages to be the time that some poems in the Manuscripts allegedly portray. The *Zelená Hora* Manuscript and several poems in the *Dvůr Králové* Manuscript were believed to have been written during the pre-Christian period, in the eighth century, when the Czechs shared a religion with the rest of the Slavs. The conviction that the period of the creation of the Manuscripts was a cultural Golden Age involved the acceptance of an imaginary pan-Slav past. The reception of the Forged Manuscripts was a case of valuing what had been preserved, rather than preserving what was valued: something analogous to what Gilman observed in Classical societies.<sup>113</sup>

The leading Czech Revivalists differed in their ascriptions of the Golden Age. For Dobrovský, it was the period between 1520 and 1620. Especially the reign of Rudolph II (1576-1611), 'the Czech language reached such a high state of perfection that the writers of this age are still considered to be classical'.<sup>114</sup> So, for Dobrovský, the Golden Age of Czech culture immediately preceded the

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<sup>113</sup> Here I refer to Gilman's observation on the Classical societies' attitude to the past, see footnote 7 above.

<sup>114</sup> Dobrovský, *Dějiny české řeči a literatury*, p.111.

decline. ‘The Battle of the White Mountain of 1620,’ writes Dobrovský, ‘crippled and weakened the whole of the Czech nation, in its soul and in its body’.<sup>115</sup> Before the ‘discovery’ of the Manuscripts Jungmann also thought that the reign of Rudolph might well have constituted a Golden Age; after the ‘discovery’ he counted as the most Golden of Golden Ages the times of the composition of the Manuscripts. Dobrovský and Jungmann shared an admiration for printer, editor and translator Daniel Adam z Veleslavína (1546-99). Dobrovský quotes Balbín who asserts that under Rudolph II, anything that was worth writing or translating was carried out normally by Adam.<sup>116</sup> In 1803 Jungmann contrasts the age of Daniel Adam to his own age to demonstrate that the latter was a period of decay.<sup>117</sup>

Kollár also observes that ‘our life had fallen on evil times’; Kollár, to be sure, is writing of humanity in general,<sup>118</sup> but it becomes clear that the decay of other nations had caused the decay of the Slavs, because the other nations had oppressed them, and because they fail to acknowledge that Slavs so greatly influenced their history.<sup>119</sup> Kollár also writes of Slav decay, namely, the

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<sup>115</sup> *ibid.*, p.124.

<sup>116</sup> *ibid.*, p.120.

<sup>117</sup> See Josef Jungmann, ‘O jazyku českém. Rozmlouvání první.’ [1803], in Josef Jungmann, *Sebrané spisy*, Prague, Český museum, 1841; See also below, chapter 3.

<sup>118</sup> ‘Do zlých časů – Bůh to s nebe vidí! – /naše živobyti upadlo,/ až se strašné jejich zrcadlo/ ruka očím odeckrýti stydí;/ zmatek točí krajin běh i lidí,/ duch má závrat, srdce uvadlo,/ ba – ó nové světa divadlo! –/ sám už sebe rozum nenávidí;/ se svobodou válčí nesvoboda,/ pravda sluje nyní neštěstí,/ a ctnost ředne jako stará moda;/ nejhorší pak jest ta chyba věku,/ že, ač cítí osten bolesti,/ nemoc tají a smích činí z léku.’ (Our existence has fallen/ into evil times – God sees that from Heaven!/ so evil that the hand is too ashamed to reveal to the eyes/ these times’ terrible mirror:/ confusion twists the course of countries and people,/ the spirit is dizzy, the heart has withered,/ indeed – oh, new spectacle for the world! reason now hates itself:/ unfreedom wars with freedom;/ truth is now labelled misfortune,/ and virtue is vanishing like an old fashion:/ but the worst is the age’s mistake/ that, although it feels the sting of pain,/ it conceals the sickness and mocks the cure.). Jan Kollár, *Slávy dcera* [1824 edn], (III, 57) Prague, Otto, 1903, p.252-53

<sup>119</sup> ‘Bratře, neslyš hlasu závistníka/ k haně předků našich drzího,/ i my máme z kmene vlastního/ mužů, kterým sluší čest a díka:/ kdo má nade Petra panovníka,/ aneb Sáma vůdce vyššího?/ My jsme dali Uhrům Zriniho/ Němcům Husa, Vlachům Koperníka;/ A sto jiných krev jsou z krve naší/ ač pak my jsme sotva zdělili/ jejich jméno, soused částku blažší./ Tak svět činí často jako děti:/ do studnice, z níž se napily,/ házejíce kameny a smeti.’ (Brother, hear not the

alienation of the native land, once the cradle, now the coffin of his nation.<sup>120</sup>

This change is symbolically marked by the transformation of Slav trees, walnut trees in this case, into the German national symbol, the oak tree. Thus, instead of having walnuts, the Slavs are left only with the pigs' fodder, acorns, and the pagan priest of the sacred homeland has been replaced by a swineherd.<sup>121</sup> The imposition of decay, according to Kollár, was easy, because the Slavs were innocent and friendly:

Ó! těch zlatých, staroslavských časů,  
jenž zem tuto někdy krásily,  
o nichž čísti, ač je líčili  
nepřátelé, nelze bez úžasů.  
Klíčů, zámků, šibenic a rasů  
neznali, tak že se divili  
velmi věcem těm, když spatřili  
u svojich je němčitelů, Sasů.

Neznáma jim byla lest i krádež,  
žebrač, přísaha a zločinství,  
rodiče a starce ctíla mládež.  
Všudy zpěv a vlidné obličej,  
stoly veždy plné hostinství  
a teď, ouve! vše se opak děje.

(Oh, those golden, ancient-Slav times/ which once adorned this land/ and about which one cannot read/ without astonishment, even if/ the enemy described them.// They did not know keys, locks, gallows or knackers/ so that they wondered greatly/ at all these things when they saw them/ with their germanisers, the Saxons.// They did not know deceit or theft, begging, swearing or criminality;/ the young respected their parents and old people.// Everywhere there were songs and kind faces,/ tables were always replete in food for guests/ but woe! Now everything is the opposite of all that.)<sup>122</sup>

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envious man's/ impertinence in shaming of our forebears; we, too, have from our own tribe men who deserve honour and gratitude: who has a greater ruler than Peter, a greater leader than Samo?/ We gave Zrinyi to the Hungarians, Huss to the Germans, Copernicus to the Italians;/ And the blood of a hundred others is our blood, though we have hardly inherited their names, while our neighbours got the happier part. The world often behaves like children, throwing stones and rubbish/ into the well from which they had drunk.), *Ibid.*, (III, 54), pp.250-51.

<sup>120</sup> 'Aj, zde leží zem ta před okem mým slzy ronícím/ Někdy kolébka, nyní národu mého rakev' (Lo, here lies before my tear-shedding eye/ what was once the cradle and is now the coffin of my nation), *Ibid.*, 'Předzpěv' (Prelude), p.17.

<sup>121</sup> 'Dub už do pně ořešáku vpleněn,/ žalud roste místo ořechů/ a kněz dávný ve sviňáka změněn!' (The oak is grafted into the trunk of the walnut, /acorns grow instead of nuts' and the ancient priest is transformed into a swineherd.) Jan Kollár [1832 edn], *Ibid.*, (II, 38), p.140. In the Prelude to *Slávy dcera*, however, Kollár uses the oak to symbolise Russia.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, (II, 41), p.142.

Thus, Kollár closely following Herder, adopts the myth of the noble savage to demonstrate the ill effect of the unnatural, cruel Germans on the kind, pacific Slavs.

In his over-sentimentalised melodramatic novel, *Poslední Čech* (The last Czech, 1844), Tyl expresses a mythology of Golden Ages to contrast with the present dark age through the pessimistic Count Velenský, who styles himself ‘the last Czech’, and his optimistic steward Svoboda. According to Velenský, the darkest of all dark ages is the nineteenth-century present:

The common people wander in darkness; they are frosty inside, and icy outside; brother does not know brother; son renounces father; mother rejects daughter. They do not know each other, love each other; they renege on each other, deny their home, their blood, their language – no, no! God will not punish me so severely that I must continue to look at this perverted Babylon. To love the whole nation, to harbour it whole in one’s heart, to live for it and through it, to nurture one’s thoughts on it, to build one’s whole future on it – and then to lose it, to see it dispersed, scattered, torn apart in itself, cleaved apart by foreigners. To sit on the ruins of its temple, utterly alone, *the last [Czech]*. Oh, in the word ‘last’ lies more than tenfold death.<sup>123</sup>

And: ‘This is the curse of the times, the times when Czech does not know Czech; blood rebels against blood; daughter denies mother, times when everything is uprooted, swept into the rubbish bin and goes off into foreign lands to seek adventure.’<sup>124</sup> Although Svoboda shares Velenský’s ideas, he believes that the period of most acute decay had taken place fifty years before the temporal setting of the story, when ‘the national spirit was lying in the ruins of its perished glory’, and now, thanks to the nationalists, propaganda has born some fruit.<sup>125</sup> Svoboda contrasts the period when ‘the national language was creeping in darkness’ with the period long before the White Mountain, when independent Bohemia spread from the Baltic to the Adriatic, and when every Czech was proud to say that s/he was Czech; now, however, the Czechs do not know their history and try to conceal their Czechness, which presents

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<sup>123</sup> Josef Kajetán Tyl, *Poslední Čech* [1844], 3rd edn, Prague, Kočí, 1928, p.96.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.118-19.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p.128.

degeneration from a nationalist point of view.<sup>126</sup> Svoboda praises the nationalists for preventing the complete decay of the Czechs, since, he believes, because of them degeneration is not as definitive as Velenský believes.<sup>127</sup> With Svoboda's words Tyl essentially summarises Fichte.

In *Babička* Němcová warns of decay by one of the 'prophesies' of the chapbook *Sibylla*: 'much need will come upon Bohemia; there will be wars, famine, plague, but the worst will be when father will not understand son, son father, brother brother, when no word or promise will be valid, that will be the worst, and then, she said, Bohemia will be scattered on the hooves of horses.'<sup>128</sup> This is intended by Němcová to reflect the contemporary situation. The Czechs of *Babička*'s time have decayed only halfway, since according to *Sibylla* the decay of the Czechs will be complete when the statue of *Sibylla* has sunk into the ground completely; and at the time of *Babička*'s words, the statue has only sunk halfway.

In *Jitřenka* (Morning star, 1868) Světlá reiterates the Revivalist mythopoeia of Golden and Dark Ages. The title comprises the basic idea of the novel, the dawn over the darkness of the period of decay. The main character, the actuary of Dobřany, believes that the Czech nation is in a state of decay:

Wherever I walk, I tread on a graveyard, where everything Czech is buried, kicked, trampled in the mud, forgotten or bewitched. All around me gape only graves in which our glory rots, our honour, our scholarship, our freedom, faith, language, unfortunately just to be manure for foreign fields.

Světlá is not original in her choice of words. The same words or concepts, *šlapat* (tread), *pošlapat* (trample) are to be found in most Revivalists I treat, and in neo-Revivalists. Jan Erazim Sojka (1828-87) uses the same word in his

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<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.21-22.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p.22.

<sup>128</sup> These words are said by Barunka, who shows how well she had remembered her grandmother's teaching, Božena Němcová, *Babička*, Prague, Kvasnička & Hampl, p.144.

account of the Czech Revival, *Naši mužové* (Our men, 1862). By the time of Světlá or Sojka the period commonly accepted as the Revival proper, that is, before 1848, was becoming an object of nostalgic comparison with neo-absolutism. Sojka describes neo-absolutism as the ‘the time of the trampling of our glory’, ‘the trunk of our nation has been cut down and burnt – the Czech name has been erased from general history!’ but he embraces the Counter-Reformation, the Revival and neo-absolutism in decay with the following: ‘For nearly 240 years we lay, some subjugated, some fettered by heavy shackles, and others in horrendous torment on the rack; the Czech did not have his own country, did not know his past, had no present, and no future beckoned him’.<sup>129</sup> The existence of a Golden Age provides a reason for demanding and trusting in a Golden Age of the future; the present period of decay is taken to be the painful transition between the two Golden Ages. Indeed one might maintain that it was necessary to imagine a past Golden Age in order to provide a goal for the nationally conscious (compare the Kingdom of God on Earth or the communist state).

In the Bulgarian case, the Golden Age is linked with a vision of the Bulgarians as a chosen people, in a twelfth-century apocryphal text, known either as *Solunska legenda* (The Salonica legend) or *Slovo ot Kiril Filosof kak pokrăsti bălgarite* (A speech by Cyril the Philosopher on how he baptised the Bulgarians).<sup>130</sup> According to this legend the Bulgarians, as the chosen people, had as their national mission the spreading of Christianity. According to the so-called *Bălgarski apokrifen letopis* (The Bulgarian apocryphal annals), from the same period, the prophet Isaiah was sent to the Bulgarians and led them to

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<sup>129</sup> Jan Erazim Sojka, *Naši mužové*, 2nd edn, Prague, Melantrich, 1953, p.6.

<sup>130</sup> Donka Petkanova (ed.), *Stara bălgarska literatura. I. Apocrifi*, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1981, p.300.

their present territory in the Balkan peninsula, the land flowing with milk and honey. Isaiah chose from among the Bulgarians a king, whose name was 'Slav'. In other words, this apocryphal text suggests not only that the Bulgarians were the fathers of the Slavs, but also something of a Slav consciousness in twelfth-century Bulgaria.<sup>131</sup> In both apocrypha the Bulgarians are contrasted with the Greeks; they were written when the Bulgarians were under Byzantine rule.<sup>132</sup> The eighteenth-century Paisii is still writing in the mediaeval monastic tradition, and so his *Istoriia* differs little in style and narration from these apocrypha and shares their anti-Greek sentiments. Paisii also puts the Bulgarians at the beginning of Slav history, although only culturally.<sup>133</sup> The introductory sentence of *Istoriia* ('Oh, you stupid and unwise! Why are you ashamed to call yourself Bulgarian and to read and speak in your mother tongue? Is it because you think that the Bulgarians have never had a kingdom and state? Bulgarian kings reigned for very many years and often they levied taxes from the strong Romans and from the wise Greeks') became something like an incantation in the Bulgarian nationalist idiom.<sup>134</sup> In his introduction Paisii formulates a myth of a Golden Age and establishes that the contemporary period is a period of decay. For him the Bulgarians used to be the most famous of all Slavs, and all kings used to try to marry their daughters to Bulgarian

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<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.294-99.

<sup>132</sup> According to Marin Drinov, the Byzantine rulers and Byzantinophile rulers in Bulgaria were much fiercer persecutors of the Bogomils than the Bulgarian rulers had been. That is why it is possible that anti-Byzantine apocrypha could have been produced by Bogomils. See the chapter on Religion below.

<sup>133</sup> Otherwise Paisii claims that the Slavs were descended from Moskos (Muscovite), and Moskos was a descendent of Japhet. See Paisii of Hilendar, *Slaviano-bălgarska istoriia*, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1969, p.38. The notion that Japhet was the ancestor of the Europeans, Ham of the Africans and serfs, and Shem of the Asians was a mediaeval commonplace. See Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, p.7. According to Paisii Ham is the ancestor of the Jews and Gypsies. Paisii, *Istoriia*, p.38.

<sup>134</sup> Paisii, *Istoriia*, p.34.

kings, in the hope of securing peace with the Bulgarians.<sup>135</sup> At the beginning of the state of decay under the Ottomans the Bulgarians suffered greatly, but soon they grew used to being 'enslaved'.<sup>136</sup> Thus, the longer the Bulgarians remain under Ottoman rule, the more they become accustomed to their unnatural state of decay.

The Bulgarian Revivalists most frequently refer to two periods as Golden Ages: one during the reign of Simeon (893-927) and the second, the ascendancy of the Assenid dynasty, especially between 1185 (independence from Byzantium) and 1241 (the end of Ivan Assen II's reign). The reign of Simeon could be seen (and was seen during the Communist period) as the Golden Age because of the level of education enjoyed by the Bulgarians; Simeon himself was seen as a particularly educated ruler. The Revivalists, however, saw the reign of Simeon as the Golden Age mainly because Simeon almost conquered Constantinople. In other words, the Revivalists saw in the reign of Simeon a potential victory over the Greeks, their mimetic rivals.<sup>137</sup> Rakovski conceives of many Golden Ages, several taking place before the Bulgarians' conversion to Christianity.<sup>138</sup> In his *Veda Slovena*, Ivan Gologanov (1839-95) maintains that before becoming Christian the Bulgarians had less communication with the Greeks, which resulted in their having advanced literacy and a unique religion

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<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, p.81

<sup>137</sup> I am using the concept 'mimetic competition' and 'mimetic rivalry' in the sense that René Girard gives them in *Deceit, Desire and the Novel. Self and Other in Literary Structure* (1961), translated by Yvonne Freccero, Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965, pp.2-3. Put in different words, I mean that the Bulgarians desired to be like the Greeks, that is, to achieve an independent Church, state and advances in education; therefore they were imitating the Greeks. They also, however, saw the Greeks as the main obstacle to the achievement of their goals.

<sup>138</sup> 'After the conversion to Christianity of the Preslav Court, the Bulgarian kingdom had two glorious epochs – Simeon's and the Assenids' reign', in 'Niakolko rechi o Aseniu Pǎrvomu, velikomu tsariu bălgarskomu i sinu mu Aseniu Vtoromu' (A few words about Assen I, the great Bulgarian tsar and his son Assen II, 1860). G.S.Rakovski, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol.3, ed. by Veselin Traikov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1984, p.9.



that stood at the beginning of all religions. Karavelov considers both periods Golden Ages, although he devotes more time to the reigns of the Assenids, since it was from their state that the Bulgarians degenerated by coming under the Ottoman 'yoke'. Revivalists employ the Assenid period because that was the period when the brothers Assen and Petăr achieved Bulgarian state and Church independence from the Byzantine Empire. Thus the Assenids were models: they had achieved what the Revivalists hoped to achieve even if subsequent generations lost everything again. Karavelov, for example, employed this period as a model for the Bulgarians to emulate, as well as an example of how a strong state may decline and fall. In his trilogy, 'Otmäshtenie' (Revenge, 1873), 'Posle otmäshtenieto' (After the revenge, 1873-74) and 'Tuka mu e kraiat' (This is the end, 1874), Karavelov described the descendants of the Assenids coming under the 'yoke': it had taken place because of the Bulgarians' contact with the Greeks, who had corrupted the Bulgarian aristocracy. One of the princesses in Karavelov's trilogy claimed that her Assenid blood made her feel strong and more able to endure hardship.<sup>139</sup>

Karavelov is not consistent in this trilogy; inconsistencies, however, are a trait of propagandists of nationalism. When he defines the 'dead age' of Bulgarianness in the first part, 'Otmäshtenie', this dead age is contrasted with a Golden Age.<sup>140</sup> At the beginning of the second part, 'Posle otmäshtenieto', he describes the decay of the Greek nation that, he alleges, took place in the

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<sup>139</sup> Karavelov, 'Posle otmäshtenieto' (1873), in Liuben Karavelov, *Săchineniia v dvanadeset toma*, vol.2, ed. by Docho Lekov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1984, p. 315.

<sup>140</sup> 'There is an old fortress on one of the peaks of the Stara Planina mountain which at the time of its blossoming existence saw such bloody tragedies that could reduce even dry stones to tears. How is it now? Now everything has changed! Once living beings dwelt there who fought the Byzantine legions, Bayezid's armies and Murad's janissaries; today one can see around the fortress only tall beech-trees, spreading oaks and wild pear trees. [...] In brief, this fortress now resembles in all respects the Bulgarian nation to which it used to belong; the Bulgarian nation used to build its present happiness and its future hopes on this fortress.' 'Otmäshtenie' (1873), in L. Karavelov, *Săbrani săchineniia v dvanadeset toma*, vol. 2, p. 219.

fourteenth century; the nation had passed its days of glory and was heading towards destruction.<sup>141</sup> Later on in the same part, Karavelov claims that national character cannot change; therefore there is actually no such thing as a national decline:

Many people say that nations change their character within three hundred years. We [the narrator] do not agree. Many factors demonstrate that even 500 years ago, the Bulgarian was the same as he is now. Not a single other nation would surrender its nation, its name and the graves of its fathers and forefathers so imperturbably and so pointlessly stupidly.<sup>142</sup>

Thus within one work, Karavelov takes three different stands on the idea of the development of nations, finally deciding that the Bulgarian nation is in an eternal state of decay. In a work from 1868, 'Doncho', included in the collection of short stories *Stranitsy iz knigi stradaniia bolgarskogo plemeni* (Pages from the book of the Bulgarian suffering, 1868), Karavelov defines the reasons for the decay of the Bulgarians as follows:

Our Bulgaria is unhappy because her sons do not have any patriotism, any stalwartness, manly hearts, any honourable Bulgarian soul. We shall suffer much more, weep much more, sweat blood and tears; we shall be rotting in Turkish prisons a great deal and carry our shackles much longer. They beat us, and we laugh; they impale us, and we kiss the knees of the pashas and judges [*kadii*]. They slaughter us, and we pronounce blessings on the Sultan; they take our wives and children, and we are cautious lest anyone tread on our fields and meadows.<sup>143</sup>

Lack of national fervour is, then, the reason not only for the fall of the Bulgarian nation, but also for the personal unhappiness of the Bulgarians. Karavelov makes a causal link between political and personal happiness.

Voinikov also creates a picture of an apparently ideal state whose fall will soon come. In his play *Vāztsariavaneto na Kruma Strashnii* (The accession of Krum the Fearful, 1871), the Bulgarian state has two branches, one near the

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<sup>141</sup> 'Men and women, young and old, clerics and laymen, rich and poor were lying on the ground neglecting their human pride. And this drunken lot was the nation that has once been glorious and great! [...] From all this one could conclude that this nation has passed through its glorious apogee and is now rolling down a steep hill to destruction and nullity.' 'Posle otmāshteniето', pp.284-85.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, p.302.

<sup>143</sup> Karavelov, 'Doncho', in Liuben Karavelov, *Sābrani Sāchineniia v dvanadeset toma*, vol.1, p.374.

river Danube, the other near the river Tisza. Danube Bulgaria is situated in a 'Heaven on Earth', as one of the characters puts it.<sup>144</sup> Danube Bulgaria resembles a land flowing with milk and honey, but in great danger from its neighbour, Byzantium; it had allowed the danger to become so great that its loss of independence is imminent. The danger lies in the intrigue besetting Danube Bulgaria. Intrigue, however, as becomes clear from the prologue, is a universal evil. Voinikov is warning that decay had infected even the most prosperous states, like Ancient Greece and Rome, or mediaeval Bulgaria. He draws a parallel between Greece and Rome and the two glorious Bulgarian states, Tisza and Danube Bulgaria.<sup>145</sup>

Nesho Bonchev takes a stand against the idea of looking to the past for inspiration or justification of present claims:

Generally, it is a good thing to know our history; but our teachers know very well that our history has not been written down yet. Those books on Bulgarian history that have been compiled for schools do not teach anything. If through reading them young people had gained at least a vague idea that our glory and hope lay not in the past dark periods of our history, but in the future, this would have been good; but from these books schoolchildren only learn that the Bulgarians are one of the most glorious nations and that they have done many things in the past; hence, the only thing they can do now is to look at their past deeds and relish them. The Greeks are in the same position: bewitched by their past like Odysseus by the songs of the sirens, they cannot get rid of that past; they cannot take even a single step towards positive knowledge; instead, they remain on the same spot, like a crayfish in a river. In this respect we are luckier than the Greeks: we have our minds focused on the future and the past does not attract us very much.<sup>146</sup>

Bonchev is alone in his attitude to the past. His contemporaries look to their own and to the Greeks' past, attempting to demonstrate first, that the Bulgarian

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<sup>144</sup> 'Indeed, it [Bulgaria] is one of the most splendid lands on Earth. Under serene skies, it is a beautiful garden; it is Heaven on Earth', Dobri Voinikov, *Vāztsariavaneto na Kruma Strashnii*, in Voinikov, *Sāchineniia*, vol.2, ed. by Docho Lekov, Sofia, Bālgarski pisatel, 1983, p.42.

<sup>145</sup> 'Сичко в вечност преминало!//Де е днес тя гръцка слава?//Де е силната държава /На великий Александра?//Де е римската импер'я/С нейната законност мъдра?//Де е гърдата Визант'я?//Де то Тиско господарство?//Де днес Крумовото царство?/(...) Аз обаче се живея' (Everything has passed into eternity/ Where is the Greeks' glory today?! Where is the strong state/ of the glorious Alexander?! Where is the Roman empire/ with her wise laws?! Where is proud Byzantium/ Where is the Tisza state?! Where is the kingdom of Krum today? [...]) I [Intrigue], however, live on), Voinikov, *Vāztsariavaneto na Kruma Strashnii*, p.12

<sup>146</sup> Nesho Bonchev, 'Dve dumi za programata na uchilishteto v Plovdiv' (Two words on the curriculum of the Plovdiv school, 1870), in Bonchev, *Literaturna kritika i publicistika*, ed. by Petār Dinekov, Bālgarski pisatel, Sofia, 1962, p. 98.

past is greater than the Greek; and second, that when the Bulgarian past was not great, it was the Greeks' fault. Bonchev may here be giving expression to a rare uncompetitive nationalism, although he normally conceives of foreigners as, at least potentially, dangerous.<sup>147</sup>

In his historical works, such as *Ivan Aleksandār* (1907), *Svetoslav Terter* (1907), *Borislav* (1909), or *Ivailo* (1913), Vazov writes nostalgically about the distant past. He continues the practice of glorifying the recent past that was started by Karavelov. Karavelov, however, glorifies only Rakovski ('Hadzhi Nicho', 1870) and Levski ('Detsata ne prilichat na bashtite si' [Children do not resemble their fathers], 1876).<sup>148</sup> Vazov composed a cycle of twelve odes, *Epopeiia na zabravenite* (Odes to the forgotten, 1881), in which he glorifies Bulgarian Revivalists, like Paisii, Rakovski, Levski, as well as who could have been the hero from the crowd, Kocho Chestimenski, and nameless Bulgarian heroes.<sup>149</sup> Thus, Vazov creates a sense of belonging to a past and present community including well-known great men like Paisii or Levski, but also great ordinary men, such as Kocho or the fighters at Shipka, who together make up the homogeneous Bulgarian nation. All have an acute sense of belonging to the Bulgarian nation.<sup>150</sup> *Epopeiia* was popular at the time of its publication, but most

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<sup>147</sup> See, for example, Bonchev's views on the building of railways in Bulgaria 'Na bălgarite triabvat sredni uchilishta: gimnaziia, realno uchilishte i duhovna seminariia' (Bulgarians need grammar schools, secondary schools and seminaries, 1871), in *ibid.*, p. 61

<sup>148</sup> Vasil Levski (born Vasil Ivanov Kunchev, 1837-73) was a Bulgarian revolutionary leader and ideologist of a Bulgarian uprising that should lead to the establishment of an independent Bulgarian state. He is considered a 'national hero'.

<sup>149</sup> Kocho Chestimenski, an ordinary Bulgarian, who had never done anything heroic before, is praised by Vazov because he did not allow any member of his family to be captured by the Turks; instead he killed his wife and child, and then himself. This was considered an expression of ultimate devotion to the national idea.

<sup>150</sup> 'И всякоя възраст, класа, пол, занятие/ зимаше участие в това предприятие:/ богатий с парите, сюрмахът с трудът, / момите с иглата, учений с умът./ а той беден, гол, бос, лишен от имотът./ за да е полезен дал си бе животът!' ('And every age, class, sex, occupation,/ took part in this enterprise[the Bulgarian national cause]:/ the rich with money, the poor with labour,/ the girls with the needle, the educated with their knowledge/ and he [Levski], poor, not having even a rag on his back, deprived of property/ in order to be useful had given

important, it has shaped to a great degree Bulgarian historiography. For example, in history books Rakovski is often described with Vazov's words, 'reckless dreamer, impossible character'.<sup>151</sup> Vazov canonises the common people from the past in his novel *Pod igoto* (Under the yoke, 1890) and regrets the moral decay of his compatriots in the continuation of *Pod igoto, Nova zemia* (New land, 1896).

Zaharii Stoianov also indulges in canonising the recent past. He completes the list of the recent Bulgarian saints and martyrs by writing a biography of Botev, a Revivalist omitted, except in one motto, from Vazov's *Epopeia*. Stoianov also deifies the leaders of the uprisings in his monumental memoir *Zapiski po bălgarskite văstaniia* (Notes on the Bulgarian uprisings, 1884-92), and shows his respect for Liuben Karavelov by writing a biography of the writer. The Revivalists became an object of admiration after 1878; the Bulgarian Revival was turned into a foundation myth entailing the canonisation of its leaders. Světlá was one of the first Czech writers to exploit the Revival as a foundation myth, in works like *První Češka, Na úsvitě, Zvonečková královna*. Otherwise one associates the mythicisation of the Czech Revival especially with the 1870s and 1880s. Stoianov and Vazov have similar goals when they praise the recent past: to draw the readers' attention to the fact that in the past the Bulgarians loved their fatherland more than they did now and had been more ready to sacrifice their lives for it. In the period that Vazov and Stoianov glorify, Karavelov felt that his contemporaries were less able to sacrifice themselves, physically or emotionally, than previous generations. One of

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his life '), Ivan Vazov, *Epopeia na zabravenite*, in Vazov, *Săchineniia v dvadest toma*, vol.1, ed. by Georgi Tsanev, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1955, p.289.

<sup>151</sup> 'мечтател безумен, образ невъзможен/ на тъмна епоха син бодър, тревожен', *Ibid.*, p.316.

Karavelov's characters states this: 'Although the Turks used to be worse when I was young, at least the Bulgarians used to be better. Just look at yourselves and see your present state! You've started drinking like Gypsies; [...] When I was younger, I used to be able to carry a hundred-kilo bag of wheat; and you? – You cannot do a single thing properly'.<sup>152</sup> One cannot help being reminded of Dalimil.

### 9. The metaphor of sleep

The period since the 1390s in the Bulgarian or since 1620 in the Czech case was seen as a period of a 500- or 200-year decay. It was often compared to a long sleep; sleep is the state in which activity is suspended; on the other hand, sleep has revitalising qualities. That is, the decline is described both as a betrayal of the moral inheritance of the preceding Golden Ages and as a prerequisite for a subsequent Golden future.

Kollár, for example, draws a parallel between the Slavs and the first Christians in Greece; he creates the image of the seven Slav sleepers, to parallel the seven Christian noblemen who, as the popular literary legend goes, entered a cave while fleeing their imperial persecutors in 251 A.D. and awakened only in 441, when the Christian Emperor Theodosius II was in power.<sup>153</sup>

Vstaňte vzhůru, ó vy, sedmispáči  
desetistoletní slavjanští,  
kterých připravili germanští  
o národní život lidožráci!  
Usnuli už sami vaši dráči  
Deciusové ti pohanští,  
potlačovatelé tyranští,  
jimž jste ušli do jeskyně v pláči.  
[...]  
Už váš národ i řeč má svá práva  
a vám v Carigrad se vrácení

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<sup>152</sup> Liuben Karavelov, 'Hadzhi Dimităr Iasenov.' (Haji D.I., 1872), in Karavelov, *Săbrani săchineniia v dvanadest toma*, vol. 4, ed. by Docho Lekov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel. 1984, pp. 320-21.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.488-89.

### bezpečné už způsobila Sláva

(Rise, oh you thousand-year/ Seven Sleeper-like Slavs,/ whom Germanic cannibals/ deprived of national life./ Your tyrants themselves have fallen asleep,/ those heathen Deciuses,/ despotic oppressors,/ from whom you, weeping, escaped into a cave./ [...]// Now your nation and language have their rights/ and [the goddess] Sláva has organised/ your safe return to Constantinople.)<sup>154</sup>

The Slavs' National Revivals awaken the Seven Sleepers. Here Kollár supports the myth of the Slav suffering, as well as suggesting that it is high time for the Slavs to wake up from their suffering and sleep.

The Seven Sleepers tale is related to the much later legend of the Blaník Knights, who will allegedly wake up and save the Bohemians in their hour of direst need. The combination of sleeping and hope that the myth of the Blaník Knights provides can explain its popularity as a literary theme during and after the Revival. The story is that Czech heroes went into Blaník Hill where they slept while waiting for their moment to rescue the Czech nation. According to the first version of the legend, Duke Wenceslas was leading the Bohemian Knights; in later versions Hussite Knights entered Blaník Hill, sometimes and sometimes not led by Wenceslas.<sup>155</sup> The direst need is the moment of the utmost Czech decay, or suffering. In a version of this story published in 1799, the Blaník Knights are noble Roman Catholics, whose desire is to spread virtue all over the world. They choose a young Czech knight, Zdeněk ze Zásniku, and help him give succour to all those in need. The Blaník Knights, as becomes clear from this story, always observe what is happening in the world, and although they allow Zdeněk to fall morally, they help him to recover from this fall. The Blaník Knights may watch the Bohemians fall, but when the time comes they will enable them to return to health. The main quality that the Blaník Knights pass on to Zdeněk is the power to heal and rejuvenate: a skill

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<sup>154</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera* [1832edn], (II, 55) p.151.

<sup>155</sup> Jarmila Svátá, *Blaník, hora tajemná*, Prague, SNDK, 1962, pp.7-14.

they possess because one of the monks who was hidden with them managed to discover and preserve the philosopher's stone. The story also suggests that even those who fall can recover and be admitted among the glorious Blaník Knights.<sup>156</sup>

In Klicpera's play *Blaník* (1813), the Blaník Knights are again good Catholics, and they appear, as one character informs us: 'Particularly, they say, when war, plague, bad harvest or other misfortunes are imminent. Apparently they have been hidden there by divine Providence, so that they can watch out for any danger threatening our dear country'.<sup>157</sup> The Bohemians, too, are chosen, and God protects them with the help of the Blaník Knights, whose martyr death had been unjust, and at the hands of people of the wrong confession (in this case – the heretics, as Klicpera calls the Taborites). The Bohemians are, then, also Christ-like, for there will be a second coming – or at least a resurrection.

As Macura informs us, during the 1830s the Blaník Knights became associated with Hussitism.<sup>158</sup> In Eliška Krásnohorská's libretto for Zdeněk Fibich (1881), for example, the Blaník Knights are shut in the hill to repent for their sins against the Hussites.<sup>159</sup> They possess the ability to heal and revive people and states alike. They set the time and the conditions for the resurrection of the Bohemian state. To the question 'Is it time yet?', they answer, 'Not yet.'<sup>160</sup> Thus, although they acknowledge the fall of the state: 'Vlast padlá ve

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<sup>156</sup> *Zdeněk ze Zásmluku se svými tovaryši, aneb Rytíři v Blanickém vrchu zavření* (Z. ze Z. with his companions, or the Knights shut in Blaník Hill, 1799), in *Romantické povídky z českého obrození*, ed. by Miloslav Novotný, Prague, ELK, 1947.

<sup>157</sup> Václav Kliment Klicpera, *Blaník* (1813), in *Soubor spisů. Dramatické práce vážné* vol.2, ed. by F. A. Šubert, Prague, Kočí, 1907, p.674.

<sup>158</sup> Macura, *Český sen*, p.18.

<sup>159</sup> Eliška Krásnohorská, *Blaník* (1881) in *Výbor z díla I. Básně a libreta*, Prague, SNKLHU, 1956, p.575.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, p.613.



skonání/ má slavit zmrtvýchvstání,' (The fallen country in its death/ is to celebrate resurrection); they believe that it will fall even further before they will save it 'však než jí k spáse zazní duchů zbraň,/ hloub ještě padne!' (but before the spirits' weapons ring out salvation/ it will fall still further).<sup>161</sup> In the Knights' view, the time for the revival of the state is in 200 years. Since the story is set straight after the Battle of the White Mountain that means that the revival will be in the 1820s. They, however, give evidence that they can bring dead people to life at the time of the story, since Zdeněk ze Zásniku, as in an anonymous version of the story from 1799, revives his apparently deceased betrothed and a parallel is drawn between the girl and the nation; a choir of knights sings: 'Národ náš, ten věčně nezahyne,/ Z hrobu vstane oslaven!' (Our nation will not perish forever,/ It will rise from the grave in glory!).<sup>162</sup> The Blaník Knights promise to rise from the dead to save the Czech nation because God wants them so to do: 'My povstanem, neb chce to věků pán' ('We shall rise, since the Lord of Ages desires it').<sup>163</sup> So the Czechs are still chosen and God decides when they will be taken out of their misery.

In a song from 1848, the sleeping Knights are Hussites and appeals to wake up are directed at Žižka and John Huss:

den se rozednívá, Blaník se otvírá,  
budí reky české ze sna vzhůru.  
Vlastenče Žižko! vstaň a pohleď sem,  
oslaviž naši svatou českou zem.  
Hlas vlasti volá, k prsům nás vine,  
Češi, Slováci a Moravané,  
kdož nám odolá nad naším vrahem,  
když svatý Václav jede s praporem.  
Stavte se, Češi, všickni v jeden tem,  
ať plyne krev po naši českou zem  
[...]  
Duch náš národní jest socha hrobní,  
jenž se stkví na všech českých pomezích,

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<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p.614.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, p.615.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, p.616.

pospichá k cíli probudit síly,  
jež dávný věk spí v rakvích cizinských,  
věk časů Přemyslovců přijid' jen sem,  
pak vyrvem vrahům naši českou zem.

(day is breaking; the Blaník is opening; it rouses Czech heroes from their sleep./ Oh, patriot Žižka, rise and look here./ Celebrate our holy Czech land./ The voice of the country is calling, pressing us against its breast./ Bohemians, Slovaks and Moravians./ Who will overcome our enemy for us./ When St Wenceslas rides with his banner./ Stand, all Bohemians in one battle array/ May blood flow over our Bohemian land./[...] Our national spirit is a statue on a tomb./ That glistens on all Bohemian borders./ is hurrying towards its goal to awaken the forces/ that have long been sleeping in coffins abroad./ Do come, age of the Přemyslids/ And then we'll wrest our Czech land from our enemies.)<sup>164</sup>

Here then, all the great heroes of Bohemian history, the unifier of Bohemian territory, St Wenceslas, the subsequent Přemyslids who had extended the Bohemian realm, and the revolutionary Taborites whom no foreign army could defeat are to rally round to help the Revivalists, and perhaps the 1848 revolutionaries, to return their glory to the Bohemians.

Tyl takes a different view on the Blaník legend: in his interpretation in *Jiřikovo vidění* (St Patrick's Purgatory, 1849) sleep is inflicted on a nineteenth-century Czech by the Blaník Knights as a means of making him appreciate what he has. The main character of the play, Jiří, is put to sleep by a Blaník Knight, as if he had entered St Patrick's Purgatory in the north of Ireland, and in his sleep Jiří receives an insight into what real virtues are and what should be valued in life. Therefore, in Tyl's play, sleep has the value the hallucinations in St Patrick's Purgatory had in mediaeval and early modern popular literature; Jiří wakes up strengthened not only physically but also morally, cured of his greed and in love with his betrothed.<sup>165</sup>

Macura concludes that the metaphor of sleep has the quality of a foundation myth in Czech literature; 'sen zakladatelský' (foundation dream) is his expression. One of the main strengths of this myth is that it brings the past into

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<sup>164</sup> J. Buncman, 'Čechů sláva' in Jaroslava Václavková (ed.), *Písně roku 1848*, Prague, Svoboda, 1948, pp.136-37.

<sup>165</sup> Josef Kajetán Tyl, *Jiřikovo vidění*, in Tyl, *Dramatické báchorky*, Prague, SNKLHU, 1953, pp.171-246.

the present. Macura remarks that the employment of this myth was obligatory in the nationalist community.<sup>166</sup> This is why one may conclude that the idea of falling into decay, of dying, symbolised by falling asleep, is one of the pillars of Czech national mythology, but this sleep heals both body and mind.

Slaveikov complains of the decayed state of the Bulgarian nation, claiming that 'we are not a nation, but dead flesh'.<sup>167</sup> He also states that the Bulgarian nation does not deserve any other fate, but eventually he claims that the sleeping brethren should be awakened and the Bulgarians should start fighting for their nation.<sup>168</sup> In that he, like other Revivalists, echoes Chintulov's 'Stani, stani, iunak balkanski', in the appeal for Bulgarians either to become as they used to be or to become extinct; the former can only happen if the brave Balkan man woke up.<sup>169</sup>

Botev also considers that the Bulgarians are in a state of decay, although he does not contrast decay with some Golden Age. He states that it is unnatural to be exploited by so many different groups (the Turkish officials, the clergy, the rich) and, following Herder, considers it unnatural to live in a multinational

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<sup>166</sup> 'shiboleth of the nationalist community', Macura, *Český sen*, pp.13, 15, 27.

<sup>167</sup> 'Не сме народ, не сме народ, а мърша' (1875) in P.R. Slaveikov, *Săchineniia*, vol.1, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1978, p.174.

<sup>168</sup> 'Народ такъв, за друго недостоин/ освен за мъки, нужди и тегла./ Научен род, безсмислен раб, спящ воин./ шо чака той за тези си дела?' in 'Zhestokosta mi se slomi' ('My cruelty was destroyed', 1873) Slaveikov, *Săchineniia*, vol.1, p.23; see also 'заспалите си да разбудим братя/ и с тях от бой на бой да полетим' ('let us wake our sleeping brothers and fly in a battle with them') in 'Napred' ('Forward', 1866), *ibid.*, p.101. 'Napred' is not original, but a bulgarianised version of 'Vpered' by the Russian N.A. Pleshcheev. I include a translation amongst my evidence because Slaveikov had some original input in the poem. Even if that had not been so, the choice of material for translation tells us something about what Slaveikov considered worth promoting.

<sup>169</sup> 'Стани, стани, юнак балкански/ от сън дълбок се събуди./ срещу народа отомански/ ти българите поведи!!! Че сълзи кървави пролива/ във робство милий наш народ;/ високо той ръце простира/ да го избави вишний бог!!! И тъй ний много претърпяхме, / но стига толкоз да търпим, / да бъдем пак, каквито бяхме./ ил' всннца да се изтребим.' 'Wake up, wake up, Balkan hero./ wake up from your deep sleep/ and lead the Bulgarians/ against the Ottoman people!// Because it is enyoked, our dear nation/ sheds tears of blood/ it [the nation] raises its hands / hoping that God will rescue it./ So, we had suffered a great deal/ but this is enough suffering;/ let us be again what we used to be / or let us all extinguish ourselves.' Dobri Chintulov, 'Stani, stani, iunak balkanski', in Dobri Chintulov, *Stani, stani, iunak balkanski* (Wake up, wake up, Balkan hero), Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1986, p.11.

state. On the one hand, he angrily urges his compatriots to wake up from their sleep and to break free of the yoke, but, on the other, he claims that Bulgarian history is a history of exploitation and, although in the past the rulers were Bulgarians, even then the circumstances of the Bulgarians differed little from those of his own day's. Botev regards the state of decay as shameful (the shameful Asiatic yoke); that is, it is morally wrong to be in a state of decay, but the moral fault lies with the one who is enyoked, not necessarily only with the enyokers.<sup>170</sup> Sleep in this case does not give the body strength; it is merely a symptom of the sickness of the body.

In his sarcastic *feuilleton* 'Politicheska zima' (Political winter, 1875), Botev uses a profusion of metaphors to make his point that it is unimportant to the Bulgarians whether they decay or progress. Similarly to Kollár, Botev believes that the whole world is in a state of decay. The world is divided into oppressors and oppressed. All nations are in an unnatural state: most of the Slav nations are oppressed parts of multinational empires; the rulers only quarrel over the ownership of the territories the oppressed inhabit. Botev compares Europe to a pub, where the rulers are the drunken customers who only shout and brawl. Turkey is not among the shouting and brawling rulers; indeed, it is not in the pub (in Europe) at all. The Bulgarians, however, are even worse off than the Turks: they are not even near the pub; they are fast asleep at home.<sup>171</sup> Like

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<sup>170</sup> 'Even those who most indulged in sleeping, the most backward blood brothers of ours, the people of Herzegovina, were roused and woke up from their deep sleep and are now up, young and old alike, even the women, are attempting to get rid of the shameful Asiatic collar. [...] while we, the Bulgarians, sleep, dream and are delirious. Circassians rob us, beat us and kill us; the Turks attack our honour, our property and our lives; the Turkish government sells even the shirt on our back, has even started to use the skin of our backs, and we put up with everything. We have enormous patience and we expect liberty and happiness to fall into our laps. But...shall we still sleep? Let's sleep, brothers; that will help us grow up', Hristo Botev, 'Shte li da spim nii oshte' (Are we going to continue sleeping, 1875) in Botev, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol.1., ed by Mihail Dimitrov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1971, p.247.

<sup>171</sup> Botev, 'Politicheska zima' (1875), in *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol.1, pp.403-07.

Karavelov, however, Botev is inconsistent. Contrary to his assertion that Bulgarians had always been in decay, he claims that the Bulgarians were once a freedom-loving nation, but that the decay of the Ottoman Empire had infected them; the chains around Bulgarian necks have corroded.<sup>172</sup> In the same work, however, Botev asserts that the freedom-loving Bulgarians have always been oppressed by their rulers, who had been predominantly Byzantine. Nevertheless, the common people have always been separated from the rulers and, therefore, have always been as 'pure' as they are today. The separation of the rulers from the ruled led to the Bulgarians' falling first into Greek, and then, into Turkish hands. Had they not been separated from the rulers, they would have fought against the foreigners and would not have allowed themselves to fall under a yoke.<sup>173</sup> Had the Bulgarian people been left alone, they would have managed their state well; Botev sees evidence for this claim in the way the Bulgarians manage their local communities. Infection and decay, therefore, come only from outside.<sup>174</sup> Thus, Botev, again like Karavelov, alters his ideas about the decay of the Bulgarians according to the circumstances in order to stimulate national consciousness more efficiently.

Botev does, however, praise 'sleeping' states in his poem 'Hadzhi Dimităr', where, like Chintulov, he uses the topos of the sleeping Prince Marko who (like the Blanik Knights) will wake and save the Bulgarians (or, as in folk tales, the Serbs) from the Turkish yoke.<sup>175</sup> In this poem Botev combines the topos of the

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<sup>172</sup> Botev 'Narodăt vchera, dnes i utre' (The people yesterday, today and tomorrow, 1871), in *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol.2, ed by Petăr Dinekov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1971, p.37.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, p.42.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, p.43. Botev is something of an anarchist; he believes that society needs to be ruled by nothing more than the natural forces that lie in a nation.

<sup>175</sup> Hristo Botev, 'Hadzhi Dimităr' [1873] in Botev, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol.1, pp.68-70. Prince Marko was a real historical figure and after he was killed in battle folk songs were composed that denied his being dead.

sleeping Prince Marko (by stating that the wounded haji Dimităr is still alive) with the wounded-hero topos of popular ballads. A similar song to Botev's 'Hadzhi Dimităr' is recorded by, among others, Karavelov, and in this song eagles feed the bleeding hero on the mountain-side; in 'Hazhdi Dimităr' eagles, wolves and fairies look after the hero.<sup>176</sup> Karavelov also devotes a play to haji Dimităr as an immortal hero. In his version, however, instead of haji Dimităr, Mother Bulgaria is asleep, and fairies wake her up and utter political statements that express Karavelov's views on liberty and how to achieve it.<sup>177</sup>

Sleeping brings recovery only in Bulgarian folklore: in Revival literature, sleeping appears as a sign of suspended activity, which is pathological. Thus, regardless of the metaphorical similarities, there is no Bulgarian parallel to the 'Czech dream' or if there is a Bulgarian dream it appears to be a nightmare. The only case when sleeping contains hope is the sleep of Mother Bulgaria: she is always awoken by good creatures (fairies in Karavelov, an educated European in Bozveli's 'Prosveshthenii Evropeits' [Educated European (written in the 1830s, first published 1901)], or Minerva in Jordan Hadzhikonstantinov Dzhinot's (1818- 82) 'Minerva i devet muzi [Minerva and the nine Muses, 1861]).<sup>178</sup> Unlike Mother Bulgaria who is only awakened by good creatures, the Czech or Bohemian Blanik Knights can only be awakened by disaster. Although metaphors of sleep are used in both cases, there are major differences in the interpretation of the waking: in the Czech case, waking indicates that

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<sup>176</sup> See, for example, 'Bolen iunak i orli prisluzhnitsi' (Sick hero and eagle helpers), in Bozhan Angelov and Hristo Vakarelski, *Trem na bălgarskata narodna istoricheska epika. Ot Momchila i Krali Marka do Karadzhatata i hadzhi Dimitra*, Sofia, Chipev, 1939, pp.311-12. The volume contains other songs with a 'sick hero', for example, pp. 171-77: the sick Doichin only appears sick, but is nevertheless able to protect his people, and his sister, or p.193.

<sup>177</sup> Karavelov, 'Hazhdi Dimităr Iasenov' in Karavelov, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol.4, pp.343-47.

<sup>178</sup> Neophyte Bozveli, 'Prosveshthenii evropeiits, polumershaia mati Bolgariia i sin mati Bolgarii' and Jordan Hadzhikonstantinov Dzhinot, 'Minerva i devet muzi i Ostrimech se razgovariat radi izgubena Bălgariia', in Bradistilova-Dobрева, *Văzrozhdenski dialozi*, Sofia, BAN, 1985.

Bohemia is in the dangerous last stages of decay; in the Bulgarian case, waking indicates an end to suffering. In both cases, however, the metaphor of waking has the function of a foundation myth for the new, that is, resuscitated, nation.

In the following chapters I look at how this physical, mental and moral decline came about and the results it had. In chapter 2, devoted to notions of corruption of blood, I examine the ideas of the sacred homeland – and see this sacred homeland from the point of view of the theory of climate. Then I look at ways of polluting the national body through miscegenation, as well as ways of improving other nations' physical and mental constitutions through miscegenation. In chapter 3, I discuss how, as a result of organic interpretations of language, the corruption of language was not only a betrayal of the national cause, but also an infection of the national body (and morality), like the pollution of the national blood. The spiritual side of national life, its religion and the alienation that follows the corruption of religion, is discussed in chapter 4. In chapter 5 I bring the results of these various forms of decay together by looking chiefly at moral decline; this chapter concentrates on the perceptions of cities as breeding grounds for moral decay and dirt, and for fruitless sexual encounters, mainly extramarital.

Just as crystals need an alien particle to crystallise around, Czech and Bulgarian nationalism needed the threat of contamination and decay to create a new foundation myth. Once the crystal has formed, it is difficult to claim that the alien particle is alien. Likewise, decay is so immanent a part of nationalism that the national body could not be formed without a virus against which anti-bodies were to be created.

## The Corruption of the Nation through Blood

There were giants on the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. (Genesis 6:4) And God looked upon the earth and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. (Genesis 6:12)

In this chapter I will examine ideas of the pollution of blood, through portrayals of others' taking over the national territory, the sacred homeland, and mingling their blood with that of the Bulgarian/Czech nation, that is to say miscegenation. By looking at treatments of the corruption of blood I shall demonstrate that ideas of 'racial hygiene' were in circulation long before the term was coined.<sup>1</sup> My argument is that ideas of femininity and purity of blood were employed as devices in the call for prophylaxis that Revivalist mythology constituted: both femininity and purity of blood were perceived at the same time as the most secure vehicles of nationality and the easiest sources of corruption. Revivalists proclaimed the urgent need to protect the weak and attractive femininity of their nation, which was a way of appealing to the manliness of the average Czech or Bulgarian. Furthermore, national mythology presented a homogeneous community of particularly virile men to protect the women (who were normally beautiful just because they were Bulgarian or Czech). I will also try to point out that, although in general Czech nationalism is believed to be more linguistic than haematic, the Czech Revivalists dwell to the same extent as the Bulgarian on the importance of the purity of blood.

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<sup>1</sup> The term was coined by Alfred Ploetz in *Grundlinien einer Rassenhygiene, I: Die Tüchtigkeit unserer Rasse und der Schutz der Schwachen*, 1895. See Foustka, *Slabí v lidské společnosti*, pp.55, 73.



## 1. The meanings of blood

Blood is a sacred fluid, and sacred objects are often considered impure.<sup>2</sup> This applies particularly to female blood. Blood and soil have always been linked with the female principle, while semen and trees represent the male principle. In national mythologies, blood and soil are linked in the process of the sacralisation of the homeland. The homeland was often represented as a female, and therefore an implicit connection was made between the violation of the sacred homeland, that is, the loss of independence, and dishonouring a female member of the nation. This could be detrimental to the further life of the tribe, clan, *ethnie*, or, eventually, the nation, because it proved the men incapable of looking after their women, which was shameful.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, taking over the women means also taking control of the quality of the offspring, which is doomed to be mixed with the blood of the conqueror; that is, men who have allowed their soil and women to be taken over by aliens have no control over the future. This cannot be acceptable in any national ideology since national ideologies are about the link between the past and the future.

In the nineteenth century, within the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empires modern nationalist ideology was adopted to a large extent *via* the works of Herder, Fichte, Jahn and Arndt. From Fichte came the idea that the nation was considered an extension of the self. The notion that not the bloodline of the

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<sup>2</sup> Mary Douglas discusses the ambivalence of the concept of divinity and its link with impurity in her *Purity and Danger*, especially the chapter 'Ritual Uncleaness', pp.7-29. Camporesi claims 'Life and salvation were closely tied up with its quality and its purity.' Piero Camporesi, *Juice of Life. The Symbolic and Magic Significance of Blood*, New York, Continuum, 1995, p.14.

<sup>3</sup> Anthony D. Smith defines *ethnie* as 'collective cultural units and sentiments of previous eras' in *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1999, p.13.

nobility, but the bloodline of the 'people' constituted the nation was borrowed chiefly from Arndt. Apart from the view that the nation was best preserved in the language, Herder influenced the Bulgarian and the Czech Revivalists with his notion that national character was influenced by climate and with his comparison of the lives of nations with the lives of plants and lower animals. Nations were natural, and organic. In both Czech and Bulgarian Revivalist nationalist writing corporeal and family metaphors were common. Thus, a blood relationship was often seen to bind the members of the nation – to each other and to their territory.

## **2. Sacred homeland imagery**

Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists were following Herder's idea that every nation should have its own state. Multinational empires were unnatural, according to Herder and his Slav followers. In Herder's words, 'national degeneration may arise through servitude' which also causes the subjugated nations' 'somnolent apathy'.<sup>4</sup> This apathy appears because of the rape of the female principle, the soil. Thus it seemed to the Bulgarian/Czech Revivalists that the decay of the Bulgarian/Czecho-Slav nation under the Ottoman/Habsburg empires had been inevitable. Since both Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists believed in the organic bond between national character and territory, foreign (Habsburg or Ottoman) rule over the national territories was considered unnatural and therefore degenerative.

Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists propagated the unnaturalness of multinational empires through asserting the natural borders of the ethnic

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<sup>4</sup> Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, p. 198. It is, however, to be noted that only towards the end of the Czech Revival did a small group of writers actually suggest that the Czechs should become independent of the Monarchy and form a republic (Karel Sabina (1811-77) and J.E. Sojka, for example).

community and the natural bonds between the people and the soil. The relationship between the soil and the people worked in two ways: on the one hand, the people influenced the nature of the soil and topography by bleeding into it; the effect of the blood-soaked soil, on the other hand, helped to form racial characteristics and national character. Blood was normally shed while defending the territory, a sacred act to enhance the sacredness of the soil. Having the sacred homeland under alien rule was detrimental to the racial type.

