

## **Donations and donors to the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1944-1989**

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**Abstract.** On the basis of documents from the Scientific Archive of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the author brings back from oblivion the donation gestures of scientists from various generations, common citizens and foreign researchers who continued the tradition of donating property, books and archives to the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS) during the communist regime. Those were neither numerous nor crucial for the functioning of the Academy and, due to the political realities, the donor's will was not always observed, but they show that the tradition of support for science and intellectual pursuits was kept alive. A special attention is paid to the generous donation gestures of foreign scientists that assisted the Academy's efforts to be a repository of national memory. The revival of the practice of private donations to BAS after 1989 demonstrates the significance of the preserved tradition of donating.

**Keywords:** donations, donors, BAS, communist regime

During the first half of the 20th century, the practice of donating in Bulgaria was still a popular social one with a great significance for the functioning of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS) (Stoyanova 2017, 145-186), but it waned in the second half of the century. That decline coincided with the establishment of the communist regime and the nationalization of all the spheres of science and social life. For a long period, the communist regime imposed mandatory forms of “donated”, non-paid labour and the deformation of the market caused by the nature of the party-state left little room for individual donations. Nevertheless, as I was working in the Scientific Archive of BAS on the project “Donors to BAS 1869-2019”, dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, I discovered that the Academy was one of these places of donations and donating practices throughout the whole 1944-1989 period of the state socialism of a Soviet type. This fact has remained outside the focus of research interest. In the present study I hope I can shed some light on the peculiarities of that ignored social practice and to retrieve from oblivion the worthy gestures of individuals to the oldest scientific institution in Bulgaria.

After the left Fatherland Front coalition around the Communist Party took power on 9 September 1944, there were no radical changes in the conditions of scientific research in BAS. Up until the passing of the BAS Law and Statutes in 1947, the funding of scientific activity had been by way of state subsidy, rent income, stock interest and the pre-existing charity funds. Most of the Academy's 65 funds operated in observance of the will of the donors. There were also one-off donations of real estate, money and books (Stoyanova, Velichkova 2015, 57, 63). According to the Academy managers, and the numbers themselves, the state subsidy comprised the most substantial part of the funding. In 1946 the state subsidy was increased from 4 to 10 million leva, 6 million of which was directed by the Academy to the work on the "Dictionary of Bulgarian language". The same year the estimated income from renting real property was 614, 900 leva, and the interests of stocks of various companies varied from 5,200 leva from the Bulgarian stock company "Granitoid" to 173,200 leva from the Bulgarian stock company "Vagleokis" ("Carbon oxide"). In 1946 the income from the Academy's funds were 60,912 leva (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 1a, file 503, p. 313, 315, 330-333, 371, 378).

The problems of charity and the organizations that provided it did not draw the attention of the new rulers straight away. That allowed the institutions, among which was BAS, to go on using the monetary funds. Until 1947, given availability, the funds granted scholarships, prize money or allowances. If that was not done, the reasons were not a deliberate policy on the part of the institution but rather the insufficient financial resources of the funds, many of which, as in previous years, were left to capitalize. Their capacities after 1944 were additionally restricted by the high post-war inflation and various measures taken by the government. Yet despite the complicated economic and political situation in the country, the gestures of donation did not end. Thus, in 1945-1947 three new charity funds were created at BAS, the donors Acad. Stefan Mladenov (1880-1963) (140,000 leva for works on Bulgarian language and comparative linguistics), the diplomat Dimitar Minchovich (1864 - after 1940) (1,304,778 leva) and the heirs of the Zlatarski family (1 million leva) (Entsiklopediya 2011). Those, however, did not last for long.