### **3. Blood-soil relationships**

Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists created the myth of sacred homeland through spreading the belief that the soil of the nation was sacred because the blood of heroic ancestors had sunk into it. Blood acquired a double nature, fused the male and female principle: the blood of the heroic dead ancestors had fertilised the female representation of the nation. Thus, in national mythology the spilt blood of the nation binds the members of the nation with its territories. For example, the Czech popular historian Antonín Žalud Vysokomýtský, writes: ‘Blood was spilt constantly, so there is no hillock, stone nor brook where Czech blood was not shed in the defence of the fatherland’. He continues: ‘The soil of our country is fertilized by the most noble lives and manly self-sacrifice of our forebears; all their blood was shed in the hope that one day there would be a beautiful harvest!’<sup>5</sup>

The mainstream neo-Revivalist writer Sofie Podlipská (1833-97) unwittingly joined the eccentric Žalud in the mythicisation of the native soil: ‘Meanwhile, however, an almost horrific number of victims fell and their blood, shed for the mother country, mingled with the moaning soil, which sucked it in

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<sup>5</sup> Antonín Vysokomýtský, *Početí roku 1620 a sledí jeho, čili řádění Jezuitů v Čechách a na Moravě* (The conception of 1620 and its results, or the Rampaging of the Jesuits in Bohemia and Moravia), Litoměřice, Medau, 1849, p. 86. (Hereafter, Žalud, *Početí roku 1620.*), p. 1.

and drank it and the memory of this blood remained in the soil, which makes this native land so very dear to us.’<sup>6</sup> Žalud and Podlipská conceive only of the blood of the ancestors spilt and so binding later generations morally. In Karolina Světlá’s Revivalist novels, the blood of recent ancestors and of her contemporaries establishes this morally binding relationship. In *Jitřenka*, for example, the main characters, convinced nationalists, commit suicide, which they conceive of as sacrificing their lives at the altar of the nation; the action is set at the end of the eighteenth century. In 1848 the new constitution is apparently offered and there are popular celebrations. The tomb of the main characters is one of the places where the celebrations are held.<sup>7</sup>

The fact that Czechs had died violent deaths in their homeland also contributed to the creation of the myth of Czech suffering.<sup>8</sup> The Czechs’ ancestors had been martyrs, because they died in their homeland defending it against aliens: the myth of the Slavs as a peace-loving, innocent nation was conceived by Adam Hartman in his *Historia persecutionum ecclesiae Bohemiae* (1647, Czech version 1655), taken over by Herder and developed from Herder by Kollár.<sup>9</sup> The bond between Czechs and their soil was valid only when the Czechs were true Czechs, that is, when the bond was racial. For example, even if Jews shed their blood defending the Bohemian Lands, a bond between the Jews and the Czech soil could not be established and thus the Czech soil did not

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<sup>6</sup> Sofie Podlipská, *Jaroslav Šternberk* [1881], 3rd edn, Prague, Unie, 1940, vol.1, p. 432.

<sup>7</sup> Karolina Světlá, *Jitřenka*, pp.522-23.

<sup>8</sup> For an analysis of Czech suffering myths see R. B. Pynsent, ‘Czech Self-Definition Through Martyrs’ in Pynsent, *Questions of Identity*, pp.147-210.

<sup>9</sup> See also Jungmann, *Překlady*, vol.2, pp.430-31. Kollár portrays the peaceful Slavs in his *Slávy dcera*, and in his *Cestopis obsahující cestu do Horní Italie a odtud přes Tyrolsko a Bavorsko se zvláštním ohledem na slávjanské živly. Roku 1841 konanou a sepsanou* (Travelogue containing a journey to Upper Italy and from there to Tyrol and Bavaria with particular regard to Slav elements. Conducted and written in 1841), Prague, Kober, 1862 (hereafter *Cestopis*), and in *Dobré vlastnosti národa slovanského* (Good qualities of the Slav nation, 1822), in Jan Kollár, *Rozpravy o slovanské vzájemnosti*, ed. by Miloš Weingart, Prague, Slovanský ústav, 1929. See also Pynsent, *Questions of Identity*, p.80.

shape the Jews' character. The Jews, as Havlíček asserts, cannot ever become Czechs and their desire to shed their blood for the Bohemian Lands can only be artificial and when expressed in verse as it had been by Siegfried Kapper (1820-79) it indicates that the Jewish poet was just looking for a rhyme rather than expressing his own desires.<sup>10</sup>

Bulgarian blood in the Bulgarian soil also testified to the Bulgarians' suffering under alien aggressors. One may find statements that the soil's main characteristic lies in the fact that it still absorbs the blood of the Bulgarians, for example in Iliia Bláskov: 'And in such a place, in such a battle-field, could a mortal enjoy all the pleasant things nature gives one? Could one walk with a light heart on this green lawn, which is constantly being sprinkled with human blood?'<sup>11</sup> And: 'God knows how many people's blood this black soil had drunk!'<sup>12</sup>

Liuben Karavelov often derived the Bulgarians' contemporary state of decay from the fact that they had profaned the sacred Bulgarian soil, sacred because it contained the blood and remains of their ancestors.<sup>13</sup> He also, however, considered the Bulgarian soil corrupt for the same reason and one notices here that heroes are sacralised into martyrs. The heroes died for the Bulgarian people as Christ had died for mankind: 'We cannot tell our dead even to 'rest in peace', for this soil is every day being bathed in their children's blood [...]. Had someone started, digging they would have found martyrs' bones

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<sup>10</sup> Karel Havlíček, 'České listy od Sigfrieda Kappera' (České listy [collection of verse] by S.K.. 1846) in K.Havlíček Borovský, *Dílo*, vol.1, Prague, Československý spisovatel, 1986, p.336.

<sup>11</sup> Iliia Bláskov, *Izgubena Stanka* (Lost Stanka, 1865) in Iliia Bláskov, *Povestvovaniia za vāzrozhdenskoto vreme. Izbrani tvorbi*. Sofia, BZNS, 1985, p.35.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.62.

<sup>13</sup> 'The graves in which the bones of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers lie have been given up for desecration, which should make their grandchildren feel ashamed'. Karavelov, 'Haji Dimitār Iasenov', p.293.

down to nine archins'.<sup>14</sup> Karavelov criticises the Bulgarians for declining so far as to be exploited as domestic animals, on soil that was steeped in their heroic ancestors' blood: 'On the other bank, in the bushes above the old Bulgarian glory, above the bones of the Bulgarian defenders of the land and fighters for national freedom and happiness, were a few more girls and boys, who were captured before us. Tied up and thrown on the grass, like lambs before the slaughter, the wretched children were lying there weeping bitterly'.<sup>15</sup> Botev also writes of the blood of contemporaries being spilled and forming part of the natural landscape:

Кажи им, майко, да помнят,  
да помнят мене да търсят:  
бяло ми месо по скали,  
по скали и по орляци,  
черни ми кърви в земята,  
в земята, майко, черната.

(Tell, them [his brothers], let them remember me./ remember me and seek me:/ my white flesh on the rocks./ on the rocks and where eagles dwell./ my black blood in the soil./ in the black soil, mother!)<sup>16</sup>

Blood in the native soil served the same ideological purposes in the Czech as in the Bulgarian Revival. But Slav blood had been sinking into foreign soil as well. Foreign soil drinks the blood of the Slavs for example in Kollár's *Slávy dcera*. Kollár employs the biblical ban on the spilling of innocent blood.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the Germans have sinned not only in spilling innocent blood, but also in refusing to repent. In the second canto, Kollár, instead of just saying that the Germans should repent for the killing of innocent Slavs, has the Daughter of

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<sup>14</sup> Karavelov, 'Neda', in Karavelov, *Săbrani săchineniia v dvanadeset toma*, vol.1, pp.383-84.

<sup>15</sup> Karavelov, 'Turski pasha' (Turkish pasha, 1868) in Karavelov, *Săbrani săchineniia v devet toma*, vol.1, ed. by Tsveta Undzhieva, Docho Lekov, Petko Totev, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1965, p.116.

<sup>16</sup> Hristo Botev, 'Na proshtavane' (Farewell, 1868), in Hristo Botev, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol.1, p.40.

<sup>17</sup> Compare Deuteronomy (19:10), 'That innocent blood be not shed in thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and so blood be upon thee.'

Sláva grow plants and flowers where Slav fighters had fallen and these plants both remind the Germans of their sins and urge the Czechs to take revenge:

A pak sedmdesát obezhlavil,  
nevinců zde, tak že pole to  
dlouho leby bylo oseto,  
jejichž červec řeku zakrvavil.  
Nyní Sláva na tom osadila  
zahradu si místě velikém,  
a z hlav stromy, květy učinila;  
v středku zří se hlava Stojněvova,  
pak ta, jemuž oči s jazykem  
živé dřela vzteklost Geronova.

(And then he [Gero, legendary German leader who slaughtered the Polabian Slavs] beheaded seventy/ innocent here, so that this field/ was long sown with skulls/ whose redness had bloodied the river./ Now Sláva has settled on it/ and made in the great place a garden./ made trees from the heads, and flowers./ in the middle one can see the head of Stojněv/ and then the head of him from which Gero's ire/ had torn living and tongue.)<sup>18</sup>

In the second wave of neo-Revivalism<sup>19</sup> that grew during, but chiefly followed the First World War, Rudolf Medek (1890-1940) verse expresses views similar to Kollár's and Karavelov's on the fortune of Czech blood spilled on Russian land. Medek, however, is more optimistic than Karavelov and dwells more on the action than Kollár in the second canto of *Slávy dcera*. Medek believes that the blood of heroes will liberate their land, which is pretty conventional:

My víme, že z barvy krve rudé  
ohnivá zář vzejde nad Čechami  
nad poli zlatými, nad nivami  
že nové slunce svítit bude!

My víme, že z barvy krve rudé  
červené květy vzplanou v stráních  
volnosti dar že uzrá na nich  
i na věky u nás sídlet bude.

My víme, z té barvy krve rudé  
že vzejde štěstí našich dětí,  
i na nás že ještě po staletí  
vzpomínat šťastný národ bude.

Krev dědů i míza dějin slavných,  
hrdinů starých věková setba,  
planoucí výzva smělych zvuků  
husitských písní, nepřátel kletba  
nás činí nepřemožitelnými,  
nás, vojáky prvního pluku.

<sup>18</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera*, pp. 134-35.

<sup>19</sup> After the 1860s/70s to the early 1890s, further powerful bouts of neo-Revivalism occur in Czech literature, one after each of the two world wars.

(We know that from the crimson colour of blood/ a fiery glow will rise over Bohemia,/ that a golden sun will shine/ over golden fields, over meadows.// We know that from the crimson colour of blood/ red flowers will flame up on the hillsides/ that the gift of liberty will ripen on them/ and will settle with us forever.// We know that from the crimson colour of blood/ the happiness of our children will rise/ and that a happy nation will remember/ us for centuries to come.// The blood of grandfathers and the sap of a glorious history,/ the age old sowing of old heroes/ the burning challenge of the bold sounds/ of Hussite hymns, the curse of enemies/ make us invincible./ us, the soldiers of the First Regiment[of the Czechoslovak Legion].)<sup>20</sup>  
 Medek returns to the same idea in *Zborov* (1917, first published independently);

here he also speaks of the bond between forefathers' remains and the soil as well as the bond between their blood and the soil. Here most important, a piece of Ukrainian soil becomes Czech soil, thanks to the Battle of Zborów, the first time Czech soldiers had fought under their own colours since 1620. Here he also specifies the exact type of red flower that grows on the graves of the dead ancestors: poppies, the symbolic flower of the Western front:

Za temných noci  
 na jejich mohyle tryznu slaví  
 staří slovanští bozi.  
 Planoucím létem  
 zde kvetou horké, rudé máky!  
 Odtud zní výzva, odtud zní příkaz  
 všem, kteří váhají, všem, kteří hynou  
 v potupném rabství!

(In dark nights/ the ancient Slav gods/ celebrate a memorial service on their [the Czechs'] burial mound./ In flaming summer/ hot, crimson poppies blossom here!/ From here rings out a challenge, from here rings out a command/ to all who hesitate, to all who are perishing/ in shameful servitude!)<sup>21</sup>

Kollár gives numerous examples of innocent Slav blood being spilled in once Slav, but now foreign lands and rivers.<sup>22</sup> His firm belief in the Slavs as an *Urvolk*, however, leads him to maintain that, although this soil is ruled by aliens today, it remains essentially Slav, the notion of the sacralisation of land abroad that Medek took up. Such is the case of the remains of Comenius that have been left abroad (in the Netherlands); and he pities the great Czech, who could not

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<sup>20</sup> Rudolf Medek, 'Přísaha'(Oath, 1917) in Medek, *Lvi srdce* (Lion heart), Prague, Památník odboje, 1919, pp.26-27.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p.38.

<sup>22</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera*, pp.105 (I,121), 124 (II,14), 125 (II,15), 174-75 (II,90); Kollár goes as far as claiming that the major characteristic of German soil is that it is a receptacle for Slav blood and bones, (II,101), p.182.



even rest in Czech soil; Milek (Cupid), his guide, however, puts his mind at rest by telling him that what Kollár imagines to be foreign soil is genuine Slav soil:

[...] velice mne bolelo,  
že to tělo slavské leželo  
v cizí zemi tu a vyhnalosti,  
jako Mojžíš Josefovy kosti  
z Egypta kam nebe velelo,  
tak mé srdce tyto zachtělo  
přenesti v kraj slavské národnosti.  
„Mýlíš se,“ dí v tom a ke mně běží  
Milek s hříčkou lehkých poletů,  
„Slavskát' jest to zem kde muž ten leží;  
Slávové zde v času oddáleném  
domovali pode Venetů  
Belgických a Armorických jménem.”

(it pained me greatly/ that this Slav body was lying here/ in a foreign land, in exile./ as Moses took Joseph's bones/ from Egypt whither Heaven commanded/ so my heart felt like taking these bones/ into a land of Slav nationality./ 'You are wrong'. Cupid then says and runs to me/ a plaything of the gentle breezes/ 'This land is Slav where this man lies/ for in distant times Slavs/ were at home here under the name Belgian and Armoric Veneti.)<sup>23</sup>

Thus Kollár manages to marry the idea of the Slavs as a dove-like nation that would only fight in order to defend its territory with the existence of Slav blood abroad. Similarly, Masaryk considers the Slavs to be good soldiers who would only fight if they had to defend their homeland. In Masaryk's version the Slavs will never even contemplate attacking anyone; their innate modesty makes them convinced that they could not defeat anyone. If, however, they are ordered to do so, they are capable of taking even the most impregnable fortress. That is, fighting can bring no pleasure to the peace-loving Slavs; it is just duty.<sup>24</sup>

Bulgarian blood falls on foreign soil as well, but when the Bulgarians are in exile. In exile in the particularly infertile Turkish soil, even the blood of Bulgarian martyrs does not make it more fertile. Bulgarian martyrs' blood corrupts the Bulgarian soil to a lesser degree than it corrupts foreign soil.<sup>25</sup> The blood of the Bulgarian heroes, however, continues to fight the Turks. The

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, (II, 89), p.174.

<sup>24</sup> See T.G. Masaryk, *Česká otázka* (The Czech question, 1895), Prague, Masarykův ústav AV ČR, 2000, p.59.

<sup>25</sup> Karavelov, 'Mächenik', in Karavelov, *Säbrani sächinentia* vol. 2, ed. by Tsveta Unzhieva, Docho Lekov, Petko Totev, Sofia, Bälgarski pisatel, 1965, pp. 199-200.

difference between the representation of the Slavs abroad in Kollár and in Karavelov is that the Bulgarians in Karavelov's 'Máchenik' (Martyr, 1879) are in exile in an entirely foreign land; while Kollár's Slavs suffer in their normal, every-day life under permanent germanisation, and the blood evident in the rivers or the soil just demonstrates the cruelty of the Germans.

The female representation of the nation is a symbolic parallel to the soil in Revivalist literature; unlike Mother Earth, or, indeed, unlike blood-soaked soil, the female representation of the nation in Bulgarian and Czech nationalism represents chastity and fertility. In that the Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists follow in the footsteps of German nationalists, who created the image of Germania and its real-life model, Queen Louise of Prussia.<sup>26</sup>

The Bulgarian Revivalists made more frequent references to the female image of the Bulgarian nation than the Czech. Mother Bulgaria appeared first in the Neophyte of Hilendar-Bozveli's dialogues in the 1830s. Bozveli's dialogues contained the main tropes for describing Mother Bulgaria, regardless of their lack of popularity. His portrayal of her nearly bleeding to death, wounded by her own children, constitutes an instance of the influence Bozveli had on subsequent Revivalists; this image recurs in the Bulgarian Revival: 'I can see that they have hurt you fatally, bound your eyes and ears with a thick band so that you could not see or hear what they are doing; they have done this to you, who have been their common mother from time immemorial'.<sup>27</sup> The spilling of the blood of Mother Bulgaria by her own sons adumbrates the view that Mother Bulgaria's sons are in a state of decay.

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<sup>26</sup> During the nineteenth century French nationalists also changed the image of the female representation of the French nation, Marianne, from an active, young and scantily clad female into a chaste, fully clothed woman. See George Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, pp.90-100.

<sup>27</sup> Neophyte of Hilendar-Bozveli, 'Prosveshthenii Evropeits, polumershaia Mati Bolgaria i sin Bolgarii', in Margarita Bradistilova-Dobreva (ed.), *Vázrozhdenski dialozi*, p.36.

The next most popular image conceived by Bozveli is of Mother Bulgaria as 'having given birth and constantly giving birth'.<sup>28</sup> He is probably alone in suggesting the similarity between Mother Bulgaria and the Virgin Mary.<sup>29</sup> His followers, however, are keen on comparing the Bulgarian nation with Christ, which may be linked to Bozveli's notion of the virgin birth of the Bulgarian nation.

In the 1840s a bleeding Mother Bulgaria appears in Dobri Chintulov's poetry,<sup>30</sup> and in Karavelov's 'Hadzhi Dimităr Iasenov' Mother Bulgaria appears at the moment of the hero's death and his bleeding is paralleled with hers.<sup>31</sup> In both cases the bleeding body of Mother Bulgaria links the members of the nation to their territory. Hristo Botev composed the most popular portrait of Mother Bulgaria:

Ох, зная, че ти плачеш майко,  
затуй, че ти си черна робиня,  
затуй, че твоят свещен глас, майко,  
е глас без помощ, глас във пустиня.

(Oh, I know that you are crying, mother/ because you are a devastated slave/ because your sacred voice, Mother,/ is a voice to which no help comes./ a voice in the wilderness.)<sup>32</sup>

Botev ascribes the responsibility for Mother Bulgaria's state and for the fact that her 'sacred' voice is 'a voice in the wilderness' to the whole of Europe; for him, the decayed state of the Bulgarians within the Ottoman Empire is largely derived from the decayed state of the rest of Europe.

In the Czech case there are frequent references to *Matička Praha* (Mother Prague)<sup>33</sup> as well as to the soil as mother.<sup>34</sup> Kollár portrays the Slav Mother

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<sup>28</sup> Bozveli, 'Plach Bednaia Mati Bolgaria' (Cry of poor Mother Bulgaria), in Petăr Dinekov (ed.), *Văzrozhdenski stranici*, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1969, pp.107-34.

<sup>29</sup> Bozveli, 'Prosveshthenii Evropeits', p. 37.

<sup>30</sup> Dobri Chintulov, *Stani, stani, iunak balkanski*, p.22.

<sup>31</sup> Karavelov, 'Hadzhi Dimităr Iasenov', pp.343-47.

<sup>32</sup> Hristo Botev, 'Obesvaneto na Vasil Levski' (The hanging of Vasil Levski, 1876) in Botev, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol.1, p.78.

goddess Sláva as a mixture of sexually attractive female and Virgin Mary. In his verse mythology of the Slavs Sláva is the goddess at the beginning of the Slavs and the mother of Mína (known as the daughter of Sláva). Sláva is made up of the best qualities of all Slav tribes and passes these qualities onto her daughter. The daughter also has some similarity with the Virgin Mary. There is no mention of a father, which may suggest that Slávy dcera was conceived immaculately. After travelling about Slav or former Slav territory, Mína, like Virgil in Dante, travels around the Slav Heaven and Hell. Kollár makes an explicit parallel between the Virgin Mary and the sister of Sláva, Lada (the Slav Venus):

Lada v jednom těle s Madonnou  
Svorný sobě udělaly stánek.

(Lada in one body with the Madonna/ Made themselves a common abode.)<sup>35</sup>

The persistence of the parallels to the Virgin Mary at the birth of the Bulgarian nation, or, in Kollár's case, at the beginning of the Slav nation, has implications. First, it promotes the idea of the Bulgarians/Slavs as one family, in other words, a group connected by blood bonds. Secondly, being born by parthenogenesis creates a moral imperative and thus provokes further mythopoeia. Hence, a myth of the special mission for the Bulgarians/ Slavs and a myth of unjustly suffering Slavs, is exploited again. Kollár's fusing of the Virgin Mary with a sexually attractive female in the images of Sláva, Mína, (Slávy dcera), and Lada is parallel to the most often exploited image of a Czech

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<sup>33</sup> Světlá, *Na úsvitě* in Světlá, *Z dob národního probuzení*, ed. by Josef Špičák, Prague, SNKLHU, 1956, pp.219-447; Holeček, *Jak u nás žijou i umírají* (How they live and die in our region, 1898), Prague, Orbis, 1949, p.17.

<sup>34</sup> Karel Sabina, 'Země byla matkou všeho a protož posvátná' (The soil was everything's mother and therefore sacred), in Sabina, *Dějepis literatury československé staré a střední doby*, Prague, Štorch, 1866, p.17.

<sup>35</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera*, (I,102), p.93.

or Bulgarian female as a combination of blood and milk, the good bodily fluids, signifying life, as opposed to the Greek (in Bulgarian literature) /old Jewish or Hungarian (in Czech literature) women, who are dry and yellow. Dryness, the lack of bodily liquids, is linked with decay and death. In medieval thought, dryness was also linked with lewdness.<sup>36</sup> Lada and the female portraits in general, suggest the capacity to preserve the blood within the body, but also the ability to reproduce.<sup>37</sup>

The parthenogenetic inception of the Bulgarians' or Slavs' blood-line, as well as their living on soil in which because of the ancestors' blood moral obligations are inherent, have produced modern Bulgarians and Slavs. In addition, a number of Czech or Czecho-Slovak Revivalists, including Kollár, František Palacký, Karel Sabina (1813-77) and Žalud-Vysokomýtský wrote on the naturalness of the Czech nation, determined as it was by its 'natural' geographical boundaries. The Czechs followed Herder in his belief that 'The more isolated they [the nations] were and, indeed, the more they were pressed from outside, the firmer their characters became, and so, if each of these nations had remained in its place, one would be able to view the Earth like a garden: here one, there another, there yet another human plant-nation would bloom in its own form and Nature'.<sup>38</sup> The fact that the Bohemian Lands are surrounded by mountains is seen as evidence of both God-giveness and the successful natural preservation of pure Czechness.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> See Camporesi, *Juice of Life*, pp. 46-47; Camporesi draws on fifteenth-century examples of 'lean' women being perceived as lewd and loving entertainment and jewellery, in other words everything idealised Czech or Bulgarian women would disdain.

<sup>37</sup> Dryness is linked with death in the Bible (Ezekiel 37: 1-10). Fichte uses the passage from Ezekiel to inspire the Germans into believing that even seemingly dead people/armies could be revived. Fichte, *Addresses*, p. 44.

<sup>38</sup> Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, p. 326.

<sup>39</sup> See, for example, Žalud, *Početí roku 1620*, p.1.

Kollár goes further than just stating that the Czech frontiers are natural. He appeals to the Slavs to fence themselves off from the Teutons instead of relying only on the natural frontiers. He proposes the Slavs should build a Great Wall of China between themselves and the Germans. Despite the fact that the Germans have already taken everything they were able to, they would not hesitate to suck the milk from Slav breasts if there were nothing else left to be taken.<sup>40</sup>

Although Bulgarian Revivalists do not express any belief in the natural fortification of Bulgaria, they do believe a natural bond exists between nation and its territory. In believing that, Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists alike draw on the one hand on Herder's views on topography and climate, and, on the other, on climatic race theory.

In Kollár's version, for example, the assertion of the special characteristics of the Slavs was based on climatic race theory, although sometimes it contradicted it. On the one hand he asserts that the Slavs live only where the climate is pleasant; on the other, their character influences the weather. Where the Germans or germanised peoples live, the weather is inclement:

Kde lid český bydlí, jasno bylo,  
než kde Němci aneb zněmčenci,  
tam se všude nebe oblačilo.

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<sup>40</sup> 'od Adrie k Baltu po zem finskou, / na Dunaj a Labe bezmezné, / ne jak Chrobrý sloupy železné, / ale zeď bych vybudoval čínskou. / Hranici tou vás bych otábořil, / o vy, bratři naši ubozí, / kterých Teuto takto upotvořil; / a když nemá co vám více bráti, / vzav už všecko, teď se nezhoří / ještě mléko slávských prsů ssáti.' (I would build, from the Adriatic to Finland in the Baltic, / by the Danube and the unlimited Elbe, not iron gates like the Bold [Boleslaw Chrobry, Polish king], / but a Great Wall of China. / I would fortify your frontiers with encampments, / o you, our wretched brethren, / whom the Teuton has so disfigured, / and if he has nothing else to take from you, / having taken everything, now he will not be afraid / to suck the milk of Slav breasts.), in Kollár, *Slávy dcera*, (II,15), pp.124-25. Without reference to Kollár, the building of the Great Wall of China is employed in contemporary Bulgarian nationalist mythology by authors like Hristo Madzharov, *Golemiat zagovor sreshtu bálgarite* [The great conspiracy against the Bulgarians], Varna, Alfiola, 2001 and Iolo Denev, *Bibliia na bálgarite i chovestvoto* [Bible of the Bulgarians and the humankind], Sofia, Tangra, 2000. Both insist that it was built so that the Chinese could protect themselves from the Bulgarians. This is slightly illogical, since both authors insist that the Chinese were actually Bulgarians.

(Where Czech people lived it was bright/ but where the Germans or the germanised [lived],/ the sky was everywhere darkened by clouds.)<sup>41</sup>

In Kollár the climatic effect on national character is also linked with physiognomy. He maintains that the moral characteristics of the Slavs are visible in their physical features. Their round faces reveal joy and innocence, where the Germans' long faces reveal cruelty, sadness and irascibility: a grotesque extension of Herder's topographical theories concerning nationhood.<sup>42</sup> Of Venice Kollár writes: 'Three basic prototypes are present in all Venetian heads and faces; one is Roman: long-necked, high-minded, melancholic, domineering, taciturn; the second is Slavonic: round-faced, amiable, merry, talkative, melodious; the third is some hodgepodge of Germanic and Arab blood.'<sup>43</sup> He maintains that there is a genuine difference in racial characteristics because of the different blood that runs in the veins of different races: Kollár asserts that French scholars have discovered that the blood of the German, English and Norman tribes is fundamentally different from the blood of the French, Italian and Slav tribes: the former being thicker and darker, the latter 'whitish, thin, and light'.<sup>44</sup>

Naturally, Bulgarian Revivalists also claimed that the Bulgarian climate was particularly clement, which facilitated the fertility of the land and the nation.

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<sup>41</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera*, (II,107), p. 186.

<sup>42</sup> 'Mnoho jsem si hlavu na tom trudil,/ proč jsou slávské tváře okrouhlé,/ a ne tenké, hrotné, tříuhlé/ jako jiných, veždy však jsem bloudil./ Ptám se Milka, on tak o tom soudil:/ "Smutek, hněv a city osuhlé/ způsobují tváře podlouhlé."/ A tím na věc pozornost mou zbudil/ Neb jsem viděl, že duch veselosti,/ smích a zpěvy lidský obličej/ přivozují k pěkné okrouhlosti./ a kdo nezná to, že tyto ctnosti/ v našem národu jsou obyčej/ panující od jakživosti?' (I have often exercised my mind/ about why Slav faces are round./ and not thin, jagged, triangular/ like those of others [that I saw] wherever I roamed./ I ask Milek [Cupid] and his judgement on the matter was:/ 'Sadness, anger and melancholy/ make long faces'./ And with that he roused my attention to something./ For I have seen that the spirit of meriness, laughter and singing lead/ the human face to pretty roundness./ and who does not know that these virtues/ are the prevalent custom of our nation/ and have been from time immemorial?), *Ibid.*, (1.21), p.38.

<sup>43</sup> Kollár, *Cestopis*, pp. 94-95. With a minor change at the beginning of the quotation, I use Pynsent's translation from *Questions of Identity*, p.87.

<sup>44</sup> Kollár, *Cestopis*, p.183.

The fact that people blessed with such exceptionally favourable climatic conditions did not live in a particularly favourable state was abnormal:

Everyone would have thought that in the midst of this rich, magnificent, delightful nature, in these rich and fertile forests, mountains, fields and hills, under the blessed southern sky, one could easily live in blissful splendour, one could live without even knowing what labour or suffering is; instead, if someone looked around, he would see only ruins everywhere; everywhere there are skin and bones instead of people; everywhere one hears of only suffering and poverty. Slavs, Slavs! May God give you more energy and less of the patience of an ox [the patience of Job].<sup>45</sup>

Bozveli believes that Bulgaria was famous all over the world for its particularly propitious climate. A character of his states about Bulgaria: 'I wish I could come to these places, see them with my own eyes, because geography books praise them greatly; according to these books the climate there is healthy and mild everywhere, the air and the water pure, the location excellent and the crops abundant'.<sup>46</sup>

These conditions are contrasted to the climatic conditions under which naturally inferior nations like the Turks live. Moreover, when inferior peoples appeared in places with a not particularly favourable climate, they could spoil the weather even further. Such is the case when Catholic missionaries appear in Constantinople, where the climate had been bad anyway, but deteriorated after their arrival:

Rain, accompanied by a very cold wind, was blowing in the one of the narrow steep streets of Constantinople. Everything was subdued; thick darkness prevailed; dogs were greeting each other and their barking was echoing around. The curtains of all houses were closed and the strong lamps, which were growing weaker, revealed a night in a frightening desert. Three people appeared at this moment: the first - black and yellow like death, the second - with a red beard like thunder, the third - blue like someone with gangrene.<sup>47</sup>

The naturally good climate of the lands that Bulgarians and Czechs inhabited found its reflection in their meek national characters, but was also the reason for alien nations' interest in their lands. The reason for the spilling of

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<sup>45</sup> Karavelov, 'Turski pasha', p.104.

<sup>46</sup> Bozveli, 'Prosveshtenii evropeits', p.67.

<sup>47</sup> Iosif G. Danelov, 'Iezuitsko gnjezdo ili parlamentät na papishtashkite podkupnici' (The nest of Jesuits or The parliament of the papist bribers, 1861)), in Margarita Bradistilova-Dobrevna (ed.), *Väzrozhdenski dialozi*, p.159.



Czech blood on Czech soil is the naturally good qualities of Czech land that appeal to most other nations, but especially to the Germans. Dobri Voinikov gives similar reasons for the spilling of Bulgarian blood on Bulgarian soil. In Voinikov's view, the fact that the Bulgarian lands are 'Heaven on earth' aroused the envy of all neighbouring nations. This caused numerous wars and the Bulgarians had to soak their soil with their own blood in order to defend their lands.<sup>48</sup> That is the reason behind all past and future Bulgarian misfortunes. In her *První Češka* Karolina Světlá expresses similar views on the Bohemian Lands. The Bohemian Lands are Heaven on Earth, and the envy of the Germans had caused much bloodshed. Unlike Voinikov, however, Světlá points out that the Czechs themselves had never started a war, had only had to defend their land.<sup>49</sup>

The portrayal of the relationship between nation and soil in such organicist terms suggested that the presence of foreigners on this soil was aberrant. The attempts of the Czechs and the Bulgarians not to allow other nations to overcome their territories had created particularly strong bonds between soil

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<sup>48</sup> 'Nature, in order to create one of the most enchanting places in the universe gave this place almost all of its natural resources. Really, this is one of the most beautiful places in the world. It is a fascinating garden under serene skies. Her beauty, her attractiveness has thrown her into the misfortune of the centuries! Yes!... Like a beautiful virgin, she has always attracted and will always attract the great conquerors of the world. Oh, her beauty equals only her wretchedness! She is wretched with her constant bloody battle-fields, with the constant violent changes of monarch, and today with seething discord! Her courageous people, although fortunate with her natural resources, are unfortunate with her disgraceful fate! Since this motherland of his [i.e. of the Bulgarian] has seen the first glory of her courageous conqueror Asparuh, the bloody battles with proud Byzantium have never stopped: neither Batai, nor Terbel, nor Telets, nor Boian, nor Telerik, nor Kardan could stop the bloodshed of her heroes! Within a whole century she has been the scene of the most horrifying battles and her disgraceful fate has been irrigated with the blood shed in these fights' in Dobri Voinikov, *Váztsariavaneto na Kruma Strashnii*, pp. 42-43.

<sup>49</sup> 'But beyond these mountains which steeply rise above us lied a hard, brutal people, created by the Lord so that by them He could try other nations. They destroyed each other like wild animals and their pastime was the bloody hunt. The land of Bohemia, blossoming like the Garden of Eden, enticed its greedy mind; it invaded the land with fire and sword, and God allowed that, so that he could discover the strength and faithfulness of His people. A holy zeal for freedom was burning in the guts of the Czechs' in Karolina Světlá, *První Češka*, Prague, Melantrich, 1975, p. 235.

and nation. The Bulgarians' and Czechs' failure to continue being the only inhabitants of their lands meant that they had allowed the organic bonds between people and territory to be sundered. That also meant that aliens had taken control over the female representation of the nation, that is, had committed a political rape of sorts.

Bulgarian Revivalists described falling under the Ottomans in similar terms. They contrasted the beautiful female embodiment of Bulgarianness with the embodiment of the Ottoman Empire, a lewd old man:

Mothers, conceal your daughters in the darkest hiding-places: they are in danger of infamy, tears, unhappiness, and eventually – disdain: the disgusting old man will love them only as long as their bodies are firm and fresh; hide your dear sons – these are to become the defenders of the stupid Koran, bodyguards of the Constantinople pigs and a scourge for Christians and for you!<sup>50</sup>

Botev contrasts the female embodiment of Bulgarianness, the birth-giving Mother Bulgaria, to a female embodiment of Turkishness: Turkey is a degenerate, drunken old prostitute:

Turkey [...] as any other ugly, drunken, despised prostitute has started telling lies, stealing, swearing and quarrelling with her young neighbours [...] [Turkey has started] to curse and reproach her former owners and pimps for leaving her without a kind word and without any protection; she announced to all the diplomatic eunuchs of Europe that she would never allow herself to be made fun of by the old rakes with whom she used to eat, drink and indulge in debauchery, and that she would not allow her skirts to be tugged by the men on the street who had come out of her dirty and suffocating embrace only yesterday.<sup>51</sup>

Both the male and female image of Turkey contain the potential of contamination: the male could dishonour Bulgarian women, while the female's behaviour could be contagious. In either case, however, allowing the haematic relationship between people and territory to be violated by the promiscuous is detrimental to the bond and brings infection to the people.

Turkey was often referred to as 'the sick man of the Balkans'.<sup>52</sup> Being ruled by someone sick is degenerative because his sickness is likely to be contagious.

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<sup>50</sup> Karavelov, 'Turski pasha', p.110.

<sup>51</sup> Botev, *Săchineniia*, vol. 2, p.83.

<sup>52</sup> A term coined by Tsar Nicholas II – later developed into 'the sick man of Europe'.

Since the Bulgarian Revivalists have a predilection for demetaphorising metaphors, attributing to them their literal meaning, the sickness of the Ottoman Empire becomes contagious through the breath of the sick Turkey; Botev writes: 'Turkey's gangrenous breath will infect us with incurable diseases'.<sup>53</sup> The Turks impose decay not simply because they rule over a nation other than their own, but chiefly because they are the least natural of all foreigners. From the 1850s onwards, to the Bulgarian mind the Turks become imposers of decay. Like Botev, Rakovski employs the image of gangrene in his description of Turkey:

The Turkish government, in the state it has reached, could justly be compared to a body which has been taken over by cankerous pain and ulcers and is just about to fall; and if one closed one ulcer another would open; therefore for an ultimate cure the body should be interred so that it can have a new incarnation: [Turkey could also be compared to] a tree which has been eaten by worms inside and by caterpillars on the outside, and is thus becoming desiccated; this tree should either be uprooted, or cut down to its base, so that new branches can grow out of it<sup>54</sup>;

What could even the best physician in the world do with a decrepit, gangrenous old man, who suffers from several sicknesses simultaneously? This is what the Turkish Empire is like today.<sup>55</sup>

In Czech nationalist propaganda, the prisoner of nations and therefore the imposer of decay was the Habsburg Empire. Kollár, among others, apart from dwelling on Herder's idea of the unnaturalness of multinational states, introduces an image of the Germans as imposers of decay even before the Habsburg Empire existed:

krásnohlasý zmužilých Slovanů kde se někdy ozýval,  
Aj, oněmelt' už, byv k úrazu žásti, jazyk.  
A kdo se loupeže té, volající vzhůru, dopustil?  
Kdo zhanobil v jednom národu lidstvo celé?  
Zardi se, závistná Teutonie, sousedo Slávy,  
tvé vin těchto počet spáchaly někdy ruce,  
neb krve nikdy tolik nevyžil čemidlaže žádný  
nepřítel, co vylil k záhubě Slávy Němec.  
Sám svobody kdo hoden, svobodu zná vážiti každou,  
ten kdo do pout jímá otroky, sám je otrok.

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<sup>53</sup> Botev, 'Zloto' [The Evil, 1871], in Hristo Botev, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol. 2, p.52.

<sup>54</sup> G.S.Rakovski, 'Nepovinen bălgarin' (Innocent Bulgarian, written 1854) in Rakovski, *Săchineniia*, vol. 1 ed. by Kiril Topalov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1983, p.75.

<sup>55</sup> G.S.Rakovski, 'Pogled na iztok' (A glimpse eastwards, 1861) in Rakovski, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol. 2, p.343.

(Where the fine-voiced language of the manly Slavs once rang out/ lo, it has fallen silent, having been struck by rancour./ And who committed this robbery that cries to the heavens?/ Who by casting shame on one nation, shamed all mankind?/ Blush, envious Teutonia, neighbour of Sláva./ it was once your hands that committed the number of these guilty acts./ for no enemy ever spilt so much ink/ as the German spilt in the destruction of Sláva./ Anyone who is worthy of freedom, respects every freedom./ He who fetters slaves is himself a slave.)<sup>56</sup>

That is, Kollár asserts, the immorality of conquering other nations and at the same time propagates the myth of Slav democracy. Kollár's belief in the Slavs' natural disposition to democracy influenced the Bulgarian Revivalists. He, for example, mentions on a number of occasions in his *Cestopis* that one of the most just rulers of Byzantium, Justinian, whom he calls Upravda, was a Slav. Among the Bulgarian Revivalists this belief is shared by Rakovski and Marin Drinov; both of them reiterate Kollár's view that Justinian bore his democracy in his Slav blood.<sup>57</sup>

For the Bulgarians the most degenerate and unnatural foreigners are the Turks and the Greeks. More often than not the physical characteristics of the unnatural nations match their moral qualities. Furthermore, the physical and moral characteristics of both Turks and Greeks are immutable. Referring to the oral tradition, especially proverbs, is a much-loved method of convincing the audience of the truthfulness of any statement concerning the permanent qualities of the Turks or the Greeks. A rarer variant of this consists in having Westerners express what the nationalist author supposes to be the fixed characteristics of the Turks or Greeks. Botev, for example, has the British Mr

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<sup>56</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera*, p. 18.

<sup>57</sup> See Kollár, *Cestopis*, pp.198-99; Rakovski, 'Otgovor na bogoslovska grátska broshura' (A response to a Greek theological brochure, 1860), in *Sábrani sáchineniia*, vol.3, pp.248-54. Marin Drinov, *Istoricheski pregled na bálgarskata tsárkva ot samoto i nachalo i do dnes*. (Historical survey of the Bulgarian Church from its very beginning till today) Vienna, Somerov, 1869, p.9. See also R. B. Pynsent, *Questions of Identity*, pp.85-86, where the author justly points out that none of the Czecho-Slav writers paid any attention to the fact that Justinian had fought the Bulgarian Slavs.

Monsel express his own conviction that 'the national character of the Turks is incorrigible'.<sup>58</sup>

The stereotypical representation of the Turks in pre-1878, and often post-1878, Bulgarian literature<sup>59</sup>, portrays them as ugly, hairy, dark, with coarse features and skin<sup>60</sup>, all of which are possibly signs of illness: 'a Turk old and half-rotten from debauchery and opium: white beard, green turban, yellow, swollen, wrinkled face'.<sup>61</sup> Elsewhere Karavelov, through the words of a child character, asserts:

What scarecrows these Turks were! [...] Their moustaches were long, like the peppers from Karlovo which people grow for bottling. Their faces were black and uneven, and their heads - shaven and sharp as water-melon stalks. Their bared chests were shaggy and their sleeves were rolled up as if they were not human beings, but butchers.<sup>62</sup>

This description reflects an innocent child's perception of the Turks – thus, although it may look naive and probably even humorous to an adult, it conveys Karavelov's conviction that the Turks are repulsive, while the Bulgarians are beautiful. The Turks' behaviour corresponds to their appearance. The Turks are so degenerate that cannibalism has become a normal practice, sanctioned by Islam. To put this message across Karavelov does not hesitate to exaggerate:

Look after yourselves, Bulgarians, hide your belongings far away: the Turk will come to you hungry and thirsty, naked and barefoot, greedy and cruel, evil and merciless, and in the name of Allah and His prophet will slit open your stomachs and will feed your

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<sup>58</sup> Hristo Botev, 'Narodät vchera, dnes i utre' (The people yesterday, today and tomorrow, 1871), in Botev, *Säbrani sächineniia*, vol.2, p.39.

<sup>59</sup> After 1878, the Turks and Ottoman rule had a different ideological meaning. Mihalaki Georgiev, for example, referred to the Ottoman rule with nostalgia. Compared to the new rulers, the Turks had been noble and dignified.

<sup>60</sup> Karavelov, 'Neda', p. 403.

<sup>61</sup> Karavelov, 'Turski pasha', p. 138.

<sup>62</sup> Karavelov, 'Neda', pp. 18-19; see also the physical description of the Turk from 'Voivoda', who was also likened to an Albanian and a Gypsy: 'Hasan was an Albanian and loved drinking very much: he had drunk away all his clothes; the only piece of clothing he had left was one Albanian fustanella (petticoat); otherwise he had one Albanian gun, a knife, a pistol and nothing else. Coarse, lice-ridden, disgusting, but he is din-islam and an aga, so he knew that he would find something to eat everywhere. [...] This Gypsy [...]; in Karavelov, 'Voivoda', in Karavelov, *Säbrani sächineniia v ävanadeset toma*, vol.1, p.60.

bowels to his brothers, who are born seven at a time and who accompany the hodja when he is praying to the great charlatan!<sup>63</sup>

According to this description the Turks are retarded; they reproduce quickly, like any evil force. Since they cannot provide for themselves, the Bulgarians have to feed them. In other words, when the Bulgarians procreate in large numbers, it manifests their health and fertility, but when Turks do so, it manifests atavism, which is perceived as a threat to the Bulgarians.

As described by the Bulgarian Revivalists, the Turks share many of the characteristics of antisemitic stereotypes. That goes, first, for the colour of their skin - dark/yellow, and, second, for the coarse, scarred texture of their skin, which is prone to skin disease.<sup>64</sup> With its open sores such skin leaves the body open, hence contagious emissions were more likely than in a whole body. Jews were susceptible to specific Jewish diseases, but the Turks were more prone to disease altogether. Unlike the Jews, however, the Turks were susceptible to diseases not normally associated with human beings, but with dogs, namely rabies: 'when spring is approaching the Turks fall ill with a sickness typical of dogs called rabies or hydrophobia. They become evil, treacherous, but frightened at the same time'.<sup>65</sup> Although one may claim that since this is satire it is not a representative for the general beliefs of the Bulgarians, it certainly represents a version of Turkish repulsiveness typical of Botev's propaganda method. Like Karavelov, Botev employs hyperbole, almost to a Swiftian degree, as a device of political persuasion. Furthermore, the Turks were alleged

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<sup>63</sup> Karavelov, 'Turski pasha', p.110.

<sup>64</sup> For the skin of the Jews and the beliefs that it had a particular predisposition to disease because of its colour and texture, see Sander Gilman's *Freud, Race, and Gender*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1993, pp.19-20, 158-59 and his *The Jew's Body*, New York and London, Routledge, 1991.

<sup>65</sup> Hristo Botev, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol. 3, ed. by Nikolai Zhechev, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1976, p.20. See also Inna Peleva, *Botev. Tialoto na natsionalizma*, Sofia, Kralitsa Mab, 1998, p.88.

to be more prone than the Bulgarians to the plague. In his *Zhitie i stradanie greshnago Sofroniia* (Life and suffering of sinful Sofronii, 1806) Sofronii of Vratsa claims that when the plague visited locations with a mixed Turkish and Bulgarian population, it affected mainly the Turks.<sup>66</sup>

Greeks, especially Greek women, appear to constitute the negation of everything healthy, natural and appreciated by a Bulgarian:

The beauty of their [Greek] women is false; their faces are plastered with make-up; their teeth wobble because of the bleaches they use for their skin. [...] Have a look at yourselves! Do you look like our roses [Bulgarian girls]? Where is the rosiness of your cheeks, which indicates health? Where are your breasts that are meant to help you raise healthy children? Where is the light in your eyes that represents kindness of heart?<sup>67</sup>

The Germans are the embodiment of degeneration and unnaturalness in Czech nationalist propaganda. Czech writers describe the Germans, especially the German upper classes, similarly to the way Bulgarians describe the Greeks. Žalud, for example, describes Ferdinand II, in Czech national mythology, the destroyer of Bohemia, in a manner strikingly similar not only to the images of a born criminal as described later by Lombroso, but also to the way the image of the Jew was blended with the image of Satan in the Middle Ages:

He had a high, flat forehead, which, however, sank near the nose; he had broad, thick eyebrows, long eye-lashes, large popping eyes, a long nose sunken above the bridge and bulging at the tip, a large mouth with fleshy, protruding lips, but an incongruously small chin, a thick moustache and an even thicker goatee [...] the general impression his face gives is of sharpness and craftiness and one cannot deny a similarity to a cunning, fierce animal.<sup>68</sup>

For Žalud the Germans and the Jews were virtually the same nation. The born criminal Ferdinand II, for example, traded the Jews' obligations to the state for an annual tribute. Thus the Jews, who should not have been allowed in Bohemia in the first place, since the Czechs should not mix with foreigners,

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<sup>66</sup> Sofronii of Vratsa, *Zhitie i stradanie greshnago Sofroniia*, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1981, p.40.

<sup>67</sup> Karavelov, *Maminoto detence* (Mummy's child, 1875), Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1958, pp.80-81.

<sup>68</sup> Žalud, *Početi roku 1620*, p. 122, translation R. B. Pynsent, *Conceptions of Enemy*, pp. 49-50. For the blending of the image of the Jew with the image of Satan in something that has 'dark, bulging eyes and a goatee' see Robert S. Wistrich, *Antisemitism. The Longest Hatred*, London, Methuen, 1991, reprinted London, Mandarin Paperbacks, 1992, p.29.

received the freedom 'to suck every heller out of the common people through trade'.<sup>69</sup> Since Žalud cannot accept that the decay of the nation could have been caused by anyone but the Germans, he transposes his nineteenth-century view that the Jews are Germans onto the seventeenth century: 'The Jews were Germans and so [Ferdinand II] welcomed them in Bohemia as disseminators of the German language— for every Jew was a German, and ill-disposed towards Slavdom.'<sup>70</sup> The notion of the Jews as Germans or at least quasi Germans fed much Czech political antisemitism in the nineteenth century and in the first quarter of the twentieth.

Both Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists created an image of the enemy-nation that was based on similarities with the Jews. At the same time, theories of race were developing all over Europe, the Jews being the race that exemplified the hostile race, and a race with immutable characteristics.<sup>71</sup> Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists' views on how Germans or Turks behaved strongly resembles Hitler's portrayal of Jewish behaviour:

The Jew completely lacks the most essential prerequisite of a cultural people, namely the idealistic spirit [...] He is and remains a parasite, a sponger who, like a pernicious bacillus, spreads over wider and wider areas according as some favourable area attracts him [...] Wherever he establishes himself the people who grant him hospitality are bound to be bled to death sooner or later [...] He poisons the blood of the others but preserves his own blood unadulterated [...] The black-haired Jewish youth lies in wait for hours on end, satanically glaring at and spying on the unsuspecting girl whom he plans to seduce, adulterating her blood and removing her from the bosom of her own people.<sup>72</sup>

Turks and Germans have done most of that: they have moved to the more favourable climate that originally the Slavs (Czechs and Bulgarians) inhabited, thus sundering the bonds between soil and people. Even worse, they also wrenched Czech and Bulgarian females away from their natural environment

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<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p.199.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> Jacques Barzun, *Race. A Study in Modern Superstition*, London, Methuen, 1938, p.28.

<sup>72</sup> Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, quoted in Léon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, p.1.



and thus bastardised the offspring of the Czechs and Bulgarians, that is, indulged in miscegenation.

#### 4. Miscegenation

The corruption of blood and of the moral qualities is most frequently attributed to miscegenation. For this reason it is used in foundation myths, including the Old Testament (Gen 6:2-7). The book of Genesis provides the reasoning behind considering the mixing of blood a crime, which brings punishment and eventually extinction.<sup>73</sup> Genesis also provides hope that some could avoid even such a serious crime, as is the case with Noah and his sons. Miscegenation plays a part in two of the most influential interlinked theories in the nineteenth century – degenerationism and race theory.

##### 4.1 *Urvolk* and purity of blood

One path to propagate the superiority of one's own nation lies in claiming, like Fichte, that all (European) nations originated from one's own nation. Kollár and Žalud in the Czech Revival and Rakovski in the Bulgarian take this path. Kollár (like Pavel Šafařík) believes that the Slavs are one nation with one language, which has different dialects and sub-dialects. Although Kollár does not go as far as to claim that all nations stemmed from the Slavs, in *Slávy dcera* he presents the Slavs as the primal civilizers of northern and eastern Europe, the leaders of savage North Europeans (this is a lyrical version of part of Herder's 'Slavenkapitel'):

Rci strome, chráme jejich rostlý, pode nimž se obětné  
Dávnověkým tehdáz pálily žertvy bohům:  
Kde jsou národové ti, jejich kde knížata, města,

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<sup>73</sup> Compare 'In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.' (Nehemiah 13: 23-25).

Jenž první v severu zkřísili tomto život?  
 Jedni učice chudou Evropu plachty i vesla  
 chystali a k bohatým přes moře vésti břehům,  
 kov tu jiní ze hlubin stkvoucí vykopávali rudných  
 více ku počtě bohům nežli ku zisku lidem.  
 Tam ti neúrodné rolníku ukázali rádlím,  
 By klas neslo zlatý, brázdití lůno země.  
 Lípy tito svěcený Slávě strom, vedle pokojných  
 cest sadili, chládek by stlaly vůkol i čich.

(Oh tree, their tall temple, under whom in those days/ they gave burnt offerings to the ancient gods, tell me:/ where those nations are, their princes, cities,/ that were the first to ignite life in this North?/ Some teaching poor Europe to make sails/ and oars and to guide them across the sea to rich shores;/ others were digging glistening metal from the ore-filled depths/ more for the glory of the gods than for human gain./ Those taught the farmer to furrow the infertile the womb of the land with plough/ so that it would bear golden ears of corn./ These planted limes, the tree consecrated to Sláva/ by peaceful ways, in order to spread cool shade and fragrance.)<sup>74</sup>  
 In Fichtean fashion, Kollár goes on to describe the germanised Slavs as a

deviation from Slavness, in other words, as renegades. Renegades they might be, but they cannot conceal their Slavness with their German ways (he is writing of the Polabian Slavs):

Slávy syna k bratrům příšlého v ty kraje nezná  
 brat vlastní, aniže vděčně mu tiskne ruky.  
 Řeč ho cizí zarazí ze rtů a tváři slovanské;  
 zrak mu lže Slovana, sluch klamy bolně kazí.

(The son of Sláva who came to his brothers into these lands is not acknowledged by/ his own brother, and he does not gratefully press his hands./ A foreign language issuing from Slav lips and face takes him aback;/ his eyes betray a Slav to him, painfully his ears spoil the illusion.)<sup>75</sup>  
 Later on, Kollár ascribes Slav origins to the Italians of Venice, 'Here, too,

Venice betrays its Slav origin and character, her blood relationship with our *dove-like nation*; in ancient times, all tribes had a particular love for doves; they kept and nurtured them in courts [...]. The [Slav] name [for pigeon] *holub* [*columba palumba*] passed from the Slavs to the rest of the nations of Europe, and no doubt, with the name they also provided them with the bird.'<sup>76</sup> Kollár derives Venezia/Benátky (the Czech for Venice) from *Veneti*, a Slav tribe, which is probably accurate, unlike his etymological history of *holub*. In claiming that regardless of the surface one could recognise the Slav underneath,

<sup>74</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera* (Prelude), p.19.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p.20.

<sup>76</sup> Kollár, *Cestopis*, p. 95.

Kollár demonstrates that he subscribes to the view that racial/national characteristics are immutable.

Drawing on linguistic evidence like Kollár, Georgi Rakovski is convinced that the Bulgarians existed at the time of the Creation in the Garden of Eden.<sup>77</sup> The major difference between him and Kollár, or any pan-Slavist, is that Rakovski writes only of Bulgarians; he does not even think of Bulgarians as Slavs. For him, the Slavs were just one of the ethnic groups that were descended from the Old Bulgarians. Exploiting the alleged phonological similarities with Bulgarian, and adjusting the Bulgarian words whenever they do not match the Sanskrit roots, Rakovski contrives to explain the origins of all Europeans. He constructs a mythology, according to which the source of Europeanness and all religious life lies in the Bulgarians.

According to his etymology, the word 'Aryan' and the Bulgarian for ploughman *ora(ch)* have the same root and denotation. On the basis of metathesis, Rakovski derives the meaning of 'Bulgarian' from the word for 'a good-natured [*blag*] person'. The *-ar* and *-in* of *Bălgarin* are simply augmentative suffixes that ensure that the word applies to the whole population. According to Rakovski *blag* in Bulgarian can also mean 'peaceful [*sic*], rich, quiet, kind, prosperous'. He uses this assertion in order to be able to demonstrate that Bulgarians have always possessed and still possess these qualities. They had been given their name by others who had recognised these qualities in them. He finds yet another semantic value for the word *blag*, based on a verb meaning 'to gather'; thus, *Bălgarin* means a good-natured, prosperous

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<sup>77</sup> G.S. Rakovski 'Pokazalets ili rākovodstvo kak da se iziskat i izdiriat nai-stari cherti nashego bitiiia, iazika, narodopokoleniia, starago ni pravleniia, slavnago ni proshestvia i proch' (Index or Guidance how to search and find the oldest features of our existence, language, kin, old laws, glorious past and so forth, 1859), Rakovski, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol. 4, ed. by Svetla Giurova, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1988, p.130.

person who gathers in the harvest.<sup>78</sup> In another etymology of *Bălgarin* Rakovski explains the word on the basis of a special food the Bulgarians eat. Now *Bălgarin* means a person who eats *bulgur* (ground wheat), as opposed to the Greeks who eat roots.<sup>79</sup> Rakovski deduces that not only are the Bulgarians and the Aryans the same people, but also that the meanings, 'good-natured', 'prosperous', denote the features that distinguish the Bulgarians (Aryans) from the dark-skinned population of India.<sup>80</sup>

Rakovski puts the Bulgarians among the founders of humanity. In another work, he expounds on a theory of the origins of other tribes. The Celts for example are descendants of the Bulgarians, since the Bulgarians gave them their name. Rakovski assumes that the name Gaul comes from the Bulgarian word *goli* (the plural of *gol*, naked), which was later transformed into *golati*, in which form it could be found in Ancient Greek sources. Greek historians, however, did not quite understand the meaning of *goli*, which referred to the fact that the soldiers of the tribe described used to fight naked.<sup>81</sup> The *goli* (the ancestors of the Celts) inhabited the same territory as the Bulgarians. The *goli* and the Bulgarians both had Bulgarian leaders, Brem and Bolga. They eventually divided their rule and Brem became the founder of the western European nations, whilst Bolga created the Greater Bulgarian state.<sup>82</sup> Since Rakovski also uses French sources, he may have well been trying to solve the problem exercising early nineteenth-century historians, namely whether the

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<sup>78</sup> G.S.Rakovski, 'Bălgarska starina' (Bulgarian relics, 1865), in Rakovski, *Săchinieniia*, ed. by Mihail Arnaudov, 1922, pp.607-08.

<sup>79</sup> Rakovski, 'Kratko razsăzhdenie vărhu tămnite i lăzhovnite nachala, na koih e osnovana stara povestnost vseh evropeyskih narodov' (A short reflection on the dark and misleading grounds on which the mythology of all European nations is based, 1860), in Rakovski, *Săbrani săchinieniia*, vol. 4, p.133

<sup>80</sup> G.S. Rakovski, 'Bălgarska starina', p.609.

<sup>81</sup> G.S. Rakovski, 'Kratko razsăzhdenie', p.153.

<sup>82</sup> G.S. Rakovski, 'Kliuch kăm bălgarskago iazika' (A key to the Bulgarian language, written 1858-65, first published 1880), in Rakovski, *Săbrani săchinieniia*, vol.4, p.263.

French were originally Romans or Celts. Since the Celts, according to Rakovski, originated among the Cymri, and the Cymri were descended from the Bulgarians, then the French, among others, were originally Bulgarian.<sup>83</sup>

The quality of the blood of the *Urvolk* could have only deteriorated when mixed with the blood of other peoples. This conviction was based on the idea that miscegenation was morally, not only biologically, wrong. Miscegenation is based on strong sentiment: it involves genitalia, and the genitalia are the most disgust-provoking bodily orifices. Female genitalia, especially when accessible, seem to be more disgusting than male: because they are 'the receptacles for that most polluting of male substances, semen. Semen pollutes in a number of ways. [...] Semen, however, disgusts because it is sexual, fertilizing, and reproductive.'<sup>84</sup>

Since the nineteenth century, nationalist ideology required that the men of the nation were virile and the women chaste and virtuous, Bulgarian and Czech Revivalists represented miscegenation before becoming a part of the Ottoman or Habsburg Empire as taking place between men from 'our' tribe who conquer women from other tribes. This was the reason for the dilution of the Bulgarian or Czech blood and for their eventual decline.

#### **4.2 Aristocracy and miscegenation: miscegenation with the Germans**

In both the Bulgarian and the Czech cases, the degeneration of the national stock is blamed on the degeneration of the aristocracy. This line of thought started earlier in the Czech case than in the Bulgarian, namely with the Dalimil

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<sup>83</sup> G.S. Rakovski, 'Kliuch kām bālgarskago iazika', p. 171. This is certainly a problem which occupied the mind of Amédée Thierry, whose works Rakovski knew. Rakovski quotes Thierry's works in 'Otogvor na bogoslovskaja grātska broshura' (A response to a Greek theological brochure, 1860), in Rakovski, *Sābrani sāchineniia*. vol. 3, pp.239-58.

<sup>84</sup> William Ian Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust*, Cambridge, MA and London, Harvard University Press, 1998, pp.102-05.

chronicle.<sup>85</sup> Dalimil shaped Czech opinions for at least two centuries after he had written his work and in the nineteenth century views similar to his shaped popular views on Czech history. Žalud, for example, continues to hold Dalimil's conviction that the Germans are cunning and subversive. Thus, it is clear that the Germans would not try to oppress the Czechs with open hostility. Instead, long before the Battle of the White Mountain, they had penetrated the Czech nobility, and thus gradually poisoned the Czech nation from the inside, depriving them of their leaders: 'The German language gradually penetrated the womb of many noble families'.<sup>86</sup> In other words, the Czech nobility had condemned itself to cultural sterility, since it had allowed the poison to enter its reproductive organs. After the Battle of the White Mountain, the Czech nobility had been sterilized, and the middle classes expelled: 'Through exile Bohemia lost its brightest minds, its best, noblest forces, scholars, artists, and everything that was excellent. [...] the Czechoslovak spirit sank and was extinguished by the Jesuits' a blast of *ad majorem Dei gloriam*'.<sup>87</sup>

Kollár conceives of germanisation coming through the nobility and he warns that this will ruin the people.<sup>88</sup> A side effect of mixed marriages could be the alienation of children from their mother, as is the case when the mother is Slav, the father Magyar, a product of Slav-Magyar miscegenation. The offspring is alienated from the Slavs, a germanised creature, as is the case with Buthue, the son of the Magyar king who had a Slav wife:

Než krev pomsty toho násilníka  
na jezera břežích vylitou  
posud vidí oko pocestníka  
ana s krví Buthue se michá

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<sup>85</sup> The description of the Czechs and Germans as opposite in nature and having opposite purpose in history starts earlier than that, with Cosmas .

<sup>86</sup> Žalud. *Početí roku 1620*, p.85.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p.198.

<sup>88</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera* [1832 edn], (II,64), p.157.

zněmčilce, co s duší zarytou  
boj se vésti s matkou neostýchá.

(But the blood of vengeance this violator/ spilt on the shores of the lake/ can still be seen by the wayfarer mixing with the blood of Buthue/ the germanised, who with stubborn mind/ is not ashamed to wage war on his mother.)<sup>89</sup>

As a true mythopoeist Kollár points out the problem and offers a solution; in

this case he suggests reslavicisation of the renegade offspring:

Navštívení krátké dovolte mi  
i vy, Přibyslava synové,  
ač pak pro vás oni zvukové,  
nimiž mluvím, dávno jsou už němi;  
ale města tato s jejich vsemi,  
pyšní Meklenburku domové,  
jsou jak Vendů starých zbytkové  
posud ještě na Slávie zemi:  
Přijmitež mne tedy, ej, však vy jste  
nejstarší a samá knížata,  
pošlá ještě z krve slavské, čisté;  
a zas mohou – jako Němci z Vilců –  
tak, by rovná byla odplata,  
Slavové se státi z poněmčilců.

(Permit me, you sons of Přibyslav/ also to visit you briefly/ even though those sounds with which I speak/ are long since mute for you, / but these cities with their villages/ the proud houses of Mecklenburg/ are remnants of the ancient Wends/ still on the land of Slávia./ Hey, accept me then; after all, you are/ the oldest and only princes/ descended from pure Slav blood/ and it may come about again - like the Germans from Wiltzi (Veleti) [of the Meckleburg area]/ and so the reward will be equal./ that the germanised become Slavs.)<sup>90</sup>

Miscegenation with the Germans was claimed not to be frequent among common (rural) people. Some authors, like Němcová, had a relatively cosmopolitan view on mixed marriages and did not consider them as the cause of decay.<sup>91</sup> Miscegenation presents no biological problem for Němcová's heroine, the grandmother. In *Babička*, she has the grandmother blame the degeneration of morals and language on modernisation, even though one daughter of the grandmother heroine is married to a German, the other to a Croat.<sup>92</sup> The grandmother does, however, rue the fact that neither married a Czech.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p.164 (II,74), see also (IV,45) pp.328-29.

<sup>90</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera* [1828], (II,71), p.162.

<sup>91</sup> Němcová still saw danger in relations with foreigners outside marriage.

<sup>92</sup> The name of the German is Prošek and it could be claimed that he is a Germanised Slav. German names, however, are common among Slavs and vice versa. Another argument for his possible Slavness is that the grandmother talks Czech to him and he talks German to her and

Since the late eighteenth century miscegenation with the Germans was programmatically unacceptable.<sup>93</sup> That was accompanied by the frequent treatment of the story of the love between the Duke of Bohemia Oldřich (Ulrich) and the peasant girl Božena.<sup>94</sup> In Zíma's version of this story, Oldřich is in danger of marrying the daughter of the German emperor. He prefers to marry a woman of his own country (*vlastenka*), but does not know whom until he spies Božena and immediately falls in love with her. The message of Zíma's play is that the erotic is subordinate to patriotism, that is, loyalty to the ruler and the homeland should rule the subjects' emotions.<sup>95</sup>

Klicpera in his version of the same legend, *Božena*, also suggests that proper mating rules, that is, Czechs marrying only Czechs, could save the Czechs from decay, an idea based on Dalimil's version of the story. In his play, however, Oldřich is married to a German woman; his German wife is barren (which appears to be historically accurate), in other words, marrying Germans is equivalent to squandering semen. Czech women, on the other hand, are fertile and maternal. This is why the 'common people' express their desire that Oldřich should marry a 'fertile Czech woman' even before he had met Božena.<sup>96</sup> The Bohemian aristocracy also joins the people in their support for

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they do understand each other; this, however, is no proof of ethnic belonging, and is often claimed to be the case in mixed marriages.

<sup>93</sup> Miscegenation with the Germans was unacceptable since Cosmas and then Dalimil, but it gained particular popularity from the eighteenth century onwards.

<sup>94</sup> That she was a married woman, together with the fact that Oldřich, too, was married when he encountered Božena was gradually whittled away from the legend from the fourteenth century onwards. Though Zíma may not have known the mediaeval Latin chronicles, Klicpera, it is clear, did. The story, as Zíma and Klicpera (and many others right up to the 1950s) used it, suited both the notion of Czech natural democracy and the Romantic notion of love prevailing.

<sup>95</sup> Antonín Josef Zíma, *Oldřich a Božena. Vlastenská původní činohra v pěti jednáních*, Prague, Hochenberg, 1789.

<sup>96</sup> Klicpera, *Božena* (written 1816 under the title *Oldřich a Božena*, first published 1820), in Václav Kliment Klicpera, *Spisy*, vol.7, Prague, Kober, 1863, p.220.



Oldřich's divorce from his 'infertile wife'.<sup>97</sup> The Czech blood in Božena means she is fully prepared for the position of Oldřich's wife; therefore, she manages, without any difficulty, to produce a speech on her willingness to be not only the mother of Oldřich's children, but also of the whole nation.<sup>98</sup>

Towards the end of the nineteenth century Holeček is convinced that even in the rare cases when proper Czechs (which for him means Czechs from Southern Bohemia) marry Germans, the result is the bohemicisation of the Germans. Nevertheless, such marriages occur, according to Holeček, only in families with too many daughters. The Germans, as he asserts, are always eager to marry a Czech girl, since they are convinced that Czech women make far better wives than German. Therefore, they are happy to put up with the female leftovers from any Czech family:

The Germans themselves acknowledged the superiority of the Czech element and came to woo Czech brides. Several were successful, and some less well-off girl, mostly from a family where there were too many daughters and consequently the dowries were smaller than usual, sacrificed herself and married into a German area, taking a coarse, uncouth husband. It was no different for her from leaving for somewhere far beyond the seas, for another world. Contacts between her old and new families were sparse [...]. Even the children were divided into two – the sons took after their father, were German, the daughters after their mother, were Czech. Moreover, even the physical and mental characteristics of the offspring of such nationally mixed marriages were dissimilar; they did not fuse and nothing in-between emerged from them.<sup>99</sup>

It does not worry Holeček that this statement contradicts an earlier statement of his that the blond type among the southern Bohemians resulted from intermarriages with the Germans.<sup>100</sup> His message, however, is that even when Czech women are taken by aliens, they cannot be subdued, and they do pass down their Czechness, at least to their daughters. Holeček is indulging in a

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<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p.245.

<sup>98</sup> Božena tells the Czechs: 'I will not be your ruler -- will not be your princess, nor your ruler -- but a loving sister of yours, a tender mother of your noble children - an obedient and amicable servant of a great man, who rules in your glorious name!!!', *ibid.*, p.329.

<sup>99</sup> Josef Holeček, *Jak u nás žijou i umírají*, p.116.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p.115.

rather mechanical version of genealogy, which was now slowly becoming part of eugenics' scientific method.

#### **4.3 Miscegenation with the Jews**

Mainstream and eccentric authors alike condemn marriage to Jews. Klicpera, for example, in his seemingly philosemitic *Izraelitka* (1842) (set in the fourteenth century), suggests that if love between a Gentile and a Jewish woman is true and admirable, the Jewish woman cannot actually be Jewish. Thus, he approves of the marriage between a Gentile boy and a girl whom everyone believed to be a Jew (Juditha) but, as it turns out, was born Christian, and therefore bore Christianity and virtue in her blood. Juditha was born and baptised Ludmila but was subsequently stolen by a Jewish woman who had had a stillborn baby and could not have children any more. Hence, although right up to the end of the play it seems as if Klicpera approved of love regardless of confession or race, in the end he conforms to antisemitic stereotyping. The Jew who had brought up Ludmila/Juditha supported the love between her and the Gentile boy in order to take revenge on the Gentiles. In Klicpera's version, Jews are prone to sterility and mental disease (the Jewess who has been looking after Juditha loses her wits, and the Jew who was in love with Juditha kills himself). Moreover, in an appendix to this play, the common people are convinced that the reason for the trial against Juditha/Ludmila was that she, being a Jew, has had a child with a Gentile, and then had killed the man and the child to use their blood for ritual purposes. Although it becomes clear that this is just a rumour, not true because the Jewish woman is not Jewish, perhaps

Klicpera suggests that it would have been true, had she been a real Jew.<sup>101</sup> This is possibly the earliest example of the Blood Libel topos in modern Czech literature.

The possibility of falling in love with a beautiful Jewish woman is explored by the antisemitic priest Josef Zimmermann. In his adaptation of a German novel, *Žid* (1856), he exploits the topos of the beautiful Jewish woman: a Gentile man falls in love with the beautiful sister of the Jew who is a minister and virtually in charge of Stuttgart, Jud Süß. Süß insists that the two of them get married, regardless of the differences of religion. In order to achieve his aim he first puts in prison the young Gentile, Klenovský and then releases him and gets a better job for him. Klenovský, who is truly in love with Jud Süß's sister Lea, does not believe it is possible for them to get married on account of their different religions. Although consistently antisemitic as far as Jud Süß is concerned, Zimmermann allows his female Jewish character to be virtuous. Thus, the beautiful Jewish woman is not a seductive calculating woman who is determined to ruin her admirers, as is the case, for example, with the Jewish woman in Baar's *Jan Cimbura*, but a noblewoman who has no interest in material matters. She is contrasted to her brother, for whom money is the only religion.<sup>102</sup> In all cases, however, Gentiles are the ones to be seduced or to

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<sup>101</sup> V.K. Klicpera, *Izraelitka* (The Israelite woman, 1842), in *Soubor spisů Václava Klimenta Klicpery*, ed. by F. A. Šubert, Prague, Kočí, 1907. The same plot is developed in Václav Kronus's novel *Židovka* (The Jewess), Hradec Králové, Šupka, n.d. [1926]. In Kronus's version, however, a sterile Jewish family brings up a Gentile girl, and this girl eventually falls in love with her brother; only the death of the Jew and their subsequent life in the countryside manages to heal brother and sister of their incestuous love. The only truly philosemitic work that I have used in this thesis is Josef Jiří Kolár's, *Pražský žid* (1872), 3rd edn, Prague, Kober, 1922. But even there marriages to Jews are not condoned, although Jews are represented as true Czech patriots who are just of a different religion. K.H.Mácha (1810-36), Sabina and V.B. Nebeský (1818-82) also portray Jews in a positive light.

<sup>102</sup> Josef Zimmermann, *Žid, anebo pýcha předchází pád* (Jew, or pride comes before a fall), Prague, Haase, 1856. The descriptions of Lea are on pp.27, 51-59, of Jud Süß on pp.31, 73; Süß's insistence on the marriage between his sister and Klenovský, p.72. Jindřich Š. Baar, *Jan*

conquer the heart of a Jewish woman; a Jewish man never manages to win the heart of a Gentile woman. Male Jews remain consistently unsavoury with the exception of Kolár's patriotic Jew who helps the rebelling estates.

#### 4.4 Miscegenation with the Greeks

The Bulgarian Revivalists believed that the Bulgarians' falling under the Turks resulted from the degeneration of the aristocracy. Starting with Paisii, most Bulgarian Revivalists claimed that the close relations the Bulgarian aristocracy maintained with the Greeks, especially their marrying Greeks, had caused their degeneration and consequently their falling under Turkish sway. The Greeks' affinity to luxury had affected the Bulgarians anyway, but what caused their utter degeneration was the mixing of pure Bulgarian blood with impure Greek blood. This had long-lasting results, which were evident in the nineteenth century; Voinikov writes:

If one notices in the present-day Bulgarian character some weaknesses that could often get in the way of the development of good, trustworthy qualities, with which the Bulgarians demonstrate that they are capable of progress in intellectual education, these weaknesses are not typical of the Bulgarian nation, but imported from the luxurious Byzantine aristocracy. A demonstration of the truth of this may be seen in the history of all weak Bulgarian tsars, fused with Greek blood, such as the reign of Petăr, who spoiled everything the glorious Simeon the Great had done; then the reign of the regicide Kaloman.<sup>103</sup>

Rakovski maintains that the Greeks had never been a pure nation but merely a mixture of many tribes, eager to swallow as many people as possible under the name Greek.<sup>104</sup> Being by definition a hybrid nation, the Greeks could not but become ever further involved in miscegenation. Likewise, using a purported folktale in his story 'Neda', Karavelov gives his view on the natural

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*Cimbura. Jihočeská idyla* (J.C. A South Bohemian Idyll, 1908), 14th edn, Prague, Novina, 1940, especially pp.355ff, warns against the dangers of falling in love with a beautiful Jewish woman and denies that the beauty of a Jew can be real, since beauty, according to the author is a moral, not an aesthetic, category, and his Jewish woman is amoral.

<sup>103</sup> Dobri Voinikov, *Velislava, bālgarska kniaginia* (Velislava, the Bulgarian princess, 1870), in Dobri Voinikov, *Sāchineniia v dva toma*, vol. 1, ed. Docho Lekov, Sofia, Bālgarski pisatel, 1983, p.203.

<sup>104</sup> Rakovski, 'Otgovor na bogoslovskaia grātska broshura', p. 252.

characteristics of the Greeks, namely their constituting the source of everything evil in the Bulgarian lands and beyond. The narrator tells the story of the Greek widow of a king of Bulgaria; she was evil 'as all widowed queens are in this world'. After the king had died, his Greek widow had a child by a vampire. This child was a dragon and after it had grown up, it had many children with its mother, all of them dragons. Thenceforth there were dragons in the Bulgarian lands.<sup>105</sup> This is not the only occasion on which Karavelov, apparently under the influence of his interpretation of Greek mythology, considers incest a typical Greek practice.<sup>106</sup>

The Greeks' impure influence could not be purged even generations after the actual act of miscegenation had taken place. This was evident among the rich Bulgarians living in areas where miscegenation had occurred during the Middle Ages, as Bozveli informs us:

I understood that these *chorbadzhii* [well-off people] call themselves Bulgarians, but hellenise themselves ... they also call themselves Christians, but their deeds [...] are far from Christian – and [they are] from my own sons, your blood-brothers and courageous ancestors from the same religion [...] My dear child! You, as I know very well, have read the history of your ancestors; therefore you must have learned how many Greek women from Livadia had been bought as slaves around Yanina, Metsovo, Zagore (which have been named in a Slav manner) [...], these Greek women had been married to the guardians who used to live in what are now two villages near Provadia and one near Razgrad. What you have described concerning the hellenised *chorbadzhii* of Trinovo [Tárnovo], seems to me to be the offspring of these mixed marriages, not my true sons<sup>107</sup>

The decay of the rich Bulgarians is, then, a product of their ethnic background, their blood. They are the descendants of conquered Greeks who remained in Bulgaria and do not behave like Bulgarians, but like the corrupt Greeks they actually are – miscegenation with the Greeks had produced only corrupt descendants. Greek blood will always out. Here Bozveli echoes

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<sup>105</sup> Karavelov, 'Neda', p.411.

<sup>106</sup> Compare the trilogy 'Otmáshtenie', 'Posle otmáshtenieto', 'Tuka mu e kraiat'. I do not forget that incest was a Romantic topos. One thinks first of all of Karel Hynek Mácha's *Máj* (May/Spring, 1836), but it survives in Kronus's *Židovka*, see footnote 101.

<sup>107</sup> Bozveli, 'Prosveshtenii evropeits', pp.38-39.

Lawrence's views on miscegenation with Blacks, although it is highly unlikely that Bozveli knew the works of the American physician.<sup>108</sup>

In the first part of his trilogy 'Otmāshtenie', Karavelov suggests that the Bulgarians' falling under Turkish rule resulted from the mixed marriages of the Bulgarian nobility. He tells the story of the fall of the fortress of Sofia. The boyar in command of the fortress was married to a Greek who decided to return to Byzantium, and so gave the keys to the fortress to the Turks, who had long been trying to conquer the city. The Greek woman ran away with her daughter, who was an exact replica of her mother; instead of returning to Byzantium, the mother became the mistress of a Turk. The Bulgarian boyar had had two sons with the Greek. The two sons had taken after their father, hence were Bulgarians through and through. Until the last part of the trilogy, the reader is left to believe that Bulgarian blood would prevail in male offspring only, while in the female line it would become corrupt (this is similar to Holeček's portrayal of the preservation of national qualities in each of the sexes). In the last part, however, the reader learns that Bulgarian blood prevails in all cases. It could not prevail in the boyar's daughter, since she was not actually his daughter. The fact that his Greek wife had conceived her by another man, possibly before her marriage, renders her ineligible to enter the Bulgarian, or any other, community. Had she conceived after marriage with another man, the result would have been the same, since the blood bond created by defloration had been violated. Thus, the boyar, like Onan, is punished for spilling his seed on the ground, since his wife does not fulfil the conditions of being a wife. Unlike Onan, who was with his deceased brother's wife, the boyar is trying to

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<sup>108</sup> See my Introduction.

make his wife a woman of completely different blood. Therefore, according to nationalist mythology, she is almost inhuman and the boyar is indulging in sexual perversion. As a result of this perversion all the Bulgarians are punished. This is a similar situation to that of the Czech Revivalist conception of the story of the sterile German wife of Oldřich, since in both cases the foreign woman is so alien that a true bond cannot be created or maintained, and therefore the Czech or Bulgarian semen is squandered.

Karavelov attributes a folk origin to his conviction that Greek women caused the decline of the Bulgarians. A number of his characters in the trilogy reiterate this conviction by saying that the Serbs have declined because of wine, the Bulgarians because of women. In 'Turski pasha', he interpolates an old man's story and this old man believes he is telling something that is common knowledge:

Beware chiefly of Greek deviousness, because the Greeks could deceive even the fox. The old men say: the Greek is as cunning as the devil, and as brave as the rabbit. Do not obey your wife if she is Greek because, when the devil gives up serving the Greek tsar, he makes your wives, who have been born of Greek seed, work for him. Had you not obeyed your wife, you would have been living in your kingdom till now and you would have been happy. Greek women will destroy us; they will ruin our kingdom as well!<sup>109</sup>

Botev goes further than Karavelov in that he asserts that the history of the Bulgarians has been the history of the Greek manipulation and hellenisation of the nobility:

Have a look at the history of the Bulgarian kingdom from the reign of Boris till our falling under Turkish rule and you will see that almost all the political historical past of our nation has been Byzantine; there have been only kings, boyars and clerics, while the people have always been separated by profound morality from the debauchery of their government; this debauchery penetrated the upper échelons of the people together with Christianity<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Karavelov, 'Turski pasha', p.112.

<sup>110</sup> Botev, 'Narodăt vchera, dnes i utre', p. 41.

That is, Christianity is the mediator for the penetration of debauchery in the upper castes and all deadly sins are ascribed to the nobility, whereas the common people remain spotless.

Unlike the lewd and corrupt Greek women who were considered to be the instigators of miscegenation, Bulgarian women were perceived as sexually desirable objects who would not willingly be involved in miscegenation. In Revival literature parallel to the topos of the attractive Jewish woman is the topos of the attractive Greek woman; in both Czech and Bulgarian Revivalist literature Slav (Czech or Bulgarian) women are sexually attractive and all other nations are willing to marry them.

#### **4.5 Miscegenation with the Turks**

Miscegenation with the Turks was discussed mainly in works describing the state of the Bulgarians after they had come under Turkish sway. There is, however, one occasion when possible miscegenation with the Tatars is described long before the Bulgarians fell to the Turks. In his play, *Velislava*,<sup>111</sup> Voinikov states his conviction that a union between a Tatar and a Bulgarian is immoral, even if such a union could have saved the kingdom of Bulgaria: 'It would be indecent to mix Bulgarian blood with Tatar [...] This would offend the dignity of our faith and of our stock. A Christian girl marrying a Muslim would be something immoral and unlawful'.<sup>112</sup>

On numerous occasions in literature describing the state after the Turkish conquest, Turks take Bulgarian women by force. Once a Bulgarian woman entered matrimony with a Turk two scenarios were developed by most

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<sup>111</sup> Voinikov has four versions of this play, under different names, one of them *Velislava* (1870), the other *Frosina* (1875). *Frosina* is the first Bulgarian play in verse. The other two versions are *Georgi Terter, tsar bălgarski* (G.T., Bulgarian tsar, 1871) and *Desislava* (1874); these last two remain in manuscript.

<sup>112</sup> Voinikov, *Velislava*, in Voinikov, *Săchineniia*, vol. 2, p. 256.



Revivalists. According to one of them, the Bulgarian woman will continue to be Bulgarian and give birth to children who would only appear to be Turkish, but would remain Bulgarian in their hearts. This scenario, developed by Drumev, for example, supports the idea that Bulgarian blood could not be changed even when mixed with inferior Turkish blood. In his *Neshtastna familiia* women manage to pass on Bulgarian blood and the national character intact regardless of any comingling with Turkish blood. The offspring of such marriages are doomed to be unhappy. Similarly to the Gentiles brought up in Jewish families that Klicpera and Kronus portray, the Christian offspring of a Bulgarian mixed marriage is punished; the son of the Christian woman and a Muslim in this story is killed by Bulgarians by accident, because they imagine he is an enemy.<sup>113</sup>

Rakovski also elaborates on the idea of the prevalence of the Bulgarian blood in miscegenation with the Turks. For him, the Turks who conquered eastern Europe were mostly unmarried, for there were allegedly no records of any married Turks migrating there. After settling in the Balkan Peninsula, they married Bulgarian, Greek and Serbian women. This resulted in the racial difference between Asian and European Turks. While the Asian Turks were dark-skinned, the European Turks were pale-skinned. The Turkish 'royal breed', according to Rakovski, had from time immemorial had non-Turkish, mainly Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian, blood in their veins. Naturally enough, the Bulgarians played a special role in this. Rakovski assumes that from the fourteenth century onwards, the Turkish sultans had more and more Bulgarian blood in them. The beginning of this process was the marriage of the Bulgarian princess Kera Tamara to Amurat Amir. Kera Tamara remained Christian till the

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<sup>113</sup> Vasil Drumev, *Neshtastna familiia* (Unhappy family, 1860), in Vasil Drumev, *Săchineniia*, vol.1, ed. by Docho Lekov and Ivan Sestrimski, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1967.

end of her days. Their son, Bayezid, also married a Bulgarian woman, and for some time, the official language of the Turkish ascendancy was Bulgarian. The Turkish army also consisted mainly of Bulgarians, which in Rakovski's view only made the Turkish army better than it would have otherwise been.<sup>114</sup> In 'Posle otmāshtenieto' and 'Tuka mu e kraiat', Karavelov also derives the courage and the success Bayezid had from his Bulgarian origin. He claims that, at the beginning, possibly because of their Bulgarian blood, the Turkish leaders were brave and strong. The more the Bulgarian blood was diluted with Turkish, that is, the less the Turkish leaders married into the Bulgarian aristocracy, the lazier the Turkish sultans became and that is why they started declining.<sup>115</sup>

The second scenario displays the Bulgarian women losing their Bulgarianness and giving birth to idiots, who were often crueller than pure-blooded Turks. This scenario shared with the previous the violence necessary for a Bulgarian woman to enter the Turkish community. The Revivalists preached that it was better for a girl to be killed or to commit suicide than to mix her blood with that of the Turks. This idea was sometimes put in the mouths of Bulgarian wives of Turks, as in Karavelov's 'Neda'. If the woman did not commit suicide after all, then her family were often willing to kill her as well as her bastard offspring.<sup>116</sup>

These two scenarios represent two opposing views on the quality of Bulgarian blood, regardless of the fact that they were both often employed by the same author, for example, Karavelov. William Miller writes concerning corruption, 'A teaspoon of sewage will spoil a barrel of wine, but a teaspoon of

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<sup>114</sup> Rakovski, 'Niakolko rechi o Aseniu Pervomu' in Rakovski, *Sāchineniia*, ed. by Arnaudov, pp. 283-84.

<sup>115</sup> Karavelov, 'Posle otmāshtenieto', p.356.

<sup>116</sup> See 'Neda', pp. 405-06, and 'Doncho', pp.342-43.

wine will do nothing for a barrel of sewage'.<sup>117</sup> A drop of Turkish blood does not, however, corrupt Bulgarian blood, for example, when Bulgarians marry Ottomans in the fourteenth century. In this case a drop of Bulgarian blood changes completely the quality of the Turkish blood. In the nineteenth century, however, even a drop of Turkish blood mixed with Bulgarian corrupts the Bulgarian. Concerning nineteenth-century instances of mingling with Turkish blood, the Bulgarian Revivalists dwell equally on the biological and the emotional (or moral) effects. They present what they believe to be biologically unacceptable as disgusting. Biology is justified by emotion.

#### **4.6 Gender roles in miscegenation**

The Revivalists present marriages between Bulgarian men and Greek women before the Ottoman conquest. A Bulgarian woman will never marry a Greek, even when forced to do so, as in Karavelov's trilogy. There the Bulgarian princess has to marry the Emperor of Byzantium, which is something she finds revolting. Unlike her, her Greek friend who also lives at the Bulgarian court claims that even if a donkey were given the title 'Emperor of Byzantium' she would have married it. The Bulgarian princess, although a product of a mixed marriage with a Greek woman, rejects miscegenation for herself and eventually loses her life trying to escape from the Byzantine court.<sup>118</sup>

Bulgarian men, however, feel nothing of the disgust that the young princess feels. Quite the opposite, Greek women represent everything sexually attractive as opposed to the image of Bulgarian females as nurturers. Greek women are seductresses. The attraction that Bulgarian men feel for them, then, is a result of their inability to see through Greek women's devices. On the one hand,

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<sup>117</sup> Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust*, p. 21.

<sup>118</sup> Karavelov, 'Posle otmáshtenieto', p.300.

intermarriage between Greek women and Bulgarian men represents the gullibility of Bulgarian men, but, since such marriages are mainly ascribed to pre-Ottoman times, they also constitute an account of Bulgarians' conquering masculinity. Although the qualities of Greek women do not change and they continue seducing virile Bulgarian men even after the Ottoman conquest, marriages, or seductions, between Bulgarian women and Greek men begin to take place only after the conquest. That is, after the loss of political independence, the Bulgarians lose control over their women who start being seduced by the Greeks. Before the conquest, Bulgarian women are conquered only by the powerful conqueror, that is, the Turks. Rakovski as usual, provides the only exception; according to him there was a marriage between Assen's illegitimate daughter and the Greek Emanoil, the despot of Salonica. In other words, after the Greeks corrupt the Bulgarian aristocracy, the Bulgarian aristocrats start having illegitimate children. According to Rakovski, Assen was 'a womaniser, like almost every great man'.<sup>119</sup> Therefore, Assen's illegitimate daughter is, on the one hand, evidence of the Greek corruption, but, on the other, she is evidence for Assen's manliness. Even Rakovski's originality, however, does not present Bulgarian men as taking part in mixed marriages with the Turks.

Ideas of copulation with another nation are described as 'disgusting' more often in the Bulgarian case than in the Czech, which might, I suppose, serve as evidence that Bulgarian nationalism is predominantly haematic, while Czech is predominantly linguistic. In both cases, however, the nation is defined through both blood and language; moreover, the inconsistencies typical of Karavelov

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<sup>119</sup> Rakovski, 'Niakolko rechi o Asenu Pervomu', pp.17, 114.

lead him to inveigh against miscegenation as well as to claim that the nation is defined by language and exists as long as its language exists.<sup>120</sup> Both Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists express the fear of contagion and of the extinction of the nation through metaphors for corruption of the blood. This corruption inevitably occurs through women: when the nation is strong and manly, the men are seduced by women of other nations. When the nation is weak and under foreign influence, the women are taken by the conquerors. The mysophobia that nationalists of both Revivals more or less advocated, was communicated through fear of mixing bodily liquids.<sup>121</sup> Eventually, when the Czechs and the Bulgarians become parts of multinational empires, their women start improving the breed of the conquerors, while weakening their own. Regardless of whether they write stories set before or after their countries were parts of multinational empires, Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists advise against mixed marriages, which they consider disgusting. As Miller points out, 'all disgusts [are] linked by a common function (defence of body and soul against pollution) and a common feel and reaction (the feeling of disgust, violation, and contamination and the desire to be rid of the offending sensation)'.<sup>122</sup> Since in both cases nation is understood organically, the defilement of one's own body is seen as a defilement of the nation, and *vice versa*. That is why Revivalists produce mating rules. Kollár's version of these rules runs as follows:

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<sup>120</sup> In his travels Karavelov notes that in some Romanian villages one can observe miscegenation between Serbs, Bulgarians and Romanians (Vlachs); this, he believes, can give scientists material for observation on the mixing and the changes that the 'races' and 'tribes' go through; nevertheless, basing his argument on linguistic evidence, he claims that the Vlachs are a Slav tribe and then concludes that a nation is alive only as long as its language is alive, see 'Pătshestivie' (Travel, 1876), in Karavelov, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol.4, pp.569-71.

<sup>121</sup> Apart from diluting the superior Czech or Bulgarian blood before the fall and thus provoking the fall, foreign (German and Greek) women make Czech and Bulgarian noblemen weaker; the loss of sperm in medieval beliefs was equal to four times the loss of blood. See Camporesi, *Juice of Life*, p.44.

<sup>122</sup> Miller, *Disgust*, p.107.

Jako lípa , jenž se ve chrastině  
 nízké zrostem nebe dotýká,  
 tak tu nad sousedky vyniká  
 tato krásná Srbů potomkyně;  
 jako Lada, jde-li před bohyně,  
 všechněch krásy sama polyká  
 tak tu předčí tato veliká  
 Slávy Dcera krásou nad Němkyně.  
 Věc to tedy k vysvětlení snadná,  
 proč mne za všech těchto krásenek  
 německých zde nehne zhola žádná;  
 ať to nyní se mlčkem jazyk mine,  
 že jen k Slavce slavský milenek,  
 roveň k rovní, svůj se k svému vine.

(Like a lime-tree that, in the low undergrowth/ touches the sky in its height/ this beautiful descendant of the Sorbs/ here excels her neighbours./ Like Lada, who, if she goes before the goddesses/ Outshines in beauty all of them/ so this great daughter of Sláva/ excels the German women in beauty./ It is easy to explain/ why absolutely none of these German beauties moves me;/ may the tongue pass over in silence now – / that only a Slav lover is for a Slav woman' equal to equal, and one embraces one's own.)<sup>123</sup>

Similarly, Voinikov summarised what mating rules Bulgarians should follow in

the form of a mantra:

Славно, честно и почтено  
 За младите в днешньо време  
 Да са държат у своето  
 Прадедно народно име.  
 [...]  
 Секи момък, сяка мома  
 От рода си да залюбва  
 Таз любов за тях е сама,  
 Що природно ги събирва.  
 Да сме верни в секи случай  
 На народний си обичай:  
 Чуздото за нас е странно,  
 Че за други е скроено

([It is] glorious, honest and honourable/ for young people nowadays/ to stick to their/ ancestors' national name [...]/ Every lad, every lass/ Should fall in love with someone from their own stock./ The only love suitable for them/ is the one which brings them together naturally./ On all occasions we should abide/ by the national custom:/ Everything foreign is alien to us/ Because it was intended for someone else.)<sup>124</sup>

Mating rules, then, are a combination of the biblical prohibition of mixed marriages with contemporary biological, anti-miscegenist doctrines. The result is a fear of contagion that can occur when one is strong because of one nation's virile masculinity, that is, its conquering other nations' women or, even more, a hypochondriacal fear of contagion through seduction or subordination. The

<sup>123</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera*, (1,89), p.84.

<sup>124</sup> Dobri Voinikov, *Krivorazbranata tsivilizatsiia, in Voinikov, Săchineniia*, vol.2, p.138.

change of the foreign elements in mixed marriages from women-seductresses to rapacious men occurs at roughly the same time as antisemitism gains popularity. The myths of the Jews' sexuality, which varied from the alleged Jewish desire to deflower Gentile women to homosexuality, depending on the author and the period, has had an impact on both national mythologies. Although in the Bulgarian Revival intermarriage with Jews is practically never discussed, the model of Jewish sexuality is used to describe the sexuality of Turks and Greeks. In other words, the regulation of the sexual practices of Czechs and Bulgarians is dictated by the desire to achieve basic hygiene, by the separation of the pure and healthy from the filthy and contagious, and the subsequent cultivation of the pure. This idea of basic hygiene is one of the foundations of degeneration theory, and of later race hygiene, as it is a part of any order – a conclusion reached by Mary Douglas. In her terms, to be holy means to be whole, and holiness is a question of separation; therefore any violation of the completeness of the body contains the danger of defilement or desecralisation.<sup>125</sup> Women, and the female representation of the nation, play a crucial role in potential defilement, since the female principles, earth and water, contain a promise for the future (abundant crops) but also the possibility of floods and thus of being defiled or destroyed; water, blood, and femininity are uncontrollable powers that can change the life of the nation or the race.

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<sup>125</sup> Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, p.55.

## The corruption of the nation through language

In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.' (Nehemiah 13: 23-25)

The idea of a perfect language, similarly to the idea of a perfect (White, Nordic, or any other) race that was at the beginning of humankind suggests that, if one does not maintain this language, one is using a language that is a regression from that original perfect state. The notion of the moral fall of individuals because of miscegenation, as well as the idea of the loss of the perfect language are to be found in the Book of Genesis. Punishment in the form of confusion was brought upon people who had hitherto lived happily and shared one language.<sup>1</sup> The desire to reach Heaven had brought with it the first example of language decay: the confusion of tongues. The Old Testament, then, contains the idea of one ideal language, spoken in a Golden Age of sorts, as well as the idea of a pure language, coming after a period of decay, as a result of one or more cataclysms.<sup>2</sup> The idea of one language prevailing over all other languages,

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis (11:1-9). In the beginning 'the whole world was of one language and of one speech' (Genesis 11:1). The punishment for the desire to appear superior and to abuse the power given by God is reflected in the change of the name of the city of Babil, signifying 'God's gate' into Babel, signifying 'confusion', see [Anonymous] *A New and Concise Bible Dictionary*, London, Morris, n.d., p.96.

<sup>2</sup> 'Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day I rise up to the pray: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them my indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people in a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.' (Zephaniah 3: 9-10).



although ubiquitous, is documented in the seventh century, when Irish scholars claimed their language was closest to the language God spoke.<sup>3</sup>

Ever since the beginning of the idea of race and racial consanguinity, the idea was that the language of the group was as much a racial category as a given physical characteristic. Kedourie observes that 'there is no clear-cut distinction between linguistic and racial nationalism. Originally, the doctrine emphasized language as the test of nationality, because language was an outward sign of a group's peculiar identity'.<sup>4</sup> Some authors, like Fishman, argue that language is an easier way of distinguishing nations than any other characteristic. This argument clearly overlooks examples when different nations have been created regardless of a shared language. Fishman is right, however, in asserting that the culmination of language nationalism takes place when language is advocated as the most important national characteristic, more important than others, such as territory, government, religion.<sup>5</sup> He does not give an example of language being more important than blood, I believe, because in most national ideologies language is in the blood.

Being a racial characteristic, language is organically corruptible. In this chapter I shall discuss how the idea of language and its corruptibility was propagated in the Bulgarian and Czech Revivals. I shall also look at the primary ideological function of language: the connection with the past, and specifically

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<sup>3</sup> When an attempt to defend speaking Gaelic as opposed to Latin was recorded, claiming that Gaelic was the language that would overcome the confusion of tongues. See Umberto Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language*, transl. by James Fentress, London, Fontana, 1997, p.16. Eco claims that 'the dream of a perfect language has always been invoked as a solution to religious or political strife.', *ibid.*, p.19.

<sup>4</sup> Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, 4th edn, Oxford, and Cambridge, MA, Blackwell, 1994, p.66. See also Barzun, *Race*, 27-51; when describing early race theorists, like Amédée Thierry and Edwards, Barzun notes that according to them even pronunciation is a racial category.

<sup>5</sup> Joshua Fishman, *Language and Nationalism. Two Integrative Essays*, Rowley, MA, Newbury House Publishers, 1972, p.49. For a recent discussion of the importance of language for nationalism and vice versa see John E. Joseph, *Language and Identity. National, Ethnic, Religious*, London and New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, especially pp.92-131.

with the Golden Age. Language has the capacity to create a link between the present and the Golden Age(s), since it bears evident traits of the Golden Age(s); in this way, using the language can involve recovering or aiming to recover the Golden Age.<sup>6</sup> Being a racial characteristic, however, language is susceptible to corruption in much the same way as blood; therefore, women again will be exploited as the keepers of linguistic tradition and the means of the introduction of corruption. After discussing the idea that the present state is a state of decay as opposed to the past Golden Ages, I shall discuss the three major forms that language decay could take according to the Revivalists: first, a preference for speaking a foreign language (pretending not to be able to speak one's mother tongue); second, speaking the mother tongue, but with many foreign words mixed in with it; and third, speaking only the mother tongue, but using morally wrong words or creating confusion by trying to purify the language.

### **1. Influences on the Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists**

The Czech and Bulgarian national mythologies shared a set of ideas on the importance of language as a reflection of national character and as a means for studying national culture – ideas they have in common with all nationalisms that were inspired or influenced by Herder and Fichte.<sup>7</sup> Fichte inspired to a greater degree than Herder the Revivalists in their efforts to 'revive' their language; an effort provoked by the conviction that Bulgarian or Czech was in a

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<sup>6</sup> Fishman argues that language provided the link with the past especially when 'current greatness was far from obvious', *Language and Nationalism*, pp.44-45.

<sup>7</sup> I do not ignore the pre-history of the Czech national movement: language clearly defines nation by the fourteenth century in Bohemia. I employ the concept 'nation' advisedly.

state of decay. Fichte thought of language in organic terms.<sup>8</sup> His mythopoeic ideas, however, were modified, even distorted, in other national mythologies.

Revivalists employed Fichte's notion of the corrosive unnaturalness of foreign languages and foreigners in general. In Fichte's view, chiefly French had corrupted present-day German. The reason for the degeneration of the peoples who moved away was not climate or miscegenation, but the fact that they ceased speaking the pure mother tongue. The Germans could flourish because they continued using the mother tongue, but not because of any special qualities this language had. The only specificity that differentiated German from the rest was that German was a natural, living language, while the rest of the Germanic peoples used some dead foreign, that is, Latin or Latinised language, not the language of the vital centre:

Here, as I wish to point out distinctly at the very beginning, it is not a question of the special quality of the language retained by the one branch or adopted by the other; on the contrary, the importance lies solely in the fact that in the one case something native is retained, while in the other case something foreign is adopted. Nor is it a question of the previous ancestry of those who continue to speak an original language; on the contrary, the importance lies solely in the fact that this language continues to be spoken, for men are formed by language far more than language is formed by men.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless, foreign elements in the language have corrupted it just as foreign blood corrupted the original in the view of Arndt or Gobineau. The morals of Germans who used French or Latin words were at risk, and they were often using such words only because they could not understand their proper meaning. Had they been able to understand that (Herder's) *Humanität* meant simply being human; that is, had they used the German *Menschlichkeit* instead, they would not have been using it so proudly.<sup>10</sup> The same applies to two other

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<sup>8</sup> On Fichte as an 'evolutionary' thinker, that is someone who aims at understanding the way ideas or matters develop, see Rádl, *The History of Biological Theories*, pp.2-3.

<sup>9</sup> Fichte, *Addresses*, pp.47-48.

<sup>10</sup> This also constitutes a mild attack on Herder, who adored the concept *Humanität*. The Herderian concept was subsequently to influence the nationalist ideology of Kollár, and far

abstract categories, *Popularität* and *Liberalität*.<sup>11</sup> Thus, although he denies any special quality of the German language, German is special, because it is a natural living language, free from meaningless concepts. A dead language can sap the energy of a living language; when, however, the ‘mutual penetration’ of the living and the dead language is complete, the culture has its Golden Age, but then the ‘source of its poetry runs dry’.<sup>12</sup>

Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists are influenced not only by Herder’s chapter on the pacific characteristics of the Slavs, but also by his writings that stated that the true spirit of a nation lies in its language.<sup>13</sup> Jungmann, for example, writes ‘We shall remain the Czech nation as long as we preserve the Czech language in its precision and purity. [...] Our nationality is in the language. Without linguistic purity there is no true eloquence, no verbal art. The corruption of language is corruption of nationality, and the beginning of its fall’.<sup>14</sup> Here, as Pynsent points out, Jungmann uses *pád* to denote decline, fall, as opposed to the usual *úpadek*; *pád* brings to mind the idea of the fall from grace, that is, Jungmann is employing words that have theological connotations. Slaveikov, who codified the modern Bulgarian language with his translation of the Bible, theorises on language along the same lines: ‘Our language is our national genius, the things that one cannot clearly express in words, while our history is knowledge of the content of national life; if one knows the language

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more, of Masaryk. Herder actually appears to mean by *Humanität* ‘complete humanity’ or ‘fulfilled humanity’.

<sup>11</sup> Fichte, *Addresses*, p.55. See also Kedourie’s discussion of Fichte’s ideas, in *Nationalism*, pp.58-64.

<sup>12</sup> Fichte, *Addresses*, pp.68-69.

<sup>13</sup> See for example Herder, *Treatise upon the Origin of Language*, London, Longman et al, 1828.

<sup>14</sup> Josef Jungmann, ‘Z druhého vydání Slovesnosti: Jsou-li překlady na ujmu národnosti?’ (From the second edition of *Slovesnost* [Letters]: are translations detrimental to nationality?, 1845) in Jungmann, *Boj o obrození národa* (Struggle for the revival of the nation), ed. by Felix Vodička, Prague, Kosek, 1948, p.118. I use R.B.Pynsent’s translation in his *Literary History as Nation Building*, p.23; this is where he comments on the use of *pád* rather than *úpadek*.

of a people, one knows that people, while if one knows the history of a people, one knows what this people is capable of; language is the anatomy of the national genius, while history is its physiology'.<sup>15</sup> It is sad, Slaveikov acknowledges in another article, to see that 'the representation of the whole nation', the language, has been neglected among Bulgarians since their childhood.<sup>16</sup> By drawing attention to the decayed state of the Czech and Bulgarian languages Jungmann and Slaveikov urge their contemporaries to improve and enrich the language. They also carry out this improvement: Jungmann with his Czech-German dictionary, and to a degree, with his translations, Slaveikov with his translations, and original works.

Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists often claim that the Czech/'Czechoslav' and Bulgarian languages are superior to foreign languages; in other words, they assert that their languages have special qualities.<sup>17</sup> They accept Fichte's, and indeed, the biblical conception that putting on airs causes corruption, which applies to language too. Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists perceive the same airs behind the Czechs' or Bulgarians' adoption of a foreign language. Unlike Fichte, however, they believe that miscegenation plays a role in language decay; in ascribing miscegenation a role, Revivalists are probably drawing on biblical explications.

Fichte claims miscegenation could not and did not play any role in the decay of the Germans living abroad, since Germans mixed with other peoples

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<sup>15</sup> Petko R. Slaveikov, 'Iazikăt i istoriata' ('Language and history', 1868), in Slaveikov, *Săchineniia*, vol.4, ed. by Sonia Baeva, Petko Totev and Tsveta Undzhieva, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1979, p.157. For Slaveikov's codification of Bulgarian language with his translation see Boian Penev, *Istoriia na novata bălgarska literatura*, vol.3, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1977, pp.465-66.

<sup>16</sup> Slaveikov, 'Iazikouchenie' ('Philology', 1866), in Slaveikov, *Săchineniia*, vol.4, p.156.

<sup>17</sup> Compare Kollár's idea that there was one Slav language, and Czech, Russian, Polish and so forth were dialects of this language. This idea was popular with Czech Revivalists; Bulgarian Revivalists also took it up, but to a far lesser degree.

in the *Vaterland* as well.<sup>18</sup> The only example in Bulgarian Revivalist literature ascribing a greater role to language than to blood comes in Karavelov's 'Päteshestvie':

Regardless of all political and religious changes the language of a people remains faithful to itself, until the people disappears because of a gradual dying away or to assimilation by another people. The anatomical type of the people or their national character, habits and customs could change easily; the people, so to speak, could have a new incarnation, but its language would definitely preserve national traits.<sup>19</sup>

The combination of what they could read in the Bible about languages and Herder and Fichte's ideas provided the Revivalists with a mythology in which languages had a Golden Age before they had come into contact with foreign, unnatural languages, and subsequently gradually reached the current state of decay, because they had considered the foreign language more elevated. A major part of Revival thinking consisted in attempting to create a future period of a pure and elevated Bulgarian or Czech language. Linguistic nationalism was not promoted only in Czech or Bulgarian. Since Czech was not the language of scholarship in the eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century Habsburg Empire, Czech Revivalists who wanted to reach large audiences, including those abroad, would write in German (or, indeed, in the eighteenth century, sometimes still Latin). These circumstances were perceived as decay of language, and still are by Czech literary criticism. The perception of decay was unaffected by the fact that writers had continuously written in Czech in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the quality of the production was not much worse than before

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<sup>18</sup> 'Just as little importance [for the decline of language] should be attached to the fact that the Teutonic race has intermingled with the former inhabitants of the countries it conquered; for, after all, the victors and masters and makers of the new people that arose from this intermingling were none but Teutons. Moreover, in the mother-country there was an intermingling with the Slavs similar to that which took place abroad with Gauls, Cantabrians, etc., and perhaps of no less extent; so it would not be easy at the present day for any one of the peoples descended from Teutons to demonstrate their greater priority of descent than others.' Fichte, *Addresses*, p.47.

<sup>19</sup> Karavelov, 'Päteshestvie', p.570.

1620.<sup>20</sup> 1620 was, however, taken as the marker of the beginning of the decline also by Dobrovský, although he did not believe that his contemporary period marked the beginning of anything new. He claims that the republication of 'Dalimil', and the publication of the Czech version of Pulkava's chronicle (1374) in 1786 could prevent the complete disintegration of the language: 'In the same year [1786] František Faustin Procházka, who with his edition of the New Testament with good notes did a great service to his nation, took up the difficult task of publishing Dalimil, Pulkava and a few other generally useful works, so that at least by showing better samples [of the language] he might prevent the complete decay of Czech.'<sup>21</sup> Dobrovský, however, gives a list of some works published in Czech after 1620, including what he considers the finest work of John Amos Comenius (1592-1670), *Labyrint světa a ráj srdce* (Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart, 1631). Thus, although one of the initiators of the decline mythology, Dobrovský also gives evidence against the decline of the language itself. Where he did see decline was in the fact that Czech had *de facto* ceased to be an official language of administration and scholarship. Jungmann also subscribes to the myth that after 1620 the Czech language declined, and believes that until the 'discovery' of the Forged Manuscripts, the reign of Rudolph marks the Golden Age of Czech literacy. He states, however, that 'Golden Age' in this case means simply the production of the greatest amount of literature printed in Czech on the broadest spectrum of

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<sup>20</sup> The idea that the Czech language went into decline after 1620 took root in Czech literary histories and historiography and was accepted by non-Czech analysts of the Czech Revival, see Agnew, *Origins of the Czech National Renaissance*, pp.68-70.

<sup>21</sup> Dobrovský, *Dějiny*, p.136.

subjects. Dobrovský was not particularly concerned with *belles-lettres*, while Jungmann was.<sup>22</sup>

In the Bulgarian Revival, although books were published mainly in Bulgarian, the Revivalists' desire to make their voice heard abroad led them to publish many newspapers in two languages. This was the case, for example, with Rakovski's Franco-Bulgarian periodical *Dunavski lebed* (Danube swan, 1860–61); moreover, the articles in French there apparently contained more information about the Bulgarians in the Ottoman Empire than their Bulgarian counterparts.<sup>23</sup> Both Bulgarians and Czechs perceived the need to 'raise' the national language to a state where it could serve high culture. Unlike the Czech case, however, this effort of the Bulgarian Revivalists was supported and instigated from abroad, by scholars such as Venelin. Again unlike the Czech case, printing books in Bulgarian on Bulgarian territory did not occur until the nineteenth century. Unlike in Czech, writing *belles-lettres* in Bulgarian had ceased.<sup>24</sup> In both cases, however, the purpose of the linguistic Revival was to create a highly cultivated language from a language that was perceived to be

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<sup>22</sup> Jungmann, 'O klasičnosti literatury a důležitosti její' (On classicality of literature and its importance, 1827), in *Boj o obrození národa*, p.109.

<sup>23</sup> See Lilova, *Vázrozhdenskite znachenii na natsionalното ime*, p.50. Lilova informs us that Constantinople papers were more tolerant to different fonts and languages: an article written in the Cyrillic alphabet, for example, did not indicate that the language was Bulgarian, it could have been Turkish. Similarly, in Constantinople articles and letters were published that were written in Greek fonts but were in Bulgarian. In Bucharest, the Bulgarian Revivalists were more careful about matters of language, and although they did receive material in different languages, they always translated it into Bulgarian. This, however, as Lilova points out, did not stop Botev from starting to publish his periodical *Tăpan* in the Latin script when the printer of Cyrillic refused to print his paper because of unpaid bills. See *ibid*, p.48. The full title of the periodical is *Dunavski lebed. Grazhdanski, liuboslovni i zabavni vestnik v Belgrad*, French title, *Le Sygne du Danube*, see Elena Nalbantova's eponymous entry in the *Encyclopediia*, pp.251-52.

<sup>24</sup> Between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, the purpose of *belles-lettres* was served by the collections of various works, often of an apocryphal nature, the so-called *damaskini*. They, however, were mostly translations.



stuck in a process of decline, regardless of whether such a decline actually existed.<sup>25</sup>

## 2. The Golden Ages of the language

Raising the nation from the dead was performed by constructing myths of Golden Ages of the language; by means of these myths Revivalists promulgated the idea that the Czech and Bulgarian were old cultures with appropriately old languages. Since both Revivals took place mainly in the nineteenth century, the place of the God-given ideal language was taken by the oldest related language for which there was plausible evidence at the time, Sanskrit. That is, the Revivalists employed modern scholarship in a populist fashion to support or adorn their language mythology. The most radical example of this in Czech Revivalist mythology is *Početí roku 1620* where Žalud claims the close connection between Czech and Sanskrit. Like other Czech Revivalists, he thinks of Czech only as a dialect of the greater Slavonic language. He states that Slavonic is closer to Sanskrit than all other Indo-Germanic languages.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, he believes that Slavonic and Sanskrit are so close to each other that there is no need to offer any proof of this closeness. He does, however, give one fine example *kukada* (Sanskrit, hen) and *kukačka* (Czech, the basket in which hens lay eggs). He also maintains that contemporary French and Italian owe their 'soft sounds' (*č*), (*š*), (*ž*) and (*ň*) to Slavonic.<sup>27</sup> In claiming that Italian has borrowed sounds from Slavonic Žalud comes close to Kollár, who asserts that the Slavs had lent basic concepts to the Romans.<sup>28</sup> In asserting such relations between the Slavs and the Romans Kollár provides an inversion of Fichte's

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<sup>25</sup> The case of Dobrovský is a little fraught. He was brought up a German-speaker, did not learn Czech until secondary school, but still considered Czech his mother-tongue.

<sup>26</sup> In the Bulgarian case similar views are held by the first purist, Bogorov.

<sup>27</sup> Žalud, *Početí roku 1620*, p. 5. See also Pynsent, *Conceptions of Enemy*, p.39.

<sup>28</sup> Kollár, *Cestopis*, p.84.

theory. Unlike renegade ‘Germans’, the Slavs did not turn Roman, nor did they start speaking Latin; instead, Kollár represents them as educators of the South, as well as the North.