On 1 February 1947 the Great National Assembly (GNA) passed a new Law on BAS that defined it as "the highest scientific institute of the country. It is a state institution with its own autonomous creative, organizational and administrative life under the authority of the Council of Ministers...". The Law entered into force on 1 March the following year. On 4 March 1947 Todor Pavlov, a communist philosopher, was appointed as its president (Todev et al. 2017, 14, 17). These changes in the BAS's operational conditions affected the Academy's funds too. Apart from the accelerated opening of new institutes that began the same year, all real estate, donations and bequests to the Academy (excluding the special purpose bequests and donations) as well as the income from them were centralized in a single general fund "Academy". That was also referred to in the Law - Art. 11, para. 2, and in the BAS's Statutes (para. 57 and 59). On the basis of these documents the Governing Council (GC) drew up Rules of procedure

for the fund that were approved by the Council of Ministers. The incomes from the fund were to be kept in government bonds or securities and, by the General Assembly's decision, part of the revenues could be invested in realty. The fund was governed by the GC of the Academy, and its accounts were kept by an official, nominated by the Council and approved by the Ministry of Finance. At the beginning of each year, when the General Assembly adopted the Academy's budget, it also adopted the fund's budget, prepared by the GC and approved by the Ministry of Finance. The use of the fund's resources was controlled by a monitoring council of two academicians, elected for a term of a year, and a representative of the Ministry of Finance (Stoyanova, Velichkova 2015, 63-64). The increased role of the Ministry of Finance in controlling the resources that were not part of the state budget is evident. Those, however, were not of much significance after the nationalization of the industry and the banking sector at the end of 1947. That is why this fund as well as the other similar funds - at Sofia University (SU) and the Bulgarian Economic Association stopped functioning (Stoyanova, Velichkova 2015, 64). The funding of scientific activity became mainly the concern and responsibility of the state.

The fate of the funds of and estate bequests to the Academy depended not only on the political climate but also on the character of that type of donations which were often connected with additional conditions. Thus, on 8 April 1946 Dragomir Kostov Kazakov (1867-1948), born in Tulcha, a retired opera singer and director bequeathed his apartment on 16 Venelin Str. to the Archaeological Institute in Sofia under the condition that a fund be set up in his name. The income from the rent and interests was to be used every three years for prize money for the composition of a work on Bulgarian archaeology (SA of BAS, f. 1, inv. 35, file 1, p. 15). Unfortunately, the fund was to be set up after the death of Kazakov's housekeeper. Since the housekeeper in question had not been paying the property taxes, being only a tenant, in 1956 the Academy as an owner was deprived of the apartment, which was confiscated by the state on account of the unpaid taxes.

The execution of the estate donations to BAS was hindered by the nationalization of the built-up urban property in April 1948. Thus, in 1946 the family of Anastasia and Dr. Petar Kozarevi, people of proven reputation for charity bequeathed an orchard of 6,170 sq. m in the Boyana area, 7 Antim I Str. But since the bequest entered into force in 1948, during the implementation of the Law on the expropriation of the large urban property, it was declared void and terminated in 1951.<sup>1</sup>

One-off donations such as bequeathing valuable archival collections and libraries to the Academy were more successful. With respect to such intellectual treasures both the donors, and the Academy demonstrated enviable nobleness. For example, although the widow of the musician, Prof. Dobri Hristov (1875-1941) expressed willingness to give the Academy all of her late husband's manuscripts, including his original musical scores for free, in 1946 Prof. Stoyan Brashovanov (1888-1956) proposed that they be bought. While he was making

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<sup>1</sup> Reference provided by the BAS Administrative Department from 14 February 2014.

an inventory of Dobrev's archives in the latter's home, he witnessed the financial predicament of the widow and her family and proposed to the BAS president to make that gesture (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 1a, file 487, p. 250).

Many eminent intellectuals perfectly naturally perceived the Academy as a repository of national spiritual heritage and donated to it. Thus, on 3 November 1947, the wife of the regular Academy member and prominent literary critic, Prof. Boyan Penev (1882-1927), the well-known poetess, Dora Gabe (1888-1983) deposited for temporary storage his archive, organized in 41 special cardboard boxes (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 1a, file 487, p. 213). The same year, the prominent jurist and regular Academy member since 1946 Prof. Stefan Balamezov (1883-1960) donated to the BAS Archives two letters of the Interim Russian government from 11 April and 13 April 1878 that he personally discovered. The particular value of the donation was that those letters, concerning the efforts of the Russian army to preserve the book repositories in Bulgarian territories were signed by the "young official for special assignments, Ivan Vazov". This gesture on the part of the academician was highly appreciated by the BAS Scientific Secretary, Prof. Spiridon Kazandzhiev (1882-1951), as it was in 1947 that the Academy started to organize and order its archives (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 1a, file 487, p. 223-225). The latter had increased and on 9 April 1949 was renamed as the "Archival Institute", which on 31 December 1959 was once again transformed into the "Archives" department of BAS (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 1a, file 697, p. 220). Later, within that department the BAS Scientific Archive would take shape as an important specialized unit for the storage of documents related to the Academy's history.