In the Bulgarian Revival Rakovski claims close connections between Bulgarian and Sanskrit. He, however, goes a step further than Žalud. With Bulgarian as the key to all languages, Rakovski explains the meaning of the appellation ‘Sanskrit’, which had been misread by west European scholars: the language is actually ‘Samskrit’, a Bulgarian compound: *sam* + *skrit* – hidden on its own, hiding itself, in other words, an esoteric language.<sup>29</sup> Thus, not only was Bulgarian the closest language to Sanskrit, but also only a Bulgarian could offer the rest of the world the true meaning of the language.<sup>30</sup> In this particular work, Rakovski does think of the Bulgarians as Slavs, but asserts that among all Slav languages that are all close to Sanskrit, Bulgarian is the closest. This is because among all Slav peoples only the Bulgarians pronounce the first-person singular nominative pronoun ‘*asǎ*’, which, although pronounced differently in different Bulgarian dialects, shows the greatest possible similarity to the Sanskrit for ‘to be’.<sup>31</sup>

Apart from claiming precedence over the rest of the languages, the Revivalists claimed their nations were among the first to have acquired a translation of the Holy Scriptures. Rakovski, as well as the Czech Dobrovský, maintained that the Slavs were literate before the mission of Cyril and

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<sup>29</sup> G.S. Rakovski, ‘Kliuch bălgarskago iazika’, in Rakovski, *Săchineniia*, ed. by Arnaudov, p.158; also Rakovski, ‘Kratko razsăzhdenie’, pp.144-146, 521-22.

<sup>30</sup> He also writes: ‘The Bulgarian language, the language that is now spoken by the people who call themselves Bulgarian (*bălgarin*, *blăgarin* and *bulgarin*) contains all *Samskrit* and Zendic languages that have fused together in it; with minor changes of pronunciation. Bulgarian folk songs and tales, customs and rites, contain the whole Zend and Old Indian religion! ... In our Bulgarian spoken language lies the key to the explanation [...] of the mixture of all European languages and to interpreting the Babel confusion’, Rakovski, ‘Kratko razsăzhdenie’, p.146.

<sup>31</sup> G.S.Rakovski, ‘Kliuch bălgarskago iazika’, Rakovski, *Săchineniia*, vol.4, p.196.

Methodius. Dobrovský also expresses subtle mistrust in the regenerative ability of the Czech language: he states that he is not certain whether the Czech language will ever achieve the level it had had in the past. Although he claims he cannot predict the future, he expresses his belief that this is very unlikely because, in order to go to grammar schools, Czechs had to prove proficiency in German, not in Czech.<sup>32</sup> This is why later Czech Revivalists described Dobrovský as someone who had only a scholarly interest in the Czech language, believing it had a past but not a future.<sup>33</sup> Dobrovský asserted that certain parts of Slavdom, namely the Wends living in Julinum near the mouth of the River Oder in the Baltic, were literate long before the mission of Cyril and Methodius, since they were great traders. They needed literacy to keep their books; this is demonstrated by Dobrovský as the basis of the common Slav word for 'market' *trh/trg*, existing also in Swedish (*Torg*) and Danish (*Torv*) – the Swedes and Danes together with many Saxons went to Julinum to trade.<sup>34</sup> In addition, Dobrovský claims that it was easy for Cyril and Methodius and their disciples to make a very accurate translation of the Bible, since the passive and

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<sup>32</sup> Palacký believed that 'The fact that for all his love for this language he [Dobrovský] wrote so little in Czech was because he had long since abandoned the hope of a revival of a Czech national literature, and even later on was always of the opinion that it could at best be cultivated as a simple literature of the common people.' Robert Auty points out that the fact that Dobrovský expressed serious doubt in the first edition of his *Geschichte* and softened his doubt in the subsequent editions could be seen as a change in his opinion; Palacký speaks against such conclusion, however, in his brief biography of Dobrovský. František Palacký, *Joseph Dobrowsky's Leben und gelehrtes Wirken*, Prague, 1833, p.37, quoted and translated by Robert Auty in, 'Changing views on the Role of Dobrovský in the Czech National Revival', in Peter Brock and H. Gordon Skilling (eds), *The Czech Renaissance of the Nineteenth Century*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1970, p.17. Palacký also writes: 'Dobrovský was the first scholar who penetrated the innermost being of the marvellous organism of the Slavonic languages and revealed it to view.' This statement reveals that Palacký considered Czech a living organism. Auty may be right to assert that 'To Dobrovský the Czech language was indeed an organism, not an assemblage of individual items; and in his grammar he characterized this organism – the classical Czech language of the sixteenth century.' Auty, *ibid.*, p.18.

<sup>33</sup> Tyl, *Poslední Čech*, p. 128.

<sup>34</sup> Dobrovský, *Dějiny*, p. 18.

active participles are close to the Greek, and therefore Cyril made an even closer translation of the Bible than the Latin translators could.<sup>35</sup>

Unlike most Bulgarian Revivalists (for example Aprilov, Chintulov, Voinikov, Karavelov) who are convinced that Cyril and Methodius were Bulgarian or that they baptised the Bulgarians, Rakovski shows little but disdain for the mission of Cyril and Methodius,<sup>36</sup> since nothing can convince him that they as Greeks, gave the Bulgarians Christianity or the Bulgarian/Slavonic alphabet. Rakovski maintains that Bulgarians were literate long before the Greek brothers were born. He states that the accepted legend must be wrong, since it was impossible for Cyril and Methodius to translate all the liturgical texts in only seventy days, even if they had five other men to help them. He refers to a work by the so-called Chernorizets Hrabăr (Brave Monk), in which the Monk avers that the Bulgarians did not have an alphabet before the disciples of Cyril and Methodius gave them one. To provide evidence for this, the Monk claims that the Bulgarians had hitherto had to write using lines and semicircles. In the Brave Monk's statement Rakovski sees evidence for the existence of a Bulgarian alphabet before the advent of Cyril and Methodius. Although he never mentions the glagolitic script, which is possibly what the Monk was referring to, Rakovski argues that all alphabets are composed of lines and semicircles. Thus, because they knew the earlier Bulgarian alphabet that was used in earlier translations of the Holy Scriptures, Cyril and Methodius and their disciples were able to transcribe the core liturgical texts in seventy days. Moreover, Rakovski claims that the Cyrillic alphabet had nothing to do

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>36</sup> He maintains that they actually came to Bulgaria after their failure in Greater Moravia.

with Cyril, and existed centuries before the coming of Christianity to Bulgaria.<sup>37</sup>

### 3. Foreign languages as morally wrong

The idea of having had a glorious language, and a number of Golden Ages at various points in Czech or Bulgarian history, which different Revivalists placed at different times, gave speaking a foreign language an air of immorality. Foreign languages were described as lacking a glorious past and containing morally false concepts unlike the Slavonic (or Czech or Bulgarian).

German was an ugly language according to, for example, Jungmann. It was also alien to the Slavs, since Slavonic was in the same group of languages as Latin or Greek, while German went together with Hebrew.<sup>38</sup> Hebrew and the Jewish people were alien to the Czechs; that is why the association of German with Hebrew had more moral than linguistic value. Žalud had equated the Jews to the Germans; in this he was a follower of Jungmann and a precursor of Havlíček. Havlíček's account of the Jewish attitude to Czech language reminds one of the topos of the Jew lying in wait to seduce a Gentile girl: the Jews spend so much time learning Czech that they have no time to cultivate their own language. He is also convinced that it is natural for Jews to use German, while it is not natural for them to use Slavonic.<sup>39</sup> According to Jungmann, in

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<sup>37</sup> Rakovski, 'Otgovor na bogoslovskaja grätska broshura', pp. 256-57.

<sup>38</sup> Jungmann asserts that the Slavonic, as well as Greek and Latin, are imaginative languages, inclined to poetry, while Hebrew and German are logical languages, inclined to philosophy. See Jungmann, 'Slovo k statečnému a blahovzdělanému Bohemariusovi' (1814), in *Boj o obrození národa*, p.51.

<sup>39</sup> 'It is not our job or our calling to look after the matters of those of the Mosaic faith, but if they are so willed as to listen to our opinion, we would advise the Jews, if they wish to abandon their natural language and literature, to join with the Germans and their literature. For in the course of time German has become a second mother-tongue in Jewry, which we can observe best in Czech, and in Polish and Hungarian Jews'. Karel Havlíček, 'České listy od Siegfrieda Kappera', p.334. Jews, as Pulzer notes, were assimilated by the Germans or by their immediate environment. The urban Jews assimilated with the Germans instead of having a separate national ideology; thus, they were frequently seen as promoters of Germandom. See Peter

addition to having a particularly ugly, 'barking and grunting' language, the Germans were incapable of learning Czech. This is why he asserts that the Czechs should take the Germans as an example, since they even take care of such an ugly language, unlike the Czechs who do not look after their beautiful language.<sup>40</sup> Everything that was valuable in German was borrowed from the Slavs in the past: this is a view shared by the mainstream Revivalist Hněvkovský and the eccentric Žalud. According to Hněvkovský, the Germans managed to revive their language in the past only thanks to their borrowings from the Slavs.<sup>41</sup> Žalud is more imaginative when describing the state in which the German language found itself in the fourth century when the Slav language came to offer a helping hand: the German language resembled more the way animals communicated, and 'the level of education of their language, in which they take so much pride now, exists only because of the Slavs.'<sup>42</sup> Yet again the myth of the Slavs as the pacific educators is exploited.

The relationship between Bulgarians and Turks and their languages was allegedly similar: the Turkish language was ugly and contained morally tainted words. Karavelov, for example, asserts that the difference between the Turkish and Bulgarian languages becomes clear when one compares concepts typical of the two languages. The Turkish language contains such concepts as '*olanin*' (minion) which speaks volumes of the moral qualities of the people who need such concepts:

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Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria*, 2nd edn, London, Halban, 1988, pp.132-36.

<sup>40</sup> Jungmann, 'O jazyku českém. Rozmlouvání první', p.135. Jungmann also considers English an ugly language, but he mentions that just to give the English as an example – even though their language is so ugly, they are proud of it and do not think of changing it for another.

<sup>41</sup> Šebastián Hněvkovský, *Zlomky o českém básnictví* (Fragments on Czech poetry, 1820), Prague, Jeřábek, 1820, pp.54-55.

<sup>42</sup> Žalud, *Početi roku 1620*, p.2.

The word *olanin* could not be translated into any European language. It signifies those boys, who, regardless of their male sex, fulfil female functions for Turkish notables. People say that the Turks have inherited this habit from Byzantium, but I think that such disgusting things can happen anywhere where affluence is extreme. That is why a handsome fifteen-year-old Turkish boy becomes heavy and sleepily fat, becomes a morally phlegmatic Turk when he turns twenty. Within these [five] years he has managed to become tired of his harem and to be bored with family life, and therefore he starts seeking other [sexual] pleasures, natural or unnatural.<sup>43</sup>

The Turks had an ugly language and they were incapable of learning any other language. Greeks could learn Bulgarian, though never properly, since their language lacked the sounds needed to speak Bulgarian.<sup>44</sup>

Among the unnatural languages some were more unnatural than others. Rakovski expresses the most radical disapproval of the Greek language. He holds beliefs similar to Kollár's on Northern Europe, and so is convinced that the Bulgarians were the educators of the Greeks. He believes that Ancient Greek was a language spoken by forest-dwellers. It had a separate history from Bulgarian till the time the two peoples started living side by side in the Balkan Peninsula. Even then, linguistic influence was only one-way – the Greeks borrowed from Bulgarian. Since Bulgarians had a word for every aspect of their lives, they did not need to borrow anything from Greek. Even the names of the major Greek gods came from Bulgarian, for example, 'Zeus' is of pure Bulgarian origin (from 'Diva', like *samodiva*, a demi-god, dryad; the root also allegedly means virgin, which is a testimony to the pure, virginal nature of the Bulgarians<sup>45</sup>). Rakovski also Bulgarianised Old Testament names, providing a

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<sup>43</sup> Karavelov, 'Detsata ne prilichat na bashtite si' (Children do not resemble their fathers, 1876), in Karavelov, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol. 3, ed. by Docho Lekov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1984, p.228. For stereotypes of the Turks as homosexuals see Chapter 5.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, Bozveli, 'Liubopitnoprstii razgovor' (Simple and curious conversation, written 1843, first published 1941); the conviction that Greeks cannot pronounce Bulgarian properly because Bulgarian is acoustically richer than Greek still survives today in the oral tradition. In his journalism Botev often includes a Greek priest who cannot pronounce Bulgarian words properly.

<sup>45</sup> Rakovski, 'Kratko razsăzhdenie', p.156. He also notes that the name of the Gypsies' main God, Devla, is of the same root, which, according to him, indicates that the Greeks and the Romans borrowed their mythology from the Bulgarians, and subsequently the name was

Bulgarian etymological explanation for most Hebrew names. For example, the first two syllables of 'Rebecca' are from Old Bulgarian *reva*, *rvenie* – a howling woman, 'Gabriel' is *Gavriil*; that is, the one who spoke.<sup>46</sup>

One of the few Revivalists who wrote mainly in Greek, Grigor Pärlichev, also discussed the unnaturalness of the Greek language.<sup>47</sup> He believed that learning Greek had a devastating impact on the quality of education. Although he was noticeably more fluent in Greek than in Bulgarian (which he admitted), he claimed that the Greek language was unnatural and that it would take one twenty-five years to learn Greek to a stage at which one could begin to become properly educated; in contrast, it would take just a few years to learn other European languages (English, French, or German) properly, hence Pärlichev's view that children should not be taught Greek at school, but English, French or German.<sup>48</sup>

The Revivalists regarded foreigners' inability to learn Bulgarian or Czech as evidence, on the one hand, of the foreigners' limited mental capacity; on the other hand, it demonstrated what rich and complex languages the Bulgarians and Czechs had. Sometimes, however, the fact that foreigners not only could not, but also would not learn Bulgarian or Czech was given as an example to

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borrowed by the Gypsies, who were one of the many ethnicities in the mixture that the Greeks and the Romans were according to Rakovski.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.145, 180. He also claims that Babylon is actually 'Babi-lono' that is, 'grandmother's womb' and Baghdad is from the Bulgarian 'Bog-o-dat', that is God-given.

<sup>47</sup> Two other Bulgarian Revivalists wrote only, or chiefly, in foreign languages, Nicola Piccolo (1792-1865) in Greek and French and Petär Beron (1799-1871) in French. Petär Beron was possibly the most influential of the three for the development of the Bulgarian language, since he wrote a Bulgarian primer. After interrupting his university education Grigor Pärlichev regretted his poor knowledge of Bulgarian. His lack of fluency in Bulgarian did not stop him from trying to translate the *Iliad* into the language. This was an attempt to demonstrate that Bulgarian was good enough to express what Homer could express. It was, however, such a bad translation that Pärlichev was severely criticised by the Revivalists, mainly Nesho Bonchev and Hristo Botev.

<sup>48</sup> Grigor Pärlichev, 'Chuvayi sia sebe si' (Look after yourself, 1866) in Grigor Pärlichev, *Izbrani proizvedeniia*, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1980, p.200.



follow: everyone should cultivate only his own language, as is the foreigners' wont.

#### **4. Speaking a foreign language instead of one's mother tongue**

##### **4.1. Speaking a foreign language instead of Czech**

To support his claim that it was wrong to speak a foreign language, Jungmann asserted that whoever has a foreign language of daily intercourse ceases being a Slav, at least while speaking it: 'Anyone who uses a foreign language when it is not necessary abandons his nationality at least for a moment. A Czech speaking German or French at that moment ceases to be a Czech. He has to think in French or German if he does not want to speak like a little schoolboy.'<sup>49</sup>

Although such ideas suggest that Jungmann defines belonging to a nation only on the basis of language, elsewhere he comes across as a convinced haematic nationalist, claiming that although Czechs can speak German, they will never become Germans; therefore he warns his readership against semi-Germans.<sup>50</sup> In his first *Rozmlouvání* he declares that no one can be Czech while claiming that their first language is German; instead, he labels Czechs who speak German 'renegades' who have to be educated into appreciating the language of the nation they belong to, in the way the Germans do. Belonging linguistically is not strong enough a bond for Jungmann, and here again he is writing as a haematic nationalist.<sup>51</sup> In order to prevent such semi-Germans from ruining the morals of the Czechs, Jungmann suggests that the Czechs should start living

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<sup>49</sup> Jungmann, 'O klasičnosti literatury a důležitosti její' (1827), p.112.

<sup>50</sup> 'Varuj se Nedoněmče!' he warns in his 'Slovo k statečnému a blahovzdělanému Bohemariusovi', p.57. Unlike Jungmann, Chmelenský comes across as a convinced linguistic nationalist in his poem 'Má píseň' (My song, previously unpublished), 'Ty se divíš, V-n ač Čech po německu že básní:-Byť by i česky psal, přece by jsi Němce slyšel' / 'You wonder, that although a Czech, V-n writes poetry in German? Even if he wrote in Czech, you would still hear the German in him.' in Chmelenský, *Vybrané spisy*, vol. 1, Prague, Kober, 1870, pp. 239-40.

<sup>51</sup> Jungmann, 'O jazyku českém. Rozmlouvání první', pp.133-35.

more like peasants, that is, speak only Czech; then they will not live with prostitutes, but lead morally upright lives with their wives.<sup>52</sup> In suggesting this Jungmann is mirroring the way the Germans saw learning French as detrimental to intellectual activity, morals and piety.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, the Bulgarian Revivalists see the simple fact of knowing French as equivalent to moral decay. As Karavelov or Botev wrote in the Bucharest periodical *Nezavisimost* [Independence]:

An old Bulgarian told us a few years ago that the world was created upside down. 'Some go to Europe to get educated and become smarter, while others wander about European schools only to lose even the last drop of common sense they had once possessed', he used to say. If I had children, I would have never agreed to send them to Paris. No father could be an enemy to his own child.<sup>54</sup>

As evidence that it was morally wrong to speak a foreign language, Revivalists often presented German- or French- speaking villains in Czech writing or Greek-, French- or Romanian-speaking villains in Bulgarian.<sup>55</sup> Revivalists and neo-Revivalists spent a great deal of effort convincing their audience that the moment foreign languages replaced the mother tongue among the poor as well as the rich would be the moment the nation dies.

The weakening of the position of the Czech language evolved in a painful fashion. Presuming that people from the periods they described had the same

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<sup>52</sup> Jungmann, 'Slovo k statečnému a blahovzdělanému Bohemariusovi', pp.57-58.

<sup>53</sup> Jahn claimed that 'He who teaches his children to learn the French language, or permits them to learn it, is delirious; he who persists in doing this sins against the Holy Ghost; he who allows his daughter to study French is about as good as he who teaches his daughter the virtues of prostitution', quoted in Fishman, *Language and Nationalism*, p.53.

<sup>54</sup> Karavelov, 'Komu oshte bi triabvalo da se dade malko hrian?' (Who else needs to be given a little horse-radish, 1874), in Karavelov, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol. 5, p.410. It is not certain whether Karavelov or Botev wrote this article, and so it is published in Botev's as well as in Karavelov's collected works. Since Botev is keener on using Paris as an emblem of debauchery, I am inclined to believe that Botev is, if not the author, at least the co-author of this article. The article manifests Botev's typically aggressive stance to everything he disapproved of, and in the typical of Botev manner blames all flaws in behaviour on diet; change of diet is therefore seen as the remedy for many conditions.

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, Tyl, *Rozina Ruthardova* (1839); in Tyl's *Angelina*, the degenerates speak French; in Voinikov's *Krivorazbranata tsivilizatsiia* the villains speak Greek and French; in Karavelov's *Izvānreden rodoliubets* and *Progresist* the villains speak Romanian.

values as they were promoting themselves, the Revivalists saw the fact that German had precedence over Czech as a demonstration of the Czechs' suffering. Kollár, for example, could not accept that the Slavs would voluntarily abandon their language; hence, he presents a picture of the Germans driving out the Slavonic with violence:

Já té Němců přisvědčiti haně  
nechtěv, díím: 'I což vám dělají,  
že se onen stárec nehájí  
zde tak zjevně naříkati na ně?'  
Tu lid začal v každé lkáti straně:  
„Ach, kraj, chrámy, krev nám hltají,  
pod křížem nám hlavy stínají,  
berou těžké desátky a daně.  
A co ještě horšího jest, to je,  
že nám vyřezují jazyky  
z našich úst a cpají do nich svoje”

(Not wanting to affirm the shame/ of the Germans, I say, 'And what are they doing to you,/ that the old man does not even restrain himself/ from complaining so openly about them'// Now the people began wailing on every side/ 'Oh, they are swallowing up our countryside, churches, blood,/ they behead us beneath the Cross,/ take burdensome tithes and taxes.// And what is even worse is that/ they cut out our tongues/ from our mouths and stuff theirs into them.')

Although other authors do not create such a violent picture of the imposition of the German language, they state that education in German is unnatural since the pupils cannot understand what they are being taught. In Němcová's *Babička*, for example, the only children who can understand what they are taught at school are the grandchildren of Babička, because their father is a German speaker and they had previously lived in Vienna for much of the year; the rest of the children simply have to sit through the classes without learning anything.<sup>57</sup> This is contrasted with the approach Babička had towards the education of her own children: although she acknowledges that they could have had a better education had she let them be educated in German, she considers the price of education in German too high from a moral point of view: '[The children] would have become estranged from me. Who would have been

<sup>56</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera* [1832edn], (II,59), p.154.

<sup>57</sup> Němcová, *Babička*, pp.181- 82.

teaching them there to love their fatherland and mother tongue? – No one. They would have learnt a foreign language, foreign manners, and in the end, they would have forgotten their own blood.’<sup>58</sup>

From the early fourteenth-century Dalimil onwards the notion of a brother not understanding his brother and parents not understanding their children has been an expression of the ultimate language decay. It bears the threat of blood relations losing their importance due to bad upbringing, in other words, the possibility of damaging someone through nurture, against their nature. Tyl, for example, continues the trend started by Dalimil, in his *Poslední Čech*, where Jaroslav Velenský, the son of the committed nationalist Count Velenský is an equally committed cosmopolitan, who is not convinced at all that the Czechs should be educated in Czech, since they would benefit intellectually more if they were educated in German. On the one hand, the young Velenský is a haematic nationalist, since he believes that the Czechs will remain Czechs whatever language they speak.<sup>59</sup> On the other, he rebels against his blood, since he abandons what his father believes is good for him and for his nation. The young Jaroslav Velenský goes as far as to claim that Czechs want to learn German instead of Czech: ‘But the Czechs want to be Germans, as we see in artisans, industrialists, townspeople, villagers; they all learn German – and have their children learn German. Indeed, many only despise the Czech language; they want to be Germans.’<sup>60</sup> Tyl’s belief that nurture is more important than nature is also evident in the case of Milada, a girl whom the old Velenský had brought up; although of French blood, she is a true Czech nationalist; in her case it is clear that being a good Czech brings with it perfect moral standards.

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p.89.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>60</sup> Tyl, *Poslední Čech*, p. 29.

The Hungarian Anthál in the same novel is such a devoted Czech nationalist that he has a duel with the young Velenský in order to protect the honour of the Czech language. Through Milada's brother, Pedrazzi, who, believing he was a Czech, had changed his name from Ladislav Petráček to Ludovico Pedrazzi and pretended not to understand Czech, Tyl criticises the tendency among young Czechs to present themselves as foreigners. As Pedrazzi says himself, he is not the only Czech to try to conceal his origin, hoping that under a foreign name he (or she) would be more appreciated among the Czechs, who normally have little respect for their compatriots' work.<sup>61</sup> Similarly to other Revivalist or neo-Revivalist authors, such as Kollár, Žalud, Němcová, Světlá, in *Poslední Čech*, Tyl blames the upper classes for being the instrument of language corruption; they make it necessary for Czechs to learn German. Thus, like the decay of blood, the decay of language was introduced by the nobility. Tyl, however, amalgamates his moralising on the contemporary decay of the Czechs with optimistic prescriptions of what should be done: he casts himself in the role of a preacher who points out errors and then shows how to redeem them. For example, although most of the Bohemian nobility is irredeemably corrupt, old Velenský is not; he considers it offensive when Jaroslav addresses his step-daughter, Milada, in French. In the end, Jaroslav's blood will out and he decides to give Czech nationalism a chance.

Světlá shares many of Tyl's (or, rather, Fichte's) ideas. She, however, takes national propaganda a step further: not only the nobility who speak only foreign languages are corrupt, but the lower classes, too, become corrupt the moment they learn German, which is what happens in her

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p.114.

*Jitřenka*.<sup>62</sup> Světlá constructs a picture of the Czech past that contributes both to the myth of Slav suffering and to the myth of the Czechs' heroic past. According to the picture she paints of the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, the nobility and the urban notables considered it shameful to speak Czech. In describing their views on language Světlá is making a point about the decay of the Czech language in those times. In *Jitřenka* she presents the notables of the small town of Dobřany as degenerates who cannot comprehend why anyone would want to speak Czech in the first place, let alone in public. Their view that Czech is not fit for anything but conversations between masters and servants is intended to reveal the social moral decay that led to the decay of the Czech literary language. In rebuking the people of Dobřany for their views, Světlá is satirising the general Bohemian late eighteenth-century view on the vernacular: 'What can a progressive person talk about in that language? After all, it is an adequate language only for the lowest classes, housemaids and day-labourers. Isn't it true that when we sometimes speak Czech at home for fun we have to borrow every second word from German? Indeed Czech does not even have words to express elevated opinions!'<sup>63</sup> After that Světlá produces the counter-argument that if a language is good enough to pray to the Lord in, it should be good enough to use in public places and the gatherings of the notables. In *První Češka*, *Na úsvitě* and *Jitřenka*, Světlá

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<sup>62</sup> Even during the 1860s and 1870s it was common to assert that only the upper classes introduced language decay through speaking foreign languages. In Pfleger-Moravský's late Romantic *Z malého světa*, for example, it is still a marker of moral purity not to be able to speak German; therefore, the main character, the worker-leader Procházka, and his close friend Hynek Vácha (an allusion to the Romantic poet Karel Hynek Mácha) cannot and do not want to learn German. The people who speak German in the novel are the people who have power, the exploiters of the simple Czechs.

<sup>63</sup> Světlá, *Jitřenka*, pp.457-58.

presents innocent Czech females who suffer because they do not know German. The later the novel, the more devastating the pictures Světlá paints. In the earliest, *První Češka*, the fact that the main character, Jitka, is forced to learn German and not allowed to speak Czech results in her refusal to speak any language, and, eventually, her being incapable of so doing. Her state verges on autism. The moment she is left in a remote rural area surrounded by the sound of the Czech tongue, she recovers her intellectual and physical abilities and becomes a propagator of the Czech national cause. In Světlá's next novel, *Na úsvitě*, another innocent woman loses all her property because she signs a contract in German that she does not understand. Instead of becoming a defender of her cause, her guardian takes measures to ensure nothing like that could happen to his own children and sends them away to get a German education. He does not even allow them to come home for the holidays until they have forgotten Czech completely. Since the guardian does not know German, his desire is not to be able to understand his own children. They fulfil their father's requirement and become true 'čechožrouti' (Czechophages): 'They rose higher and higher and eventually held important posts, where they raged against their own blood in as many ways as they could.'<sup>64</sup>

In the guardian's motives for turning his children into renegades Světlá recognises the decayed state the once great Czechs had fallen into:

I saw that [no one] had any respect for the Czechs, that the Czechs were good enough only for toil. And I also decided immediately that I would not give my children a life like this, that I would do better for them. I wanted to divide up my estate among them, but I surrendered the estate instead so that I could redeem them from Czech debasement and whenever I meet them they thank me for that. Now at least they are doing well, are

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<sup>64</sup> Světlá, *Na úsvitě*, p.283.

respected by the gentry, indeed, are gentry themselves. And what would have become of them if I'd left them in this Czech hole with their stupid [Czech] language?<sup>65</sup> Instead of appalling the rest of the village population, these thoughts inspire them to follow suit and educate their children in German; hence Světlá's conclusion that the Czech nation had created its cruellest executors in its own children. Thus the decay Dalimil or Tyl had been describing or warning against, fathers not understanding their children – becomes a reality in Světlá's work; her portrayal also demonstrates the moral decay that speaking a foreign language brings, the decay Jungmann warned against. The result of the nation's suicide is not only a lack of people who consider themselves Czechs, but also the reluctance of all educated in German to do any other than white-collar work. This applies even to people who were only partially educated in German and abandoned their studies because of their inability to learn anything when instructed in a foreign language. Světlá, then, not only calls attention to the unnaturalness of education in a foreign language, but also points out that corruption enters when education is lacking.<sup>66</sup>

In *Na úsvitě* Světlá differentiates between people who could learn German and those who could not. Here, the guardian's children are the only lower-class children of pure Czech origin, the offspring of morally decent Czechs, who manage to learn German and forget Czech. Among the main characters of the novel only the illegitimate child Pavel not only learns, but even enjoys learning German and eventually starts mocking Czech books. Since no one knows who Pavel's father was, Pavel is impure biologically, by birth; this is reflected in his attitude to the Czech national idea and in his ability to learn German. He differs from the two legitimate children he is brought up with, Jarolím and Klárka.

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<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*



Unlike him, Jarolím becomes physically ill because he has to learn a foreign language and so soon refuses to do so. In the end, he is imprisoned and sentenced to death for reading and spreading national propaganda. Although his sister Klárka is only a latent nationalist, she finds it impossible to learn German. She never thoroughly understands the national idea, but, as Světlá writes, like every woman, she is prone to have compassion with the weak, that is, with the Czechs; once more Světlá exploits the Slav suffering topos. Klárka is by nature, not by education, nationally conscious. In *Jitřenka*, Světlá elaborates the same topic from a different point of view. In *Na úsvitě* young children move away from home and are corrupted by German. In *Jitřenka*, a young woman, who used to refuse to learn German or to dress according to urban fashion, goes to Prague where her vanity is encouraged and she falls morally; her betrothed learns she had fallen by seeing a letter she had written in German. After many unsuccessful attempts, she manages to learn German when she falls in love with a German itinerant player, although she is actually already betrothed.

Speaking German to appear distinguished did not take place only when the speakers had been educated in German. Members of the lower classes trying to pass themselves off as educated in German were also susceptible to linguistic corruption. Chmelenský writes:

Proč milostpaní z Kleveta  
Vždy po německu štěbetá?  
Bys viděl, co se tenkrát naučila –  
Když první služkou v krčmě byla.

(Why does the dear lady of Gossipton/ Always chatter in German?/ So that you can see what she had learnt/ When she was the senior servant in a pub.)<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> J. K. Chmelenský, 'Příčina' (Their reason, 1823), in Chmelenský, *Vybrané spisy*, vol. 1, p. 101.

Towards the end of the century, Holeček gives no evidence of language decay, at least among the Southern Bohemians, even in mixed marriages: ‘The husband a German and the wife a Czech, they lived together for long years, got on well enough, farmed well, but neither learnt the other’s language. He spoke German, she Czech; indeed, practically speaking, they both knew only their mother-tongues.’<sup>68</sup> That is, like blood and race, the language of Southern Bohemians remains intact and is passed on to the offspring.

Holeček gives examples of Germans being able to learn Czech in a mixed marriage, but not Czechs German. The marriage of the narrator’s aunt to a German is such an example: his aunt teaches her husband Czech, instead of learning German herself and hence she has a completely Czech family. Another example Holeček gives is a Czech boy who goes to school in a German town and ends up teaching the whole town Czech while he does not learn a word of German. After praising the South Bohemians for not being able to learn German, Holeček concludes: ‘But our people harbour no national fanaticism, nor any religious fanaticism. They have no religious prejudice against the Germans; they do not like their language and are incapable of learning it, but they do not hate it.’<sup>69</sup>

#### **4.2. Speaking a foreign language instead of Bulgarian**

Until the 1850s and 1860s, when Rakovski, Karavelov and eventually Botev started publishing, ideas of the decayed state of the language were expressed mainly in works describing the lack of knowledge of Bulgarian among the Greek or hellenised clergy or amongst the rich. In pre-1850s works the decay of language was embodied in descriptions of priests or schoolmasters not

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<sup>68</sup> Holeček, *Jak u nás žijou i umírají*, p.116.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.117-18.

knowing, or being unwilling to speak, Bulgarian; after the 1850s the descriptions of language decay became more varied. Before the 1850s, the masses of Bulgarians, urban or rural, were often represented as victims of the decay of the rich; after the 1850s, mainly the urban population was described as willingly taking part in practices which would lead to their forgetting or at least pretending to have forgotten their language. In other words, the ideas that entertained Czech Revivalists, that is, the rich and the city-dwellers alienating themselves from the keepers of the true national tradition, became popular in the Bulgarian Revival only during the 1850s, when the Czech Revival proper was coming to an end.

Warnings against entirely abandoning one's language for Greek started with the work of Paisii, who, even though he admitted that Bulgarian lacked words for certain concepts, deplored Bulgarians' use of Greek.<sup>70</sup> As Jungmann suggested that the Czechs should take the Germans as an example of a people that looked after its language, Paisii suggested that the Bulgarians should take the Greeks as an example, since the Greeks would never abandon their language, regardless of the existence of many other languages that are richer and more 'glorious' (*slavni*) than Greek.<sup>71</sup> As Paisii appeals to Bulgarians not to be ashamed of their own language and origins, in the 1830s and 1840s Bozveli appeals to the Bulgarians to learn foreign languages, but not to be disgusted by their own.<sup>72</sup> For Paisii, however, the main problem was not the language of education, but the language of the liturgy; early Revivalists did not consider

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<sup>70</sup> Paisii more or less repeats the fifteenth-century Všeherd's words, although it is extremely unlikely that Paisii knew Všeherd. Všeherd wrote 'knowing that I am a Czech, I will learn Latin but write and speak Czech; there are some who are ashamed of their natural language and do not love it, indeed seem to hate it, but I would rather write anything I want to write in the Czech, not the Latin, language'. Cited in Pynsent, *Czech Literary Histories*, p.17.

<sup>71</sup> Paisii, *Istoriia*, pp.36-38.

<sup>72</sup> Bozveli, 'Prosveshtenii evropeits, polumershaia Mati Bolgariia i sin Mati Bolgarii', pp.38-39.

secular education in a foreign language ruinous for the education of Bulgarians; they saw not the schoolmasters, but the priests and the rich as the main imposers of decay.<sup>73</sup> After 1835, when the first Bulgarian-language secular school was opened, the language of secular education started receiving more attention, and eventually, after the Bulgarians achieved an autocephalous Church, the language of secular education became the major concern of nationalists. For Bozveli in the 1840s, speaking a foreign language is not a marker of decay, as long as this foreign language is not Turkish or Greek, but the language of one of the 'educated nations'. In early works by Voinikov, written as dialogues like Bozveli's, the learning of foreign languages could not by itself cause decay; like Bozveli, Voinikov expects decent education to take place abroad, that is, in a foreign language, but he insists that the Bulgarians should be educated first in Bulgarian and then learn foreign languages.<sup>74</sup>

### **4.3. Bulgarian urban language decay**

Karavelov more than any other writer I have chosen considers on the different paths of language decay. Unlike Světlá, however, he rarely describes women suffering because of their lack of knowledge of foreign languages. In Karavelov's version, as in the case of the corruption of blood, women are the main instrument of language decay, either through miscegenation, that is, Greek or hellenised women inveigling Bulgarian men into marrying them, or Bulgarian women convincing their husbands it is shameful to speak Bulgarian. The other two causes of language decay Karavelov describes are the same as we find in Czech writers: a desire to appear distinguished, evident mainly among the urban population, or having been educated or having lived abroad.

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p.49.

<sup>74</sup> See Voinikov, *Sāchineniia*, vol.1, pp.1-50.

According to Karavelov, Plovdiv is the most decayed of all Bulgarian cities; it is 'Babel'.<sup>75</sup> One of the aspects of the degeneration of the Plovdiv population is the Bulgarians' refusal to speak Bulgarian. Karavelov maintains that if a peasant came to the shop of a Bulgarian, the Bulgarian shopkeeper would pretend not to speak Bulgarian, denying his own language in order to assert authority over the poor, simple peasant.<sup>76</sup>

The reason behind the decay of Plovdiv was the mixed population – apart from Bulgarians there were Greeks, Albanians, Turks and Jews, as well as a Pole in 'Detsata ne prilichat na bashtite si' and worst of all, hellenised Albanians, the so-called *tsintsari/kutsovlasi*<sup>77</sup> and many hellenised Bulgarians. As described by Karavelov in his short story 'Stoian' (1872), one of these ex-Bulgarians, Papadati, would rather turn Turk than utter a word in Bulgarian. Papadati has not only made his two daughters true renegades, but also spread the infection of hellenisation to the pure Bulgarians, which phenomenon ends with a Bulgarian, Stoian, murdering his hellenised wife (Papadati's daughter), and her lover, the local priest, then falling ill and dying.<sup>78</sup> Stoian had brought this trouble upon himself by going against his parents' desire that he not marry a Greek. His fall, however, is not due to miscegenation, since his wife is of

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<sup>75</sup> Karavelov, 'Detsata ne prilichat na bashtite si', p.216.

<sup>76</sup> Karavelov, 'Zapiski za Bălgariia i bălgarite' (first published in Russian as 'Iz zapisok bulgara', 1867), *Săchineniia*, vol.4, p.426.

<sup>77</sup> The *tsintsari* (hellenised Albanians, Aromanians) are always negative characters because they have abandoned their homeland, and betrayed their own nation, religion and language by adapting to whatever is most beneficial at a given point of time. The Bulgarian equivalent of the *Tsintsari* are the Gagaouz, who would not speak any other language but Turkish, although they are allegedly of Bulgarian origin and Christians, see, for example Blăskov, *Dvama bratia*, in Blăskov, *Povestvovaniia za vāzrozhdenskoto vreme*, Sofia, BZNS, 1985, pp. 213-14. The Gagaouz are depicted also by Slaveikov, according to whose definition they are 'Christian Tatars' 'who speak a rude version of Turkish, and are almost savage, unruly, cruel, lecherous, and bibulous.' In P.R. Slaveikov, 'Pătni belezhki' (Travel notes, 1868) in Slaveikov, *Săchineniia*, vol.4, p.219.

<sup>78</sup> 'Kiriak Papadati was one of the hellenised Bulgarians who would more readily convert to Islam than utter a word in Bulgarian' in Karavelov, 'Stoian', in Karavelov, *Săchineniia*, vol.2, pp. 205-06.

Bulgarian blood. Thus, marrying language renegades, who are concomitantly of base moral stature, despite their blood, could bring only moral corruption.

Not only marrying, but also having any contact whatsoever with language renegades corrupts; the infection could be spread by schoolmasters and even friends. Karavelov in 'Zapiski za Bălgariia i bălgarite' (Notes on Bulgaria and the Bulgarians, 1867) and Blăskov in *Dvama bratia* (Two brothers, 1888-89) describe such instances in the cities they deal with, Plovdiv and Silistra. Both Blăskov and Karavelov portray morally and physically repulsive schoolmasters as spreaders of corruption. Karavelov's spreader of infection among Plovdiv schoolchildren is a turkicised Greek, who is rotten on the inside as well as the outside: 'Imagine such a creature that did not wash for months, that did not comb his hair or beard for years, that changes only when his shirt or clothes are torn, and that is covered by various insects and dirt of all kinds. In addition, Samurkash effendi was blind in one eye, his face devastated by smallpox, and his body gave off a rather unpleasant smell.'<sup>79</sup> In Blăskov's work contact with the new teacher spoils not only the children, who lose their innocence by means of the education he offers them, but also the other teacher at the school, who was one of the few nationalists in the city before becoming friends with the hellenised Bulgarian. In both works the spreaders of the Greek language are branded by nature (or, possibly, punished by God) in such a way that one could distinguish them from the remaining, incorrupt population; contact with renegades, be they hellenised or turkicised, was represented as much more detrimental to morality than contact with true Greeks. Both works, however, assert the prevalence of the natural strength of the Bulgarians faced with Greek

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<sup>79</sup> Karavelov, 'Zapiski za Bălgariia i bălgarite', pp.430-31.

influence. In *Dvama bratia*, once education in Bulgarian makes its way into Silistra, it spreads 'like wild fire'. In 'Zapiski za Bălgaria i bălgarite', Karavelov maintains that for the Bulgarians in Plovdiv being Bulgarian meant being Christian, and as Christians they believed it was better for them to pretend to be Greek rather than to be openly Bulgarian. Since Karavelov is not as optimistic as Blăskov, he does not describe education in Bulgarian spreading fast in Plovdiv; instead he gives the first Bulgarian teachers the role of surgeons cutting the dead flesh from a healthy body.<sup>80</sup> Regardless of the fact that both Blăskov and Karavelov claim that degeneration in cities is at a more advanced stage than in the villages, they maintain that the cure for degeneration, that is, education, also started in the cities. In Karavelov's view, however, there were cases when ignorance would not allow people to appreciate the advantages of having a progressive education in their mother tongue<sup>81</sup>; Plovdiv remains the embodiment of degeneration for him, as cities in general do for Blăskov, for whom all foreign cities, regardless of the fact that only there could the Bulgarians acquire education, were equally, if not even more, degenerate.

#### 4.4. Education abroad

This, however, was not the case with Bozveli, writing thirty years before Karavelov and Blăskov and at roughly the same time as the Czech Revivalist Tyl. Bozveli maintains that the best way of acquiring a good secular education

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<sup>80</sup> 'The first word against the Phanariot yoke and the first protest against the Graeco-Asiatic gangrene were born in Plovdiv and its surroundings. [...] They [the early Revivalists in Plovdiv] first pronounced the name Bulgarian with pride and benevolence and first raised their voices in defence of this name; they first discovered the falseness of the Phanariots and advised the Bulgarian nation to stop soiling itself in the Byzantine morass; [...] they first separated the living from the dead, the honest from the dishonest, the lies from the truth, the corn-cockle from the hard wheat, and ours from theirs', Karavelov, 'Zapiski za Bălgaria i bălgarite', pp.429-30.

<sup>81</sup> Such is the case of the semi-hellenised Bulgarian woman in 'Detsata ne prilichat na bashtite si', which is also set in Plovdiv; she moves her children from the Bulgarian school to the Greek because the Bulgarian schoolmaster and the doctor were doing experiments on cats and dogs, p.232.

is to go to school abroad; then one should return to Bulgaria and spread knowledge. In all his dialogues he includes a son of Mother Bulgaria who was educated abroad and who spelled out all the answers to contemporary Bulgarian problems in what Bozveli considered an exemplary Bulgarian (which meant Bulgarian replete with neo-Classical compounds that only he used or understood). The opponents of the son of Mother Bulgaria are, at least in the second part of the 'Liubopitnoprostitii razgovor' (Curiously simple conversation, written 1842-44, first published 1941), rich Bulgarians who can hardly speak Bulgarian, which reminds one of Jungmann's *Rozmlouvání I* where the Czech cannot speak Czech properly. These rich Bulgarians suggest that whoever wants to be educated in Bulgarian and not in Greek should go abroad, which is what Bozveli himself suggests.<sup>82</sup> Either Bozveli is satirising the rich, or he believes that Bulgarians can be educated in Old Church Slavonic, for example, in Russia; for him Old Church Slavonic is what Bulgarian should be modelled on. The next inconsistency in this dialogue is that the rich hellenised Bulgarians do not normally speak Greek but Turkish. They preach that proper education could be only in Greek, and that no one in Austria (where the dialogue takes place) is properly educated since their schooling is in German, not Greek.<sup>83</sup>

After Bozveli, living and being educated abroad was seen as the chief cause of apostasy. Just as Světlá wrote of the reluctance of Czechs who knew German to do anything but white-collar work, so the Bulgarians who knew Western languages and dressed according to Western fashion were presented as reluctant

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<sup>82</sup> 'The Bulgarians who want to read in Bulgarian should go to the other kingdoms, and those who want to be educated in Bulgaria should learn to read in Greek' in the Neophyte of Hilendar - Bozveli, 'Liubopitnoprostitii razgovor', in Margarita Bradistilova-Dobreva, *Vázrozhdenski dialozi*, p.56.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p.56. Nevertheless, the reader cannot understand why the son of Mother Bulgaria is convinced they are Greeks, since they speak only Turkish and have habits usually associated with the Turks, smoking or giving thanks to Allah.



to do any work at all. One of Voinikov's characters summarises a view common among the Revivalists:

If I knew French, I wouldn't have started any job at all. I would be dressed, you know, *à la* fashion-monger: with a watch, chain, gloves, with a walking stick and, of course, spectacles, so that anyone who saw me would recognise immediately that I knew French, that I was educated. Then I wouldn't have become a tailor, nor would I have sat in a shop selling olives. I would have just walked about as if I had no care in the world.<sup>84</sup>

Education abroad was often seen as a pseudo-education or no education at all, and in both the Czech and the Bulgarian Revival foreign languages were said to ruin moral standards.

In his unfinished novel, *Uchenik i blagodeteli* (Student and benefactors, 1864-65), Vasil Drumev gives two examples of people whose morals degenerate after learning a Western language on foreign territory. One of the characters corrupted by foreign languages is a thief who claims to have been educated in London, while he had actually learnt English while being a servant to English people in Constantinople; he pretends to be highly educated in order to gain the main character's (Zhivko's) trust so that he can rob him. The other character corrupted by education in a foreign language is Zhivko's best friend, Bogdan. Bogdan goes to study in Vienna, unlike Zhivko, who goes to study in Primorsk (Russia). Both face big-city degeneration, but it infects only Bogdan's morals. Although one of the major topics of the novel is the degeneration of the Bulgarian notables in Primorsk, Drumev suggests that even their corruption is minimal compared to the extent of corruption that the non-Slavonic West can inflict. By suggesting the contrast between the Slavonic East and the non-Slavonic West, Drumev points out that non-Slavonic nations are so different that mutual comprehension is impossible. This belief is ridiculed in Karavelov's

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<sup>84</sup> Voinikov, *Krivorazbranata tsivilizatsiia*, p. 127. As Lilova points out, a knowledge of French did actually change the attitudes of people: she draws on Todor Burmov's memoirs, from a trip within Bulgaria, during which he pretended to be French; this allowed him to hire himself a Turkish guard and the Bulgarians everywhere were very servile towards him, see Lilova, *Vázrozhdenskite znacheniiia*, pp.50-51.

*Bălgari ot staro vreme* (Bulgarians from the old times, 1868), where the old generation which is doomed never to comprehend the new age (the new age is positive in this case; it brings the desire to create a Bulgarian state independent of the Ottoman Empire), believes that the Germans and the English are mute, since they cannot understand Bulgarian and the Bulgarians cannot understand them.<sup>85</sup> Naturally, the old generation blames only the English for not understanding Bulgarian: ‘I saw the English in Constantinople, and I can assure you that they are fools of such a magnitude that the world has not created before. The Englishman would come into a shop to get himself bread and cheese and you could not understand him... He asks you for something, you give him something completely different. And did you know that most of the Englishmen are mute like the Germans?’<sup>86</sup>

#### **4.5. Religion as an agent of language decay**

By maintaining that monasteries and religion in general are major paths to language corruption, Karavelov brings the discussion of the fate of the Bulgarian language back to its beginnings (the language of the liturgy), except that, unlike the early Bulgarian Revivalists, he blames the degenerate morals of monks and priests for the decay of the language; language decay is a component of their general degeneration and of the degeneration they proliferate. People who have no contact with the clergy preserve a purer language and morality. Karavelov quotes as examples adherents of the

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<sup>85</sup> The Slavonic for German is *nemec*, the mute one; Karavelov’s story is based on a pun, and the English, as Germanic-speakers are just a brand of German.

<sup>86</sup> Karavelov, *Bălgari ot staro vreme*, in Karavelov, *Săbrani săchineniia v devet toma*, vol.1, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1965, pp. 253-54.

Paulician sect, and the Bulgarians who had converted to Islam (Pomaks).<sup>87</sup>

Neither the Paulicians, nor the Bulgarian Muslims, had to have any contact with the Greek or hellenised priests, from whom all corruption sprang; the Pomaks, according to Karavelov, did not know any Turkish, hence the Koran could not have had any meaning for them. That is why they, in Karavelov's view, spoke an older and purer version of Bulgarian, free from Turkish words or word-order.<sup>88</sup>

### **5. Polluting the mother-tongue with foreign words**

Not only people giving preference to languages other than their own, but also people using foreign words, word-order and accent while speaking their mother tongue were seen as ruining the language. Naturally, in most cases the people who spoke an impure language were of impure morals. Such is the case, for example, with the degenerate Czech in Jungmann's '*Rozmlouvání I*', who, although speaking Czech cannot pronounce a single word in normal Czech. Everything he says in Czech, is pronounced with a German accent and German syntax. This character believes that his origin (blood) is Czech, but his language is German; therefore he has no interest in, let alone respect for, the glorious Czech cultural achievements of the past that the resurrected Daniel Adam z Veleslavína is trying to bring to his attention. For this modern Czech being a Czech from Prague means that he has been to all the cafés and pubs in Prague, where he played billiards and smoked cigars; otherwise there is no difference

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<sup>87</sup> The Paulicians were a sect founded by the brothers Paul and John in the seventh century who used quotations from the Epistles of St. Paul to support their Manichean heresy. The Bogomils emerged from them.

<sup>88</sup> 'The most remarkable fact is that the language of the Lovech Pomaks is pure – without Turkish words or constructions, melodious, and has preserved most of its Old Bulgarian forms, more than the language of the Orthodox Bulgarians. I'm no longer even talking about the fact that there are no Greek words or Greek influences in the language of the Pomaks, which have otherwise been introduced by the so-called Greek education among the Orthodox Bulgarian population,' Karavelov, '*Zapiski za Bălgaria i bălgarite*', pp.380-81, see also p.377; for the language of the Paulicians, p.441.

between Czechs and Germans.<sup>89</sup> As it was in the case of blood, the threat here presents not only the corruption of the language, which has already happened, but the extinction of the Czechs because of the extinction of their language.

Kollár is also concerned with the preservation of the purity of the Czech sounds. As he had claimed facetiously that the dwelling places of Germans and the germanised had gloomy weather, so Kollár ascribes German origins to several ugly sounds in Czech and here he implicitly praises what was for him the Slovak dialect of Czech: he traces language decay back to phonetics:

Než řeč naše nejen nemá hmotů  
jako *bl, kl, sl, ml* huhňavé  
aneb *dr, pr, tr, vr* štěkavé  
od Germanů půjčené a Gothů,  
nýbrž chrání se i od skřehotů;  
svléká pomalu ř břískavé,  
slala *ííkání* kvičlavé  
s *ee*káním k mezem Hottentotů:  
milostné *a*, pak *o* převelebné  
vracejí se zpátkem z vyhnanství  
*bejk, šejd, hejl* tu hnusné, nepotřebné;  
každá těžká, přebroušená, divá  
hláska ztratila tu měšťanství,  
hudbu má řeč naše zlatoznivá.

(But our speech not only does not have heavy sounds/ like the mumbling *bl, kl, sl, ml*/ or the barking *dr, pr, tr, vr*/ borrowed from the Teutons and Goths,// But also avoids croaking sounds,/ is slowly divesting itself of the jarring *ř*./ had been sending squeaking 'ee-ee' sounds/ And eh-eh sounds to the Hottentots' frontier// The loving *a*, and most magnificent *o*/ are returning from exile/ and now saying *ej* for *y* is disgusting, unnecessary// Every difficult, effete, wild/ sound has now lost its citizenship./Our chrysophonous language has music.)<sup>90</sup>

Greek, Turkish or French words or sounds were the potential threats to the Bulgarian language. Greek and French words were normally mixed into the speech of characters who were trying to appear educated and knowledgeable about fashion, which was opposed to the Bulgarian tradition. Such is the case in Voinikov's *Krivorazbranata tsivilizatsiia*; French and Greek words are used by a Greek, a hellenised and west-europeanised Bulgarian who were educated in

<sup>89</sup> Jungmann, 'O jazyku českém. Rozmlouvání první.', pp.133-35.

<sup>90</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera* (1832), (IV,124), p.381.

Paris, and by his mother and sister, who had no education whatsoever. Thus, 'Avropata' for 'Europe' ('the Europe' in Bulgarian dialect, for correct 'Evropa') and 'evgenis' (Greek for noble) as a description of themselves are the words used most often by the two women. Although Turkish words in Bulgarian were normally seen to be as corrupting as any other foreign words, in Voinikov's play the only non-corrupt member of the degenerate family expresses himself with the help of many Turkish words; he also dresses according to the Turkish fashion and smokes a chibouk. Hence, sticking to Turkish habits and language can be positive, can indicate abiding by tradition, as opposed to adopting French fashion and coddling one's vanity; Turkish habits and vocabulary make for tradition particularly when contrasted with a small-town mixture of local dialect and Greek.

Turkish words could, however, corrupt the language, rather than express tradition, as is the case of the priest in *Bălgari ot staro vreme*, whose sermons sound like a pub-oration: 'In those times, annadănma ['you know what I mean' in Turkish], saith the Lord, annadănma, to the Jews who came to Him [the last few words in Old Church Slavonic], annadănma.'<sup>91</sup> Here, the priest is criticised for talking like a dervish, that is, for mixing a language typical of another religion into a Christian service. The Turkish word he uses, however, was (and sometimes still is) used in informal speech. Furthermore, for Bulgarians of that time 'dervish' often meant being mad, had connotations similar to those of 'whirling dervish' in English.

Even less acceptable for the Bulgarian Revivalists was the polluted language of someone who pretended to be a Bulgarian patriot abroad. Botev

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<sup>91</sup> Karavelov, *Bălgari ot staro vreme*, p. 187.

had a succession of articles in his weekly *Tăpan* (Drum, 1869-75), attacking the representatives of the Bulgarian émigrés around Dobrodetelna družina (The Charitable Society), the so-called ‘Old Ones’<sup>92</sup>. In each article the representative of the ‘Old Ones’ would speak unintelligible Bulgarian, a mixture of Greek, Turkish, Romanian, Russian and French. In each article Botev allows one language to dominate, but his conclusion is the same whichever the dominant polluting language: people who could not or did not want to express themselves in good Bulgarian could not wish the Bulgarians well. Most often Botev criticised the ‘Old Ones’ for speaking and publishing in a Bulgarian-Romanian language.<sup>93</sup> In an article satirising the writing of the regulations for the local Bulgarian school, for example, Botev includes only people who cannot speak Bulgarian properly. In their attempts to avoid confusion they start a debate about what words they should use in the regulations of the school; the debate, however, only makes the confusion greater:

Dr Părvich : ‘Calm down, quiet [in French]!.. This word ‘member’ [in bad Bulgarian] should be said in other words [shows the speaker does not know anything of gender in Bulgarian, neuter for ‘word’, which is feminine in Bulgarian] in Bulgarian [in Romanian], because [in Romanian] if it gets publicity like that [Romanian], everyone would think that we, who are members [in French] of the Dobrodetelnata Družina [Charitable Society], that we are paragraphs, which in French [in Romanian] is called *article*. The committee approves changing the word ‘article’ to ‘number’ .

Mr Hachiu: This is not right; this word is used only in trade.

Dr Părvich. Who ... what ... what’s the matter, my brother? Is it not a shame to stay here talking about one word for three hours? [everything in Romanian]

Dr Tachiu: How do you understand this word? [only ‘word’ in Romanian]

Dr Părvich: “Appendix” is called “annex”. [only “Appendix” in Bulgarian, everything else in Romanian]. We’d better use “pledge”.

Mr Hachiu: “Pledge” means amanet [‘pledge’ in Turkish] but this is a Turkish word.

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<sup>92</sup> The Old Ones relied very much on Russia for a political solution of the Eastern Question; they were against revolution and were not against dualism (Turco-Bulgarian). Botev and Karavelov were members of the group of the ‘Young Ones’, who propagated revolution and warned of Russia’s imperial ambitions.

<sup>93</sup> See, for example, Botev, ‘Vestnik “Otechestvo” ili organ na notabilite’, in Botev, *Săbrani săchinieniia*, vol. 1, p.105.

Mr Patladzhanov [Mr Aubergine] Let's look it up in the dictionary [i.e. for Russian equivalent]. It's better to put "appendix" [in Russian]

Dr Părvich: Mr Secretary, let's put "appendix" and let's get on. [everything in Romanian, except "appendix"]

Dr Tachiu: We've got to try [in Romanian] to cleanse our language of alien [in Romanian] words; therefore we should [in Romanian] put "treasurer" instead of "cashier". (Everyone agrees, except Mr Hachiu, who says)

Mr Hachiu: This is not right, because this word is more general, and on top of that you don't know Bulgarian (Loud arguments start, which only supports Mr Hachiu's statement [that they do not know Bulgarian] because no one could translate the word "cash-box" into Bulgarian).<sup>94</sup>

The language of the pseudo-patriots in Botev's journalism is telling of their lack of national feeling; that is, their lack of proficiency in Bulgarian is equated to the lack of national feeling (compare Jungmann above). Their linguistic mistakes uncover their true nature, as in the case of the 'notable' in 'Edin notabil,' who refers to himself as noble in Turkish (*chelebiia*), Greek (*evgenis*) or something that sounds like the Bulgarian word for noble, but actually means either someone who eats Bulgarians or groats (*bulgaroiadie/bulguriadie* instead of *blagorodie*).<sup>95</sup> In other words, like the Turks, he was feeding on Bulgarian suffering, but he preferred to think of himself as a patriot, and his stomach contained his 'feelings' for the Bulgarians.

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<sup>94</sup> Първич. Исихая, силанс!... Туй дума "член" трябва да се каже с друго реч българску, фийнка ако са стабилиса тѣй, ще разбират нас, които сме мембри на "Добродетелната дружина", че ний сме параграфи, което ще каже на французещи артикл. Комитетът одобрява и изменява речта "член" с думата "число".

Г.Х. Не е право, тази хората се употребява само в търговията.

Първич: Каре... че есте фарате... Пентру аста vorba бива ли са стѣм трей часури.

Г.д-р Тачю. Как разумявате тая [прилог] vorba?

Г. Д-р Първич: "Прилог" ва са зика анекс

XX "Залог" по-добре.

Г. Хачю: Залог ще каже аманет, но тази дума е турска

Г. Патладжанов: Стойте да го видим в лексикона. По-добре да се тури прибавление.

Г.д-р Първич. Домну секретар, айде пуне прибавление, и дѣй наинте.

Г.д-р Тачю. Да старуйсаме да очистим езика си от думи странни; затова требуеше наместо "касиерин" да се каже "ковчежник". (Сички одобряват, само г. Хачю зема реч.)

Г. Хачю. Не е право, защото тази дума е обща, и после ний не трябва да се бавим с управлението на езика, а със смисълта, освен туй вий сами не знаете български. (Повдига се голям шум, но като не можеха да преведат на български "каса", за която се появи и други разговор, сбѣдна се мнението на кир Хача) In Botev, 'Edna uchebna komisiia', [Tăran, 1869], in Botev, *Săbrani sâchineniia*, vol. 1, pp. 96-97.

<sup>95</sup> Botev, 'Edin notabil'[One notable, 1869], in Botev, *Săbrani sâchineniia*, vol. 1, pp. 86-93.

## 6. Polluting the mother-tongue with Slav words

Arguments against excessive Russian loans in Bulgarian were voiced before Botev and Karavelov. Between 1830 and the 1850s hundreds of words were borrowed from Russian and everyone who wanted to sound educated spoke ‘Slavonic’ – a mixture of Old Church Slavonic and Russian that replaced Greek in Bulgarian schools. Speaking and writing in this language was provoked by the desire to appear educated. Moreover, ‘Slavonic’ was not foreign, therefore, was not beneficial to one’s social status, unlike Greek, Turkish or French. ‘Slavonic’ could not change the social status of anyone speaking or teaching it; it could not pave the way to a white-collar job.<sup>96</sup> The problem with studying ‘Slavonic’ at Bulgarian schools, according to Bogorov, was that from the very beginning of their education students were taught that contemporary spoken Bulgarian was not good enough to constitute a school subject. Bogorov, who later became an enthusiastic purist, wrote in the 1840s, similarly to Jungmann, that there was nothing wrong with borrowing words from other Slav languages, since hardly any language existed without loan words. In his *Pärvichka bălgarska gramatika* (First Bulgarian grammar, 1847) he opposes the replacing of what some believed to be Turkish words (but were of pure Bulgarian origin according to him) with Russian words. He provides extensive lists of words that

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<sup>96</sup> Although there were rare occasions when teachers were accused of insisting on teaching ‘Slavonic’ just because they had ‘Slavonic’ grammar books for sale, ‘By doing that [bringing Slavonic into the schools] they did not do anything, but bring the breviary back into the schools. The only difference is that before the pupils used to have to learn the breviary by heart, but now they try to learn the declensions of all verbs to be found in it; hence, any of the pupils who could conjugate one verb from whichever class was admired and is still admired as a great Slavonic scholar. That is what our knowledge of Slavonic consists of! And no one would ever utter a word about Bulgarian. Whenever the notables and mayors had meetings about school matters, they would always solve this problem to the teacher’s benefit: ‘We know how to speak Bulgarian, the children should not waste time learning their fathers’ language at school.’ This suggestion appealed to the teacher, since he had quite a few Slavonic grammar books for sale.’ Ivan Bogorov, ‘Prosvetenie i knizhnina na bălgarete’ (Education and literature of the Bulgarians, 1858) in Bogorov, *Za narodna sviast...*, p. 49:



were unjustly castigated for being Turkish and explains their Bulgarian origin in the style Rakovski uses later. According to Bogorov, the result of borrowing too many Russian words is confusion and the inability of Bulgarians to understand each other, as is the case with the word for 'celebrate Communion', imported from Russian: 'Who celebrates your communion for you? (*sveshtenodeistva*)', someone asked the peasants from one village. 'No one does us any harm', was the answer. From this example everyone can see that Bulgarians talk with Bulgarians in Bulgarian and do not understand one another.'<sup>97</sup> Aprilov takes the opposite point of view to Bogorov's. He reproaches, for example, the Neophyte of Rila, who used apparently too many Turkish words in his translation of the New Testament. The Neophyte's motive was to make the New Testament understandable to Bulgarians and therefore he used Turkish words that were commonly used in Bulgarian. Aprilov suggests that the Neophyte should have used Old Slavonic words instead; the words could have been translated into Turkish in brackets to enhance understanding, but at the same time to enhance the learning of the Slavonic language.<sup>98</sup> Aprilov does not see anything wrong with borrowings from Russian, since he (after Kollár, Šafařík or Herder) believes in the existence of a single Slav language, of which Russian and Bulgarian are branches.<sup>99</sup>

Nesho Bonchev takes an original stand on Bulgarian borrowings from Russian. He believes like Jungmann that for a language to achieve classicality,

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<sup>97</sup> Bogorov, 'Niakolko dumi za bashtinii nash ezik' (A couple of words about our father tongue, 1874) in Bogorov, *Za narodna sviast*, p.150. See also his comments that Russian words are forced onto Bulgarian, although Bulgarian has its own words for these concepts; the use of Russian was prompted, Bogorov asserts, by the teachers' and journalists' conviction that Bulgarian was base and needed to be elevated through the use of Russian, that is, high-style words instead of the low-style Bulgarian words. *Ibid.*, p.147.

<sup>98</sup> Aprilov, *Dennitsa na novobălgarskoto obrazovanie* (1841), in Vasil Aprilov, *Săchineniia*, ed. By Petko Totev, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1968, p.41.

<sup>99</sup> Aprilov, 'Za gospodin Raino i negovite uchenitsi', in Aprilov, *Săchineniia*, p.175.

it is necessary that great authors create works in it. Since he does not believe there are any great Bulgarian authors yet, he ruefully writes about the translation of great Russian authors into Bulgarian. It is regarding such translations that Bonchev writes against extensive borrowing from Russian.<sup>100</sup> 'Today,' Bonchev writes regarding his own translation of Gogol, 'everything written in Bulgarian is rough and clumsy because our language has not yet been polished, has not taken its final shape. The reason for that is that we do not have talented writers who would learn the speech of the common people and thus get to know the spirit of the nation; after accomplishing that such writers can produce works that the people can use as a model.'<sup>101</sup>

He believes that borrowings do as much damage to Bulgarian as to Russian: to Bulgarian by the use of foreign words, to Russian because it distorts Russian words beyond recognition in the process of bulgarianisation.<sup>102</sup> He believes that the development of Russian should be taken as an example only – the Russian language, he asserts, reached higher stages of development only after incorporating Old Church Slavonic; hence, the Bulgarians should first learn 'Old Bulgarian'/'Old Church Slavonic'.<sup>103</sup> What he finds even more appalling

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<sup>100</sup> 'Writers of real genius are very few in each nation, but in them the spiritual life of the nation finds expression, and the writers of lesser talent repeat small parts of the ideas of the great masters', 'Klasicheskite evropeiski pisateli na bălgarski ezik i polzata ot izuchavaneto im' (Classical European authors in Bulgarian and the use of studying them, 1875), in Nesho Bonchev, *Literaturna kritika i publitsistika*, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1962, p.154. 'In every people's literature one can see the spiritual image of the nation, in much the same way that one can see the image of a person when they look in the mirror.' *Ibid*, p.151.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p.165.

<sup>102</sup> 'The poor Russian language! We Bulgarians torture and cripple it so much, and still do not have enough intelligence to express even two thoughts in our stupid, hopeless language!' Nesho Bonchev, 'Dve dumi poradi programite na gabrovskite uchilishta' (Two words concerning the programmes of the schools in Gabrovo, 1873), in Nesho Bonchev, *Literaturna kritika i publitsistika*, p.105.

<sup>103</sup> 'The Slavonic language should teach the student about the roots of the Bulgarian language. The Bulgarian language cannot be developed without a knowledge of Old Bulgarian. We will get to know the spirit and the power of our language only when we know Old Church Slavonic well. As we can see, the Russian language also reached higher stages of development only after accepting the Slavonic element. The ancient language should be our guide and helper when we

is that 'foreign missionaries' who did not know 'the spirit of the Bulgarian language' translated the Bible. They created a mockery of the Bulgarian language, and instead of being inspiring, the Holy Scripture became disgusting even to touch.<sup>104</sup>

Rakovski does not share Bonchev's concerns about the possible damage the Bulgarians are doing to the Russian language. Similarly to Kollár who expressed concern about Russian swallowing smaller Slav dialects, Rakovski is worried about the attitude the Russians have to the Bulgarians.<sup>105</sup> The Bulgarians, he claims, had given the Russians Christianity and the Slavonic alphabet. This did not prevent the Russians from remaining the barbarians they had always been. On top of this, the Russians bankrupted Greater Bulgaria, which used to exist on the banks of the Volga, russified the Bulgarians living there and imposed on them the Russian language. Later on, under the 'Turkish Yoke', especially after the beginning of the decline of the Ottoman Empire, the Russians started crossing the Danube to plunder the Bulgarians. Thus the Bulgarians were exposed to attacks from both the Turks and the Russians. When the Russians were defeated, they would take Bulgarians back to Russia with them and enserf them. The Russians used to trade Bulgarians as if they

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learn our poor, damaged language. To put it in order we need to look for support to Old Church Slavonic and Russian.' For him there is no difference between 'Old Church Slavonic', 'Old Bulgarian' and 'Slavonic'. In Nesho Bonchev, 'Na bălgarite triabvat sredni uchilishta: gimnaziia, realno uchilishte i duhovna seminariia' (1871), in Nesho Bonchev, *Literaturna kritika i publitsistika*, p.64.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> Pynsent points out that Kollár was worried about the possible emergence of Russian hegemony, in the sense that Russian could swallow minor Slav dialects, which were of equal importance to Kollár, *Questions of Identity*, p.57. See also Kollár's 'O literárnej vzajemnosti mezi kmeny a nářečími slávskými'<sup>9</sup>On the literary reciprocity between Slav tribes and dialects', Miloš Weingart, (ed.), *Jan Kollár. Rozpravy o slovanské vzajemnosti*, (J.K. Debates on Slav reciprocity), Prague, Slovanský ústav, 1929, pp. 214-15: Kollár warns that sometimes Slavs can be more independent under foreign rule than under the rule of another, stronger Slav tribe.

were cattle.<sup>106</sup> The only nation to which Rakovski had expressed a similar attitude, is the Greek.

Since the perception of the Slavs as one nation was stronger among the Czechs than among the Bulgarians, there were more occasions in Bulgarian literature on which words borrowed from another Slav language were perceived as pollutants. Even the idea of codifying a separate Slovak language, which would lead to the separation of the Czechs and Slovaks, was seen as detrimental to Slav Reciprocity. Kollár does not allow Bernolák in the Slav Heaven, although he is convinced that Bernolák believed he was doing his best for his nation. Kollár, however, does not approve of the idea of separating Czech and Slovak.<sup>107</sup> Similarly, Jungmann opposes the codification of a Slovak literary language and reproaches all those who try to write according to their local dialect. As he puts it, 'If things go on like this, we shall soon have books in the Prague, Domažlice, Giant Mountain, Olomouc, Turčiany and who knows what other sub-sub-dialect: something in each of them, nothing in all!'<sup>108</sup> Here once again, Jungmann gives German as a model: in German there are many more dialects, a great deal more differentiated than the Slav dialects, but there is only one German literary language. He asserts that language functions best if the linguistic rules emanate from one capital in much the same fashion that the heart pumps blood to the rest of the organs. If that does not happen, however, there is a danger that the language will break up into dialects and then eventually sink into barbarism.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Rakovski, 'Preselenie v Rusiia' (Migration to Russia, 1861), in Rakovski, *Săchineniia*, ed. by Arnaudov, pp.474-78.

<sup>107</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera* (1832), (IV, 69), pp. 344-45.

<sup>108</sup> Jungmann, 'O různění českého písemného jazyka' (1832), in Jungmann, *Boj o obrození národa*, pp.65-66.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p.66.

## 6.1. Using ‘morally wrong’ words

In Czech stylistically unacceptable words and some neologisms were as corruptive as loan words, for example, the replacement of ‘panna’ by ‘slečna’. *Panna* meant ‘Miss’ and ‘virgin’; the new word for ‘Miss’, *slečna* gained popularity in this meaning during the early Revival and was based on *šlechtična*, noble woman.<sup>110</sup> Since the word no longer contained the meaning ‘virgin’, the Czechs’ morality was open to suspicion. Thus Chmelenský writes, satirically:

Dokud mnoho panen bylo,  
Málo slečen v světě žilo;  
Co se mnoho slečen stalo,  
Je teď v světě panen málo.

(As long as there were many *pannas*/ Few *slečnas* lived in this world/ Now that many have become *slečna*/ There are few *pannas* in the world.)<sup>111</sup>

In *Každý něco pro vlast* (Everyone something for the homeland, 1829) Klicpera also comments on the choice between *slečna* and *panna*, but adds to the distortions of the language the German-influenced opposition between *jemnostpaní* (gnädige Frau, for Frau/ [Mrs]) and *paní* (Mrs). Sixty years later, Holeček complains about another innovation concerning the farm-hands’ address to the people they were working for, the traditional word being ‘strejčku’ (uncle), while the morally wrong term, since it was a translation from German was ‘sedláče’ (farmer).<sup>112</sup> Thus, Holeček suggests that the relationship between people in South Bohemia is close, whereas German terminology

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<sup>110</sup> The word first occurs in 1622 denoting unmarried noblewomen; it is also recorded in Jungmann’s dictionary in 1838.

<sup>111</sup> Chmelenský, ‘Obojí nemůže být’ (She cannot be both, [1823]), in Chmelenský, *Vybrané spisy*, vol. 1, p.99.

<sup>112</sup> Holeček points out that for the whole community, not only for the people that work for him the farmer is ‘uncle’ while his wife is ‘aunt’. After a man who had previously worked for Germans called a Czech-speaking South Bohemian farmer ‘farmer’ (*sedláče*), he was threatened with dismissal but eventually forgiven on condition that he did not mix with the Germans any more. Holeček, *Jak u nás žijou i umírají*, pp.42–43.

suggests estrangement; the German estrangement, however, could easily be inflicted on Czech society, and language is the likely means of this infliction.

Although there is no parallel to Czech 'morally wrong' words in the Bulgarian Revival, in the process of mythologising language the Bulgarians and Czechs share not only the belief that the language is in a state of decline, but also that women play a special role in the decline. In both cases women can be the mediator of language decay, as is the case in Světlá, Chmelenský, or Karavelov, or the main victims of the fact that the language does not dominate in the motherland, as in Světlá. Chmelenský puts speaking Czech among the basic mating rules:

Česky mluvme, česky pějme,  
Bratři, jsouce Čechové,  
Českým dcerkám v náruč spějme,  
Jsouce čeští synové.  
V jednotě co skála stůjme,  
A když v boj zve český lev,  
Svou krev vlasti obětujme,  
Tak zní zpěv můj – český zpěv.

(Brothers, since we are Czechs,/ Let us speak Czech, let us sing Czech./ Let us throw ourselves into the arms of Czech daughters,/ Since we are Czech sons./ Let us stand solid as a rock/ And when the lion of Bohemia calls us to battle,/ Let us sacrifice our blood to the motherland./ Thus runs my song – the Czech song.)<sup>113</sup>

'Czech song' was best preserved in the villages; and so was the spirit of the nation. Cities were the places where languages were mixed with foreign pollutants, whereas the village language remained pure. Bulgarian and Czech Revivalists sought to elevate that 'village' language to the status of the bearer of high culture. The idea that communication with other nations brought knowledge and decay was probably also a variation on the story of Eve and the Serpent. Rules of hygiene analogous to those regarding the racial purity ruled language in the Revival. As with any other (racial) characteristic, allowing

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<sup>113</sup> J. K. Chmelenský, 'Má píseň' (My song), in Chmelenský, *Vybrané spisy*, vol. 1, pp.239-40.

foreign pollutants meant a weakening of the stock. As a means of defence alien elements in the national language were described as disgusting.

One case where a Revivalist considers decay to be brought about by seclusion comes in Bogorov's introduction to his *Chistobălgarska nakoalnia za sladkodumstvo* (Purely Bulgarian anvil for eloquence, 1878). Bogorov asserts that if a nation is isolated from communication with other nations, and does not advance in scholarship, it is likely that some phenomena in this nation's life will cease to exist; because of its seclusion, the nation will not observe phenomena taking place elsewhere and so will lose the words to describe such phenomena.<sup>114</sup> He is particularly concerned here with the fact that Bulgarian is not an administrative language. Bogorov, then, bewails the same thing as other Revivalists, Bulgarian and Czech, but he finds its cause elsewhere, essentially in reclusive apathy – not in the foreigners' imposition of a new language of administration. That is new. As a great purist he clearly felt particularly thwarted by the status of the Bulgarian language.

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<sup>114</sup> Bogorov, *Chistobălgarska nakoalnia za sladkodumstvo* in Bogorov, *Za narodna sviast*, pp.163-64.

## Corruption of the nation through religion

Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought back that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. (Ezekiel, 34:2-5)

The role of religion for nationalism has been discussed by a number of scholars, and therefore in the following chapter I am not going to reiterate the once original idea that nationalism was the 'God of modernity'.<sup>1</sup> For my study Anthony D. Smith's argument is most influential. This argument runs that for the creation of a nation, belief in a myth of ethnic election plays a crucial role. Ethnic election can be of two types, Smith argues: the first is covenantal, that is, the people are chosen for being special and will continue being chosen as long as they abide by the conditions of the covenant. The second type rests on a specific mission that the people is chosen to fulfil. Sometimes a combination of both is possible.<sup>2</sup> Smith believes that the cultivation of a 'myth of ethnic election' is possibly even more important for ethnic survival than myths of common ancestry or of a Golden Age.<sup>3</sup> He elucidates the difference between ethnocentrism and a myth of ethnic election as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Josep R. Llobera, *The God of Modernity: The Development of Nationalism in Western Europe*, Oxford, Berg, 1994. Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples. Sacred Sources of National Identity*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, David A. Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France. Inventing Nationalism 1680-1800*, Cambridge, MA and London, 2001, Liah Greenfeld, 'The Modern Religion?' in *Critical Review*, 101996, 2, pp.169-91.

<sup>2</sup> Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, pp.44-95.

<sup>3</sup> Anthony D. Smith, 'Chosen Peoples' in John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, (eds), *Ethnicity*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, p.189.



Ethnic communities have quite commonly regarded themselves as the moral centre of the universe and as far as possible affected to ignore or despise those around them. A myth of ethnic election is more demanding. To be chosen is to be placed under moral obligations. One is chosen on the condition that one observes certain moral, ritual and legal codes, and only for as long as one continues to do so. The privilege of election is accorded only to those who are sanctified, whose life-style is an expression of sacred values.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that the myth of election places one under moral obligations raises the community's expectations of itself, and thus increases the perception of the present state as a state of decay. The more myths aimed at the unification of the once glorious community are employed, the stronger the impression of a present state of decay.

In this chapter I will look at ideas of the creation of a nation on the basis of a fundamentally religious principle, that is, ethnic election. Religion will be looked at as one of the possible ducts by which foreign influence infiltrates the religious lives of the Bulgarians and Czechs, but also directly influences their moral life and, in some cases, the biological qualities of their offspring. For my study it will be irrelevant what type of religion is incorporated in national mythology: thinking of a religion as the spiritual expression of the race means that the only element of importance is that the religion is connected naturally, by the will of God or the gods, with a particular people. Thus I shall not dwell on theological explanations on the differences between Orthodox Christianity (the confession of the Bulgarians) and Protestantism/Catholicism (the confessions of the Czechs) – my only concern will be the sentiment that was applied to the religion and its recognition as 'ours'.

In asserting the moral excellence of the Bulgarians and Czechs over the non-Slav population within the Ottoman or Habsburg Empire, Revivalists presented the Czechs/Bulgarians either as very Christian, the embodiment of true Christianity, or as innocent victims of the corruption Christianity brought

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p.190.

with it. Regardless of which path the Revivalists took (sometimes the same writer would take both paths), the suggestion was, as with mingling of blood or incorporating alien linguistic forms or adopting another language, that foreign influence can bring only corruption. Corrupting the religion of the true Bulgarians or the true Czechs meant diminishing their national feeling, therefore creating apostates from what used to be naturally Bulgarian or Czech. In this chapter I will demonstrate how the Revivalists saw the contribution of religion to national corruption. In the first part of this chapter I first look at the contrast between heathendom and Christianity presented in *belles-lettres* and historiography. Second, I look at the impact the adoption of Christianity allegedly had on the Czech and Bulgarian nations. Third, I look at the reality that the Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists were propagating in what they tried to pass off as genuine documents from a pagan past or documents demonstrating the survival of the pagan in the Late Middle Ages, namely Hanka's and Linda's Forged Manuscripts and the Bulgarian forgery, *Veda Slovena* (edited by Stefan Verkovich [1821-93] and forged by Ivan Gologanov). The second part of this chapter is devoted to the myths that were built up asserting that the Bulgarians or the Czechs were the only true Christians. The third section of the chapter will examine the way the Bulgarians, and very marginally the Czechs, perceived other religions, mainly Islam, as a form of fanatical mysticism. My aim is to demonstrate that in national mythology, alien influence of any kind is always infectious, and this is so, as we shall see, even in cases when the foreign influence turns out not to be foreign.

Concerning religion, the situation of the Czechs in the Habsburg Empire is different from that of the Bulgarians in the Ottoman Empire; a large part of

Bulgarian Revival politics was devoted to the achievement of an autocephalous Bulgarian Church. This was prompted by the fact that, until 1849, the only difference between peoples in the Ottoman Empire lay in their religious affiliation; therefore Bulgarians and Greeks fell into the same category of 'rum-milet', that is, Christians. In 1849 Bulgarians were allowed to build a church of their own in the Phanar quarter of Constantinople: a political act of the Turkish government distinguishing Bulgarians from Greeks. The effort directed towards achieving an autocephalous Church served entirely national purposes.<sup>5</sup> Although in literature the difference between the confession of the ruling class and the Czech population is overemphasized, the difference was not normally great. The Czech population was largely Roman Catholic, and although there were Lutherans (like Palacký, or Slovak Lutherans like Kollár and Šafařík), religion was not equated to nationality, since there were many German Lutherans as well. Politically speaking language played for the Czechs the same role as religion for the Bulgarians. Protestants and reformers, however, played a large role in historical novels and poems as well as in some theories of Czech national character: first, the reforming followers of John Huss and revolutionary Taborites and moderate Calixtienes, then the Bohemian Brethren and to a limited degree, the Lutherans, for in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries a large proportion of the Bohemian Lutherans was German-speaking. On the other hand, many Czech Revivalists, such as Dobrovský or J.J. Marek (Roman Catholic) and Kollár (Lutheran), were priests themselves and Šafařík was the son of a Lutheran priest who for years taught at an Orthodox school in

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<sup>5</sup> Zhechev, *Bălgarskiiat Velikden ili strastite bălgarski*, pp13-28. See also Nikolai Genchev, *Bălgarsko vāzrazhdane*, Sofia, Otechestven Front, 1988, pp.196-209, 288-302. A Turkish government document, *Hatihumaiun*, issued in 1857, took the next step towards acknowledging the different ethnic communities of the Ottoman Empire. The Bulgarians achieved an autocephalous Church in 1871.

Novi Sad. Sabina, for example, was an atheist. Anti-clericalism was typical of both Revivals, and probably reflected the Enlightenment, but in the Czech case it was also a product of the demonisation of the Counter-Reformation. Regardless of this difference in the role of religion (or confession), I will trace the similarities in the approach to faith in both Revivals.

### **1. Pure paganism versus corrupt Christianity**

Long after the Revival, the extreme right-wing (Jewish) Lev Borský (1883-1944) claimed, possibly under the impression that he was following Nietzsche, that the morality of Christianity was the morality of decadence, that Christianity was an unnatural religion because it was contrary to life-affirming instincts.<sup>6</sup> More than a century before Borský was writing, views similar to his were popular among the Czech Revivalists, and the Czechs' views influenced the Bulgarian Revivalists. Analogously to the conclusion Borský drew in 1935, that 'in all periods of decay there had always been a decline in religious sentiment', some Revivalists advocated the view that there had once been a true, life-affirming Slav (or specifically Bulgarian) religion that was then replaced by Christianity, which was imposed by foreigners.<sup>7</sup> Authors like Linda and Tyl in the Czech Revival and Voinikov in the Bulgarian contrasted paganism to Christianity, pointing out the naturalness of pagan Slav beliefs and rites. Linda's *Záře nad pohanstvem* influenced Tyl's *Krvavé křtiny* (Bloody baptism, 1849), and Tyl's works influenced Voinikov in general; it is therefore likely that his *Váztsariavaneto na Kruma Strashnii* was also influenced by ideas he

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<sup>6</sup> Lev Borský, *Vůdcové lidstva a jeho svůdci. Základy biopolitiky* (Leaders of humanity and its seducers. The foundations of biopolitics), Prague, Otakar Skýpala, 1935, p.81.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.111.

came across in Tyl.<sup>8</sup> The earliest, Linda's *Záře*, is the most sophisticated. Linda's *Záře* and Tyl's *Krvavé křtiny* discuss the assassination of one of the first Czech Christian rulers, Wenceslas, by his brother, the still heathen Boleslav. Voinikov's *Krum Strashnii* also employs the fratricide or, at least, *Bruderzwist* topos, although both brothers, Krum and Mortagon, are pagan and Mortagon's attempt to murder Krum is unsuccessful. Voinikov presents Bulgaria at the time of Krum as composed of two parts – one on the south side of the Danube and consequently near the Greeks; and another, in Pannonia, near the river Tisza. The Tisza part of Bulgaria is ruled by Krum and is in constant conflict with the Franks and Avars. After the conflicts and the quarrelling among the rulers of the Danube part left them without a ruler, they invited Krum to be their ruler, so that the two parts of Bulgaria could unite. But even those closest to Krum, his brother and one of the leaders of the army, who have had absolutely no contact with the Greeks, turn out to be corrupt. Their envy and desire for fame lead them to plot against Krum; their plot, however, fails because Krum's cause is noble and just. The Byzantine armies and religion threaten the Danube Bulgarians, and the Tisza Bulgarians are innocent, virile, and willing to help their pagan blood brothers. Voinikov here supports an historical narrative that originated in Rakovski's work and will later be developed in the works of the 1990s Bulgarian extreme nationalists, that is the idea that the Bulgarians founded Hungary, and that Attila the Hun was a Bulgarian. In Voinikov's work pure, white paganism triumphs over impure (because Byzantine), black Christianity. Voinikov follows Paisii in constructing a cult of Krum as the embodiment of an exemplary strong morality in

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<sup>8</sup> In the third act of the play, for example, Krum and others sing the Bulgarian translation of 'Kde domov můj' [Where is my homeland], a song written by Tyl that had first appeared in his play *Fidlovačka*; this song is now the Czech national anthem.

Bulgarians, such as other nations do not know. The question of which religion (paganism or Christianity) is better for the Czechs is conveyed as a moral dilemma in Linda's and Tyl's works; through this dilemma they inquire what the best way to serve the Czech nation is. Therefore the opposition between heathendom and Christianity is an opposition between tradition and innovation, nationalism and cosmopolitanism, allegedly typical Slav values and universal values. In *Krum Strashnii* Voinikov uses the contrast between heathendom and Christianity to indicate the difference between Bulgarians and Greeks. Regardless of the meaning ascribed to being pagan, the ancient Slavs, Czechs and Bulgarians described in these works share the same characteristics.

### **1.1. Pagan strength and athleticism versus Christian effeminacy**

In the first chapter of his novel Linda praises heathendom; he describes in detail the places of pagan worship and the statue of the chief Slav god, Svantovít, which represents 'a young man of mighty stature (today, he would appear quite enormous to us), a kind face, his eyes looking proudly into the distance as if after a battle, raising a sword in his right hand, lifting a spear with his left, his chest cased in iron; his leg was tensed in a speedy gait; his whole body looked as if he were charging warriors; around him lies a great quantity of weapons, a saddle, bridle and a black cock'.<sup>9</sup> This description of Svantovít suggests that, compared with him, Linda considers the Czechs of his day to be degenerate, or at least physically regressed. He describes pagans as fertile: one pagan is a father of seven grandfathers and great-grandfather of 252 great-grandchildren<sup>10</sup>. The description of Svantovít also suggests what is most valued among the Slav pagans: courage, sexual prowess and muscular masculinity. Linda starts his

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<sup>9</sup> Josef Linda, *Záře nad pohanstvem nebo Václav a Boleslav*, Prague, ČAVU, 1924, p.2.

<sup>10</sup> Linda, *Záře*, pp.4-5.

work by addressing his audience as ‘Brothers, descendants of the dukes who followed Forefather Czech’; all the pagans he describes are athletic, mainly warriors. Regardless of the fact that Linda was not very popular in his lifetime among the Revivalists, Tyl seems to have borrowed many of Linda’s ideas, including the notion of pagan Slav athleticism.<sup>11</sup> Tyl emphasises his point by suggesting that it is impossible for an athletic Slav to be anything but a pagan. He describes the warrior Hněvsa who had been converted to Christianity; when he says in front of a pagan priest, Česta, that he is Christian, the pagan priest refuses to believe it – because he knows that Hněvsa is a warrior. In Linda, Boleslav, the pagan brother, is represented as short-tempered and athletic; in Tyl as athletic, bloodthirsty, and war-lusting; he is the representation of true Czechness in both authors. Tyl’s imitator, Voinikov, puts across something that would fit better a comedy: he demonstrates the bravery of Krum’s son, the heir to the Bulgarian throne, by describing his superiority to his servant; the Bulgarian prince threatens his unarmed servant with a sword; his courage is also manifested in his readiness to kill many cats, dogs and geese, whereas his servant is considered very ‘feminine’ by him, since he is not willing to kill animals at all and runs away when threatened.<sup>12</sup>

## 1.2 Jolly paganism versus gloomy monotheistic Christianity

In Voinikov’s *Krum Strashnii* Christians are portrayed as gloomy people who dress in black, unlike the jolly pagans who are dressed in white. Voinikov gives the difference between black-clad Christianity and white-clad paganism the

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<sup>11</sup> Possible points of reference for Linda and Tyl’s description of pagan athleticism are Chateaubriand’s *Atala* and *René*, which exhibit the noble, and physically strong, pagan savage. In Jungmann’s translation of *Atala Chactas*, the noble savage, is presented as being unable to be anything but pagan. François-René de Chateaubriand’s *Atala* and *René*, transl. by Walter J. Cobb, New York, Signet, 1962.

<sup>12</sup> Dobri Voinikov, *Vāztsariavaneto na Kruma Strashnii*, in Voinikov, *Sāchineniia*, vol.2, Sofia, Bālgarski pisatel, 1983, pp.24-25.

status of a moral opposition. In Linda's work even young children hold no truck with Christianity. Pagan children play outdoors all day and have many children-gods to look after them, while the children of the only peasant Christian family Linda describes in this work, are not allowed to play with the rest and have only one God.<sup>13</sup> Tyl also sees the pagans as jolly; his Christians are effeminate, but not necessarily gloomy. Pagan girls believe that the essence of life, including religious life, is 'věnce víti /radostně žíti/ v rozkošném poskoku/ mládenci po boku/ tím se stává /Bohům sláva' (to wreath garlands/ to live in joy,/ in delightful frolicking/ with a young man by your side,/ this is the way/ to worship the gods).<sup>14</sup>

Apart from being jolly, the pagan gods are more accessible – in Linda there is a god for each of the Slavs' needs. The Slavs cannot comprehend how any religion could have only one God. The Slavs start a theological debate by asking why a God allows himself to be crucified, rather than fighting for his people and defending them. They cannot comprehend how His crucifixion could have helped His people either. Their hypothesis is that Jesus' people were defeated in a battle, and then taken as slaves, and that He had liberated them from slavery – otherwise they would have needed no liberation.<sup>15</sup> This explanation links secular and religious authority in one person, something the pagans would be able to understand. Apart from having a god for each aspect of their lives, the Slav pagan religion is known, as St Wenceslas's mother Drahomíra says, to every living Slav, including children; it involves praying in the open air and having their places of worship literally anywhere, which is contrasted with the dark Christian churches with their crosses, reproductions of

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<sup>13</sup> Linda, *Záře*, pp.34-35.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.3-4.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.86-87.



the Crucifixion. Furthermore, the pagans Linda describes believe that their gods love them much more than the gods of any other nation; since the pagans Linda describes are attractive, the reader is inclined to believe that much of what they say represents Linda's own views. The pagans' claim that the thing that a Slav would miss most while abroad is the love of the many pagan gods defines the bond between people and territory in religious, as opposed to haematic, terms. This echoes the sixteenth-century chronicler Václav Hájek z Libočan's (1499-1553) portrayal of the pagan Czechs as particularly religious.

So far, for Linda, paganism appears superior to Christianity from a nationalist point of view. The strength and virility of Slav men corresponds to the Ancient concept of *mens sana in corpore sano*.<sup>16</sup> Abandoning the Slav religion was seen as corrupting the pure national state. Corrupting the religion of the true Czechs meant diminishing their national consciousness, and thus creating national renegacy. Boleslav tries to warn Wenceslas against the dangers that spreading Christianity holds:

And your nation will be enslaved by foreign nations; the independent Slav will worship the alien and, corrupted by the alien, he will cast out what his glorious fathers left him. Foreigners will come here like dragons to suck the nation's blood – they will make everything their own. These fields, meadows, pastures, which sons sacredly inherit from their fathers, will be cultivated by our wretched descendants on behalf of foreigners; and they will have to beg these foreigners for their daily bread; as gaunt as shadows they will drag themselves along where their stalwart fathers had held celebrations; their voices will be just a whizzing and their gaze a crazed anxiety, and they will live in the dust before the foreigners.<sup>17</sup>

Linda's *Záře* contains seven chapters, and alternate chapters are devoted to descriptions of heathendom (the odd chapters) and Christianity (the even); this leads the reader to expect that the last, seventh, chapter will be devoted to the celebration of heathendom. Linda lavishly demonstrates the dangers that Christianity presents, which he or his narrator make clear is farther-reaching

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<sup>16</sup> George Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, *passim*.

<sup>17</sup> Linda, *Záře*, pp.66-67.

than a simple replacement of the jolly old paganism with the dark new Christianity. Christianity seems to run counter to natural Slav tradition; that is expressed symbolically in the fact that the old pagan places of worship are converted into Christian churches. In *Záře*, this happens especially in the capital, Vyšehrad, where Slavness and Czechness were concentrated in accordance with the will of the new Bohemian ruler, Wenceslas. In the rural areas the pagan customs and places of worship remain intact. Christianity spreads like an infectious disease; in the words of one of the pagan priests, the Christians poison the rest with their breath; prophylaxis is difficult, since the danger is invisible.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, Linda depicts Christianity and the Christian Wenceslas, as exceptionally generous and forgiving, and cosmopolitan, in contrast to the pagans who are battle-lusting and loyal only to the Slavs. Christianity is presented as the religion that knows no nationality, while paganism is the embodiment of Slavness. Contrary to the norm of Revivalists' didacticism, Linda does not impose on the reader his own opinion about which is the better religion. Instead, he presents the conflict of paganism and Christianity as it develops in the Přemyslid family. Wenceslas, though Christian, is presented as particularly gifted, and this explains why he is the duke, although in Linda's version he is the younger brother. His brother, Boleslav, is also virtuous, but he is interested only in the Slavs, whereas Wenceslas is interested in the whole of humanity, and chiefly in matters celestial. Even pagans admire Wenceslas, and he manages to convert a particularly inveterate pagan into Christianity. This pagan tries to kill him, but instead of passing a death sentence on him, Wenceslas forgives him, saying that

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.101 (through the visionary words of the pagan priest).

he can forgive crimes against himself, but not against his state. Another example of the pagans' love of him comes when an innocent young pagan believes that Wenceslas is Svantovít. Boleslav considers Wenceslas's religion a betrayal of everything Slav, and is torn between his loyalties to his ducal brother and to the Czech people. He tries to provoke Wenceslas into defending their nation, by asking him what he would do if another Christian nation attacked the Czechs. Wenceslas answers that attacking another people is against the rules of Christianity; this makes Boleslav reflect on the matter. In *Záře* Boleslav is fond of his brother, which makes his decision to kill him all the more painful. In both Tyl's *Krvavé křtiny* (where Boleslav is not fond of Wenceslas) and Linda's *Záře*, Wenceslas and Boleslav's mother, Drahomíra, considers her son's conversion to Christianity a betrayal. In *Záře* she also bewails the destruction of the pagan places of worship and their substitution with churches.<sup>19</sup> Regardless of the religious differences (which constitute, in the end, different types of love for the nation), Linda shows Drahomíra as a mother who loves both her sons and suffers when she learns that duty requires one of them to kill the other. In Tyl's work, Drahomíra is a nationalist whose maternal feelings are weak; the most frequently expressed emotion Drahomíra has for Wenceslas is annoyance at him for being passive and unmasculine; he does not defend the Bohemian Lands from the Germans and offers to give the Germans what they want to prevent bloodshed. This seems effeminate to Boleslav and Drahomíra, who believe that the Czechs' honour is now at stake,

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<sup>19</sup> 'Oh gods of my fathers, you are known to every member of the nation, indeed to every child in our lands, and the ruler of the nation, Wenceslas, has turned away from you! Oh, that it is not in my power to destroy all the gods of foreigners like a fierce fire and place you once more on your thrones in Vyšehrad, so that the nation has only you for their gods in all our lands, so that the nation does not turn away from you, one group worshipping you in the open, another group worshipping crosses in dark churches' *Ibid.*, p.71.

since their leader prefers peace and does not want his people to go to war. None the less, Wenceslas is presented as a wise ruler, since he proposes to the German leader that, if there is to be fighting, then the two of them should fight a duel, and then the people's lives would be saved. The Christian German ruler decides that it is better not to fight at all, and to reach agreement without bloodshed. In Linda's *Záře*, Wenceslas does fight a duel with a representative of the pagans, so that he can prevent a civil war between his pagan and Christian subjects. Linda's version of Wenceslas's patriotism constitutes Christian love for one's nation as a part of humanity, basically a version of Herder – love for humanity starts with love for your nation. Straight after killing his brother, Boleslav converts to Christianity: thus Linda indicates the moral superiority of Christianity. Here he draws yet another parallel between Wenceslas and Jesus: Wenceslas died for a similar cause to that of Jesus: Jesus died for the sins of Man, and after His death the Church was founded. Wenceslas died so that his nation would become Christian. The pagan gods who made Boleslav kill his brother do not answer his prayers, but the Christians who are nearby looking for Wenceslas, offer him consolation. So, in Linda's view, Providence has been at work. Linda's previous praise for paganism serves to emphasise the difficulty that supremely good Christianity has in triumphing over good paganism; with its message of peace, Christianity is, in the end, now appropriate for the Czechs. Linda represents paganism and Christianity as religions of love - and allows the cosmopolitan religion to win only after listing the dangers cosmopolitanism holds. Tyl's *Krvavé křtiny* also affirms Christianity, but in a simplified fashion that also reflects Herder's philosophy.

### 1.3 Conversion to Christianity

Unlike Linda, Žalud appears only to regret the fact that the Slavs ever left their national religion. In the original, pagan, Bohemian state, Žalud asserts, religious and secular authority were concentrated in the same leader. He provides linguistic evidence for this claim. In his view, the fact that the words for holy and secular (*svatý* and *světský*) have the same root expresses the fact that at some period in the past they had denoted the same or a similar concept.<sup>20</sup> Therefore he interprets the conversion of the Bohemian state to Christianity as splitting the state into two. This splitting determined the state's decline, since hardly any living organism can continue living after being split into two:

Now two states arose within every state, a secular led by the prince, and a clerical led by a bishop subject to the suzerainty of the Pope. State unity was broken; the body of the state was without might or main! Subjects did not know to whom they owed primary allegiance. But once physical servitude establishes itself, psychological servitude soon follows.

Christianity had destroyed everything that was good in Slav paganism:

With the introduction of Christianity we saw the splitting of the Bohemian state into the civil and the ecclesiastical.

The ecclesiastical side did not, however, develop since it was permeated with ill-willed foreigners. Latin and German elements forced themselves into the Slavonic, which obstructed the true, pure development of nationality, dissipating the mind with alien linguistic objects. In the heathen church, however, all civil intercourse was concentrated in one point: the principles of the church were also those of the state;<sup>21</sup>

Since he considers the Slavs one nation, he is confident that if Christianity had been accepted through another Slav country, not through the Germans, it would have been much closer to what was, in religious terms, naturally Czech. It would have been far better for the Czechs had they adopted Christianity from the Eastern Church during the mission of Cyril and Methodius. Žalud's attitude to the Greek brothers does not differ in any way from that of any Slavophile writer of history.

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<sup>20</sup> His etymological conclusion is ~~correct~~ — the two words share their origin.

<sup>21</sup> Žalud, *Početi roku 1620*, p. 76.

Voinikov also has respect for Cyril and Methodius, which does not prevent him from claiming in *Krum Strashnii* that Christianity is a cunning religion typical of the Greeks, while paganism reflects the Bulgarian character, and Bulgarian bravery; in this work, no other aspects of Christianity or of paganism are discussed. In a later work, however, Voinikov claims that the Bulgarians were baptised by Methodius, which makes Bulgarian Christianity particularly precious. He manages to marry the idea of the pagan war-lusting manliness with Christianity, in that Boris, the Bulgarian khan (reg.852-889) chose Christianity only because Christian rulers seemed to win all battles against pagans. His manliness is also demonstrated by the fact that he slaughters the Bulgarian boyars who rebel against him.<sup>22</sup> Bläskov, who entirely supports Christianity and condemns paganism, also sees Boris's bravery in the slaughter of the boyars. Bläskov sees the hand of God in the fact that Boris manages to suppress the uprising of the boyars with the help of a very small number of men. Bläskov expresses no regret at the abolition of paganism; in his view paganism had promoted immorality.<sup>23</sup>

In praising both paganism and Christianity, Voinikov resembles Rakovski. Rakovski, however, does not lend any importance to Cyril and Methodius, nor to their disciples. Similar to other Revivalist historians of the Bulgarian Church, for example Marin Drinov or Iliia Bläskov, he begins his account of the advent of Christianity on the Balkan Peninsula with St Paul. Rakovski cannot accept that the Greeks could have given the Bulgarians the Christian faith.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> See Voinikov, *Pokrăstvaneto na Preslavskiiia dvor* (The baptism of the Preslav Court, 1868) in Dobri Voinikov, *Săchineniia*, vol.1, 1983.

<sup>23</sup> Bläskov, *Kratka istoriia na bălgarskata tsărkva* (A short history of the Bulgarian Church), Plovdiv, Danov, 1895, p.6.

<sup>24</sup> See, Marin Drinov, *Istoricheski pregled na bălgarskata tsărkva ot samoto i nachalo i do dnes* (A historical overview of the Bulgarian Church from its very beginning till today), Vienna,

The theoretical problem that Linda poses in his *Záře* – of the possibility of conflict between blood and religion, that is, members of the same ethnic group having to fight their pagan compatriots – is represented by Rakovski as something that took place in Bulgarian history. Those Bulgarians who were converted to Christianity by St Paul had no sense of their blood relationship with the heathen Bulgarians living in the mountains; they felt more affinity to the mixture of peoples that the Roman Empire was, because they shared their religion.<sup>25</sup> Hence, they helped the Christian armies against their blood-brothers.<sup>26</sup> In asserting the difference between the heathen mountain Bulgarians and the Christian mixture coming from the lowlands, Rakovski reflects the views of Herder and Arndt, who claim that in the cycles of progress and decline various civilizations follow, there are always some people in the mountains, unaffected by urban miscegenation and cosmopolitanism, who normally save the civilisations.<sup>27</sup> That is probably why it is so important for Rakovski that the

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Somerov, 1869, p.1, and Bläskov, *Kratka istoriia na bălgarskata tsărkva*, p.1. Both of them note that St Paul used to preach on the Balkan Peninsula, within Bulgarian territories. See Rakovski, 'Niakolko rechi o Aseniu Pervomu', in G.S. Rakovski, *Săchineniia*, vol.3, p.10 for his claim that the Bulgarians were baptised by St Paul.

<sup>25</sup> Rakovski defines Byzantium as 'not only the Greeks, but the mixture of different nations, which Constantine the Great, in founding the Byzantine throne, united in one state. At the time of the reign of Constantine the Great this mixture consisted of Macedonian and Thracian Bulgarians and remnants of the Hellenic people [...]; of Armenians and baptised Jews and of the Romans themselves. All these nations had the name Romans. A part of the Bulgarians who lived in the Stara Planina Mountains have always been excluded from this mixture and this alien name, and they lived independently in the impenetrable area of Ema (Stara Planina).' *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>26</sup> Rakovski, 'Macedonian and Romanian [*rumanski*, most probably Roumelian] Bulgarians, since they had been Christians since the time of St Paul, and the Stara Planina Bulgarians still pagans, first helped the Byzantine army and attacked their blood brothers, the Bulgarians, stuck in the impenetrable location of Ema. Christianity had made the above-mentioned mixture of peoples feel close to each other and all served to glorify the Byzantine Emperor.' *Ibid.*, p.10.

<sup>27</sup> This is one of the foundations of the myth of Nordic superiority, according to which people from the North have always had a more difficult life; therefore they needed more developed faculties in order to survive. Because of their climate they had to overcome more difficulties; therefore they could not degenerate due to laziness. This myth is reflected also in the work of Ivan Seliminski, see his 'Proizhod, razvitie, rodoslovie i razprostranenie na săshtestvata, vključitelino i na choveka (Obsht pregled) (Origin, development, genealogy, and spread of living beings, including human beings. A general overview, written most probably in Braila

areas the heathen Bulgarians inhabit are ‘impenetrable’, offer no opportunity for racial, linguistic, or religious miscegenation, as opposed to the lowlands where renegade Christian Bulgarians lived.

According to Rakovski the religion that the Bulgarians living in the ‘impenetrable’ mountains embraced demonstrated the Bulgarians’ link to Sanskrit and the Aryans.<sup>28</sup> The ‘Aryans’ prophet was the Persian Manes, or Mana, or Manu (different spellings employed by Rakovski without any explanation; Rakovski is clearly thinking of the Manichaeans), and his followers were Harma, Buddha and Toma. It was a dualist religion, the good God being Sveto-Zara (white god) and the bad A-harana (bad, not good, black god). The good god is called Sura, Siva or Zara, or Zaratu, instead of Zoroaster, which, according to Rakovski, is the hellenised version of Zaratu.<sup>29</sup> Their religious books were called veda, meaning knowledge, and were brought to the Balkan Peninsula by the Bulgarians living in the mountains.<sup>30</sup> The language that the believers in Zara (Zoroastrians) used was Sanskrit and Zend. This religion was preserved in the Bogomil sect, which, Rakovski claims, was not a version of Christianity, but a continuation of the natural Bulgarian religion.

On the other hand, Rakovski claims that the Bulgarians are the true Christians, and it is important to him that the Bulgarians are Orthodox (as

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after 1864) in Seliminski, *Sāchineniia*, ed. by Rositsa Dimcheva and Nikolai Kochev, Sofia, Bālgarski pisatel, 1989, p.197.

<sup>28</sup> Here Rakovski may mean Arians, because Arianism was not a version of Christianity; Bogomilism, on the other hand, was. On the other hand, as pointed out in Chapter I, Rakovski believes that the Bulgarians are the true Aryans. It is likely that Rakovski did not differentiate between Arians and Aryans. In his study of the dualist sects, Yuri Stoyanov (*The Other God*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2000, 112ff and 139-66), never links Arianism with the Bulgars or Bulgarian Bogomils; the lack of any actual connection is not normally a reason for Rakovski not to create a version of his own.

<sup>29</sup> Rakovski, ‘Niakolko rechi o Aseniu Pervomu’, pp.30-31.

<sup>30</sup> Rakovski speaks of a Bulgarian state in the Balkan Peninsula in the sixth century BC; these were the Bulgarians who preserved the Zoroastrian faith and the links with Sanskrit. See Rakovski, notes to ‘Niakolko rechi’, *Sāchineniia*, vol.3, p.116.



opposed to Roman Catholic) and that they have always (*sic*) had an autocephalous Church. Regardless of the fact that the Greeks imposed Christianity on the Bulgarians and thus forced them to fight their blood brothers, Rakovski claims that not only is Christianity the Bulgarians' religion, but also that the Greeks had very little to do with the conversion. Moreover, Rakovski believes that the second Christian Church in the world was established in Salonica, which in his view had always been a Bulgarian city. St Paul could not create a Church in Athens, Rakovski asserts, because of the plenitude of idols there. The Slavs from Salonica who believed in the Arian/Aryan (*iarianska*) faith, had no idols, and believed in the afterlife; therefore they could have been converted to Christianity easily.<sup>31</sup> Another piece of evidence Rakovski uses to demonstrate that the Bulgarians were Christian long before the official conversion was that there was, according to him, no serious bloodshed as a result of the conversion. This he interprets as resulting from the fact that many Bulgarians were Christian before the official conversion.<sup>32</sup> Since he will not give up his idea of Bulgarian Zoroastrianism, he concludes that secretly very many Bulgarians continued being Zoroastrians, or Arians/Aryans, and that these eventually became active under the label Bogomil; but the Greeks had destroyed the Bogomils' books and leaders.<sup>33</sup> Thus Rakovski places the Bulgarians at the beginning of the world not only biologically, as we have seen, but also culturally.

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<sup>31</sup> Rakovski, 'Otgovor na bogoslovska grätska broshura', in Rakovski, *Sächineniia*, vol.3, p.247.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p.257. It is accurate to claim that there were Christian Bulgarians before the conversion. What Rakovski calls lack of bloodshed, however, is the slaughtering of fifty-two families from the Bulgarian aristocracy. See Richard Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp.14-15.

<sup>33</sup> Rakovski, 'Otgovor na bogoslovska grätska broshura', p.257.

Since the concept of enemy is crucial for Rakovski's definition of what is Bulgarian, what is most important for him is to point out that the Bulgarians never belonged to any of the enemy's groups, the Muslims, the Catholics, the Greeks. All the adherents of these groups seem to be willing to convert the Bulgarians to their religion or to claim that the Bulgarians are part of their nation. This is a direct reflection of the fact that Rakovski is trying to spread the national idea within the Ottoman Empire; he believes the Bulgarians should be clearly differentiated from the Muslims, but also from other parts of the Ottoman population. Although the Revivalists changed religious differentiation into ethnic, they did not change the way Bulgarians used 'faith' (*viara*), to refer to another ethnic group (Greek faith), religion (Turkish faith) or species (to be a dog was a faith as well).

Seliminski also subscribes to the belief that the Apostles converted the Bulgarians in Macedonia to Christianity. His argument is fundamentally the same as Rakovski's: the Macedonians (that is, Bulgarians) were converted while their compatriots to the North were not. When the Bulgarian khan Boris was converted (Seliminski has 863 for 864), the Greeks entered the country: 'Then many alien Greek priests rushed in, and they corrupted the new Bulgarian Church'. Boris, however, expelled these priests because he could not see any difference between them and the pagans – that is, Seliminski presumes that Boris had such a profound knowledge of Christianity that he recognised the Greeks' corrupting rites and teachings. From then on, until 1767, the Bulgarian Church had been autocephalous.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> 'Religiata, duhovenstvo i tsarkovniiat ni vāpros' (Religion, clergy, and our Church question, 1860) in Seliminski, *Sāchineniia*, pp.174-75.

The Czech Revivalist Šebestián Hněvkovský adds another aspect to the opposition between natural Slav religion and Christianity. Like Rakovski, he claims that the Slavs were literate before the advent of Christianity, and that a violent conversion to Christianity in Bohemia (unlike Rakovski's alleged non-violent conversion) destroyed this 'thousand-year-old' cultural current, and together with it the treasury of independent Slav poetry.<sup>35</sup> Václav Hanka and Josef Linda, however, were not satisfied just to suggest that there used to be a national Slav poetry that had disappeared with the advent of Christianity; they (it is generally believed) created this poetry, and their forgeries, particularly the Dvůr Králové Manuscript and the Zelená Hora Manuscript), influenced the Czech national movement for almost the whole of the rest of the nineteenth century.<sup>36</sup>

As represented in the Dvůr Králové Manuscript, the pagan Slavs were jolly, bellicose (they become excited when they learn that they will be starting a war), and are of fairly free sexual behaviour; the pagan Slavs were blissfully unaware of any regulation of sexual practices.<sup>37</sup> Apart from being fond of women and warfare, the pagan men are very attached to their gods, as becomes clear from the poem 'Záboj a Slavoj'. In this poem the Czechs' conversion to Christianity by Germans is accompanied by the Germans destroying the places of worship and felling all the trees of their sacred groves.<sup>38</sup> Trees, in Indo-European

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<sup>35</sup> 'As a result of the violent grafting of a new religion, the uprooting of primal liberty, government, mores, religion, they also lost their happy nationality, and the stream of thousand-year-old culture vanished and with it the treasury of independent Slav poetry.' Hněvkovský, *Zlomky o českém básnictví*, p.12.

<sup>36</sup> For the influence of the Manuscripts on Czech intellectual life see Pynsent, *Literary History as Nation Building*, *passim*.

<sup>37</sup> See the poems 'Jahody' and 'Zbyhoň' in *Rukopis královédvorský*, ed. by J. Kořínek, Prague, Kober, 1873.

<sup>38</sup> 'I nesměchu se bít před bohy,/ni v súmrky jim dávati jiesti./ Kamo otčík dáváše krmě bohóm, / kamo k nim hlásat chodiváše,/ posěkachu vsie drva,/ i rozhrušichu vsie bohy.' ('And they were not allowed to fight before their gods/ nor to take them food in the twilight./ And they

folklore, as Uli Linke asserts, have the symbolic meaning of male procreation, later interpreted as the tree of life.<sup>39</sup> The notion of the parallel between the change of the religion and the felling of trees could be interpreted as a violent effemination of the Czechs, a symbolic castration of sorts. One detail in this poem contributes towards the idea that Christianity effeminated the Czechs, where the German symbol, the oak (*dub*, masculine), is paralleled by the Czech oak, demonstrating that the Czechs had been just as mighty as the Germans. In the early Revival, the Czechs' 'mimetic competition' with the Germans resulted in paralleling the German oak by the Czech lime-tree (*lipa*, feminine); thus, the national symbol had changed gender after the advent of Christianity, or at least the forger wanted to emphasize the pagans' masculinity. The image of the pagans this poem presented was influential. For example, it invented a supposedly typical Czech musical instrument, the *varyto*, which was not only seen as an actual musical instrument from pre-Christian times, but was also used as an epithet to describe something or someone as belonging to the true Czech tradition. In Tyl's *Krvavé křtiny*, for example, Drahomíra refers to the old pagan priest Česta as a *varyto* from an epoch that, regrettably, belonged to

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felled all the trees/ and knocked down the idols/ where the father had offered / food to the gods./ where they used to go to sing of the gods' glory.) See 'Záboj and Slavoj' in *Rukopis králevédvorský a zelenohorský*, p.8.