Another important department that was developed and enriched additionally, thanks to donation gestures was the Central Library of BAS (CL-BAS). The accumulation of its stock had begun as early as the National Revival period and since 1911 a mandatory deposit of the works by the Academy members was introduced<sup>2</sup>. This tradition continued after the war. But in order to alleviate the consequences of the post-war crisis and the repressive policy towards the former political and cultural elite, BAS, most often, practiced buying out personal book collections. The Academy did so in 1947 with the personal library of the prominent historian, archaeologist, and folklorist, Prof. Yordan Ivanov (1872-1947) and the library of the famous jurist and politician, Prof. Stefan Bobchev (1853-1940) (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 1a, file 487, p. 20-25, 228, 317).

Despite the complexity of the circumstances, other scientists continued the Revival tradition of donating their libraries. Such a gesture was made by one of the leading Antiquity scholars, Prof. Gavril Katsarov (1874-1958), who in 1947 donated his valuable, well-stocked library to the Academy's Archaeological Institute, so that it could be of use for "the young developing cadres within the field of archaeology", as it was pointed out in the acknowledgment letter of 16 October 1947 by the Academy's management to Katsarov (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 1a, file 487, p. 217). The Academy took on the responsibility of moving the evacuated library from Sofia to Pirdop and Katsarov supervised the transfer that

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<sup>2</sup> Reference provided by the Central Library of BAS, S. Naydenova, Director, 2018.

took place in the summer of the following year (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 1a, file 487, p. 293).

Various popular and not so popular authors also donated books written or owned by them, for which the Academy's management always expressed its gratitude. For instance, on 21 March 1947, Petar Cholakov-Zarin from Sofia donated his works on the history of the cooperative movement that were not owned by BAS Library (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 1a, file 487, p. 106). The Academy also kept expanding its library fund with the works of its members as was required by Art. 3 of its internal Rules of procedure. Among the most significant contributors in that respect for the 1946-1947 period are the academicians Nikola Mihov (1877-1962), Dr. Konstantin Pashev (1873-1961), Dr. Vladimir Markov (1883-1962), Andrey Protich (1875-1959), Nikolay Liliiev (1885-1960), Ivan Buresh (1885-1980) and others (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 1a, file 487, p. 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 96, 197, 223).

In the following decades the conditions for scientific research in Bulgaria changed more radically. The Academy was definitively structured on the Soviet model with the BAS Law of 1949, passed by the GNC on 16 September, whose Art. 1 stated that "BAS is the highest state scientific institution and is under the authority of the Council of Ministers". Nevertheless, the Academy was not stripped of the possibility to receive private donations as well. Thus, Art. 41 explicitly specified that "BAS will have the following rights and privileges: all of its real estate, funds, donations and bequests in favour of the Academy, and its income will be exempt from any taxes, charges, duties, stamps". And under Art. 34 the income from the bequests to the Academy were to be used in accordance with the will of the donor following special Regulations, approved by the Council of Ministers (SG, 235, 11 October 1949).

The Law amending the BAS Law of 14 March 1957, that repealed almost all of the articles of the preceding Law, kept only the afore-mentioned Art. 41 (Izvestiya 1957). Under the new Law, the Academy was again to be administered by a Statutes, approved on 30 March 1957 by Decree 141 of the Presidium of the National Assembly, which, however, did not contain a dedicated text on donations. The academic funds had already ceased to exist, and the funds of the two other institutions - the Bulgarian Economic Association and Sofia University - had also been nationalized, in 1949 and 1952, respectively (Stoyanova, Velichkova 2015, 64). Not much later, on 11 December 1959, on the basis of a Decree of the Council of Ministers, the General Assembly of the Academy adopted a new structural reform for the development of the institutes, based on the expansion of facilities and increase of scientific cadres. The further development of the Academy and the experiment with the creation of united centres for science and cadre training of BAS institutes and SU faculties in 1972 necessitated amendments to the constitution documents as well. Thus, in 1973 new Statutes was adopted, with an explicit inclusion of a provision in Art. 57, according to which "all property, given to BAS, bequests in its favour will be administered in accordance with the will of the testators and donors and will be added to the Academy's main resources, insofar as this does not contradict its tasks and interests". That provision was also preserved in the following revision of the Statutes in July 1977 (SG, 38, 15 May 1973; SG, 59, 29 July 1977). The question of whether those

regulatory documents were observed by the high-ranking officials is a different one. Records show more instances to the contrary.