<sup>39</sup> Linke gives as an example an apocryphon, popular in Czech, French, German and English, which tell the story of Adam, who was dying and asked his son Seth to get three seeds from the tree of life from the Garden of Eden. Seth did get the seeds but returned too late, therefore he put the seeds in Adam's mouth and buried him; from these seeds a 'wonderful' tree grew later. Another example Linke gives is the early Roman legend of Cybele and Attis/Atys, where Cybele wanted to be certain that her beloved Attis would not belong to anyone else, and so asked him to emasculate himself, which he did near a pine tree; here he 'bled to death, and his spirit retreated into the tree' Linke, *Blood and Nation*, pp.21-23. The classically educated forgers were familiar with the legend of Cybele and Attis, but Hanka almost certainly knew the Old Czech *Život Adama* (Life of Adam) as well.

the past.<sup>40</sup> The Forged Manuscripts were used as a source for the history of the Czech pre-Christian past for the entire period of the Revival.<sup>41</sup>

In the Bulgarian Revival the influence went the opposite way: instead of forgeries influencing works of literature and history, works of would-be history, namely Rakovski's works, inspired forgeries. The Czech Forged Manuscripts may have inspired Rakovski or other Bulgarian Revivalists in their invention of the Bulgarian pre-Christian past, since parts of *Rukopis králevédvorský* were translated and published in 1852 by Ivan Shopov (1826–53), who actually died in Prague.<sup>42</sup> Rakovski's theories inspired Ivan Gologanov who set himself the task to prove that Greek mythology, Christianity and all other forms of Eurasian religion originated among the Bulgarians. Another task of his was to provide evidence for his belief that the Bulgarians were the chosen nation. Thus, in the collection of supposedly Bulgarian folk songs he gives Stefan Verkovich<sup>43</sup> to publish, one finds Orpheus as a character of Bulgarian folklore.<sup>44</sup> In addition,

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<sup>40</sup> Tyl, *Krvavé křtiny*, p. 222.

<sup>41</sup> This resulted in many history books and works of *belles-lettres* taking as a starting point fictional documents. Not only would *varyto* appear as a musical instrument in works of fiction (Jan z Hvězdy's *Jarohněv z Hrádku*, Prague, Pospíšil, 1843 is just one more example, see p.27), but also the idea of the Czech Golden Age was shifted from what Dobrovský used to believe was the true Golden Age to the periods portrayed in the Manuscripts.

<sup>42</sup> See Ivan Radev, *Entsiklopediia*, pp.803-04. Raiko Zhinzifov (1839-77) also translated 'Jahody', 'Kytice' and 'Škřivánek' in 1863. See R. Zhinzifov, *Săchineniia*, ed. by Docho Lekov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1969, pp.152-56.

<sup>43</sup> Verkovich was born a Bosnian Catholic who devoted his time to the promotion of the Slav idea; hence, he spent a large portion of his life gathering ethnographical material from the Slavs in Macedonia and published many folk songs from the region. That is how he came across Gologanov and became an unwitting participant in the forgery.

<sup>44</sup> Rakovski was not the only one to believe that the Thracians were Slavs or Bulgarians. Seliminski claims that Plato asserted the Slav origin of the Thracians, see 'Proizhod, razvitie, rodoslovie' in Seliminski, *Săchineniia*, p.195. In his 'Bălgarskiiat tsărkoven văpros' (The Question of the Bulgarian Church, 1864) Seliminski also asserts that Orpheus was a Slav, who was born in the village of Karadzhal, see Seliminski, *Săchineniia* p.215. He shares Rakovski's and Gologanov's belief that the main Slav god was Vishnu, the Slav Holy Trinity being Vishnu, Shiva and Krasnu, *ibid.*, p.214. Seliminski is convinced that the Holy Trinity is a part of every religious system, and of any attempt to create cosmos out of chaos, because the Trinity symbolises life: it takes a man and a woman to produce a child, pp.213ff. Thus not only the eccentric passionate nationalists believed the Greek mythology was a poor imitation of the Slav (Bulgarian), but also an author like Seliminski, who was educated (as were Rakovski and Gologanov) and could express himself only in Greek. Without claiming that everyone in the

Gologanov claims that the pagan Bulgarians had Vishnu as their God, and this was preserved in his 'folk' songs. Similarly to Karavelov's and Rakovski's belief that the Muslim Bulgarians best preserved the proto-Bulgarian language or customs, Gologanov claims that he had been collecting his material only from the Pomaks. In these 'pre-Christian' folk songs one finds the story of Moses and his Chosen People, except that Moses is called Vishnu and the Chosen People are the Bulgarians trying to settle in the Balkan Peninsula; Moses/Vishnu is leading them and when they reach the Aegean Sea, they sacrifice a dove and the sea divides, like the Red Sea for the Israelites, so that they can walk across, soon to reach the Promised Land of Bulgaria.<sup>45</sup> The fact that the 'young' people in another version of the same song are defined as people under 100 years of age, is another attempt to claim that the Bulgarian folklore was the source for the Old Testament, quite apart from the fact that it predated Greek mythology. Gologanov attempts to provide evidence for Rakovski's conviction that Christianity was imposed on the Bulgarians, who had a much better and older religion that supplied the essence of Bulgarianness.

In Linda's *Záře*, as in *Veda Slovena*, the Slavs' hyper-fertility is the reason for their migration from their previous dwelling place to Bohemia, led by Forefather Czech. But Linda's tribal elder does not only relate a foundation myth about the beginning of the Czechs' inhabitation of Bohemia; he also asserts that the Slavs are the Chosen People, and that the god Svantovít had saved them from an equivalent of the biblical Flood.<sup>46</sup> The story parallels the story in Genesis: the gods used to walk among the people, but eventually people

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Bulgarian Revival believed in the Bulgarian cultural precedence over the Greeks, one can safely claim that such beliefs were spread among disparate strata of society.

<sup>45</sup> Stefan Verkovich (ed.), *Veda Slovena. Bălgarski narodni pesni ot predistorichno i predhristiansko doba*, vol.1, Belgrade, Drzhavna shtampagiiia, 1871, p.52.

<sup>46</sup> Linda, *Záře*, pp.22-23, 24-25.

started behaving in the wrong way and the gods decided to eradicate them; the god Svantovít reminds one of Noah; but where Noah received orders from God to save himself and his family and all animals, Svantovít uses his muscle power to save at least ten members of humankind, of whom the best is the man called Slav.

The need to demonstrate that one's nation was chosen by virtue of an original pagan faith was shared by one Czech and several Bulgarian Revivalists. This not only might suggest that the original pagan religion was much better than Christianity, but also could lead Czechs (if they read Linda) and Bulgarians (if they read *Veda Slovena*) to consider that they had ceased to be a chosen nation. One of the reasons for this was their conversion to Christianity, that is, submitting to Western or Greek influence. This was regardless of the fact that in other works the same writers contrived to prove that the Czechs and Bulgarians were the true Christians.

## **2. Pure versus corrupt versions of Christianity**

Since writers at the beginning of the Revival praised both Christianity and paganism, it is not surprising to find some neo-Revivalists, like Holeček, claiming at the end of the nineteenth century that, had Christianity not existed, the Czechs would have invented it, since it is the most natural peasant religion.<sup>47</sup> Unlike Žalud, who maintained, logically enough, and in keeping with the history with the rest of Europe, that the aristocracy were the first to accept Christianity and subsequently imposed it on the rest of the population, Holeček asserts that Christianity was first disseminated amongst the peasantry, and then reached the aristocracy. Holeček, however, speaks of a specifically Czech

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<sup>47</sup> Holeček, *Jak u nás žijou i umírají*, p.88.

peasant Christianity, which, he claims, was persecuted by the Germans, the germanised and the Catholics as heresy. By this, on the one hand, he manages to marry the idea of a pure pagan and truly Czech religion with the idea of Czechs being true Christians. On the other hand, he considers nineteenth-century Czech religiousness to be in a state of decay, since *Unitas Fratrum* religiousness and hymns have been replaced by Roman Catholic. The main difference between the two types of religiousness, according to Holeček, lies in the fact that according to the *Unitas Fratrum* or Protestant type altogether, one is expected to think and read the Bible, while Catholicism is characterised by a lack of thinking. He asserts that since the Counter-Reformation, Czech religiousness has declined to a state of 'naivety', in contrast to the period of the Czech Reformation, when every peasant woman knew the Bible.<sup>48</sup> For him it is important that even women knew the Bible, since he is convinced that in subsequent periods women were much more susceptible to the wiles of Catholicism. In Holeček's view innocence and natural religiousness are the reasons behind the Czechs' religious decay: he claims that the Czechs would always obey their priests. Because of this obedience they allowed the old Hussite books to be destroyed: the South Bohemian peasants were reluctant to give their books to the Jesuits, although they did not know what these books were; they just had respect for the old books handed down by their ancestors. When their priests asked them to hand over the books, however, disciplined as they were, they immediately surrendered them all.<sup>49</sup> Holeček presents his peasants as unconsciously preserving the religiousness of their predecessors, which has been passed down in their blood. He speaks of his relations in

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p.22. Here Holeček is alluding to Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini whose statement to this effect had long become part of Czech national mythology.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.18.



Southern Bohemia as the direct descendants of the South Bohemian Huss, John Žižka and Petr Chelčický; they carry Hussitism in their blood. This is expressed in their love for books (had all people read as much as the Southern Bohemians, he claims, the Czechs would have been morally healthier), their true religiousness and in the hymns they used to sing until almost the end of the eighteenth century. He asserts that they (*naši*) would spend every moment they were not at work in church. He had heard that people used to sing Hussite hymns, although he had never heard them sung; he had, however, heard people singing hymns of the *Unitas Fratrum*, regardless of the fact that they were banned by the Church. In Holeček's view, the Catholics replaced *Unitas Fratrum* hymns with lewd songs, concerned only with debauchery; that happened especially after the Catholics had established the Marian cult (*sic* – the Marian cult was actually evident in Czech vernacular literature from the early fourteenth century):

What the Czech nation went through in this period! Who would not weep at its decay, if he compared any magnificent chorale of the *Unitas Fratrum*, for example, with the Marian hymn that I have heard a hundred times in church and at other religious celebrations; I excerpt one stanza:

I have the most beautiful of all beloveds,  
Princes and the Emperor visit her,  
Thousands, no, still more of us,  
Faithful lovers visit her.

The last echoes of 'heretical' hymns have faded away in our churches, and hymns like this have replaced them. The common people are not to blame for this. They sing in naive simplicity and fervent devotion and their hearts are pure.<sup>50</sup>

In other words, the decay brought by the Marian cult cannot be complete as long as the Czechs have their innocent hearts pumping true Czech blood. Whatever confession they adhere to, they remain close to their roots and to the original Slav pagan and Christian religions. In short, Holeček believes that any

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p.19.

expression of true religiousness can be traced back to its pre-Christian and Hussite roots.<sup>51</sup>

Žalud portrays the Roman Church, and especially the Jesuits, interfering with the Czechs' piety and so bringing only decline. One of the eventual consequences of the adoption of Roman Christianity in the ninth century was that from the sixteenth century onwards it became possible for the Jesuits to spread their influence in Bohemia and Moravia. Like Holeček later, Žalud speaks of the Czechs' innocence making them easy prey for the corrupt Jesuits.<sup>52</sup> Similarly to the Germans (or to the Greeks in the Bulgarian case), the only purpose of the Jesuits was to sow the seeds of discord among the Czechs, which would facilitate the Jesuit manipulation of the Czechs.<sup>53</sup> The result that the Jesuits expected from this strategy was that the nation would be unable to consolidate against them and, thus, they would ensure the nation's decline.<sup>54</sup> Another point where Holeček agrees with Žalud is his assertion that the Jesuits did everything to keep the Slav population completely ignorant and thus dependent on them: 'it was a casting of humankind down among dumb beasts – a cruel struggle of royal cruelty and monastic obscurantism against reason and light, the aim of which was to ensure that humanity did not rise out of infantilism, but remained immersed in stupidity and superstition'.<sup>55</sup>

Inhumanity and the inclination to indulge in gratuitous torture, combined with the dubious morality preached by them, make the Jesuits similar to the

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<sup>51</sup> 'Every expression of pure, profound piety in our people goes back to olden times' and 'If some ancestor buried 1000 years ago rose from the grave, he would hurry to a gathering at a crossroads thinking that it was his parish community and that he had only been asleep for a while', *ibid.*, p.25.

<sup>52</sup> Žalud, *Početi roku 1620*, p. 54.

<sup>53</sup> The title of the chapter I am quoting is 'The manner in which the Jesuits' seed is sown', 'Jakovým způsobem se jezuitské símě seje'. *Ibid.*, p.62-63.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

Turks in Bulgarian Revivalists' fiction. The parallel between the Jesuits and the Turks is made also by Žalud, who considered that the Jesuits' atrocities would shock even the Turks.<sup>56</sup> The purpose of the alien Jesuits, as Žalud sees it, is to destroy every living thing in the lands by infecting them, since 'wild animals rule only in the wilderness'.<sup>57</sup> The Jesuit spirit metastasises in monasteries all over the countries under their sway. That monks do not work offends Žalud's socio-political sensibilities; he has socialist leanings and sees the monks as perpetrators of class exploitation. For him as a radical liberal (not quite a socialist like Sabina or Sojka), the existence of monasteries in any state indicates advanced decay.

Regardless of the fact that in *Krvavé křtiny* Tyl represents the true Czechs as pagans, in *Rozina Ruthardova* he represents the Czechs as the converters of Prussians to Christianity; hence they are not only true Christians, but also spreaders of Christianity; that contrasts with his earlier view of Christianity as a religion imposed by foreigners.<sup>58</sup> If Czechs impose religious beliefs it is good; if foreigners impose such beliefs on Czechs it is evil. In *Jan Hus* (1848), Tyl presents the Czechs as the only people who truly understand Christianity, in contrast to the Church of Rome and the Germans. Huss's belief that the pope was a human being like everyone else, and therefore could be fallible, is accurately presented by Tyl as essential to Huss's ideology. In Tyl's *Jan Hus* women are more sensitive to the Truth than men; the play opens with a quarrel between husband and wife, caused by the wife's desire to go to the Bethlehem Chapel where Huss is preaching; her husband will not allow her to do so. This quarrel is paralleled in the royal family, where the queen, Sophia, likes Huss

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 107, 109, 110.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>58</sup> Josef Kajetán Tyl. *Rozina Ruthardova. Povídka z dějin domácích*, Prague, Melantrich, 1951.

and his teaching. Her husband, Wenceslas IV, is at times a good friend of Huss, but he is concerned with the well-being of all his subjects, and so is sometimes confused about where his loyalties lie, and ends up fighting against the Poles instead of fighting with them against the Germans.<sup>59</sup> When Wenceslas is pressed by Rome to deal with Huss, he asks Huss to leave Prague, even though this is against what his naturally wiser wife suggests. The third naturally wise woman described in the play is Markéta, Huss's mother, whose wisdom is shown in that she has brought Huss up and that she tries to avoid all confrontation that might lead to the spilling of Czech blood. Her intuition helps her foresee not only Huss's future, but also the future of Bohemian Lands – she has a vision of Huss's burning at the stake and the consequent wars.<sup>60</sup>

The conflict between Huss and the Pope is represented as a conflict between Czechness and the alien. Huss is the embodiment of true piety, but chiefly of true Czechness; hence, at several points in the play, he, instead of Wenceslas IV, is praised for gaining more votes for the *natio* of Bohemia in the administration of Prague University and for advocating religious services in the vernacular. In Tyl Huss is represented as the Czech Messiah, which once again makes the Czechs the chosen people; here the ethnic election is not only a covenant with God, but also messianic: like Christ, Huss had to live and die so that the people should know his teaching. He had to be born, according to Žižka, 'so that Bohemia would not regress, become stunted'.<sup>61</sup> Tyl has Žižka declare that Jerome of Prague, John Huss, and John Žižka represent a new,

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<sup>59</sup> Tyl, *Jan Hus*, in Tyl, *Sebrané spisy*, vol.20., pp.138-39.

<sup>60</sup> Markéta's vision: 'It was as if people from every corner of the earth had met to see your glory, but then a glow appeared in the sky as if the whole east were burning with a great flame and you were standing in the midst of it; but I could hardly recognise you; you had a strange robe on your body, something like a magician's, and when I began to call you, you dissolved and the whole sky was suffused with blood – and I woke up in my terror', *Ibid.*, p.120.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p.177.

Bohemian Holy Trinity. The mission of this new Trinity is to renew the Bohemian glory that had been weakened by Rome and the Germans.<sup>62</sup>

Catholicism, as the confession of foreigners, is represented as sheer superstition. The Papists are not truly religious, since all they need is to buy remission of their sins and thus a passport to Heaven. Their priests are also bellicose, as opposed to the pacifist Huss, although not unlike Jerome of Prague, who, for example, congratulates Žižka as the slaughterer of the Germans.<sup>63</sup> As one might expect, however, the believing Papist is not as dangerous as the renegade, the Czech who suddenly rejects reform and submits to the contagion of Papism. Tyl's real villain is, then, Stephen Pálež, Huss's former fellow student who, out of envy and greed, becomes one of Huss's accusers. This is the reason for the disquiet that causes the decay of the Czech people. Tyl's Wenceslas IV uses the language of contagion: 'that finally an end be put to your quarrels. It is a poison that ulcerates the healthy limbs of my people – and I do not wish to rule over ulceration and so always have to cure it with iron and fire'.<sup>64</sup> Pálež embodies the 'enemy within'; Huss, Jeronym and Žižka represent the Czech Holy Trinity (as in Holeček), and Pálež the Czech Judas.

Tyl's play also exploits another aspect of the religious theme in Czech national mythology. When Huss is under an interdict and has to leave Prague, he goes to his native village, where the local peasants become his followers. Huss starts preaching in the open air, which brings him closer to the pagan places of worship that Tyl had praised in *Krvavé křtiny*, which is another way of demonstrating that Huss is an essentially Czech priest. Tyl hints that once

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<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p.142.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p.140.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p.126.

Huss and his teaching disappear, Czech statehood will disappear too, since the Emperor Sigismund is eager to become king of Bohemia. Only two paths are open to the Czechs: either, in Huss's own words, 'my teaching will rise through my blood' or the Czechs will become subordinate to the corrupt Papists who ply a lucrative trade in the forgiveness of sins.<sup>65</sup>

In his *Žižka z Trocnova a bitva u Sudoměřic* (*Žižka of Trocnov and the battle of Sudoměřice*, 1849), Tyl elaborates the idea of the Czechs as the chosen nation: this time not through the image of the Czech Holy Trinity, but through an allegorical comparison between Žižka and Moses.<sup>66</sup> The true form of Christianity is the Christianity that Huss preached and Žižka attempts to defend. Žižka is a combination of manliness and devout Christianity. As in *Jan Hus*, here Church reform is equated to Czechness: all decent nationalists are followers of Huss. Tyl's *Žižka* does not want a civil war but the Catholics' refusal to keep their promises leads to the outbreak of such a war. In *Měšťané a studenti* (*Citizens and students*, 1850), however, Tyl no longer equates Czechness to confession: haematic affiliation turns out to be more important than following Huss's principles. In *Žižka z Trocnova*, Czechs spill the blood of other Czechs because of religion; in *Měšťané a studenti* foreign invaders, the Protestant Swedes, spill Czech blood and steal Czech national treasures.<sup>67</sup> In that they are helped by a Czech Protestant (Arnošt) who is convinced that by supporting the Swedes he is supporting the liberation of his nation. According to him, 'The Swede is not fighting Bohemia but the alien parasite that has set up

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<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p.205.

<sup>66</sup> Tyl, *Žižka z Trocnova a bitva u Sudoměřic* (1849), in *Spisy*, vol.20 *Historická dramata*, Prague, SKLNU, 1954, pp.366, 368. For a glorification of Žižka see also Puchmajer's 'Oda na Jana Žižku z Trocnova' [1802], in Antonín Jaroslav Puchmajer, *Almanachy* [1802], ed. by Jaroslav Vlček, Prague, ČAVU, pp.60-67.

<sup>67</sup> Tyl, *Měšťané a studenti* (1850), in *Spisy*, vol.20, p.429.

home in its [Bohemia's] guts, with that foreign growth that settled on its beautiful body like ulcers'.<sup>68</sup> The message of the play is that no religious differences can justify the betrayal of one's nation; the Czech students and citizens defeat the pillaging foreigner and execute Arnošt. Throughout the play, however, Arnošt is described as a good nationalist who would sacrifice his life for the nation. His wife, although also Protestant, senses that it is wrong to fight with foreigners against one's compatriots and tries to stop him. In other words, femininity in Tyl symbolises a link with Nature, and with essential Czechness. The women in *Jan Hus* and *Měšťané a studenti* know better than the men what is best for the Bohemian nation. The only case when Tyl's interpretation of female behaviour is the same as Holeček's later interpretation, comes in *Žižka z Trocnova*, where the only person to leave the followers of Žižka and to join their religious enemies is Žižka's niece; she does this, rather like the women in Holeček, because she is easily manipulated. With that exception, during the 1840s Tyl is confirming a feminine ideal as a combination of motherhood, chastity and intuition, while towards the *fin-de-siècle* the nationalist Holeček saw women as dangerous, and possibly vehicles of decay, even when they were not corrupt themselves.

In her novels from the 1870s Světlá, who was brought up Roman Catholic, but nevertheless believed that the true Czech religion was that of the *Unitas Fratrum*, explores both paths that femininity could take: extreme corruption and natural affinity to just causes. In her *Zvonečková královna* (The queen of the bells, 1872), set in the eighteenth century, women are tools of the Jesuits. The Jesuits exploit a widow, *Nepovolná*, in order to inherit her wealth. *Nepovolná* is

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p.392.

so loyal to them that she is happy to sacrifice her granddaughter's (Xavera's), happiness to them. She makes Xavera sign a contract with her, stating that she would inherit her wealth on the condition that she put her beauty to the service of the Catholic Church; Xavera's task was to make young men fall in love with her and then lead them to permanent loyalty to the Jesuits. Xavera agrees and is successful. Eventually, however, she falls in love, but as a result of her Jesuit upbringing, she manifests such capriciousness that her behaviour brings about the death of the man she loves. Women can be dangerous vehicles of corruption.<sup>69</sup>

In *Poslední paní Hlohovská* (The last Mrs H, 1870), a woman (Marie Felicie) is blessed with intuition as well as a strong passion for truth. This is why she wants to compensate for the injustice done to the adherents of the Unitas Fratrum. Although she was brought up Roman Catholic, her longing for truth leads her to discover that the only path to it is with Unitas Fratrum – an idea eventually developed by Masaryk.<sup>70</sup> She falls in love with a member of the Unitas Fratrum and eventually leaves the country with other Brethren, who are expelled because they dare to ask the Emperor for permission to be openly Protestant. Since the Patent of Tolerance (which permitted only some Protestant denominations and not the Unitas), they are forced into exile, accused of being heretics, adherents of the Adamite sect.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Světlá, *Zvonečková královna. Zapomenutý příběh pražský* (1872), Prague, SNKLHU, 1957.

<sup>70</sup> In his *Česká otázka* Masaryk asserts that the reason for the decline of the Czechs is that they betrayed the ideas that had grown out of the Czech Reformation. To revive the nation, the Czechs needed to undo the reasons for the decay, that is, return to Huss's and, eventually, the Unitas Fratrum's ideas. See T.G. Masaryk, *Česká otázka* (1892), Prague, Masarykův ústav AV ČR, 2000, p.155.

<sup>71</sup> Karolina Světlá, *Poslední paní Hlohovská* [1870], in Karolina Světlá, *Z dob národního probuzení*, Prague, SNKLHU, 1956, pp.624-29.



J.J. Marek also employs the Romeo and Juliet motif in his *Jarohněv z Hrádku* (1843), set in the time of George of Poděbrady (reg.1458-71). Here a Taborite, Jan Kolda, is in love with the wife of a Roman Catholic; he kills her husband during a battle between Papists and the remnants of the Taborites, and takes the woman who does not love him hostage, separating her from her only child, thus destroying the family. In this novel reason and moderation are attributed to both Catholics and Protestants, but their extremes are demonised. Religious extremism, fanaticism, is as degenerate as religious apathy. One of the fanatical Taborites, Mákovec, for example, is evil incarnate: he is exceptionally cruel, and kills more or less for the sake of killing. J.J. Marek, however, does not describe the opposition between Protestants and Catholics in black and white.<sup>72</sup> At the beginning of the novel old Přeč, the father of the murdered husband and grandfather of the main character Jarohněv, declares the Protestants heretics and hostile to the motherland (*vlast*). Nevertheless, it becomes clear that the lives of grandfather and grandson had been saved by a Protestant woman who had fed them and hidden them from her Taborite husband.<sup>73</sup> They are all potentially good Czechs for the Revivalist author.

*Poslední paní Hlohovská* shares with *Jarohněv z Hrádku* the idea that German Lutherans are friendly towards the Jews. Světlá makes the Jews allies to Frederick of Prussia, who had ruined parts of Prague just out of his desire to expand his realm. In that he was helped by the Jews, and the Jewish Quarter was the only part of Prague not badly damaged by Frederick's soldiers.<sup>74</sup> J.J. Marek has George of Poděbrady speak against pogroms.<sup>75</sup> The philosemitic

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<sup>72</sup> Jan z Hvězdy, *Jarohněv z Hrádku*, part I, Prague, Pospíšil, 1843, pp.52-53.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p.64.

<sup>74</sup> Světlá, *Poslední paní Hlohovská*, pp.564-65.

<sup>75</sup> <sup>75</sup> Jan z Hvězdy, *Jarohněv z Hrádku*, part II, Prague, Pospíšil, 1843, p.104.

Josef Jiří Kolar (1812-96) takes a different point of view in his representation of the Jews as the allies of the true Czechs (Protestants) shortly after the Battle of the White Mountain. In his *Pražský žid* Falu Eliab is a Czech nationalist and is the only person that the Protestant Count Turn can turn to for help. While the Catholics try to destroy the Protestant Estates, Falu Eliab lends money to Turn, a loan that he does not expect to be repaid, and looks after his daughter; eventually he is killed by the Catholics while trying to help Turn's daughter escape. Catholics here are represented as blood-thirsty (they kill even old men, who are facing the grave anyway) and superstitious.<sup>76</sup> Thus, although Kolar employs stereotypical characteristics (Falu Eliab has money that he lends), he shows more respect for Judaism than for Catholicism. For J.J.Marek and Kolar, then, the Jews do not threaten the religion of the Czechs or, indeed, their blood-line.

Czech Revivalists saw the Czechs either as the true Roman Catholics or as the true Protestants. The use to which the legend of the Blaník Knights was put illustrates this. For example, in Kramérius and Klicpera, the Blaník Knights are Catholics who have suffered from the inhuman cruelty of the Taborites. Later in the century Krásnohorská declares that the Blaník legend is of anti-Hussite, therefore anti-Czech character. Therefore, she promptly changes the confession of the knights, making them Hussites.<sup>77</sup> Even more strongly, from the late 1830s onwards, Hussites were not only considered representatives of the Czech religion, but also of 'natural' Czech democracy. Papists represented effete aristocratism.

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<sup>76</sup> Josef Jiří Kolar, *Pražský žid* (The Prague Jew, 1872), 3rd edn, Prague, Kober, 1922, the 1621 executions are on pp.38-41, the superstitions of the Catholics used by a member of Unitas Fratrum in order to help Falu Eliab and Turn's daughter escape, pp.64-67.

<sup>77</sup> Eliška Krásnohorská, *Blaník*, p.575.

The Bulgarian case is not dissimilar to the Czech. Rakovski, for example, manages to marry his ideas of the Bulgarian true pre-Christian religion with a representation of the Bulgarians as the true Christians, unlike the Greeks and the Catholics. For Rakovski the Bulgarians are not simply Orthodox Christians, they are the only authentic Orthodox Christians. Only once does he assert that the Greeks, being Orthodox, were the natural allies of the Bulgarians against the Crusaders. It is important for him that there has never been any Uniate Church in Bulgaria; giving evidence for that takes up most of his historical study 'Niakolko rechi o Asenu Părvomu'. In this work, he spells out most of his ideas on the purity of Bulgarian Orthodox Christianity; he also claims that the members of the Paulician sect are actually adherents of the original Bulgarian religion. Since the Bogomils were persecuted in Bulgaria by official Greek Orthodox Christianity during the Crusades, they sought refuge among the crusaders who promptly converted them to Catholicism, and that is how the Paulician sect began.<sup>78</sup>

Karavelov also asserts that the Bogomils and the Paulicians are the same sect, and that they have always rebelled against Orthodoxy, but especially against the Greek clergy. In rebelling they were attracted by the Catholics and seemingly converted to Catholicism. Some of them converted to Orthodox Christianity, some to Islam, and those who became Muslim or Catholic, according to Karavelov, have managed to preserve more traces of the true Bulgarian religion than Orthodox Bulgarians, mainly because of the influence of the Phanariot Greeks on the Bulgarians, but also because the Roman Catholics had forgotten about the Bulgarian Paulicians. Paulicians, Muslim or

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<sup>78</sup> Rakovski, 'Niakolko rechi', in Rakovski, *Săchineniia*, vol.3, p.35.

Catholic, continued not only speaking the purest form of Bulgarian, but wore only Bulgarian clothes, which they would not change even under pain of death, Karavelov informs us.<sup>79</sup>

Not only Rakovski, but also Marin Drinov represent the Bulgarians as the bearers of the true Christianity that eventually brought about the Reformation. Although Drinov does not go as far as to claim that the Bogomil heresy was the embodiment of true Christianity, he claims that the Bogomils had had a beneficial influence in states where the Church was subordinate to the Pope: 'because it was the beginning of the fight with the power-lusting Roman clergy, a fight that eventually liberated the nations from the spiritual and physical burden of the Roman Pope.'<sup>80</sup> In claiming that the Bogomil heresy was the inspiration for the Reformation Drinov agrees with Kollár<sup>81</sup> and Rakovski and provides material for the 1990s Bulgarian nationalists, such as Hristo Madzharov or Petăr Dobrev, who claim the same. The only drawback that Drinov sees in the extreme popularity of Bogomilism all over Europe is that occasionally its principles were misunderstood; nevertheless the heretics continued to be called 'Bulgari' (Bugri). This, Drinov asserts demonstrating a shaky knowledge of Cathar history, gave the Bulgarians a bad name, since heretics in France who had 'unnatural' sexual practices called themselves *bougres* from Bulgarians.<sup>82</sup> In his view the Bogomil heresy was not a remnant of the pre-Christian Bulgarian beliefs, but a version of the Manichaean heresy, enriched by 'the Bulgarian national spirit'.<sup>83</sup> He believes that the Bulgarian

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<sup>79</sup> Karavelov, 'Zapiski za Bălgariia i bălgarite', pp.441-42.

<sup>80</sup> Marin Drinov, *Istoricheski pregled na bălgarskata tsărkva ot samoto i nachalo i do dnes*, pp.51-52.

<sup>81</sup> Kollár, *Cestopis*, p.199.

<sup>82</sup> Drinov, *Istoricheski pregled*, p.54.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p.49.

clergy and kings were tolerant towards it because it was a typically Bulgarian heresy. Drinov maintains that only the Greeks and the pro-Catholic King Boril persecuted the Bogomils in Bulgaria, and the Catholics in western Europe never ceased persecuting them, while 'In Bulgaria, where these heresies started, the heretics used to live freely. The Bulgarian Church, led by the spirit of true Christianity, was trying to convert them onto the path of truth with calm words and persuasion.'<sup>84</sup>

Similarly to Rakovski, Drinov represents the Catholics as desiring to convert the Bulgarians. Regardless of the fact that Drinov regrets the Schism, he brings evidence that the Bulgarians never joined what he calls the Roman patriarchate, before or after the Schism. Here Drinov is probably alluding to the unsuccessful attempt at putting the Bulgarian Church under the Roman that was made by Iosif Sokolski and Dragan Tsankov (1828-1911) in 1861; on 2 April 1861 the Pope ordained Iosif Sokolski Archbishop of the Bulgarian Uniate Church (the Uniate Church existed until June 1861, when Sokolski declared such a Church was a bad idea, and went to Russia where he spent the remainder of his life).<sup>85</sup> To prevent further such attempts the Revivalists represented the Catholics as having always been eager to take over the Bulgarian lands. Rakovski and Drinov endeavoured to prove that even when a Concord between the Pope and the Bulgarian ruler existed, it was not real. A Bulgarian ruler (Kaloian, *reg.* 1197-1207) had a Concord with Pope Innocence III, according to which the Bulgarian king was recognized as king by the Pope and the Bulgarian

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<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p.82. Drinov contradicts himself concerning the only Bulgarian ruler who summoned a Church Council to attack the Bogomils, King Boril. On the one hand, he says that Boril relied on the Pope to support him in his illegitimate assumption of the throne; hence the persecution of the Bogomils was carried out to please the Pope. On the other, he claims that Boril had not 'sold himself' to the Pope; he thought that purging heresy would not do any harm to Orthodoxy, *ibid.*, pp.83-84.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.294-95

Church became subordinate to Rome. Drinov acknowledges this fact but says that there was a clause in the Concord, stating that the Bulgarian Church should remain the same as it was under the previous kings, which he understands as Eastern Orthodox.<sup>86</sup> Since the formulation 'previous Bulgarian kings' refers to Bulgarian kings before 1018, the Orthodox Church did not exist as a concept then and the Bulgarian Church could not have been Orthodox. For propaganda reasons Drinov obfuscates the fact that he was claiming the existence of Bulgarian Orthodoxy before the Schism.

Rakovski, who is convinced that the Orthodox Church has existed from time immemorial, denies any Concord existed under Kaloian's reign because he believes that the Bulgarian Church had remained independent under Byzantine rule, and therefore they did not need any foreign help to ordain their patriarch. As far as the king was concerned, he is certain that, since the Bulgarians acknowledged their king, there was no need for other countries to recognise him.<sup>87</sup>

The Catholics are the embodiment of evil for Iosif Dainelov in the fragments he published in *Dunavski lebed*, the paper Rakovski edited. Dainelov's work mocked Dragan Tsankov's espousal of Greek-Catholicism. The Bulgarians involved in the negotiation, Dainelov writes, have no interest in Catholicism whatsoever; their only interest is in Catholic money. The author is convinced that Catholicism springs from France and is firmly linked with Napoleon. The Jesuits/Catholics are physically and mentally weak. They are not

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<sup>86</sup> Drinov, *Istoricheski pregled*, p.76.

<sup>87</sup> Rakovski, 'Niakolko rechi..'p.14; he gives an emotional account of the fact that Asen (actually Kaloian) was of the Bulgarian royal line and therefore needed no further acknowledgement; in addition Assen (Kaloian) was applying the law that might is always right, like Napoleon; he had an advantage over Napoleon, however, in that he was from the Bulgarian royal family.

real men, because they have neither beard nor moustache, which is unforgivable. The Catholics just wanted to gain control over the Bulgarians.

Drinov and Rakovski both believe that the Jesuits could change their appearance, that they are willing to learn languages and to pretend to be of the local nation in order to convert innocent patriots to Catholicism. Indeed, the Jesuits become for them something like the blond Jew for antisemites. Drinov claims that the Jesuits have been instructed to conceal themselves in Orthodox garb in order to gain the trust of the Bulgarians.<sup>88</sup> Rakovski gives examples of Jesuits who go as far as to disguise themselves as Hindus in order to attract Indians to Catholicism. In general, Rakovski believes that the

[Jesuit missionaries] first learn the language and customs of the people they want to attract to the Pope's faith and, once they have planted themselves among the innocent people, first they ingratiate themselves, lie and promise everything, dress like the people they are trying to attract, but, once they have managed to attract them and to stamp the enemy's seal on them, they gradually start persecuting their national customs, rituals and rites, start making them stop loving their nation and begin to persuade them that everything depends on the Pope. Poor people stop loving their nation so much that they become cruel persecutors of their own brothers!<sup>89</sup>

This 'enemy's seal' acts even on the bearers of true Christianity, the Paulicians.

Once they have been converted to Catholicism, in Rakovski's view at the beginning of the nineteenth century, they start considering the rest of the Bulgarians their enemies. He gives examples of Paulicians who kill Bulgarians, especially Bulgarian women and young girls, as a result of fanaticism. His conviction that the Paulicians are eager to kill Bulgarians, especially women, looks forward to Hitler's interpretation of the Jew who lurks, waiting in order to get hold of Aryan girls. By employing what was becoming a mytheme of sexual antisemitism in the description of the Paulicians Rakovski indicates the Bulgarians' preoccupation with the enemy within, people who speak Bulgarian, but because they have changed their faith, have ceased being Bulgarian. Thus

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<sup>88</sup> Drinov, *Istoricheski pregled*, p.174.

<sup>89</sup> Rakovski, 'Niakolko rechi...', p.112.

Rakovski represents the Bulgarians as innocent victims of Catholic fanaticism, but he also warns his readership that changing religion, that is ceasing to be Bulgarian, can turn them into brutes.<sup>90</sup>

Drinov is one of the few Revivalists to make the distinction between Jesuits and other orders of the Catholic Church, like the Franciscans, and other Western confessions, like the Protestants. In his view, all varieties of non-Orthodox believers are interested in luring the Bulgarians away from the true faith. The fact that there is no distinction between Protestants and Catholics for most Bulgarian Revivalists is clear from the statement that one of Blăskov's characters makes: that the Bulgarian nation is stalked by 'Papist Protestants, frightening and cunning Jesuits'.<sup>91</sup>

Slaveikov writes against the idea that the decay of Bulgarian piety has come as a result of the Catholics or Protestants; for him, the Bulgarians are not in danger of becoming Catholics or Protestants; they are in danger of becoming atheists:

The evil is not about to come, [...] it has come already. [...] The Bulgarians will not become Catholics or Protestants, but they will not remain Orthodox either. [...] The Bulgarians will remain Orthodox only by name, while they will actually have no faith. [...] A faith so humiliated in the eyes of the thinking; a faith that because of the abuse of its priests has forced the believers to despise it; a faith that, because of the lack of sermons, the masses are still unaware of; one does not change such a faith; one just leaves it.

A whole nation could not change its faith like an individual [...] One has to know one's faith well, to be able to judge its strengths and advantages or disadvantages, and only after that could one choose between two paths – either to defend the faith till death, or to change it promptly. Thanks to the mercy of the Greek bishops we have never known our faith in such a way; the people, thank God, have never heard anything and do not know anything about their religion; they cannot judge it and cannot have any opinion about it.<sup>92</sup>

Thus Slaveikov blames the Greek and the hellenised Bulgarian clergy for the advanced stage of Bulgarian religious decay. 'Through the establishment of a

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<sup>90</sup> Rakovski, 'Niakolko rechi...', p.97.

<sup>91</sup> 'папишаша протестанти, страшни и лукави езуити', Blăskov, *Dvama bratia*, p.284.

<sup>92</sup> Petko Slaveikov, 'Ogledaloto na g.Burmova ili drugo porglasiavane na glasa ot pusto gore tilileysko III' (Mr Burmov's looking-glass, or Another voicing of the voice crying in the wilderness), *Bălgaria*, II (78), 14.09.1860, in P.R. Slaveikov, *Săbrani săchinenia*, vol.5, ed. by Stoianka Mihailova and Docho Lekov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1980, pp.54-55.



national Church the Bulgarian people wanted [...]', writes Slaveikov, 'to establish a national independence of sorts, since this is permitted according to the laws on the establishment of independent Churches in the Ottoman state'.<sup>93</sup> Bogorov defines the difference between the Orthodox populations in Plovdiv: Bulgarians are those who do not recognise the Constantinople patriarch, and Greeks are those who do. So, it is possible that of two brothers one can be Bulgarian, while the other Greek.<sup>94</sup> Although many Bulgarian Revivalists would not have agreed with the idea of having an autonomous state within the Ottoman Empire, all agreed that independence had to be achieved through separation from the Greek Church. This is why the Revivalists strove to prove that the Bulgarians have never been subordinate to the Greek Church, and that therefore the contemporary subordination of the Bulgarian Church to the Greek was a regression from its natural independence. Being subordinate to the Greek Church was worse than being subordinate to the Roman, since in Orthodox Christianity the Church was subordinate to the head of the secular authority, and thus, if a people were subordinate to a Church, that also meant that they are politically subordinate. For example, although Drinov quotes from documents from the period of Byzantine rule (eleventh and twelfth centuries), in which the Bulgarian Church in Ohrid had an archbishop as its head, he translates archbishop as patriarch, and claims that the Bulgarians have always had an autocephalous patriarchate.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Petko Slaveikov, 'Dvete kasti i vlasti ili dneshnata nasha ekzarhiia i shto ni obeshtavata' (The two castes and authorities, or Our present Exarchate and what it promises to us, 1872) in P.R. Slaveikov, *Săchinenia*, vol.7, ed. by Stoianka Mihailova and Docho Lekov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1981, p.216.

<sup>94</sup> Bogorov, *Niakolko dena razhodka po bălgarskite mesta* (A few days' walk in Bulgarian places, 1868) in Bogorov, *Za narodna sviast*, p.213.

<sup>95</sup> 'Bulgaria was under Byzantine rule for over 150 years and over the whole of that period it never lost its church independence [...] Out of thirty or more episcopates, [...] that were under the Ohrid archbishop [patriarch in Bulgarian], only eight are named in the abovementioned

The Revivalists see the reason for the present decay of the Bulgarians' piety as lying not only in their subordination to the Greek Church, but also in the qualities of the Greek clergy, which cause a decline in the religiousness of the Bulgarians and in their morals. Sofronii, for example, claims that the rest of the clergy hated him because he was literate. Bogorov takes a similar line by claiming that the only people in Bulgaria who became priests were men who could not make their living in any other way.<sup>96</sup> They corrupt the Bulgarians morally and genetically, since they allow even incestuous marriage, if they are paid enough.<sup>97</sup> Karavelov adds to the list of the faults of the Greek or hellenised clergy: apart from being ignorant and avaricious, in his works they are gluttonous debauchers. A recurrent motif in Karavelov's works is the licentious Greek bishop's dean, who normally chases all the women in the town he lives in. In 'Bozhko' a dean seduces and causes the death of a Bulgarian girl; in 'Stoian' an identical character becomes the lover of the main character's wife. In 'Detsata ne prilichat na bashtite si' the dean combines most of the characteristics that Karavelov ascribes to hellenised clergy:

[The dean hated the Paulicians] and would curse them until heavy sweat appeared on his face. Of course, such hatred could not appear in his heart because of so-called religious fanaticism, since Father Nikifor was not properly familiar with Orthodoxy, although he spoke in favour of Orthodoxy. He hated the Paulicians precisely because they would not treat him with due respect and because they would not allow him into their houses to sprinkle holy water; he hated the Turks because they went to the mosque and because they would not recognise his bishop as the head of their faith; he hated the Jews because they were Jews and because their ancestors had crucified Christ; finally, he hated the Gypsies because this peculiar tribe would not pay the king, or the priests. He considered the Greek

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certificate' Drinov, *Istoričeski pregled*, p.57; he also supports his argument that the Bulgarian Church had always been autocephalous patriarchate with the fact that one Byzantine historian, Nikita Honiad, calls the head of the Bulgarian Church a patriarch. This is sufficient evidence for him to consider that the Bulgarian patriarchate had never ceased to exist, regardless of the fact that he states that all the Ohrid archbishops called themselves archbishops, *ibid.*, p.60.

<sup>96</sup>Bogorov also claims that Bulgarian priests do not study in order to become priests and only know how to baptise, marry and perform the funeral service, albeit only on the condition that they are paid in advance. Bogorov, 'Propadvanie na pravoslavната viara mezhdu bǎlgarite' (The decline of the Orthodox faith among the Bulgarians, 1867), in Bogorov, *Za narodna sviast...*, p.60.

<sup>97</sup> See Bogorov, 'Propadvanie...', p.60. See also Bozveli, 'Liubopitnoprastii razgovor', in Bradistilova-Dobрева, *Vǎzrozhdenski dialozi*, p.60.

faith the most perfect, most correct, most sacred, and least fallible [...]. He used to like to spend his spare time among the most licentious young people, to gamble, to look at salacious pictures, to lie even on Maundy Thursday, not to pay his debts, to steal whatever he came across and so on. But his main quality was that the Plovdiv ladies, who, if we are to be honest, have never shone with exceptional moral stature, were especially fond of him. [...]in Plovdiv's dead streets, as in the house of Father Nikifor, lived very many boys and girls who called themselves his '*anepsii*' [cousins] and who would invest great effort into making their uncle's happy moments even happier.<sup>98</sup>

Practically, the only sin not mentioned here is murder, but Karavelov eventually states that the dean Nikifor would have been a happier man had his archbishop been killed; not because he hates him, but because he would have liked to have become archbishop himself.<sup>99</sup> According to Karavelov, the Greek clergy have always been degenerate, and he gives a similar example of a licentious Greek priest in his trilogy devoted to Bulgaria's falling under Turkish rule. In the second part, '*Posle Otmāshtenieta*', he presents the Greek clergy as an assemblage of drunken dissolutes, who increase the number of the saints' days, in order to have more reasons for getting drunk. He writes: 'A few monks were walking among the drunk; they were taking liberties with the women, singing secular songs, drinking wine and laughing as loud as they could.'<sup>100</sup> In the last part of the trilogy, '*Tuka mu e kraiat*', what had appeared to be the general lechery and corruption of the Greek clergy turns out to be a Byzantine plot against Bulgarianness: the Byzantine emperors had been using their corrupt monks as a weapon against the Bulgarians, an instrument to destroy their morality. Thus, the emperors instructed the Greek clergy to build monasteries around Plovdiv so that Byzantium could corrupt and consequently control the Bulgarians. The Greek bishop, the bishop's archdeacon and a hellenised Bulgarian are the cause of the fall of Plovdiv. The archdeacon Nil who has at least three children by a Greek nun plays the main part in the plot against the

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<sup>98</sup> Karavelov, '*Detsata ne prilichat na bashtite si*', pp.176-177.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p.180.

<sup>100</sup> Karavelov, '*Posle Otmāshtenieta*', p.285.

Bulgarians. He manages to charm all women, except one true Bulgarian, whose eight brothers die fighting the Turks. On the instructions of the Greek clergy the hellenised Bulgarians poison the Bulgarian soldiers and burn their provisions. That is why one of the Bulgarian princes at the end of the work pleads that the archdeacon Nil be burnt at the stake as a heretic and apostate. Only after what happens to Plovdiv do the Bulgarians realise that their real enemies are not the Turks but the Greeks. Throughout the trilogy Karavelov states that the Turks may want to take over the Bulgarian territories, but that they want to do so in an open battle, and that it is more honourable to be defeated by a mighty foe than to fall prey to the Greek intrigues.

Apart from being the cause of the Bulgarians' defeat by the Turks, the Greek clergy are to be blamed for the degeneration of the Bulgarians under the Turks. Karavelov maintains that the Greeks have been establishing monasteries in Bulgaria before the defeat, regardless of the fact that the Bulgarians had an autocephalous Church in those days. After the defeat and especially after the Bulgarians lost their Church, the Greeks scatter monasteries all over Bulgaria. These monasteries are flourishing sites of debauchery. The convents, he is convinced, are brothels, where every year hundreds of children are thrown into the privies. In his journalism, Karavelov criticises the clergy for all manner of sins, but chiefly for debauchery. He claims that the monks have three wives simultaneously, or that they have many children in other people's families.<sup>101</sup>

The function of the monks is compared to that of stud bulls; although women,

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<sup>101</sup> Karavelov (or Botev: the article is anonymous and it is not clear which of them was the author; possibly they wrote the articles together; the same is true for the series 'Znaesh li ti koi sme' (Do you know who we are') in the journal *Nezavisimost*, published in Botev's and in Karavelov's collected works) 'Zhenskite manastiri sa stanali publichni kāshtia' (The convents have become brothels, 1874), in Karavelov, *Sābrani sāchineniia v dvanadest toma*, vol.5, pp.356-57.

who are compared to cows, have their husbands, that is, oxen, they cannot survive without bulls.<sup>102</sup>

In a work of fiction, 'Izvānreden rodoliubets' (An exceptional patriot, 1875), he explains in detail the mechanisms of making an ecclesiastical career: young nuns would seduce old men and take their money, while young monks will do the same with old women. In this story, Karavelov illustrates his general attacks on the clergy, accusing them of gluttony, sodomy, drunkenness, greed, every imaginable sin, with the story of a virtuous boy, whose decay starts the moment he sets a foot in the monastery. He does follow the steps prescribed for a clerical career, and buys pornographic pictures from the Jews (that is, Karavelov presents him as a masturbator). He eventually also contracts venereal disease, and starts lending money at interest, like the Jews. In addition to that, he changes his national affiliation according to the needs of the moment.<sup>103</sup>

In brief, Bulgarian Revivalists see the corruption of the clergy as a more topical danger to society than the Czechs do; therefore they devote more journalism to it than the Czechs. In the Bulgarian case, as in the Czech, women are frequently the victims of clerical corruption, but also its vehicles, as is the case in Karavelov's short stories. Here Karavelov employs women in much the same way as Světlá.

### 3. Christianity versus Islam

Islam is hardly an important topic for the Czech Revivalists. Historically probably non-existent battles with the Tatars near Olomouc occupy one poem, 'Jaroslav', in the forged *Rukopis královédvorský* and form the subject of the forger Linda's play *Jaroslav Šternberg v boji proti Tatarům*, where Islam is

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<sup>102</sup> Karavelov, 'Da pogovorim za duhovnite aigāri' (Let's talk about the clerical stud-horses, 1874) in Karavelov, *Sābrani sāchineniia*, vol.5, p.361.

<sup>103</sup> Karavelov, 'Izvānreden rodoliubets' in Karavelov, *Sābrani sāchineniia*, vol.3, 1984.

represented not as an authentic religion but as a combination of magic and superstition. A phantasm that appears above the heads of the Tatars and fills the Slavs with fear is the reason for the Tatars winning one of the battles:

From out of the multitude on a long pole there rose some hideous head, black, horribly large; long hair as if mouldered in a grave; from its maw, from its nose, from its ugly eyes wafted stinking smoke and steam; sunken eyes revolved in this head and jerked that terrifying face. In a flash the terrible roar of the Tatars turned into a yet more terrible silence, and this head was burning with a fearful crackling. A spectacle from Hell!<sup>104</sup>

For Czech Revivalists Islam is too exotic to present any threat.

Rakovski describes what the Bulgarians regarded as a sin, namely smoking hashish, with similar melodrama to Linda's. He draws on the stories of the Assassins when he describes the hashish-smoking dervish in *Izstupleniyi dervish*. His dervish had gone into a trance after smoking the stuff and hence entered the Muslim Heaven. Going to Heaven through sinning represents the Muslims as pleasure-seeking creatures, and is intended to contrast with the denial of sensual pleasure advocated in Orthodox Christianity; Islam here is presented as the religion of the voluptuous. The Muslim Heaven is full of beautiful young virgins and handsome boys, 'designated to serve Muslims', that is: the Muslims indulge in sensual pleasure to get into their Heaven, and there they are rewarded by yet more sensual pleasure.<sup>105</sup> All this comports with mediaeval portrayals of the Assassins.

Karavelov's characters also believe that non-Orthodox Christians are incapable of piety. In her confused version of the Blood Libel, one of his characters claims that the Jews use Christian children's blood for Holy Communion, the Turks (Muslims) use olives for Communion, while the Armenians (which probably means the Armenian Catholics, since the Orthodox

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<sup>104</sup> Josef Linda, *Jaroslav Šternberg v boji proti Tatarům* [1823], ed. by F. Kréma, Prague, ČAVU, 1930, pp.13-14.

<sup>105</sup> Rakovski, 'Iztupleniyi dervish ili Vážtochniyi vāpros' (written 1858, first published 1884) in *Sāchineniia*, vol. 1, ed. by Kiril Topalov, Sofia, Bālgarski pisatel, 1983, p.98.

Christians have the same Holy Communion) use excrement.<sup>106</sup> Although, in this work, the Muslims are presented as the most human among the non-believers, in 'Voivoda' the fact that they are not Christians renders them inhuman, in the words of the main character:

'Are they [the Turks] human beings and Christians like us? Do they know that Jesus teaches us to love even our enemies and that He died for us? The Turks are unbelieving dogs and they should go to Hell.'

'If the Turks are enemies of Christ, why did Christ give us into their hands?' [Asks one of the rebels against the Turks; the question is directed at the leader, the voevoda]

'God did not give us to the Turks, but we allowed ourselves to fall into their hands. We are punished because we used to lack unity and because we did not love our fatherland enough.'<sup>107</sup>

This is an example of national and religious decline resulting from not abiding by conditions of the covenant: had the Bulgarians been united and faithful Christians, God would not have punished them.

The Czech and the Bulgarian Revivalists were creating a myth of ethnic election through the idea that their peoples had been chosen both for a mission (to convert the rest of the world) and for a covenant with God (to be united Christians who do not allow other tribes and faiths to interfere with them). This myth, together with the ideas that the people were connected to a particular land and that they had a past Golden Age and that within the community individual sacrifice can have regenerative powers, are all described as sources for nationalism derived from religion, or any other belief system, by Anthony Smith.<sup>108</sup> What I have tried to demonstrate is not only that religious principles were employed for the creation of the myth of ethnic election, and the perception of the current period as a period of decay, but also that the religion of the Czechs and Bulgarians, be it pagan or Christian, was considered superior to any other by virtue of being Czech or Bulgarian. The idea of the current

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<sup>106</sup> Liuben Karavelov, 'Bălgari ot staro vreme', p.244.

<sup>107</sup> Liuben Karavelov, 'Voivoda', in Karavelov, *Săbrani săchinenia v dvanadeset toma*, vol.1, p.233.

<sup>108</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples, passim*, but see particularly p.255.

decay of the Czech or Bulgarian nations was considered immoral not only from a secular point of view, but also from a religious point of view, in that it could bring punishment in the afterlife. Any foreign influences, Christian or non-Christian, could only corrupt the religion of the Czechs and Bulgarians; but even when such foreign influence, like Christianity, was adopted by them, they turned out to be the only true bearers of that faith.



### **National decline through decline of morals**

'Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city' Zephaniah (3:1)

The reason for preserving the racial type, the language and religion of the nation, was the preservation of the offspring's physical and moral health. For this reason, similarly to contemporaneous and later degeneration theorists, the Revivalists warned against the dangers held by cities, and by urban extramarital sexual relationships that produced no offspring, as well as by the excess of money that could be encountered in the cities. An excess of money was naturally corrupting; furthermore the socialists among the Revivalists considered the uneven distribution of wealth to be the cause of the moral degeneration of both exploiters and exploited. Long after the Revival, in 1904, Foustka warns the Czechs that statehood alone could not ensure an end to degeneration; the French, he asserts, complain about their degeneration regardless of the fact that they have an independent state.<sup>1</sup> Having dealt with the ideas of degeneration due to the loss of independence in the first part of the chapter on Blood, I will concentrate here on the alleged causes of national degeneration that are not necessarily connected with the lack of political independence.