During the 1950s and 1960s scientists, intellectuals and their relatives continued the tradition of donating estates to the Academy. Rada Ileva, the daughter of the eminent writer and politician, Todor Vlaykov (1865-1943), executing the will of her late father, donated with Act of donation No. 30 of 14 January 1959 part of its own ground floor on 65 Asparuh Str. The estate consisted of two rooms and a service closet that had been used as residential and office space by Vlaykov. The donation was made in order for BAS to preserve Vlaykov's study, library and furniture in their original arrangement by the writer (SA of BAS, f. 1, inv. 35, file 4, p. 4-5). As is well-known, donating was a family trait of the Vlaykovs. Rada had chosen BAS, for which she informed the Academy in 1954. BAS GC set the condition that she agrees to also donate or sell the writer's personal belongings and archive. Only in that case the Academy would have had the legitimate right for interference for the accommodation officials who had already given the rooms to tenants. After 1944 the practice was common in big cities where property owners were forced to give their unoccupied living spaces to people selected by the municipality. That was especially common in Sofia whose constant development continued to make it the preferred place for many migrants from all over the country. During the 1946-1965 period the capital grew intensively with about 21.1-23.2% of Bulgarian urban population being concentrated in it (Kiradzhiev 2010, 118). That gave rise to permanent housing crisis, which, during the 1940s and 1950s, was being solved at the expense of the owners of the then available housing stock. Despite a certain delay, Rada agreed to donate everything with the exception of the archive that was to be paid after evaluation. Saving the rooms from being appropriated for public use was more important to her (SA of BAS, f. 216k, inv. 1, file 1080, p. 5-8). The efforts of R. Vlaykova and BAS were successful. In 1979, however, BAS hands over for free the writer's estate, all his moveable property and library to the Ministry of Culture to be included in the National Museum of Bulgarian Literature.<sup>3</sup>

The example with Vlaykov's will clearly shows that even when the heirs and BAS managed to get around the policy of solving the housing crisis to the detriment of owners, the will of the donors was not fully observed. There were other cases of alteration of the donor's will that was not the fault of the Academy but rather of the respective government officials who used donations to BAS to solve other issues. That was the case with the donation of Nikola Tanev. In 1955 the renowned artist, Nikola Tanev (1890-1962) donated to the Academy his apartment on 89 Evlogi Georgiev Blvd. The apartment, together with all of the artist's moveable property, artworks and personal belongings, were given by BAS for free to the National Art Gallery for the purpose of opening a Nikola Tanev House Museum.<sup>4</sup>

A similar case is the one with the bequest of the first Bulgarian female professor of nuclear physics, Elisaveta Karamihaylova (1897-1968). In 1968 Karami-

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<sup>3</sup> Reference provided by the BAS Administrative department from 14 February 2014.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

haylova bequeathed to BAS her house on II Krakra Str. with all of her property as well as her body to be used for research on the effects of radiation on human organism. With her donation gesture E. Karamihaylova expressed her attitude to the Academy where she started to work in 1955 escaping the hostile work environment at Sofia University. At the Physics Institute to which she was attached, Elisaveta Karamihaylova established and presided till her death the Department of Radioactivity and Nuclear Spectroscopy. There she was appointed to professorship in 1962 and dedicated herself to radioecology. Her position at BAS allowed the “Bulgarian Marie Curie” to keep on living with science, through science and for science. She enjoyed esteem and respect at the Academy, which led to her decision to donate to BAS everything she had owned (Lazarova, Balabanov 2013, 23, 29, 24). Unfortunately, despite the will of the donor, the legal provisions and the repeated requests on the part of BAS, the latter did not take possession of the property. It was appropriated by Sofia Municipality and currently is occupied by the Union of Architects in Bulgaria.<sup>5</sup>