The achievement of homogeneity is the goal of any national propaganda; for its achievement, the creation of an average, respectable citizen is necessary. For the ideas of respectability, however, the regulation of sexual practices was

vital.<sup>2</sup> Mating rules making a distinction among the members of one's nation had to be created in order to match the morals of the nation with national propaganda. As in the case of blood, language, and, religious corruption, women were represented as the potential vehicle for corruption as well as its potential cure, for they were the preservers of tradition. Therefore, Revivalists needed to concentrate on women's sexual behaviour for the regulation of sexual practices. Cities were the sites where sexual practices were most corrupt; on the other hand, however, cities preserved most of the nation's history and contained the potential for developing the nation's future. Hence, in this chapter I have to look at cities and the perceived differences between urban and rural life, mainly with regard to 'sexual selection' in the Darwinian meaning.<sup>3</sup> Cities were also where people manifested their possession of money more than they could in villages, even though they might own those villages. Money was also directly linked to, for example, the amount of alcohol consumed – a potential source of degeneration that had nothing to do with political dependence. I will discuss the consumption of alcohol and other beverages as potential degenerative factors. Another degenerative factor that could cause a decline in the population was a proclivity to suicide: I will discuss the different reasons for suicide, because sometimes suicide could serve eugenics as I have shown in the part of my Blood chapter that treats miscegenation. Unlike in the previous chapters, where I have discussed writers' views on the causes of decay, here I will examine the results of degeneration as provoked by a lack of prophylaxis in breeding, or foresight in linguistic or religious practices.

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<sup>1</sup> Břetislav Foustka, *Slabi v lidské společnosti*, p.7.

<sup>2</sup> Here I am drawing on George Mosse's argument from his *Nationalism and Sexuality*, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* [1871], London, John Murray, 1901, part III, p.846ff.

## 1. Urban versus Rural

### 1.1 The dual nature of cities: cosmopolitanism and the focus of national history

Cities were not only a location for miscegenation; they were the location for anything alien as well; simultaneously, however, they served as the location of national treasures and monuments, of national memory. In Světlá's *Na úsvitě* this dual nature is explicit: on the one hand, Prague makes virtuous children sick, as is Jarolím's experience: when still a child, although already very patriotic, he falls sick in Prague, and his sickness takes the form of hypersensitivity; it is never cured.<sup>4</sup> For village children Prague is an unnatural place, and Jarolím and the narrator of the story, Klárka, had pleaded with their parents not to take them to Prague at weekends, but to leave them in the village to listen to the stories their elderly servant told them.<sup>5</sup> Peasant folk culture is healthy and natural; urban culture is malignant. Regardless of the sickness it inflicts on him, Jarolím worships Prague, because so many monuments of Czech history are to be seen there. His sister, who knows that his hypersensitivity was provoked by Prague, also looks at Prague through the prism of Jarolím's admiration for the capital: 'When I looked down onto the city from my hiding-place, it was as if I were looking into Jarolím's soul. All the locations of ancient Czech glory were there before me in mute splendour [...].The castle, this crown on the royal brow of Prague, Prague's paradise Petřín Hill, Prague's ornament Pohořelec, her pride the bridge; all these houses and churches told me about Jarolím'.<sup>6</sup> In a similar fashion, the neo-Revivalist Holeček, represents Prague as the place where Czech history is concentrated

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<sup>4</sup> Světlá, *Na úsvitě*, p.244.

and where the moral decay engendered by urban life had progressed the furthest. His brother Jan, he claims, is the epitome of true Czechness, that is, he is a true Czech from a village in Southern Bohemia; Jan:

liked the idea of going to Prague, but he liked the idea of going away from Prague even more, back to his toil, to his cares and joys, which are more intimate and purer than anything a town-dweller or wretched city-dweller can derive from the most accomplished product of human art. I do not want to reject art, for when it is true, genuine, it is the flower of the human spirit. But a flower is a flower, on no account a fruit.<sup>7</sup>

Jan also sees Prague as the concentration of Czech history: 'He visited the Prague sights and the sacred objects of the Bohemian nation; here he stood, moved and wondering, there he said a pious prayer.'<sup>8</sup> Since for Holeček being a true Czech means being a true nationalist, Jan sees the historical monuments as places of religious worship.

## **1.2. Prague and morality. Degeneration through excess**

Světlá opposes Prague to true Czechness, which is to be found in the villages. True Czechness is healthy. In 'Lesní panna' (Wood nymph, 1863), for example, the main character, Karla, is an embodiment of the Czech folk tradition: she knows hundreds of Czech folk tales that she would normally relate under the lime tree outside her house. Her beauty leads a young count to fall in love with her, and her knowledge of folk medicine saves his life. They marry and live happily only while they travel abroad. When they attempt to settle in Prague the count notices more and more the social ineptitude of Karla, who, anyway, feels intensely unhappy. Prague is where the count falls in love with another, of course German-speaking, woman, and Karla disappears with their baby son: the story parallels a story about a wood-nymph she had recounted to him, a version of the Undine myth. In this story, although Prague is the place where the natural

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.228.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.350.

<sup>7</sup> Holeček, *Jak u nás žijou i umírají*, pp.17-18.

Czech nymph cannot fit in, the German speaking city does not inflict moral decay on Karla, because Nature is too strong in her.<sup>9</sup>

In *Jitřenka*, however, a very similar character to Karla does fall morally. Here a Czech girl, Hedvika, who also knows fairy tales and is an endless source of folklore decides to go to Prague to learn those Prague ways that were so difficult for Karla to learn. When she returns from Prague, nothing of her previous beauty has remained, and her hair has turned grey.<sup>10</sup> Hedvika, however, has inflicted her decay upon herself, since she was warned not to go to Prague by her betrothed: ‘Do you mean you don’t know that the city you are so blindly keen to go to as if it were the wellspring of wisdom, is Sodom, a den of foreignness, a cursed field disseminating the weed of renegation all over our country. There beneath a flowery shroud of mould an acrid sea of sins is putrefying, whose stench kills hearts and turns them to stone; it will kill your heart, turn it to stone, too.’<sup>11</sup> In brief, although Prague represented the concentration of Czech historical monuments, when women, the living monuments of Czech history and tradition, went to Prague, they were in danger of forgetting their role as the preservers of tradition. For Světlá, it seems, women were more susceptible than men to the moral decay inherent in Prague society.

Prague is the setting for infidelity not only in Světlá’s ‘Lesní panna’ and *Jitřenka*, but also in her *Na úsvitě*. In Prague, Jarolím’s and Klárka’s father had

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p.17.

<sup>9</sup> Světlá, Karolina. ‘Lesní panna’ (1863 periodical; 1878 book form), in Karolina Světlá, *Povídky z Ještěda*, Prague, SNKLHU, 1956.

<sup>10</sup> ‘But what was she, that delightful, dazzling Hedvika? Where was the gleam of her youth, the charm of her maidenly nobility, the glow of her beauty? There was no trace of all this in the pale, gaunt face of the trembling, careworn woman who had so unexpectedly appeared before him’, Světlá, *Jitřenka*, p. 515.

<sup>11</sup> Světlá, *Jitřenka*, p. 493.

had an affair with a woman whom he abandoned to marry their mother. This woman eventually has a child, Pavel, of unknown paternity. Because she falls ill, she brings the child to Jarolím's and Klárka's parents. When she grows up, Klárka falls in love with Pavel, but he tries to denationalise her in dress and speech. This is a crime against Nature, since Klárka exemplifies natural nationalism: she never subscribes to any ideology, but naturally prefers to wear Czech peasant clothes, speak Czech and feels responsible to the nation. Then, to boost his self-confidence, Pavel starts an affair with Klárka's spoiled Prague cousin, Tekla, whose main interest is fashion. Finally, he attempts to marry his boss's retarded daughter, but Tekla ruins the ceremony and after that enters a convent. Thus, the father's sin results in the unhappiness of Pavel, Klárka, Tekla and the potential wife of Pavel, whose wedding is ruined. Similarly, in *První Česka* the bad choice of the father results in the unhappiness of the child, although not to a lesser extent. Jitka's father falls in love and eventually marries a beautiful but degenerate former prostitute. Because of her past, she is neither a good wife nor a good mother, which indirectly causes her husband's death: when particularly upset by her, he goes hunting and dies on the hunt. She also ill-treats her daughter.

In *Jitřenka* and in *První Česka*, Světlá sets mating rules according to which a Czech should fall in love only with a Czech who is of ethnographical interest, who represents Czech tradition. The love between the actuary and the peasant girl in *Jitřenka* is a case of ethnographical interest taken to extremes. Their love is unsexed, as the actuary's landlady notices:

The deputy steward's wife [pojezdná] used to say to herself that there had no doubt never been such lovers before this strange type of people appeared on our planet. There was no dallying, no squeezing of hands, perhaps not even kissing, such as she has seen others

doing, and as she has done herself. The actuary used to gaze piously at his betrothed as if at the blessed Sacrament, full of noble-minded respect, he avoided any intimacy at all.<sup>12</sup> According to the actuary, this is because in Hedvika he loves not the woman, but the Golden Age of his nation: 'When I look at Hedvika playing quietly beside me, it is as if I were present in the Golden Age of our nation, when just a few flowers were enough to bring joy to a person's heart'.<sup>13</sup> This love is contrasted with the love Hedvika harbours for the German itinerant player, as Hedvika eventually realises:

You looked at me quite differently when I picked up your carnation... When he [the German itinerant player] came into my box during the interval to thank me for the enthusiastic words I wrote on a bunch of flowers I threw at him, I looked at him as if he were a stranger. His name, his face, indeed even the memory of him had suddenly vanished like an hallucination fleeing the mind of a man recovered from a dream.[...] Actually it was indeed only a vision born of a fever – the emotion for which I could find no name was a disease of an adolescent brain excited by over-powerful new impressions.<sup>14</sup>

Before realising that he can only fall in love with his research objects, the actuary-ethnographer is convinced that he could love only a woman who loves the nation as much as she loves her parents, brothers and God.<sup>15</sup> Světlá asserts that the same should apply to girls when choosing a husband, and Jarolím in *Na úsvitě* expresses this conviction when reflecting that girls should not commit themselves to any intimate relationship with a man until that man has shown that he is capable of doing something for the nation.<sup>16</sup> When this rule is not kept, as in *První Češka*, disaster follows. Finding a proper object for one's love, however, proves to be therapeutic not only for Jitka, but also, eventually, for the

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 480.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 481.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 519.

<sup>15</sup> 'But I swear to you, my beloved spirits, that I shall believe and shall enter hopeful into your ranks, that I shall join your voices, join my endeavour and my strength with your endeavours, that I shall become the most enthusiastic contributor to the sublime work of you all, the eagerest of awakeners among you. And then only if I meet one girl, in whom I discover that love for her nation, for her mother-tongue and traditional values is as strong an instinct as her love for parents, her brothers, her God. I shall consider such a meeting a sign from Heaven that my nation will be saved, as a guarantee from God Himself that a beautiful future is gestating for us in the mysterious womb of Fate.' *Ibid.*, p. 471.

<sup>16</sup> Světlá, *Na úsvitě*, p.412.

nation, since she gives birth to boys who fight for the liberation of the Czechs at the barricades.

Tyl is also concerned with the relationship between Prague and moral standards. Only in Prague, or in an urban environment, could the condition ‘rozervanost’ (he explicitly constructs the word on the basis of *Zerrissenheit* to emphasise its un-Czechness: the state of being a Romantic malcontent) be met: village people cannot comprehend why any sickness should be fashionable, or that this sickness should not be contracted by a village-dweller, who ‘earns his daily bread with the sweat on his brow and then, in a state of contentment, sprinkles it with salt’.<sup>17</sup> Tyl explains the difference between village and city mentality in the prelude to the story. The peasant is a ‘robust man, neither a philosopher, nor a fool, but replete with healthy, unaffected, genuine, good sense’.<sup>18</sup> The main character, based on Tyl’s friend, the poet Mácha, that is, a man subject to *rozervanost*, is susceptible to foreign influences; this fictionalised version of Mácha suffers from degeneration issuing from excess:

If you find a person who pretends to be unhappy, who forces himself and others to this [pessimistic] belief – that all happiness is lost for him, who at every opportunity whines about his unfulfilled longing or dashed hopes, who as a result of sinfully forcing himself so far into such a state that he trusts neither Heaven nor Earth, who, filled with deliberate, feigned, exaggerated, unnatural pain, talks about some world and afterlife of his own fevered imagination, a man who has of his own free will broken all bonds of faith, hope and charity – that is a Romantic malcontent [*rozervanec*].<sup>19</sup>

The *rozervanec*, Hynek (Hynek/Ignaz was the forename used by Mácha’s friends and family), begins an affair with the pretty, but stupid Beata (based on Mácha’s Lori, who was still very much alive when Tyl published the story), and continuously torments her. Eventually, he decides to marry her, but

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<sup>17</sup> Tyl, ‘Rozervanec’ (1840), in J. K. Tyl, *Novely a arabesky (1832-1840), Sebrané spisy*, vol.1, Prague, SNKLHU, 1958, p.282.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.281.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.282. The definition continues: ‘So far their realm is, of course, not large here in Bohemia and, God willing, it will not become any larger, since abroad, where it had its main seat, its rule is coming to a sad end’, *ibid.*, p.283.



unexpectedly dies before that could happen. This proves that he is psychologically and biologically unfit; it also sets Beata free, and she marries a butcher and is entirely happy.<sup>20</sup>

Tyl traces Prague's evil influences to the Middle Ages. In his *Rozina Ruthardova*, set at the very beginning of the fourteenth century, the spoilt daughter of Ruthard, Rozina, returns to Kutná Hora from Prague. In Prague she has become accustomed to entertaining herself by flirting. The young men in Kutná Hora are not skilled in flirting, which bores her; to amuse herself, she uses her skills to attract the noble-minded Vít Plichta. Vít is engaged to a proper Czech girl, Adlinka, but falls in love with Rozina. Apart from teaching her to flirt, Prague had destroyed Rozina's national consciousness. Thus, she starts by ruining Vít's and Adlinka's personal life and then goes on to ruin the life of a whole community; she helps a German count to take the city of Kutná Hora. As it turns out, her father's infidelity had led to his spoiling Rozina and making a traitor of her. Her spoiling is aided by his Prussian servant who is the brother of the girl with whom Ruthard used to be in love as a young man. He had promised to marry her, but had not done so, and she died of grief. Bozděch, the Prussian servant, decides to take revenge, and starts poisoning Ruthard's children, and eventually, his wife. The only child he did not poison was Rozina, and he spoilt her so much that he could use her not only against her father but also against her nation. *Rozina Ruthardova* lays down the proper Czech mating rules in a definitive fashion: Czechs should fall in love not merely with Czechs, but just with Czechs who have not been tainted by the city, since the city breeds infidelity to other human beings, and to the nation.

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<sup>20</sup> Lori actually married a policeman and was not entirely happy.

In the post-Revivalist social novel by Jakub Arbes, *Kandidáti existence* (Candidates of existence, 1878), Prague is where the Magyar seducers of Czech girls reside. Nadasdi Senior and Nadasdi Junior are rich city-dwellers who conceive illegitimate children with Czech women.<sup>21</sup> The child of Nadasdi Senior, however, dies in infancy. The child of Nadasdi Junior, although abandoned by the mother in the middle of the night in front of a church, survives, to be brought up by the brother of the woman whom Nadasdi Senior had seduced. Unlike his father, Nadasdi Junior would have looked after his daughter, had he been aware that she existed; also unlike his father, the son has leftist views, which prompts his founding a factory in which the workers are paid as much as the owners. This positive development in the Nadasdi family may be thanks to the fact that Nadasdi Junior had been born in Prague, rather than in Asiatic Hungary, and spends almost all his life in Bohemia and Moravia. Hence, although Prague could be detrimental to the morals of genuine Czechs, as we saw in *Světlá*, it can have a benign influence on the morals of the Magyars.

In Pflieger-Moravský's *Z malého světa* Prague is presented as a germanised city where Czechs are not welcome. Prague is where Germans and German-speakers make a living easily, while hard-working Czechs live in poverty. In this novel Prague is also where pre-marital miscegenation takes place: the main character, Václav Procházka, is the product of a French count's affair with a Czech girl. Regardless of his morally and biologically suspicious origin, Procházka grows up to be a model Czech nationalist and worker. Pflieger-Moravský seems to allow extra-marital relations to be morally acceptable: he

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<sup>21</sup> Jakub Arbes, *Kandidáti existence*, Prague, Odeon, 1966.

does not pass a judgement on Procházka's parents; moreover, Procházka himself lives and has a child with a woman he never married. He also points out that for women workers, it is more difficult to retain innocence than for any other social stratum, since they witness intimate conversations between men and women in factories from a young age. Pflieger-Moravský shows understanding for women who have to prostitute; he points out that despair may force women into prostitution. On the other hand, he presents a scene where a girl is being procured by some workers for the sexual gratification of others without her knowledge while her mother is dying and thus casts doubt on the moral integrity of the workers.<sup>22</sup> On the whole, however, Pflieger-Moravský seems to believe that workers have higher moral standards than the rich. His character Hynek Vácha seems to confirm this opinion when he sees Procházka's daughter being kissed by the son of a rich factory-owner: he tells her that if he had seen her kissing a worker, he would not have told her father, but since he saw her with a rich man, he believes that her morality is threatened.<sup>23</sup> Pflieger-Moravský differentiates between urban and rural sexual practices: his suggestion is that there is no prostitution in the villages. He illustrates that with the accident that befalls the young Procházka immediately after arriving in Prague: after hearing music playing Procházka decides to join those dancing to it. It does not occur to him that the music is coming from a brothel, and that the girls there must be paid to dance with him.<sup>24</sup> In other words, compared to the village, the morality of the Prague workers is degenerate, but compared to the rich the workers are virtuous. Germanised Prague breeds moral decay, but also teaches innocent village people like

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<sup>22</sup> Pflieger-Moravský, *Z malého světa*, pp.535-37, 541-43.

Procházka to become fighters against germanisation, something Procházka would not have done had he remained in the village where he was brought up. Thus, part of the message of *Z malého světa* is a continuation of the opposition between German and Czech, and the need to re-bohemicise the germanised capital.

Villages represent a concentration of Czechness in Svatopluk Čech's *Lešetínský kovář* (The smith of Lešetín, 1883). Here urbanisation is forced onto the Czech village by the industrialising Germans. The main character's smithy is to be demolished, an idea that horrifies the smith, since for him his house and yard are sacred; the yard is where the graves of his relations are. Thus, the smithy in North Bohemia represents the Czech territories in miniature, and modernisation is a nation-killing disease. The Germans not only build factories and thus rape the Bohemian countryside, but also violate Czech women; a girl raped by a German while her betrothed is away kills herself when she realises she is pregnant by the rapist.<sup>25</sup> This story resembles Bulgarian Revival stories in which Bulgarian girls kill themselves as an act of purification of the nation; by killing themselves women will not bear bastard offspring. As in *Z malého světa*, in *Lešetínský kovář* the Czechs eventually rebel against the capitalist Germans and in an uprising aimed at the re-bohemicisation of the village kill the rapist. Thus both works constitute an appeal to rebel and protect the Czechness of the rural or of the poor; this also means the protection of Czech women against German lechery.

Regulated sexuality is in keeping with Czech national propaganda. Kollár, for example, uses sexuality to bolster his idea of Slav Reciprocity. Kisses,

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.506-08.

therefore, are allowed, only if they are performed in accordance with the Slav fashion:

Jedenkráté, když sen tuhý sklíčil  
její unavené očinky;  
polibek jsem za půl hodinky  
pravoslavský dávati se cvičil;  
ne jak Říman, Řek a Němec líčil  
v básněch, ony vilné šibřinky,  
ale čisté, řádné hubinky;  
jakových zvyk bratrům Rusům žičil;  
totiž takto líbal jsem svou družku:  
ode čela dolů ku brádce,  
potom křížem ode ucha k ušku.  
Na té cestě dvakráte se přijde  
k oné růžoplodné zahrádce  
rtíků, kde vstříc duše duši vyjde.

(Once, when deep sleep pressed/ upon her darling tired eyes/ for half an hour I practised/ giving her a true Slav kiss, // Not a kiss such as the Roman, Greek or German has described/ in poems, in those lascivious playings,/ but chaste, proper little kisses/ such as custom gave our brother Russians; // for I kissed my friend thus:/ from her forehead down to her little chin/ and then across from ear to ear./ On this journey one comes twice/ to that rose-rich garden/ of the lips, where soul comes out to meet soul.)<sup>26</sup>

In *Slávy dcera* kisses are also pseudo-punishment for mistakes in the dialect of the beloved, when the two amorous Slavs teach each other Czech and Lusatian.<sup>27</sup> On the whole, Kollár believes that love is at the basis of national feeling:

Láska jest všech velkých skutků zárod,  
a kdo nemiloval, nemůže  
ani znáti, co je vlast a národ.

(Love is the embryo of all great deeds/ and anyone who has not loved cannot/ even know what mother-country and nation are.)<sup>28</sup>

His understanding of the Slavs does not coincide with what Němcová believes.

In *Babička*, the grandmother asserts that kissing was not popular among Czechs; her husband kissed her only once, and this was out of confusion.<sup>29</sup> The grandmother also contrasts Czech and urban, that is, foreign, morals: she is puzzled that it is normal for foreigners to flirt and to have several sweethearts

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.55-56.

<sup>25</sup> Svatopluk Čech, *Lešetínský kovář a menší básně*, 5th edn, Prague, Topič, 1912, pp.58-60.

<sup>26</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera*, (I,60), p.64.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, (I,96), p.89 .

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, (I,25), p.41.

<sup>29</sup> Němcová, *Babička*, p.199.

before they decide to get married; this is unheard of in rural Bohemia.<sup>30</sup> At the end of the century, Holeček goes even further in regulating the Czechs' sexual practices: he claims that the Southern Bohemians would never use the expression 'I love you', since they could love only God. In Pfleger-Moravský's view, too, proper Czechs did not use the expression 'I love you'. His Hynek Vácha, for example, has never used the word 'miluji' for 'love', but has told his mother 'mám vás rád' (I am fond of you); that is, for pure love pure expressions are allowed.<sup>31</sup> According to Holeček, parents have always arranged marriages in Southern Bohemia, and people have always been content with that. Thus 'erotomaniac literature', as he calls *Trivialliteratur*, would never be popular among them, since they cannot comprehend the emotions described in it.<sup>32</sup> Tyl in 'Rozervanec' and Holeček in *Jak u nás žijou i umírají* are not satisfied only to regulate Czech sexual practices, asserting what is right and wrong; they write with the idea of forming literary taste, drawing for Czech literature boundaries between the erotically acceptable and unacceptable.

Contrary to Holeček's views on the preservation of Czech morals in 1898, Chmelenský expresses concern about the level that moral degeneration has reached in the Revival in a satirical quip:

Jul se diví, že tolik nevěrných ve světě ženských;  
Víc se divím, věrných ještě že je tolik.

(Jul is astonished that there are so many unfaithful women in the world/ I am more astonished that there are still so many faithful ones.)<sup>33</sup>

Nevertheless he asserts that the decline of morals is more frequent among city girls:

Když padneš, ty se honosíš.

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p.155.

<sup>31</sup> Pfleger-Moravský, *Z malého světa*, p.549.

<sup>32</sup> Holeček, *Jak u nás žijou i umírají*, pp.94-103.

<sup>33</sup> J.K. Chmelenský, 'Div co větší' (The greatest wonder, 1823), in Chmelenský, *Vybrané spisy*, 1, p.91.

že padnout slušně rozumíš;  
Milejší v kraji dívka mně –  
neb ona nijak nepadne.

(If you fall, you boast/ that you know how to fall with decency/ I like country girls better./ for they never fall in any way.)<sup>34</sup>

And:

Když jde Ferdinand od milenky,  
Andělsky že voní, rce o ni;  
Mně jsou přece milejší děvenky –  
Které dokonce nic nevoní.

(When Ferdinand is walking away from his beloved/ He says of her that she smells like an angel/ I, however, prefer girls/ Who do not smell at all.)<sup>35</sup>

Thus, although Chmelenský (light-heartedly) preaches simplicity and modesty,

he satirises the level of sexual corruption. In this he reminds one of Gallaš who

also propagates simplicity as against complicated, that is, luxurious, life:

Ano, čím ty jsou sprostnější,  
O to bývá blaženější  
V stánku svém Venkovník,  
Pokoje Milovník

O té pravdě přesvědčuje  
Nás zkušenost jistě:  
Že čím se kdo víc vzdáluje  
Od sprostnosti čisté  
U zhání po nádhernosti –  
O to víc od blaženosti  
Se vzdáluje cíle  
U pokojné chvíle

Kdo ale v sprostnosti žije  
Drže se vždy ctnosti –  
Ten vždy rozkoš čistou pije  
Z kalicha mírnosti.

(Yes, the simpler they are/ The happier the country man./ The lover of peace/ Is in his abode./ Experience persuades us/ Of that truth/ The further someone goes away/ From pure simplicity/ In pursuit of splendour/ The further he goes away/ From the goal of happiness/ In peaceful times/ However, anyone who lives in simplicity/ Always abiding by virtue/ Always drinks pure rapture/ From the cup of moderation.)<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> J.K. Chmelenský, 'Na městskou dívku' (To a city girl, 1823) in Chmelenský, *Vybrané spisy*, 1, p.97.

<sup>35</sup> J. K. Chmelenský, 'Na Ferdinanda' (To F., 1823), in Chmelenský, *Vybrané spisy*, 1, p.102.

<sup>36</sup> Josef Heřman [Agapit] Gal[í]jaš, 'Druhá ranní' (Second morning song) in *Muza Moravská v patero odděleních obsahující duchovní, mravní, polní, velko-občanské a staro-vlastenské*

### 1.3. Bulgarians and the cities

In the Bulgarian Revival, the former capitals, Pliska, Preslav and Tărnovo were mentioned, if at all, only as large towns, where the author concerned implied the corruption that large towns comprised. The memory of Bulgarian history was not preserved in the large towns, and the lack of any historical monuments was seen as a manifestation of contemporary decay.<sup>37</sup> Bulgarian Revivalists had different goals and their own means of achieving them; some were revolutionaries, others proponents of legal actions against the Ottoman government. Revolutionaries were concentrated in Roumania, but also elsewhere in the Balkans. The proponents of legal action were mainly in Constantinople. Thus, the large cities criticised by them were either Constantinople or the Romanian cities Bucharest, Braila and Galaț. Since the Bulgarian Revivalists in Constantinople were mainly interested in achieving autonomy within the Ottoman Empire, Constantinople was criticised even more severely by the Bucharest revolutionary Revivalists than by the autonomists.

For example, Karavelov, who belonged to the revolutionary Revivalists until the mid-1870s, saw Constantinople as the focal point of degenerative urban practices; it had been one, according to him, long before Constantinople became the Ottoman capital:

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*hanácké písně Skladatelů vlastenských, k prospěchu a vzdělání moravských Vlastenců.* Brno, Trasler, 1813, p.25.

<sup>37</sup> See, for example, Voinikov, 'Napomniuvanie na edin pätnik', in *Săchinenia*, vol.2, p.301: 'Вместо царски ми палати/ Гледа срутени стени;/ Вместо дворове богати --/ Жалостни развалини;/ Вместо храмове високи -- / Тревясали камъни;/ Вместо долове велики -- / Мъховни зеленини;/ В кратце вместо град столичен/ Гледа грозна пустиня;/ Вместо живот политичен -- / Най-печална съдбина!/ Всичко тук е онищено/ Под грозно опустение;/ Всичко, всичко наследено/От гробното мълчение!....'; 'Instead of royal palaces/ collapsed walls are to be seen;/ Instead of rich courts-/ Pitiful ruins;/ Instead of high temples --/ stones overgrown with grass;/ Instead of great ravines --/ mossy greens;/ In short, instead of a capital city/ An ugly desert is to be seen;/ Instead of civilised life --/ The most gruesome fate!/ Everything here is destroyed/ through an ugly dilapidation/ A grave-like silence/ has inherited everything!...'



Nature created Constantinople for something special. In this city only spongers, those in love, those who fantasise, idlers and womanisers should live. Only Venice could compete with Constantinople in these aspects; only Venice is capable of producing hotter hotheads and more extreme dreamers! Finally, only Venice can say that her sons are more voluptuous, lewder, more effeminate and lazier than the products of Constantinople, that is, the Roman-Greek poets. In Constantinople the woman has almost always been considered to be an adornment for the man and an instrument for his voluptuousness.<sup>38</sup>

Here Karavelov seems to be a determinist convinced that Constantinople could not be any different at any point in time. The debauchery he describes is typical of most of the large towns and cities he writes about, but effeminate men are mentioned only in Constantinople.<sup>39</sup> Sofronii also speaks of unrespectable sexual practices in Constantinople, and he labels the effeminate men 'sodomites.' In his *Zhitie i stradanie*, he recalls an incident he experienced in Constantinople as a young man: 'Sodomite' Turks caught him because they found him attractive. Luckily, they put him in a room that had a key in the lock and he shut himself in. Jews living nearby heard his cries for help and rescued him.<sup>40</sup> This story stereotypes the Turks as homosexuals, although nothing that Sofronii had experienced and reconstitutes in his writing gives even the slightest hint of the Turks' sexual desire: he was caught by the Turks because they believed that his papers were not in order, and then, when the Jews found his friend who paid his fine for him, they released him. Therefore, although the accident he describes does not suggest that the Turks had any sexual appetite for him, because of his conviction that the Turks are sodomites, Sofronii concludes that they were attracted to him sexually.

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<sup>38</sup> Karavelov, 'Posle otmáshtenieta', p.309.

<sup>39</sup> Normally when men are described as having female characteristics by Czech or Bulgarian writers, it demonstrates their exceptionally good nature. The fact that they are feminine in appearance is mentioned only to emphasize their exceptional handsomeness, and the fact that they would, for example, do jobs normally considered women's. Such is the peasant brother in Holeček's *Jak u nás žijou i umirají*, Jitka's father in *První Češka*, Párvan in Karavelov's 'Voivoda', Bozhko in his 'Bozhko', Levski in 'Detsata ne prilichat na bashtite si' among many others. Karavelov presents Levski as a superman who could with the same ease organise uprisings and help with the cooking.

<sup>40</sup> Sofronii of Vratsa, *Zhitie i stradanie greshnago Sofroniia*, p.11.

Karavelov attempts to convince his readership that even Turks do not think highly of Constantinople: they consider that it ‘has become a leech that is capable of drinking the blood even of unborn children’.<sup>41</sup> Or, in the words of a pasha, ‘especially nowadays, when our Constantinople has started resembling a Gypsy’s bag or an Italian fallen woman.’<sup>42</sup> That is, Constantinople is bad by virtue of being a big city, by having been taken over by the Turks and by being the capital of the Ottoman Empire. This means that for the Bulgarians it will represent the epitome of evil, and evil goes together with unnatural sexual practices. The metaphors describing it draw on abnormal sexuality both male and female, that is, on homosexuality and prostitution. Rouse is a Constantinople in miniature.

#### **1.4. Filth: the Oriental; Europeanness; Jews**

Karavelov, for example, explains in detail the decay of Rouse:

Ruschuk [Turkish name for Rouse] is still a young town, and old people say that there cannot be deep waves in shallow water. Of course, what they say makes no sense at all because Ruschuk and its governors’ clerks stand erect like pyramids before our eyes.[...] When Christ said that ‘the first will be last, and the last first’, He was thinking of creating Ruschuk and making it the capital of Bulgaria. And if you want to hear the truth, then I have to tell you, that Ruschuk resembles a capital as much as Midhad Pasha resembles Hercules. And if you need to get a correct idea of this town, you have to climb up some mosque and have a look at its pigsties and at its skeletons, who are otherwise called faithful subjects of the dense shadow. You would see quite a colourful picture: two-legged animals who belong to different nationalities in different costumes and with different physiognomies, run around on the streets and tread on the poor soil; knee-deep mud and rubbish; the houses are decapitated, as ragged and unhappy as the population. Such is the capital of Bulgaria that spreads education and progress up to the Balkan Mountains and to the Sofia fields – and Ruschuk is Constantinople in miniature. The Turkish Empire is a very peculiar state; the Turkish population is incredibly funny; and Ruschuk is an extraordinary creation. All Turks are Marses; Turkey is a military camp; the Turkish woman is a milk-maid, and Ruschuk is a Turkish dung-heap. [...] For the honest, for those who want to live and for thinkers, Ruschuk is too narrow; it is murderous; it is unattractive. We frequently accuse Ruschuk youth of sleeping, of not knowing what to do, of degenerating ever further; but we never ask ourselves why that

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<sup>41</sup> Karavelov, ‘Bogatiit siromah’ (The rich poor man, 1872-73) in Karavelov, *Săchineniia v dvanadeset toma*, vol.2, p.194.

<sup>42</sup> Karavelov, ‘Detsata ne prilichat na bashtite si’, p.225.

is. For the bright young people in Ruschuk there is only one salvation: to go to the vineyards, get drunk like navvies and breathe some fresh air.<sup>43</sup>

Rousse is bad because of the filth it contains and disseminates; this filth is not only the actual dirt that Karavelov sees on the streets of Rousse, but also the sully of Rousse by its famous Turkish coffee-houses: 'Those who have never been to Ruschuk, do not know Turkish coffee-houses, and those who do not know Turkish coffee-houses, do not know the Turkish people. [...] the coffee-house is for the Turk the supreme place of worship.'<sup>44</sup> The trouble with the coffee-house is not that alcohol is served there; that is so in the pubs, too; for, as Karavelov informs us, 'the pub is a national institution, while the coffee-house is Turkish,'<sup>45</sup> but that the Rousse population shows tolerance of the intolerable, that is, of Turkish debauchery in the coffee-houses.

Coffee-houses are what makes Plovdiv resemble Rousse, according to Karavelov. The only difference between Plovdiv and Rousse or, indeed, Sofia<sup>46</sup> is that in Rousse and Sofia one can observe decay resulting from poverty to a greater extent than in any other towns; moreover, in Karavelov's view their populations suffer most from a lack of contact with other people, and are therefore exceptionally ignorant. Plovdiv's population, on the other hand, is

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<sup>43</sup> Karavelov, 'Bogatiiat siromah, pp.138-39.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p.188.

<sup>45</sup> Karavelov, 'Zapiski za Bălgaria i bălgarite', p.423. Vazov also subscribed to the myth of the pub as a national institution, in his 'Nemili-nedragi', where the true Bulgarian revolutionary, Strandzhata, has a pub in Braila, and this pub is where all Bulgarian patriots go; in another story, 'Chichovtsi', Vazov presents the pub as a centre-piece of Bulgarian small-town societies. This goes against what Blăskov asserts in his *Zlochesta Krăstinka*, in which the only place where the village people could socialise and discuss problems was the churchyard. As Holeček portrays later South Bohemians, Blăskov here presents an idyllic picture of an innocent village population who had lived in the same uncorrupted way for thousands of years. The village people in Blăskov's story, however, are forced by their priest and a rich man from the town to demolish their church, and build a new, better one. The main character, Lulcho, who used to be the village schoolmaster, goes to raise some funds from the neighbouring towns and villages for the new church. Since he was prone to degeneration from the beginning of the story, he runs away with the money, leaving the villagers and his wife and children penniless. Eventually money is raised again, but instead of building a new church, the villagers are lured into building a pub (by the same priest and the same rich man). In this case, the pub ruins a national institution, the Church.

<sup>46</sup> See below.

mixed. Plovdiv is Sodom and Gomorrah, and 'if Bulgarian want to live, Plovdiv should not exist.'<sup>47</sup> Plovdiv people are greatly influenced by the Greeks; they would happily let their children starve as long as that allows them to be able to dress in silk. They also indulge in loose sexual behaviour, in part under the influence of the Greeks, in part because they desire to appear (west) European. On the one hand, the Plovdiv population would not forgive a Bulgarian young man for going to a coffee-house, since in 'coffee-houses things that would disgust even the most degenerate Christian take place.'<sup>48</sup> Especially in the winter,

the coffee-houses are full of visitors, who sit cross-legged on the benches, drink bitter coffee, smoke a hookah, listen to the Gypsies from Odrin playing and enjoy the dancing of the belly-dancers. [...] I do not know if there is anything more disgusting, more revolting than those Turkish belly-dancers. These two-legged beasts are normally Armenians, Greeks or Gypsies who do not possess any human qualities, neither the instinct of self-preservation, nor... These creatures of no honour are used by the Turkish lechers as women without any shame or self-respect.[...] The belly-dancers would lie in the laps of all the visitors, would stroke their beards and titillate them with their buttocks; the sleepy and lifeless physiognomies of the masters [*aga*] would acquire an abnormal look, unusual fire would appear in their eyes and their bodies, exhausted by drink, they would start trembling. [...] For one such male mistress in 1851 two murders took place (one of them in Plovdiv, the other in Tatar Pazardzhik).[...] Of course, all this allows us to conclude that sodomite lewdness has taken root in Turkish life to such a degree that lewdness will cease existing once the nation that finds pleasure in such lewdness ceases to exist. This lewdness lies in the very upbringing, the very life and morals and customs of this barbarian nation.<sup>49</sup>

This assessment of Turkish corruption also applies to the citizens of Plovdiv who were influenced by the Turks. Karavelov claims that, although it is unacceptable for Plovdiv youth to go to coffee-houses, the same lechery goes on in the churchyard, especially on Fridays, when in front of everyone the belly-dancers perform the same activities as in the coffee-houses. Everyone,

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<sup>47</sup> Karavelov, 'Detsata ne prilichat na bashtite si', p.252.

<sup>48</sup> 'Young people are prohibited to go to the coffee-houses. If some of you went to the pub and got drunk, the Plovdiv notables would forgive you; but if you go to a coffee-house, public opinion would condemn you forever', in Karavelov, 'Zapiski za Bălgaria i bălgarite', p.423.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.427-29. Karavelov adds: 'These Turkish citizens, lecherous to the backbone, do not have any land, and even if they had any, they would not have been working it, because they consider all work humiliating for the Orthodox aga; they do not have any occupation, because they consider every honest labour something suitable only for the Giaors; finally, their main

including women, could see them. Karavelov is appalled that no one seems to mind, not even the women, whose femininity has been defamed by the Asiatic atmosphere.<sup>50</sup> Violating femininity cannot be forgiven by any nationalist, Bulgarian or Czech. Kollár, for example, writes against the mixing of male and female characteristics:

V živobytí lidském žádná změna  
horši není jako v pohlaví;  
když se ona útlá rozpravi  
povah v něm a charakterů stěna:  
ženský muž se tak, jak mužská žena  
cti a štěstí svého pozbaví;  
toho tam se málem zohaví,  
této mnohem člověčenství cena.

(In human life no change/ is worse than change in sex/ when the slender wall of temperaments/ of characters are distorted in one sex:/ a feminine man, like a masculine woman/ loses his or her honour and happiness; the first almost disfigures himself/ the second [loses] much of the value of humanity.)<sup>51</sup>

Bulgarian Revivalists are more explicit when declaring the disgust they feel at the changes of gender roles. Semen, apart from provoking disgust because of its reproductive qualities<sup>52</sup>, is disgusting because it feminises everything that it comes in contact with.<sup>53</sup> The Turks, apart from being disgusting from the moral point of view, were seen as having a somewhat female appearance. Parallel to the image of Bulgarian males entertaining the Turks with dancing, Botev and Karavelov portray the well-heeled turkicised Bulgarians as fat and coarse-skinned. Botev and Karavelov ascribe the same characteristics to well-heeled lazy Turks. In this way the Bulgarian authors foreshadow what degeneration

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trades are robbery, murder and violence because those trades are considered, even by the Turkish rulers, to be signs of strength and courage.'

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p.429.

<sup>51</sup> Kollár, *Slávy dcera* (1824 edn), (I,75), p.74.

<sup>52</sup> See Chapter I.

<sup>53</sup> Miller, *Disgust*, p.103. For a discussion of the idea that homosexuals could infect men, also on homosexuality's medical sanctioning and on the belief that homosexuality was detrimental to the medical condition of the state, see Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, *passim*, as well as his 'Affirmations and New Dimensions' in his *Toward the Final Solution*, esp. pp.xvi-xvii.

theorists saw in the fatness of the prostitutes - a sign of their degeneration and unhealthy life.<sup>54</sup>

Degeneration theorists asserted that circumcision violated the wholesomeness of the body, which resulted in pervert sexuality. Muslims in the Bulgarian Revival, similarly to Jews in west European stereotypes, were seen as indulging in aberrant sexual behaviour. Jews were viewed either as obsessively sex-centred, or as having a diminished sexual drive. Turks were seen only as obsessed with their sexuality. Circumcision in Jews, as Gilman asserts, since it was a violation of 'maleness', often seemed to resemble castration and provoked the equating of the Jewish male with the female.<sup>55</sup> Thus, in medieval stereotyping male Jews menstruated.<sup>56</sup> With the advance of degeneration theory, homosexuality was believed to be a Jewish degenerative sexual deviation because of the effeminacy of Jews. Towards the end of the nineteenth century degenerative stigmata were believed to be palpable, and deviant sexual behaviour to be the result of a traumatic stigmatising experience, such as circumcision.<sup>57</sup> Apparently without any knowledge of degenerationist thought, the Bulgarians stereotyped the Turks as either obsessed with Bulgarian females, or obsessively homosexual, or both. Karavelov writes:

And where are our male children? – minions and *chibukchias* [servants who prepare the hookahs], belly-dancers and stable-men for the Turks; turkicised in Constantinople, Rouse and Vidin; exiles in Dear Bekir, Sham and Halep. And where are our sisters, with whom we have been growing up? – In the harem of the debauched pasha, in the arms of the rotting old man who could indulge his utterly disgusting desires with them; and they [the sisters], nearly killed and morally corrupt, try as hard as they can to revive the old man's strength lost through debauchery and opium with the beauty of their bodies: they show him their naked bodies, tickle him, stroke his beard, kiss him.

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<sup>54</sup> Gilman draws on the works of Parent-Duchetel, *On Prostitution in the City of Paris* (1836), according to whom prostitutes were plump because they took too many hot baths and got up late. Parent-Duchetel's anonymous translator into English adds in 1840 that prostitutes were most probably plump because they were confined indoors most of the time, like prisoners. See Sander L. Gilman *Difference and Pathology*, p.94.

<sup>55</sup> Sander Gilman, *Freud, Race and Gender*, pp.8 ff.

<sup>56</sup> Wistrich, *Antisemitism*, p.31.

<sup>57</sup> Gilman, *Freud, Race and Gender*, p.165.

stroke him and make his old age happier. And where are our daughters? They have been dishonoured by Turkish rakes and by bishop's deans; then they have been thrown out to be an object of disgust for young and for old.<sup>58</sup>

The Turks' sexual perversions infect the Bulgarians, male and female, as well as the Greeks. The Turks sully the Bulgarians even when their aim is not to marry them, but just to rape them; here the Turks are similar to the Germans Čech portrayed in *Lešetínský kovář*. Of course, a woman who had been raped is ineligible for marriage. Moreover, as Karavelov informs us, women raped by Turks are objects of disgust for other Bulgarians. Tsani Ginchev accuses the Turks, both men and women, of pursuing perverted sexual practices in the harems. One Turkish mother, for example, breast-feeds her son until he is seven, not because he needs it, but because she enjoys it.<sup>59</sup> Ginchev also claims that Turkish highwaymen are not interested only in travellers' money, but if they happened also to be women or young men or boys, they would become victims of the highwaymen's Asiatic voluptuousness.<sup>60</sup> Karavelov is atypical in suggesting that this sexual behaviour had influenced the Orthodox Christian population, mainly the Greek or hellenised, but also sometimes the Bulgarian.

Coffee's quality as a stimulant brought with it negative associations in the minds of respectable Bulgarians.<sup>61</sup> The link between sexual excess and coffee-houses was made only in the Bulgarian Revival; nevertheless, for the Czechs, too, coffee was linked with over-excitation of the senses. Coffee, like champagne, was drunk by people who had a taste for exoticism and therefore were not good, reliable Czechs. For example, the degeneration of the young

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<sup>58</sup> Liuben Karavelov, 'Hadzhi Dimităr Iasenov', p.293.

<sup>59</sup> Tsani Ginchev, *Gancho Koserkata* (1890), in Tsani Ginchev, *Izbrani proizvedeniia*, vol.1, ed. by Simeon Ianev, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1986, p.191. This seven-year old Turkish child, although still breast-fed, is already a smoker.

<sup>60</sup> Tsani Ginchev, *Zinalata stena* (1887), in Tsani Ginchev, *Izbrani proizvedeniia*, vol.1, p.31.

<sup>61</sup> Although Beron does not speak of coffee-houses in his *Riben bukvar*, he does state that an excess of coffee is dangerous to one's health, and that it is originally an Arabic product. See Petăr Beron, *Bukvar s različni poucheniia* [1824], Sofia, Narodna prosveta, 1974, pp.91-92

Count Velenský in Tyl's *Poslední Čech* is evident not only in his cosmopolitanism, but also in the fact that he and his friend Pedrazzi drink champagne to celebrate their reunion; although they have both been brought up in Bohemia, their drinking habits are a direct result of their spending a great deal of time in western Europe.<sup>62</sup> Coffee is considered highly corruptive, a point on which Kamarýt agrees with Gallaš:

Píte si kávu  
Píte si vína  
Píte si jedy  
Pohřešujice  
Se v kalu vášní.

(Drink coffee./ Drink wine./ Drink poisons./ Losing yourselves/ In the mire of passions.)<sup>63</sup>  
Wine is represented here as the drink of the Bohemian bourgeoisie. In other words, this is merely a social comment, not a nationalist social comment, like criticism of coffee. It is, however, often difficult to disentangle social commentary from nationalist commentary in nineteenth-century Czech literature. Indeed, Kamarýt's poem constitutes an expression of that puritanism common in Czech idealist nationalists throughout the nineteenth century. Gallaš exhibits something of that puritanism: he prescribes what foods could contribute to health; one should drink 'from the cup of moderation':

Chléb, kýžku a vdolky  
kašu, kobzole [,]  
To sílí pacholky  
Po práci z pole.

A ta zprosná strava  
Vícej jim sílí  
Zajistě dodává  
Než aby pili  
Kafé, a lahůdky  
Tučné jídali –  
Z nichžto mdlé žaludky  
Páni [*sic*] dostali.

(Bread, soured milk and *vdolky* [small doughnut-like buns]/ porridge, potatoes./ These give strength to lads / After work in the fields.// Certainly these simple foodstuffs/ Give more

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<sup>62</sup> Tyl, *Poslední Čech*, p.17.

<sup>63</sup> J.V. Kamarýt, 'Při potůčku' in Kamarýt, *Smišené básně*, Prague, Fetterlová, 1822, p. 64.



strength to them/ Than drinking/ Coffee and eating./ Fatty delicacies / From which gentlemen got/ Weak stomachs.)<sup>64</sup>

Thus coffee is bad not only for one's morals, but also for one's body. In other words, the Revivalists' cause needed healthy minds and healthy bodies. Ironically, although Gallaš was attempting to make a point about the healthy simplicity of Moravian rural life without the unhealthy complications that the city could bring, he could not make his point without supplying the words for various foods with footnotes giving the German translation, which either tells us something about the language of Moravian peasants or indicates that Gallaš is trying to educate Moravian townies in the Czech (or, as he would call it, Moravian) language.

Coffee was particularly ruinous to women's health in Jaromír Rubeš's view: he is convinced that coffee is a poison that destroys women's general well-being. Women who drink coffee are pale, live short lives, suffer from consumption, have black teeth. If they had not been coffee-drinkers, Rubeš believes that women could be in a fit condition to get married even in their fifties. He gives Eve as an example of a woman who managed to be at the beginning of humanity without coffee, as well as Helen, whose face launched a thousand ships; she was, in his satirical view, so beautiful because she did not drink coffee.<sup>65</sup>

Possibly because coffee allegedly had the potential of making its consumers lose control of their senses, which respectability requires, and because it was still an exotic drink for early nineteenth-century Czechs, it was also considered an unnecessary extravagance. That would comport with Revival

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<sup>64</sup> Gallaš, *Muza Moravská*, p. 42.

puritanism. At the end of the nineteenth century, Holeček also speaks out against coffee, claiming that it was not a drink typical of the Czechs; he asserts that beer soup is the typically Czech drink. He also speaks out against the use of sugar, which is not natural to the Czechs: he insists that Czechs would naturally use honey instead of sugar.<sup>66</sup> As for Kamarýt, for Holeček extravagance is a sure path to degeneration. The rich indulged most in such extravagance and by the end of the nineteenth century the degenerate aristocrat had become a topos of nationalist (and Decadent) Czech literature.

In Bulgaria coffee and sugar were not necessarily associated with extravagance, but were almost always a mark of prosperity. They were associated with the Turks who had brought them to the Balkan Peninsula, and hence coffee was the drink of the élite, although there are examples of uncorrupt Bulgarians drinking coffee. After the establishment of a Bulgarian state Ginchev claims in his *Gancho Koserkata* that the Bulgarians would not normally possess coffee, and that even when they needed it as a medicine, they would borrow it from the Turks.<sup>67</sup> In *Zinalata stena*, Ginchev asserts that the Bulgarians may have coffee and sweets, but only to give to Turks; Bulgarians drink *rakiia* and eat chick-peas and grapes.<sup>68</sup> The Bulgarians, similarly to the Czechs in Holeček, use honey: Ginchev writes that where Turks use *halva*, the Bulgarians use honey.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> František Jaromír Rubeš, 'Mužská prosba' (1837) in Rubeš, *Sebrané spisy*, Prague, Kočí, 1906, pp.243-45.

<sup>66</sup> Holeček, *Jak u nás žijou i umírají*, p.93. This is linked with the enormous increase in sugar-beet farming and sugar refineries in the Bohemian Lands. Nationalists regarded the sugar-production as a devastation of the landscape and of rural life because it led to the proletarianisation of peasants.

<sup>67</sup> Ginchev, *Gancho Koserkata*, p.279.

<sup>68</sup> Ginchev, *Zinalata stena*, p.133.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p.144.

The fact that the Bulgarians could tolerate hard alcohol, but not coffee, and that although young Velenský did drink champagne, but nevertheless found a path to regeneration, perhaps confirms Miller's assertion that, however disgusting, alcohol is more tolerable than sweets and fat: 'Grease and fat conjure up images of indolence, otium, weak-willed lethargy, sliminess, unctuousness. Sugariness does not fare much better. [...] the fact is that greasiness and sugariness offend us morally more than alcohol.'<sup>70</sup> Alcohol has a dual nature. When consumed repetitively just for pleasure, it provokes what Miller calls the disgust of surfeit, a reaction to degeneration through excess. On the other hand, when taken to dull the sense of pain that the present state of decline of one's nation inspires, alcohol is regarded as medicine. This is supported by Botev's poem 'V mehanata' (In the tavern, 1873). Vazov uses drunkenness as a metaphor in his *Pod igoto* (Under the yoke, 1888), where everyone becomes 'drunk' on national emotions; losing control of one's senses can be beneficial to the national cause. This is so because, in their 'drunken' state, the characters in the novel forget everything apart from their nation, which is the purpose of national propaganda. Vazov also uses literal drunkenness in *Pod igoto* when describing the bravery of one of his characters who, when drunk, meets a Turkish administrator on the road and then decided to ride him like a horse. Karavelov, however, will allow only degenerates to drink alcohol.<sup>71</sup>

### **1.5. Degeneration through deficiency**

According to Bulgarian Revivalists, the decay of morals does not occur only in the large cities where different cultures meet. Rousse, for example, unlike any

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<sup>70</sup> Miller, *Disgust*, p.121.

other large towns is 'dead'. Rouse does not even have a decent Bulgarian pub. Bogorov informs us that the people of Rouse are uneducated. He claims that the women there could not even do women's work, like knitting and weaving, or baking bread. This, Bogorov maintains, disturbs their mental health and their morality; he believes that a woman who makes everything she uses in her house with her own hands is calmer on Sundays and her morality is firmer than that of a woman who has no handicraft skills.<sup>72</sup> This view is not intended as a condemnation of the whole of Rouse. Bogorov represents the population of the town as innocently unaware of what corrupts it, as well as what is useful for the preservation of morality. It is thus, he claims, that foreigners come to open pubs and coffee-houses, since running such enterprises is difficult for Bulgarians to learn.<sup>73</sup>

Karavelov considers filth the main characteristic of Rouse, and of the other large Bulgarian town he concerns himself with, Plovdiv. He compares Plovdiv to the Turkish towns and cities, and so blames the corruption of Plovdiv on the Oriental influence. In one of his early works, 'Zapiski za Bălgaria i bălgarite', he describes Plovdiv as a hotbed of disease, first because of the rice cultivated there, and, second, because of its Oriental filth. He asserts that all Oriental towns are beautiful from a distance, but that once one looks closely at them, they are repugnant. Apart from the 'decapitated houses' that one could also see in Rouse, in Plovdiv there were 'muddy streets, stinking morasses, desperate uncleanliness, lazy mangy dogs and sleepy human

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<sup>71</sup> Ivan Vazov, *Pod igoto*, in Vazov, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol. 12, ed. by Emil Stefanov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1956, pp.270, 273-75.

<sup>72</sup> Bogorov, *Za narodna sviast*, pp.199, 200.

<sup>73</sup> '[Rouse people] dig and make the roads following the Englishmen's orders and foreigners come to open public houses and coffee-houses, because these two occupations are not customary for the Bulgarians'. *Ibid.*, pp.198-99.

physiognomies'. The filth and stench he describes in Plovdiv (the mud, the morass-like streets, in which dead dogs, cats and even horses float), is similar to the dirt in Sofia (and Rousse), except that in Plovdiv the filth is ubiquitous, irrespective of the quarter, while in Sofia similar filth, with the addition of eggshells, is, according to Karavelov, typical only of the Jewish quarter.<sup>74</sup> Although in 'Zapiski' he claims that the Jews of Plovdiv are exceptionally honourable people, unlike their 'brothers' from Vienna or all over western Europe, he gives a different picture in 'Neno'. Here he discusses the Plovdiv Jews again, but this time he does not distinguish between Sephardim and Ashkenazim; all Jews are dirty, and unpleasant for anyone who is not Jewish. Similarly to Sofia Jews, the Plovdiv Jews have eggshells on the streets. They breed in vast numbers, which Karavelov regards as sowing the seeds of a disaster.<sup>75</sup> In 'Zapiski', Karavelov is convinced that filth and the cultivation of rice cause the annual epidemics of fever, typhus, and cholera in Plovdiv.<sup>76</sup> In Sofia the disease caused by the Jews is typhoid fever. In Salonica, he claims that Jews' dirt gives the population cholera. For Bulgarian Revivalists Jews are

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<sup>74</sup> Karavelov, 'Zapiski za Bălgaria i bălgarite', p.401. On Sofia's Jewish quarter he writes: 'Sofia is such a wonderful town, like all Turkish towns not only in Europe and Asia, but also in Africa, if only in this or that Turkish-African town there were no Jews. They say that the capital of the *foetor judaicus* is Salonica, but I can assure you that this town should fall to her knees before Sofia and surrender her its laurels. If Salonica's dirt is called immediate cholera, then the Sofia Jewish arsenal could be called the most stinking plague. I have seen nowhere else, not even in Ismail, such street swamps as I saw in Sofia. Sofia's dirt is different from the dirt of other towns -- and here I mean only some of the quarters, especially the Jewish quarter -- and the difference is that in the non-Jewish quarters you would rarely see dead cats, hens and donkeys, [...] shells from boiled or fried eggs [as you would in the Jewish quarter]. In Sofia you can encounter Jewish types such as you cannot see even in the Warsaw Jewish museum. I do not know whether the editors of *Pester Lloyd* or *Neue [Wiener] Presse* have their specific smell; I only know that if a Sofia Jew comes close to you, you have to go to the bath to wash yourself with fuller's earth. [...] I think that if the Sofia population wants to have healthy air and to get rid of typhoid fever, they will have to deport their Jews to the top of Mount Vitosha, or soak them in brine', *ibid.*, pp.467-68.

<sup>75</sup> 'From the Jewish market street down towards the [River] Maritsa spreads the Jewish street which appears colourful, of course because of the dirt, mud and egg-shells; this street is almost always busy with Jews walking hither and thither, their parents, whose heads are shaking with greed and their countless children, who stick out their tongues at every passer-by who does not have the luck to be a Jew', Karavelov, 'Neno', pp.257-58.

not necessarily always the cause of cholera, with which the Jews had been associated for centuries in European popular culture; cities, however, are. Cholera is a large-town disease in Blăskov's *Dvama bratia*; it originates in the town, and because of the lack of any prophylaxis, it spreads into the surrounding villages. Blăskov describes an outbreak of cholera in such a way that he does not leave any doubt that the appearance and the spread of the disease was the fault of the town-dwellers. They go to a fair in a nearby village, knowing that there is cholera in their town. Instead of taking precautions, they just eat, drink, and dance as much as they can, and soon cholera rages in this and the surrounding villages.<sup>77</sup>

For Bogorov, on the other hand, Jews represent Europeanness in a positive sense. He suggests that the Bulgarians should take the Jews as their example: the Jews have developed their own trade using the River Maritsa, while the Bulgarians do not believe that the river can be used for transport, and so they wait to see what happens to the Jews' goods. Thus, while the Christians are still uncertain whether trade comports with Christian morality, the Jews' trade functions well throughout the year.<sup>78</sup> Bogorov explains the presence of eggshells in the street filth: according to him, eggs are the main diet of Jews.<sup>79</sup>

The urban decay described by Bogorov, Blăskov and Karavelov, is caused by backwardness, which was imposed on the Bulgarians by Ottoman manners. Thus, the decay of the people is caused by the fact that the urban population had been detached from healthy village work, but did not enjoy the education typical of west European cities. Thus, this type of urban decay could be called

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<sup>76</sup> Karavelov, 'Zapiski za Bălgaria i bălgarite', p.399.

<sup>77</sup> Blăskov, *Dvama bratia*, pp.412-13.

<sup>78</sup> Bogorov, *Za narodna sviast*, p.215.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p.213.

decay through deficiency. Unlike the Czech Revivalists, Bulgarian Revivalists are not concerned with the dangers of industrialisation and the consequent denationalisation of cities.<sup>80</sup> The only characteristic that so far made Plovdiv and Sofia similar to west European cities, was the presence of Jews.

### 1.6. Czech cities and Jews

Holeček discusses the Jews as a sign of the decay of the urban populations; he is convinced that Jews live only among corrupt or corruptible people. Hence, one could find Jews in Prague and elsewhere in Bohemia, but not among his South Bohemians, especially not in the South Bohemian villages:

Our villages are free of Jews. There was never any contrived agitation against them, no organised economic battle. Where there is carrion, birds of prey soon gather. They fly in of their own accord, uncalled, led by instinct. Anywhere lacking moral or economic carrion does not entice them. They do not intentionally avoid such a place, but nothing attracts them there. They can fly there, but they will remain hungry.<sup>81</sup>

This description, labelling the Jews birds of prey, comports with the topoi of economic antisemitism, but also with the physical stereotyping of the Jews with long crooked noses.<sup>82</sup> South Bohemian villages indulge in neither the moral nor the economic malpractice that would attract Jews. Because Jews function on the basis of animal instinct, they appear 'uninvited'; this means they can also appear among communities that have not reached the state of moral degeneration that the Jews can benefit from. Holeček's suggestion is that communities that wish to remain *judenrein* have to maintain high moral standards amongst themselves. It hardly needs saying that Holeček's view prefigures that of the Nazis.

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<sup>80</sup> Nesho Bonchev is concerned by the idea of allowing foreigners to build railways and buy property in the Bulgarian lands, which he believes will allow foreigners to sell their goods cheaper than Bulgarians can; foreign goods will be cheaper because of the advanced stage of industrialisation abroad. See Nesho Bonchev, 'Na bălgarite triabvat sredni uchilishta: gimnaziia, realno uchilishte i duhovna seminariia' (1871), in Nesho Bonchev, *Literaturna kritika i publicistika*, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1962, pp.60-61.

<sup>81</sup> Holeček, *Jak u nás žijou i umírají*, pp.113-14.

Světlá also hints that trouble and Jews go hand in hand in Prague. In *Poslední paní Hlohovská* she claims that the Jews collaborated with the Prussians against Maria Theresa's accession to the throne. Thus, she finds the pogroms that followed the empress's coronation justified. Maria Theresa also expels the Jews after her coronation, which in Světlá's view is an expression of the confirmation of the new nature of the city. Maria Theresa's good nature and the interests of the aristocracy cause their being allowed back to Prague, which promises future decay.<sup>83</sup>

### 1.7. Westernised cities

In the Czech case almost all evil foreign influence was attributed to the Germans or other west Europeans. For the Czech Revivalists, Italy was the place whence degeneration often sprang – a topos of *Trivialliteratur* – and red-haired hot-blooded Italians abound in early to mid-nineteenth-century Czech popular fiction.<sup>84</sup> German and Italian influences were seen as semi-foreign, since Germans and Czechs were within the same Empire, as was much of northern Italy. The difference between German and Italian influence was that Italy was the place of refuge for people who rejected Czech society or were

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<sup>82</sup> For economic antisemitism in Austria after 1867 see Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria*, London, Halban, 1988, pp.138-40.

<sup>83</sup> 'At that time the common people had reason to complain about them: the people had always been irked by the fact that they [the Jews] had unearned privileges that Christians did not have, and so they hated them. Even the old royal officers had given them twice the amount of interest that was allocated to Christian creditors. If a Jew and a Christian were involved in a court case and the Jew was found guilty, he was rarely given an adequate sentence. The Jews were always enthusiastically supported from above and if they got into any trouble, the nobility intervened.' Světlá, *Poslední paní Hlohovská*, p.565.

<sup>84</sup> See, for example, Zimmerman, *Žid, anebo pýcha předchází pád*, where the red-haired Italian swindler is even more corrupt than the corrupt Jew; Italy is the place of refuge of the morally unstable even at the end of the eighteenth century, see for example [M.V. Kramerius] *Zdeněk ze Zámku se svými tovaryši, aneb Rytíři v Blanickém vrchu zavření* (1799), in *Romantické povídky z českého obrození*, ed. by Miloslav Novotný, Prague, ELK, 1947.



rejected by it; while German cities represented industrialisation, which was not necessarily negatively evaluated.<sup>85</sup>

Italy is a refuge for Angelina in Turinský's eponymous drama (1821). Angelina had to leave Bohemia because she had a premarital child by a Bohemian whom she loved. Angelina leaves the child to be brought up by her mother, while she marries Count Racontini, an Italian. She never manages to overcome her sorrow at leaving her homeland and not marrying the man she loved. At the time that the play takes place, her daughter, Ludmila, is in Italy as her companion, but Angelina's sin torments her still and she appears ever more sickly. When her Bohemian lover, Milotín, appears out of the blue, she cannot cope with her guilt any longer and commits suicide.<sup>86</sup> Her daughter suffers because she is away from Bohemia. As a result of her sin, not only Angelina herself, but also Ludmila, has to live in exile. Although not burdened biologically with bad hereditary traits, the unrespectable sexual practices of her parents have burdened Ludmila with the punishment of living away from her homeland. She longs for the Czech language that she knows only from her mother. Thus the West (semi-foreign in this case) provides a refuge for the morally fallen, and that applies not only to large cities, for Angelina lives in a suitably pre-Romantic secluded castle.

When Italian influence comes into Bohemian cities the result is always catastrophic; such is the case of Tyl's *Angelina*, which was possibly inspired by Turinský's play. In this story Tyl presents a case of urban degeneration. Tyl's Angelina is a childless woman, brought up in Italy, who suffers from

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<sup>85</sup> For a positive evaluation of industrialisation, see, for example, Jan Kollár, *Nábožný pohled na tú krajinu která jest matka evangelické víry. Kázeň při návratu odtud*, Pest, Trattner & Károlyi, 1835.

headaches, which at the time was believed to be a sign of hysteria. Angelina does seem to be hysterical; her moods change quickly; she tends to faint and has seizures of extreme religiousness, in which she is seeking redemption for something. She is beautiful, and a widow. She forces herself into Prague high society, where she meets Count Sokolov. Count Sokolov, who lives in the country (with his wife and son) is contrasted to his unmarried sister Florentina; while he has a healthy, quiet family life in the country, his sister lives in Prague society. At the beginning of the story Count Sokolov is concerned about the physical and mental health of his sister, since although 'she was as beautiful as she has always been, the ruddiness of her cheeks appeared as if it were borrowed; her whole behaviour was as if calculated with a machine'; Sokolov draws the conclusion that this must be the result of too much male attention which Florentina receives thanks to her beauty and her wealth. He decides to observe her closely and to take her with him to his country house if his suspicion proves true.<sup>87</sup> Florentina, on the other hand, thinks that her brother has gone downhill since he moved out of Prague. Angelina is the reason for Sokolov's desire to extend his stay in Prague for as long as possible; he forgets his worries about his sister, as well as his son and wife. Eventually Angelina poisons his wife and marries him – until she becomes bored with him, as she had with her first husband. When Angelina finally falls truly in love, it becomes clear that she had learnt the skill of poisoning from her aunt in Italy, and she had poisoned the uncle of her first husband who opposed their marriage. She also poisons the man who reported her to the police. After being arrested she admits all her sins and commits suicide. This is an instance of foreign nurture

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<sup>86</sup> František Turinský, *Angelina*[1821], in *Básnické spisy Františka Turinského*, Prague, Kober.

(in education, manners, language) bringing about the decline not only of the woman, but also of everyone she comes in contact with, sowing not only moral degeneration in the men that she meets (the desire to be with her marks the beginning of Sokolov's fall), but also the death of these men and those close to them.

Italy is where the lewd and the degenerate find refuge in J.J. Marek's *Harfenice* (Female harpist, 1845). *Harfenice* is the story of two generations, of which the decline in morals of the first determines the degeneration of the second and a bad end for both generations. A Czech musician, Václav Dušek, had fallen in love with an Italian singer, Francilla Setti. She is spoilt, vain and promiscuous. Nevertheless, he marries her, but shortly after she gives birth to their daughter, Leonie, she disappears to Italy. Instead of looking after his daughter, Dušek starts looking for his wife, but meets her accidentally long after he had given up any hope of finding her. Although a product of miscegenation, Leonie is virtuous. She was brought up by a close friend of Dušek's, Malvin. Malvin's son, Artur, is the spoilt young man who causes the suffering and, eventually, the deaths of all who love him. At the beginning of the story he proposes to pay for the affection of the woman he is in love with (Julietta, the harpist who happens to be the second daughter of Dušek).<sup>88</sup> He is arrested and taken to a police station, where the author treats us to a picture of urban moral decrepitude:

Some young officers were sitting there gambling. Some upturned bottles were lying on the table – mute witnesses of glorious orgies. The candles were coming to the end of their wicks – here and there some fellow, overcome by drink and sleep, was resting on a simple chair, but three were still examining their pansophical chits, that is, their cards, so intently it was as if eternal salvation depended on playing the right one. Little piles of gold and

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1880.

<sup>87</sup>Tyl, 'Angelina', p.110.

<sup>88</sup>Jan z Hvězdy, *Harfenice* [1845], Prague, Bačkovský, 1906, p.7.

silver glistened before them, and on their faces was inscribed in lapidary fashion: greed, despair, frivolity.<sup>89</sup>

Therefore, even the people who are supposed to enforce the law, theoretically based on the Christian moral code, are amoral. Eventually, Artur, Oedipus-like, attempts to murder his father, not knowing that he was his father, befriends a criminal and finds refuge in Italy. There, apart from becoming a Czech version of the Slovak bandit Jánošík, he starts an affair with Dušek's estranged wife, now a countess and mother of the girl whom he was meant to marry, Julietta. After Dušek and his daughter Julietta arrive in Italy, Artur leaves the countess, but Julietta no longer wants him. Shortly after that, a war breaks out and Artur ends up fighting for the Italians against a Czech regiment in the Austrian Army. Thus, his personal moral decay proves detrimental to the whole Czech nation. Furthermore, when the tumbrel passes by, his betrothed, the daughter of his previous Italian mistress, sees him, and in her shock she loses her balance, falls out of the window and dies. Thus, the irresponsible life of the generation of the fathers (Malvin and Dušek) results in their suffering and the suffering of their children. Although it is not made explicit in the story, the fact that Malvin is the only person to doubt that Julietta is Dušek's daughter suggests that, when young, they (that is not only Dušek, who married the Italian singer) were both of dubious moral stature. J.J. Marek, the priest, is preaching on the visitation of the sins of the fathers.

## **2. Foreign cities (Torn-off branches)**

In the Bulgarian Revival, foreign cities were used to contrast the purity of the Bulgarians with to the morally decayed foreigners. Drumev's *Uchenik i blagodeteli* treats the decay of a foreign city, Primorsk, in much the same way

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<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p.10.

as other writers write about Bulgarian cities. According to the main character of the novel, Zhivko, Primorsk should have been an exemplary European city. While Drumev presents the reader with Zhivko's idea of what a European city should look like and what Primorsk is in his imagination, the carriage taking Zhivko into Primorsk reaches the city and sinks into mud; the horses also sink up to their knees into mud; the streets, 'although even and broad, were much muddier, much, much muddier, than the streets of the last non-European town'.<sup>90</sup> Mud seems to be the only thing Primorsk has in excess: an Englishman even tries to fish in the mud, while a Frenchman who had sunk into the mud, cries for help, insisting that if no one helped him, he would drown.<sup>91</sup> The presence of Jews, apart from Frenchmen and Englishmen, makes Primorsk different from what Karavelov means by an Oriental town, makes it a European city. A Jew is the first person from Primorsk that Zhivko comes across, and this Jew keeps an inn where Zhivko spends his first night. Urban degeneration is concentrated in this inn, since, apart from belonging to a Jew, it is full of people of all faiths and ranks, most of whom are drunk, including a fallen woman who is covered in the wine that she has vomited up.<sup>92</sup> Smoke makes the air unbreathable, and by way of completing the picture, Drumev has Zhivko robbed there.

Zhivko's fate in Primorsk is similar to the fate of Velichko in Odessa in Blăskov's *Dvama bratia*. They are both young men who had left their native

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<sup>90</sup> Drumev, *Uchenik i blagideteli*, pp.253-54.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p.257.

<sup>92</sup> The description of the Jew is antisemitic: 'The Jew's face was revolting. With just one eye, scarred mouth, black teeth, long, upturned nose, wrinkled face, half-burnt, with a long yellow beard that had not been combed for a very long time and was full of straws and dirt. [...] from time to time he would belch and would emanate a smell of onions and garlic, so that Zhivko had to shut his eyes and hold his nose'. Even Karavelov does not go into such detail in describing the racial inferiority of the Jews. In addition, Drumev claims that all Jews know Bulgarian,

villages in pursuit of a better education; they were uprooted not out of a desire to climb the social ladder, but to help their nation. Odessa and Primorsk are similar in that they are large by Bulgarian standards, and they were not entirely foreign, since they were Slav. Odessa is cleaner than Primorsk, but both Zhivko (*Uchenik i blagodeli*) and Velichko (*Dvama bratia*) contract tuberculosis in the cities. Velichko is cured once he returns to his village and the nutritious food he is used to.<sup>93</sup> It is not likely that Zhivko will be cured, but since the novel is unfinished we shall never know. In fact, then, both Blăskov and Drumev have produced variations on the theme of Turgenev's *Nakanune* (On the eve, 1860), in which a young Bulgarian (Insarov) dies of sorrow abroad. Particularly Drumev combines in Zhivko all the reasons a contemporary medical textbook would have described as causes of tuberculosis, except heredity. As Susan Sontag informs us, before the publication of Koch's discovery of the bacillus causing tuberculosis in 1881, textbooks ascribed it to an 'hereditary disposition, unfavourable climate, sedentary indoor life, defective ventilation, deficiency of light, and "depressing emotions"'.<sup>94</sup> Zhivko lives in a humid, dark basement, abandoned by the rich Bulgarian notables and does not have the means to get education, or to return to Bulgaria. As a metaphor, tuberculosis, Sontag asserts, had a dual meaning: on the one hand, it referred to a lack of means, food, and bad living conditions, and was the disease of the poor; it was also linked with the idea of a lack of sexual desire, that is, only people free of sexual desire had it, or, once they contracted it, they were liberated from such desire. On the other

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implying that the Jews could understand Bulgarians, while their own language is incomprehensible to Bulgarians. *Ibid.*, p.254-55.

<sup>93</sup> The bland meals that Velichko is complaining of are meat with potatoes, as opposed to hot fresh milk with dry bread, which is what cures him.

<sup>94</sup> Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, p.54. I owe the comparison with Turgenev's plot to her book; see p.22.

hand, it was the disease of excess, like cancer, which was associated with excessive sexual desire, passion, and excessive appetite, as well as frequently changing moods.<sup>95</sup> Sontag shows that at least since the eighteenth century, the urban population was believed to be more susceptible to tuberculosis than the rural. All these beliefs are to be found in Drumev and Bláskov's representations of tuberculosis, with the extra propaganda aspect that tuberculosis appears in unhealthy, foreign and unfriendly cities.

In 'Hadzhi Nicho' (1870) Karavelov also has a variant of the tuberculosis topos; he has the writer-revolutionary Rakovski contract tuberculosis because of miserable conditions abroad; furthermore, because Rakovski had relied on a degenerate Bulgarian for financial support that he never received, he died in penury.<sup>96</sup> In this story Karavelov considers something between decay through deficiency and decay through excess. On the one hand, as in *Uchenik i blagodeteli* and *Dvama bratia*, the main character's plight is caused by deficiency. On the other, the reasons for this deficiency are, first, the excess in which the rich Bulgarian (hadzhi Nicho) indulges, and, second, the fact that at this stage Rakovski was living in Bucharest, a foreign city, but also a borderland city, one of contrasts between excess and want. As Karavelov announces in the subtitle of the story, the work is based on real events, the struggle between the so-called 'Olds' and 'Youngs' among the Bulgarian Revivalists in Bucharest. Part of the 'true story' is that Rakovski dies of tuberculosis. Karavelov, however, romanticises modern Bulgarian history by making Rakovski a contemporary martyr. In so doing Karavelov exploits the myth of Slav suffering. He abides by the idea evident in Turinský's *Angelina*,

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<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.25, 27.

as well as in Turgenev's *Nakanune*: that a torn-off branch cannot survive away from its bole. Botev epitomises this notion in his 'Na proshtavane', where he describes Bulgarian émigrés in Romania, as 'wandering, not precious to anyone, not loved by anyone'.<sup>97</sup> Botev's words are picked up by Vazov in his idealisation of the past in *Nemili-nedragi*, (The rejected and unloved, 1883). The story takes place in Romania, and 'Romania was giving them [Bulgarian émigrés] hospitality, but this was the hospitality that the deserted seashore gives the survivors of a shipwreck. They were in a society, but also in a desert'.<sup>98</sup> In this story, however, the decline of the Bulgarians is not limited to their living in poverty abroad; the former ensign, Strandzhata, instead of fighting Turks, has become a publican who suffers from tuberculosis. Strandzhata constitutes yet another example of romanticising the unsexing nature of tuberculosis.

Karavelov romanticises the sexual nature of the city-inflicted tuberculosis in his 'Hadzhi Nicho', where the mistress of haji Nicho, a beautiful, but poor Bulgarian girl, has the symptoms of tuberculosis: she is nervous, passionate (which one can tell by looking at her full lips), but her body is thin and she appears to be in pain. 'Premature grief and tiredness could be seen in her face, in her body, in her gait, in the way she talked to people; she received these qualities from her bitter past; even if she was having fun, like the rest; even if she laughed, carefree and child-like, there was always a sad and dejected tinge to her cheerfulness and laughter'.<sup>99</sup> This is a picture of a fallen woman who had

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<sup>96</sup> Karavelov, 'Hadzhi Nicho', pp.108-10: 'Hadzhi Nicho' was published in the periodical *Svoboda* in 1870, and later the same year it came out in a book form.

<sup>97</sup> 'Но кълни, майко, проклинай/ таз турска черна прокуда,/ дете нас млади пропъди/ по таз тежка чужбина – / да ходим, да се скитаем, немили, клети, недраги' Botev, 'Na proshtavane', in Botev, *Săbrani săchinienii*, vol.1, p.38.

<sup>98</sup> Ivan Vazov, 'Nemili-nedragi' in Vazov, *Săbrani săchinienii*, vol.5, ed. by Pantelei Zarev, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, p.108.

<sup>99</sup> Karavelov, 'Hadzhi Nicho', p.82.



fallen because she lived in Bucharest; she had become like this not only because of her poverty, but also because of her love; she does not sell herself to haji Nicho; she is in love with him, and has a sexual relationship with him, hoping that they will eventually marry, which haji Nicho does not intend. This banal story constitutes the first instance in Bulgarian literature of a sexually attractive and active female having tuberculosis; the causes of her illness are both excess (of sexuality) and deficiency (of money), a topic that is developed by Zola in *Nana*.<sup>100</sup> Although the influence of Hugo's *Les Misérables* is likely, here Karavelov describes a woman who, although initially unwillingly, but unforced, engages in a lasting extramarital sexual relationship. Thus, unlike Hugo, or, indeed, Pflieger-Moravský, who excuses his character's prostituting herself to support her children, Karavelov takes a step towards Zola: Mariika chooses to lose her virginity in a union which does not bring her any financial benefit, although she hoped for the financial security that the marriage to haji Nicho would have brought her.

This is not the only occasion on which Karavelov discusses extramarital sexual relationships. In his 'Stana', for example, a girl is seduced and gives birth to a child. The story takes place in a large Bulgarian town, and after being rejected by her family, Stana goes to Romania, where she eventually becomes a prostitute and loses her mind. She returns to her home town and dies in a church, repenting her fate, as far as that was possible in her mental condition. The man who seduces her is a degenerate alcoholic and womaniser; like Mariika in 'Hadzhi Nicho', Stana is in love with him. In accordance with degeneration theory, the offspring of alcoholics have a smaller chance of

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<sup>100</sup> Gilman, *Difference and Pathology*, pp.69-70.

survival than the children of healthy parents, and the product of Stana's love does not survive. Stana's lot represents a case of degeneration (the man who seduces her) inflicting further degeneration (her going to Romania), which results in lethal medical conditions (her madness and the child's death).

Bucharest is semi-alien because it is so close to Bulgaria and many Bulgarians live there. On the other hand, there are many other nationalities there as well, which makes it different from Bulgarian towns. According to Karavelov's division, Bucharest could be a 'European' city, since Jews and west Europeans live there. The difference is that, according to Karavelov, west European cities are luxurious, but because west European societies are more developed, the luxury there serves just to make people's lives more comfortable, whereas outside western Europe luxury is redolent of luxuriance, excess. In an underdeveloped society, luxury serves only vice and decay.<sup>101</sup> For Karavelov, when people move to Bucharest it may indicate their degenerate nature; on the other hand, he claims that Bulgarians go to Bucharest chiefly in order to start a family, since there is a superfluity of women in Bucharest, unlike in the Bulgarian territories; he also, however, gives examples of people who go to Bucharest to avoid family life and conventional morality.<sup>102</sup> Such is

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<sup>101</sup> Karavelov, 'Hadzhi Nicho', p.81.

<sup>102</sup> 'Bucharest is one of those cities, which for unknown reasons have the ability to attract ... A man leaves his town or village, leaves behind the fresh air and the beauty of Nature, gives up the happiness of his family life, abandons his father's home and moves to Bucharest to starve, to drink the disgusting sediment-clogged water of the famous Dumbovica *apa dulce*, to sleep in pubs, etc., etc., etc.! [...] The Romanians say that the reason for foreigners' moving there and increasing the Romanian population is Dumbovica and its sweet water, which, if someone has ever drunk it, has such an impact on that person that he will never leave Bucharest. The merchants, especially the Jews, the Bulgarians, the Aromanians, the Germans and the Greeks ascribe that to a different reason, that is, the Romanians' inability to pursue commerce; and we, who are in the habit of measuring human life with a psychological tape, think that the reason lies in the red sleeveless dresses, in the colourful blouses, in the blackened eyebrows, in the whitened faces.' Karavelov, 'Izvānreden rodolybets', pp.109-10; 'In short, the Bulgarian moves to Romania to find a quiet, peaceful (sometimes hungry) family life, the Jew – to speculate, the German – to be a master and to earn money, the Aromanian – to acquire human characteristics,

the case with Neno in *Maminoto detentse*, who abandons his wife to find a paradise of alcohol and immorality in Bucharest. Instead of staying with his wife and children, Neno runs to Bucharest and starts living with a Gypsy woman; they take turns in being drunk and beating one another. None of the main characters from his trilogy, 'Maminoto detentse', 'Progresist' and 'Izvānreden rodoliubets', could have survived in a Bulgarian environment, since public opinion would not have permitted them to behave as they do in Bucharest. Hence Karavelov implies that even a corrupt Bulgarian town, like Kazanlāk in 'Maminoto detense', is less degenerate than Bucharest.

Since only degenerate Bulgarians go to Bucharest, the orgiastic scenes that Karavelov describes there serve as a foil to the innocent love of the simple Bulgarians. While in Bulgaria (similarly to what Holeček describes in South Bohemia) young people only exchange looks and then they send matchmakers to arrange the formalities of the marriage, in Bucharest sexual desire replaces eye-gazing and sexuality is emotionless and repulsive, as in 'Izvānreden rodoliubets': 'when the old rubbish [the way Karavelov refers to the old woman involved] heated up not for the last time, her licking [of the cleric] was so violent, fierce and heroic, that the face of the father superior was be-dribbled from his forehead to the end of his beard with three types of make-up'.<sup>103</sup>

In 'Progresist', Bucharest is the most detrimental city to the morals of a bright young man from a small Bulgarian town. When he was a child, he was sent with money raised from the people of his town to a grammar school in Belgrade. As Karavelov specifies in another work ('Nakazal ia bog'), Belgrade is another semi-foreign city, which allows corruption and cosmopolitanism to

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the Greek – to lie to the humble mortals and to grow fat on other people's work', Karavelov.

thrive.<sup>104</sup> In Belgrade the child, Ivan Chuchuligata (Ivan the Lark), learns to be lazy. Although he never finished his schooling in Belgrade, he moved to Vienna where some Czechs taught him ‘to wear glasses, a top hat and a French beard, to talk through his nose, to chase women and to look important’.<sup>105</sup> Bucharest, however, has the most devastating impact on Ivan Chuchuligata, since here he decides to become Romanian, and apart from marrying a Romanian and changing his name to Chuchuligianu, he refuses to let his own mother into his house, since his mother would make it clear to his acquaintances that he was not a real Romanian. As it turns out, he is not the only Bulgarian to become Romanian.<sup>106</sup> Through the words of a woman passer-by who offers comfort to the rejected mother, Karavelov blames the renegation of the Bulgarians in Romania for the state Romania is in:

The land of Romania has declined. The son does not respect his mother; the daughter does not want to stay with her husband; the wife does not look after her children; the husband walks on the streets with his mistress; the father does not want to see his children; the son-in-law eats away the dowry of his wife and sends her back to her parents – everything is upside down... You see, if the French do it like that, we should become like the French, too!<sup>107</sup>

Thus, it is not that the Bulgarians are especially prone to decay, they are a victim of the large-scale degeneracy spreading eastwards from France, afflicting ‘little Paris’, as Bucharest was called by Romanians and Bulgarians alike.

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‘Izvānreden rodoliubets’, p.111.

<sup>103</sup> Karavelov, ‘Izvanreden rodoliubets’, p.120.

<sup>104</sup> ‘Dorchol – this is the colourful, ugly, poor, fearful side of white Belgrade. Poverty – only desperate poverty reigns in the half-abandoned houses, left over from the Turks, tilting, sagging with time, pierced by huge cannon balls during the bombardment of Belgrade... The inhabitants of this city are as colourful, poor and ragged as their houses. Here you can come across the Asiatic type of the Jew, and the Teutonic physiognomy of the German, and the cunning fat Armenian, and the Romanian or Turkish Gypsy with his fiddle, and the age-old Persian tea-merchant, and the lover from the Banat, and the man from Bosnia, and the Turk, and the Bulgarian, etc.. [...] These people without refined physiognomy are dangerous for any police, but are very interesting for naturalists’, Karavelov, ‘Nakazal ia bog. Skitsa iz uchenicheskiiia zhivot’, pp.175-76.

<sup>105</sup> Karavelov, ‘Progresist’, p.141.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p.145.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p.151.

Bucharest is the enticing place of refuge and the cause of the decay of a family and a village in Bláskov's *Zlochesta Kráštinka*. The novel begins retrospectively, presenting the decayed man who caused the decay of the family and of the village, whose life abroad has changed his appearance. Bucharest has had the same impact on him as Prague had on Hedvika in Světlá's *Jitřenka*, except that it took him longer to change his appearance and to realise his mistakes: 'his hair was already grey, his face was disgruntled, had a scowl on it, was self-important and rather ugly; his eye-lids quivered and his eyes had a sad and important look; he wore tight-fitting clothes.'<sup>108</sup> His tight-fitting clothes are the only sign of his having become west European; the other components of his description represent physical and nervous degeneration. He has brought decay into his family and village because he wanted to become a true European; all he achieves for himself is a veneer of western Europeanness in his clothes. The story appears to constitute a warning to Bulgarians, urging them to remain Bulgarians. Seeking a fast way to becoming 'European' can lead only to superficiality. In achieving this superficiality they will also destroy not only their spiritual, but also their physical selves.

### **3. Europeanising the Oriental**

On the whole, the Greeks were seen as the vehicle of sexual corruption that arose from a false understanding of Western civilisation. Karavelov gives a number of examples of hellenised women who are unfaithful to their husbands: abandoning one's Bulgarianness leads to immoral behaviour. The only way to ensure decency is to stick fast to one's Bulgarianness. Thus, abandoning Bulgarianness is of itself immoral (compare *Zlochesta Kráštinka*). This view on

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<sup>108</sup> Bláskov, *Zlochesta Kráštinka*, p. 77.

hellenised women is clearly held by Dobri Voinikov in his *Krivorazbranata tsivilizatsiia*, where a Greek educated in France and a semi-educated (in France again) Bulgarian try to corrupt the population of a Bulgarian town. Being western European, namely French, means for them wearing tight-fitting trousers and sprinkling their sentences with French words. Voinikov's point is similar to Karavelov's in 'Progresist'; 'fashion' is mistaken for 'civilisation' in backward societies; that can bring only corruption. In both cases the corruption comes to the Bulgarian territories from abroad.<sup>109</sup> Neither Karavelov nor Voinikov are expressing xenophobia; they are criticising xenophilia and its subversive, degrading, corrupting consequences for Bulgarian society. In Voinikov's play, 'tradition' seems to be entirely Oriental, since the only non-degenerate member of the family, Anka's father, smokes, uses many Turkish words in his speech, and objects to his daughter dressing in the western European manner. The francophone Bulgarian (Dimitraki) is trying to seduce a good Bulgarian girl (Mariika), while the Greek (Margaridi) is trying to charm Dimitraki's sister. Dimitraki does not simply imitate the French: he wants to be French, and has spread this desire to his sister. As he claims, if he knew that

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<sup>109</sup> 'In young nations everything happens more by imitation than by systematic research. Often the best moral stands are [...] misunderstood. Because of that instead of a high standard of morality and prudence, moral paralysis and lechery often settle amongst them; instead of sincerity, fraternal love and affection – pride, contempt, and hatred; instead of concord and friendship – discord; therefore, instead of development – obstruction and deception.[...] Fashion is taken over instead of civilisation.

Yes, the pseudo-civilised man is something more than the uneducated; he can do everything; he knows everything; he talks about philanthropy, fraternal love, unity, accord, but without having ever experienced them, without having his heart in them and without practising what he preaches.[...]

Have a look at our neighbouring nations, who, regardless of their political independence and autonomy, for the past thirty to forty years, have not made any progress in industry because they have been mere blind imitators of the outer veneer, rather than serious enquirers into its foundations. Moreover, it is impossible to claim that firm foundations of a stable moral life have been laid for a hopeful future: the moral paralysis spread by pseudo-educated people amongst the masses infects every noble sentiment, [...]destroys every moral teaching and code [...]. In regaining national consciousness this same infection quickly entered our younger

there was the smallest amount of Bulgarian flesh in him, he would cut it out and give it to the dogs.<sup>110</sup> As it turns out, Anka is the only woman in town who is 'European', but Voinikov hints that there is a danger that her degeneration will spread to the rest of the women; he is convinced that she is the only one 'so far', that is, more will soon adopt her persuasion.<sup>111</sup> The rest of the young men in town are also on their way to total corruption, since they understand 'civilisation' to mean drinking in excess and toasting civilisation.<sup>112</sup>

An old woman, Baba Stoina, is a little senile, but nevertheless knowledgeable in Bulgarian traditions. Her senility finds expression in her taste for alcohol and her thinking of men even in her old age. *Krivorazbranata tsivilizatsiia* shares with Karavelov's *Bălgari ot staro vreme* (which was published a year after Voinikov's work) the idea that being old does not necessarily mean being wise. Stoina is among the few Bulgarians not susceptible to the infection the Greek spreads among most of the town's population. For example, when Margaridi offers 'civilisation' to the town in the form of dancing a polka, that is, men touching women they are not married to, she is the one to call him 'Antichrist'. Margaridi nevertheless succeeds not only in dancing with Anka, but also in convincing all the young people to dance in couples (instead of the traditional ring-dance).<sup>113</sup> Baba Stoina comments: 'He is tempting them like the Devil, and they ape him'. A little later, she adds 'Our lads must have lost their minds. They are allowing someone of God knows what faith to tempt them. They have abandoned the beautiful Bulgarian ring-dance to

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generation in those parts of our fatherland where the seeds of pseudo-education have been sown.' Dobri Voinikov, *Krivorazbranata tsivilizatsiia*, pp.57-59.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p.104.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p.70.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.80-85.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p.97.

start writhing about like him, the Devil'.<sup>114</sup> With the polka, Margaridi quickly succeeds in sullyng most of the town's population. One of the Bulgarian young men notices that pseudo-civilisation is becoming increasingly popular with the Bulgarians.<sup>115</sup>

Margaridi is most successful with Anka, who accepts his idea of her being europeanised by him. She runs away with him, is seduced in a near-by village, and then he tries to abandon her. Voinikov points out the difference between her and a village woman, who, when Margaridi proposes to her that he will make her European and tries to hold her hand, threatens to hit him.<sup>116</sup> Thus Voinikov suggests that this type of corruption can happen only in an urban environment. On the other hand, since the proper Bulgarian girl Mariika rejects all attempts of the Bulgarian Dimitraki to 'europeanise' her, and preaches that a Bulgarian girl should marry only a thoroughly Bulgarian man, Voinikov implies that corruption does not have to take place even in a town. Mariika, who is poor, reminds one of Princess Velislava in Voinikov's play of the same name. Velislava not only rejects mixed marriages, but also sets rules for sexual selection within the Bulgarian nation: 'The proper Bulgarian lass would never fall in love with a lad interested in luxury, who knows nothing except how to please women. In love, the Bulgarian woman has always given preference to

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<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.98, 99,100. Dancing is discussed by Rakovski and Karavelov as well: Karavelov disagrees with Rakovski, according to whom the Bulgarians used to dance in man-woman couples; 'Zapiski za Bălgaria i bălgarite', p.391. There, p.396, Karavelov claims that the way Bulgarian youth socialises, that is, no dancing that involves touching the other sex, is a mark of their lack of degeneration. Karavelov and Voinikov agree that 'European influence has harmed our people more than it has helped them', *ibid.*, p.397.

<sup>115</sup> 'Gentlemen, I will give you a definition of contemporary Bulgarian civilisation: wearing fashionable clothes, you know *à la France*; knowing how to play billiards, patience, piquet [...]; knowing European dances, how to compliment the fair sex and to attract their attention with cleverly contrived romances. And it is a little different with the men -- to know how to talk about politics, about national matters, namely about political and Church problems, how to give your opinion on how to solve them, and that has to happen in the coffee-house or in the casino.



the soldier rather than a man interested in luxury'.<sup>117</sup> Voinikov asserts that this selection is immanent in proper Bulgarian women, since he hardly differentiates between the mediaeval Velislava and the nineteenth-century Mariika.

The interplay between the Oriental and the European arises in Vazov's *Nova zemia* (New land, 1896), although the novel is set in post-1878, independent, Bulgaria. Here he describes Rouse as a place suffering decay through excess, rather than decay through deficiency as Karavelov or Bogorov describe it. Although Vazov is normally nostalgic for the old patriarchal times, in his *Nova zemia* Rouse appears 'modern', and 'civilised'. This the narrator attributes to the effort of the same Midhat Pasha who had been criticised by Karavelov. However much Vazov venerates the 'progress' achieved by Midhat Pasha, he claims that European culture was imported by him in its ugliest varieties, which contradicts his admiration for Midhat Pasha as a civiliser.<sup>118</sup> In Vazov's view, expressed through the words of a Russian, Count Mazurin, a senior officer in the Russian governor's office, because Rouse is at the Bulgarian border, it is more susceptible to influence from abroad than other towns. The inner parts of the country had preserved their Bulgarianness better; 'fashion' and 'civilisation' had not penetrated further than the borders.<sup>119</sup> Mazurin reminds one of Karavelov when he blames the loose sexual behaviour of the local women on the influence of neighbouring Romania. The Russian count finds it strange that women in Rouse dress in the latest west European

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Also, to know how to preach education: fraternity, equality, liberty, without your heart wanting them.', *Krivorazbranata tsivilizatsiia* p.109.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p.137.

<sup>117</sup> Voinikov, 'Velislava, bălgarska kniaginia', in Voinikov, *Săchineniia v dva toma*, vol. 1, p.203.

<sup>118</sup> Ivan Vazov, *Nova zemia*, in Vazov, *Săbrani săchineniia*, vol.13, ed. by Georgi Konstantinov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1956, p.68.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p.60. Here Vazov's view echoes what Arndt had asserted about the corruption of the borderland parts of any country, as opposed to the pure inner parts.

fashion, while their 'brothers' in the villages still wear national costume.<sup>120</sup>

Women again are more susceptible to corruption than men.

Rousse is cosmopolitan, as Mazurin points out, and lust for money had attracted all nationalities there. Rousse's cosmopolitan nature is clear from the fact that it 'teems with' Jews of different origins: Balkan Ladino-speakers and Yiddish-speakers from Poland, Russia and Germany.<sup>121</sup> Even after the liberation, the presence of Jews is an indication of 'European-ness', but, for Mazurin, the ubiquitous filth in Rousse indicates backwardness and the Oriental.<sup>122</sup> Greed is the characteristic of Rousse Bulgarians, not only foreigners. Bribery is the norm there and only the main character of the novel, Naiden Stremski, rebels against it.

Rousse has also given refuge to a vulgar Bulgarian who started his education in Bucharest and Paris, but never finished it; he spends his time drinking and attempting to impress women. Since he has polished his womanising techniques in the Moulin Rouge, he finds it easy to impress Bulgarian high society. The fact that Rousse women like his cynical jokes points to their moral degeneration. The post-liberation citizens of Rousse dance that degenerate Czech dance, the polka. Vazov, however, unlike Voinikov in *Krivorazbranata tsivilizatsiia*, has nothing against the polka or other 'western' dances, even though his theme is corruption from the West.

Indicative of the corrupt moral state of Rousse is that the beautiful Rousse Bulgarian, Svetlina Golicheva, decides to run away from her husband with her lover, first to Romania, and then to western Europe (fashionable Ostende).

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<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p.56.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p.61.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.56-57.

Rousse's position as a borderland town enables Svetlina to fulfil her corrupt desire. She is a *femme fatale* of sorts:

The black satin dress that embraced Madame Golitcheff's beautiful figure formed a contrast with the bright-coloured dresses in the background. [...] She was a woman of twenty-five, at the zenith of her womanhood and with fully developed curves. Pale, a little plump, with black, tired, eager eyes and with sensuous lips, a neck sculpted on ideal shoulders, she was breathing with full vitality, *bliss* and voluptuousness. There was something alluring, sweetly burning in the gaze and the smile of this woman, who was alluring, maddening, bewildering.<sup>123</sup>

Like Nana, she is plump, and, again like Nana she seems to be a sinner because she is so attractive.<sup>124</sup> Her lover is a Russian officer, Volsky, and the similarity of his name to Vronsky from *Anna Karenina* is intentional. Svetlina's sister, Draga, admires what her sister does, and makes the parallel between Anna Karenina and Svetlina explicit. Moreover, she desires to become like her sister, that is, the corruption of one sister infects the other, who is prone to corruption anyway.

Although Rousse seems to be the breeding-ground for moral decay, Vazov does not suggest that village life is entirely free of degeneracy. In his short story 'Diado lotso gleda' (Grandfather I. is watching), he suggests that pure souls could exist in villages, but in order not to be either corrupted or upset by the post-1878 state of Bulgarian society, they needed to be blind. lotso is just that, and this, combined with the fact that he lives in a secluded village, allows him to preserve his ideals of an independent Bulgaria and to 'see' it slowly coming about without seeing the surrounding corruption.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p.69.

<sup>124</sup> Sander Gilman, *Difference and Pathology*, pp.69, 94ff. 'Steatopygia', particularly developed bottoms, was a condition believed to be typical of Hottentots and prostitutes, both categories having abnormal sexual behaviour which was also characterised by lack of modesty – a characteristic believed to be racial from Herder to Krafft-Ebing and beyond.

<sup>125</sup> 'Diado lotso gleda' (1901), in Vazov, *Săbrani săchineniia v dvadeset toma*, vol.8, ed. by Pantelei Zarev, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1956, pp.7-16.

#### 4. Degenerate villages

On the whole, the city is the representation of sophisticated unnaturalness, as opposed to the village, which is the representation of simple naturalness. This norm can be traced from Rousseau to the Romantics and then to Nordau and ever after. The vicious city has been a topos at least since the Old Testament, in the establishment of a city by Cain. The trouble with this rule is, as is held by Karavelov and Světlá, that the lack of education in the villages could lead to the moral degeneration of their population. In Světlá's case that is degeneration because of the lack of edifying entertainment that leads the peasants to spend all their free time drinking in the pub and playing cards.<sup>126</sup> In Karavelov's view, the lack of education among the peasants in the villages around Pirot has resulted in their 'lewd' practices, since a girl there was not allowed to marry before she had earned the money spent on keeping her since she was born. A boy, on the other hand, was expected to marry soon, and so bring a helpmate into his household. This, according to Karavelov, constitutes immorality imposed by the older generations, who more or less force the younger generations to be lewd.<sup>127</sup>

Vazov represents villages both in a Romantic fashion, idyllically secluded and hence close to Nature, and in a Realist fashion, much more backward and dirtier than towns. The advent of education and Western influence in the towns had brought progress. In his novel, *Kazalarskata tsaritsa* (The Queen of

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<sup>126</sup> Světlá, *Na úsvitě*, p.227.

<sup>127</sup> 'These villages, which bear the common name Visok, brim over with lechery. Not only do they not consider adultery shameful and dishonest, but it is encouraged by the old men and women, who pimp their daughters and daughters-in-law. The reason for this lechery is, in our opinion, that the boys marry very young (eleven years old), and the girls – very old. A girl's father would say that she has to work to repay the bread that she has eaten while she was young, and the boy's father is in a hurry to marry his son, because his wife is very old and because he needs someone to work in the house. According to Vuk Karadžić, similar cases existed in

Kazalar, 1903), one of the main characters is surprised that the village of Kazalar is so clean. It turns out that the cleanliness of the village is thanks to Western influence: Chakalov, who has studied medicine in Paris and had acquired sick lungs and nerves there, decided to live in a village to improve his health. Chakalov had taught the peasants hygiene and how to derive more profit from their land. The seclusion of this village, on the other hand, provided a villain (Traichev) with the conditions for seducing and keeping a woman (Tsonka) as his mistress, by pretending that they were married. Since the peasants were innocent and trusting, they had no reason not to believe Traichev when he told them that they had married in the nearby town. The village in this case protects him from civic responsibility; he does not need to meet the girl's parents or comply with any norms that would have been compulsory in Sofia. Once he has made her pregnant, he goes to Sofia and becomes an important civil servant. The fact that she is in the village provides him with the security that she will not threaten his career. Thus, although Vazov presents villages as idyllic, he presents them as vulnerable to corruption, because of either the innocence or ignorance of the people. As usual, Vazov propagates Western influence, but in small doses. Moreover, for him, cities can breed wisdom, not only corruption.<sup>128</sup>

### **5. Wealth and sexuality**

Czech and Bulgarian Revivalists were most probably aware of the pseudo-scientific beliefs prevalent at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, according to which lack of energy was attributed to the practice of

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Serbia, but the Serbian government has managed to cure this public evil, although lechery has not been exterminated yet'. Karavelov, 'Zapiski za Bălgaria i bălgarite', p.437.

<sup>128</sup> Ivan Vazov, *Kazalarskata tsaritsa* [1903], in Vazov, *Săchineniia v dvadest toma*, vol.14, ed. by Georgi Konstantinov, Sofia, Bălgarski pisatel, 1956.

masturbation. Thus, the rich urban Greeks in Karavelov, for example, apart from not having children, or not many, could be seen as masturbators. The supposedly stock saying put in the mouth of one of Karavelov's characters that wherever the Greeks walked, the grass would not grow leads to this conclusion.<sup>129</sup> That is, Karavelov is accusing the Greeks and the rich hellenised Bulgarians of sexual infirmity combined with hypertrophied sexual desire. The result is sterility, or lack of a future.

The rich were often represented as having a greater sexual drive than the poor, and they had the means to force the poor to satisfy this sexual drive. In Bulgarian Revival literature, we find not only the elderly mistress of the priest in Karavelov's 'Izvānreden rodoliubets', but also many examples of a Sensibility topos, the seduction of poor girls by rich men. Even Bozveli, who does not typically touch on such themes, writes of Tārnovo's rich Bulgarians:

And those village maidens, whom you can see on the streets with children conceived in adultery, who go to the bishop's residence and back, leaving their children in the churches, these poor girls are the servants of the rich Bulgarians, and they have conceived with their sons or with the 'Platonic brothers', the bishop's friends. [...] The arch-sins that our Tārnovo rich men, their sons, sons-in-law and their relations and the bishop's friends engage in, would disgust not only God, but even the Devil. If we do not stop them, it will be horrible – we shall suffer like Sodom and Gomorrah. And the girl that sleeps in the bishop's residence is the granddaughter of the convent grandmother's grandchild, born Gypsy, a permanent bedmate of the bishop's and the 'Platonic grammarian'.<sup>130</sup>

Having an excess of sexual desire is not the only degenerative quality that the rich possess. The rich, in Karavelov's politico-economic assessment of the Bulgarians, exploit the ordinary Bulgarians and will continue to do so even after the establishment of an independent Bulgarian state.<sup>131</sup> They also appear physically different to such a degree that they could be seen as racially different: 'The whole face of this *chorbadzhiia* was pocked by measles and

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<sup>129</sup> Karavelov, *Maminoto detentse*, p.81.

<sup>130</sup> Bozveli, 'Prosveshthenii evropeits', pp.47-48.

covered with yellow-green spots; his lips were thin and blue, signs of evil, and under his bushy eyebrows small eyes sparkled. Evil and scoffer was this baptised Jew, God forgive him!’<sup>132</sup> The fact that such unattractive people could not only rule the lives of the Bulgarians, but also procreate through forced copulation with Bulgarian women, threatened the biological survival of the Bulgarian nation.

## 6. Wealth and suicide

More explicitly in Czech than in Bulgarian Revivalist literature, other than when imitating the oral tradition, the rich, because of their increased sexual desire, and excitable personalities, are more prone to suicide. Thus, most of the cases of suicide described in Czech Revival literature are of rich people who have sinned. Turinský’s Angelina commits suicide after her sexual sins come to light and she finds herself incapable of coping with responsibility for them. Tyl’s Angelina has sinned sexually and also commits suicide when forced to accept punishment for her actions. Rich capricious women who want to have everything that appeals to them are represented in Klicpera’s *Božena*, where Božena’s rival, the noble Milolida, after failing to acquire Oldřich’s love or to kill Božena, kills herself. Thus, the Czech Revivalists presented rich women as capricious and possibly mentally sick. In some post-Revival literature, suicide was attributed to poor women who have been sexually exploited: the girl, procured for prostitution while her mother was dying in *Z malého světa* commits suicide, and so does the raped woman in *Lešetínský kovář*. The one case of a man committing suicide among the authors I am dealing with is of the sexually and morally questionable Nadasdi Junior of Arbes’s *Kandidáti*

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<sup>131</sup> ‘Whatever people say, but Phanariots and the Turks would be gone one day, but this national

*existence*. Nadasdi Junior kills himself after his illegitimate daughter declares that she would rather stay with her adoptive father. His mental condition probably results from his in-between state – he is a rich Hungarian who had had a libertine’s sexual life, but on the other hand he wants to help the workers, although in the end his rich-man mentality surfaces. Female suicide is described in Mácha’s non-nationalist Romantic work *Máj*, where Jarmila also commits suicide as a result of her loose sexual behaviour.<sup>133</sup> For a man to commit suicide, however, several reasons are combined.

In the Bulgarian Revival, however, avoiding miscegenation, that is, eugenic suicide, was the most frequent reason for sex-linked suicide. Only in Karavelov’s ‘Bozhko’ does the seduced girl commit suicide, in a scenario similar to Tyl’s; that is, when she had to face the consequences of her behaviour. Similarly to Tyl’s Angelina, she first confesses her sins and then kills herself. Otherwise, in the Bulgarian Revival suicide was considered a masculine and revolutionary attribute: revolutionaries were said to have carried poison so that they would be able to kill themselves if captured by the Turks. Thus, suicide was less connected with gender roles in the Bulgarian case than in the Czech, and less connected with extramarital coition. Revivalists would advocate suicide, as long as it served to preserve the purity of the nation’s blood, or if it helped preserve the secrets of the uprisings against Turks.

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infection – the *chorbadzhii* – will remain’, Karavelov, ‘Bozhko’, vol.1, p.204.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.205-06.

<sup>133</sup> Jarmila gives no sign of being rich, except that she can wait by an oak tree for twenty days without doing statutory labour. Another exception is the love-crazed girl in J.J. Marek’s *Jarohněv z Hrádku*. One might note that Masaryk considered *Máj* a representation of the typical broken Czech family, thus a story of moral degeneration. See Pynsent, ‘Národ, nic a láska’ in Eva Broklová (ed.), *Sto let Masarykovy České otázky*, Prague, Ústav T.G. Masaryka, 1997, pp.327-43.



Anderson asserts that there can be a monument to the unknown warrior only if there is a nation; that is, one of the signs of a successful nation-building is the creation of an unknown warrior.<sup>134</sup> Mosse maintains that nationalism has helped the establishment of 'respectability' among the middle classes, as opposed to the aristocracy or the poor. I have been interested not in how nationalism helped the assertion of 'respectability' but in how respectability helped the construction and establishment of nationalism; thus, the creation of a homogeneous 'golden mean', and 'respectability' was one of the objectives of the national propaganda. An excess of wealth, and hence of sexuality, would then go against the creation of a homogeneous healthy/respectable middle-class society. Although considered typical of the Golden pre-Christian Age<sup>135</sup>, as is clear from the Forged Manuscripts, promiscuity is the only component of the Golden Age that the Revivalists reject. The pursuit of the respectable mean involved not only propaganda against miscegenation, but also the advocating of sexual selectivity within the nation. Thus, ideals of female and male beauty and virtue are elaborated on, regarding not only racial, but also moral characteristics. Although in the Bulgarian case the idea of the 'middle classes' was not relevant, the Revivalists' goal was homogeneity none the less. Regardless of the actual need to create a respectable middle class, both Czech and Bulgarian nationalisms were modelled on Western notions, where the ideal of a respectable middle class was dominant in the period following the French Revolution.

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<sup>134</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (1983), London and New York, Verso, 1991, p.9.

<sup>135</sup> See 'Jahoda' in *RKZ* and the discussion of the morality of the pagans in the Religion chapter, see also mediaeval Bohemian chronicles, especially those of Cosmas and Dalimil.

## Conclusion

‘Women do not generate [...] They conceive.’<sup>1</sup> Their wombs can be the receptacles of divinity, as in the case of Virgin Mary; their wombs, however, are also a likely receptacle of infection. Thus, an image of women as close to divinity and to decay was created in the Old and New Testaments, as far as Christian civilisation is concerned. Women’s double nature as the preservers of tradition and the most likely mediator of degeneration was used in the propaganda of both Czech and Bulgarian nationalism. Sexuality, parallel to ‘race’ and ‘degeneration’, was receiving increasing attention during the nineteenth century. These three spheres of medical and anthropological interest were normally interlinked: studies of the racial differences between Blacks and Whites resulted in panoptica exhibiting Black females. As Gilman notes, however, nineteenth-century scholars studied in greater detail Black females and their sexuality than they did the sexuality of Black males. This, as he concludes, was because in finding the sexuality of Black females anomalous they had a proof that female sexuality was altogether deviant.<sup>2</sup> Hence, national mythologies advocated an ideal model of a desexualised chaste woman, as opposed to the sexualised deviant (such as the foreigner or the prostitute).<sup>3</sup> Alien women could, however deviant, be sexually attractive, while alien men were normally not seen as attractive; they either lurked in the bushes for women

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<sup>1</sup> Valeria Finucci, ‘Genealogical Pleasures, Genealogical Disruptions’, ‘Introduction’ in Valeria Finucci and Kevin Brownlee (eds), *Generation and Degeneration. Tropes of Reproduction in Literature and History from Antiquity to Early Modern Europe*, Durham, NC and London, Duke University Press, 2001, p.1.

<sup>2</sup> Gilman, *Difference and Pathology*, p.89, points out that during the nineteenth century there was a number of studies of the genitalia of Black females, while when scholars studied Black males they never discussed their genitalia.

<sup>3</sup> Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, pp.90-113, 133ff.

or seduced them. Thus, race theory made it impossible to match the topos of the beautiful Jewish woman with the notion of a handsome Jew, which, at least until the 1880s, would have been a contradiction.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, although I do not go as far as Foucault and claim that the history of humanity is a history of the control of the sexual drive, I claim that in nineteenth-century nationalism, racism and degenerationism, controlling female sexuality played a vital role.<sup>5</sup> Female sexuality, if not controlled, could bring contamination of the national blood, and because of that, also of the national language, religion and morality, in brief, of everything that came under the name 'tradition'. This is why ideologues of the national idea devoted time and effort to informing the readership what sort of woman was necessary for the nation. As far as corruption was concerned, the gender roles in Czech and Bulgarian national mythologies were strictly delineated: foreign women could corrupt our national men, but our women were only corrupted by force by the foreign men. These gender roles were employed in the discussion of the corruption of all elements of national propaganda this thesis deals with, namely, blood, language, religion, and morals.

It was the purpose of this thesis to assess the differences between what was conceived of as a 'central European' and a 'Balkan' nationalism. Although I started working on this subject anticipating that there will be major differences in the conception of nationalism by the Czechs and the Bulgarians, I could find more similarities than differences. This just might be because Bulgarian Revivalists borrowed ideas that were common among the Czech Revivalists, but I suspect the same general ancient prejudices (and standards) were at work

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<sup>4</sup> Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, pp.xviii-xix.

<sup>5</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1 (1976), London, Penguin, 1998.

in both Revivals. The danger of contamination that race and degeneration theory elaborated spread from Western Europe eastwards. Therefore the fear of contamination was first expressed in the Czech and then in the Bulgarian Revival; the differences between their ideas of nationalism are only of degree, not of quality. This applies also to the fact that Czech Revivalists were more preoccupied with Slav nationalism than Bulgarian; the mechanisms that they applied to promote the Czech nation as a part of the larger Slav nation were the same as the mechanisms employed by the Bulgarians to promote a national sense of belonging. Regardless of the common view that Czech nationalism was more focused on linguistic components than on haematic, when it was a question of sustaining the national sense of belonging through fear, Czech Revivalists used notions of the pollution of blood to the same extent as Bulgarian. In most cases only after the blood of the population was polluted, did pollution of language, religion and morals follow.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, it is true that the Czech National Revival produced more works of literature than the Bulgarian; this, however, is where the Czech Revivalists focused on matters concerning not only the nation's language, but also its blood, religion and morality. Fear was the driving force behind Czech and Bulgarian nationalism of the nineteenth century, as it was behind race, degeneration or conspiracy theory.

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<sup>6</sup> One might suggest that the fear of the extinction of the Czech literary language was a propaganda device to unite the new post-Josephine intelligentsia in a nation-building movement.

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