More often than not, the Academy was not able to keep estate donations not only because of the municipal housing or institutional policies, but also because of the actions of relatives and heirs. Thus, 4/8 ideal parts of an apartment on 17A Hadzhi Dimitar Str., fl. 3 donated by Tinka Nikolova Krastevich in 1954 were transferred to the Municipality under the Decree of the Council of Ministers No. 202 of 1961 and sold to the tenants. In another case, the Academy received money for an apartment on 120 Rakovski Str., donated by Engineer Bogomil Minkov Radoslavov in 1939, since in 1973, by a court’s decision, the apartment was given to a private person.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the loss of estate over the years, the Academy kept receiving donations. Thus, in the autumn of 1962, Katya and Dimitar Tsvetynovi, the parents of the prematurely deceased in an accident Engineer Ventseslav D. Tsvetynov, Assistant at the Physics Institute, donated in his memory a floor of their house on 4 Panoramen Pat Str., Boyana, as well as half of its yard space. Taking into account their son’s dedication to his work at the Institute, Ventseslav Tsvetynov’s parents expressed their will that the donated estate be used as a House of Culture by BAS and specifically by the Institute of Electronics and to be named after the deceased. The donors wished that the house be used as a “place for theoretical discussions and for organizing cultural meetings of the Institute’s assistants” (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 35, file 4, p. 2, 6). The donation of the Engineer Ventseslav Tsvetynov House of Culture at the Institute of Electronics was one of the few estate donations during the communist period that were realized in accordance to the donors’ will.

The one-off objects donations such as libraries, manuscripts and books proved to be much more successful and correspondent with the will of the donors. Thus, on 14 February 1962, the Scientific Secretary-General of BAS informed the Presidium Bureau that Engineer Stefan Peychu had donated books to the Academy via the Bulgarian legation in Brussels (SA of BAS,

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

f. 1s, inv. 14, file 14, p. 1). In 1965 the Academy received the relatively small (720 volumes) but highly valuable personal library of Vasil D. Stoyanov (1839-1910) - one of the founders of the Bulgarian Learned Society and its deputy president, a literary and public figure, who established the library of the Society. The collection contained valuable works and Bulgarian printed books of the National Revival period that were bibliographical rarities. Later, the BAS Library was donated the personal library of Toma St. Tomov (1891-1988), an eminent philologist, expert on French medieval literature, and dictionary compiler. In that way the Library acquired books from the end of the XIX century and modern literature in the fields of linguistics and literary studies in French, Spanish and Russian. BAS was also bequeathed the library of the writer and social activist Vicho Ivanov (1901-1979) of 3,500 volumes. Other sizeable book donations were made by the heirs of the writer Stoyan Mihaylovski (1856-1927) - over 2,000 volumes. 670 volumes belonging to the historian at the Institute of History at BAS Yaroslav Yotsov (1907-1977) were also donated to the Academic Library.<sup>7</sup> In 1984 the politician and first female Bulgarian minister Tsola Dragoycheva (1898-1993) bequeathed posthumously to BAS her library of over 3,000 volumes in Bulgarian, Russian and other languages (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 50, file 108, p. 3, 4). Dragoycheva's decision was influenced by her friend, who provided hideout for her before 1944, the author of a bibliography of her works and a director of the BAS Library, Prof. Elena Savova.

Elena Savova's activity in the fields of bibliography and library studies is intertwined with various donation gestures made by foreign benefactors to the Academy and Bulgaria, often motivated by her erudition and work. Elena Savova (1918-2011) studied Romance philology at Sofia University and started to work for BAS in 1946 after undergoing training by the leading figures of bibliography studies in Bulgaria, Todor Borov and Nikola Mihov. Till 1988 she was the director of CL-BAS and did a lot not only about its organizational development as an information centre for the advances in science but also about the acquisition of rare and valuable documents and sources for Bulgarian history. Her efforts in that area intensified on the occasion of the 1300th anniversary of the foundation of the Bulgarian state. During that period Savova witnessed the noble gestures of various foreign scientists to provide free support, by way of scientific advice or administrative assistance, the work of collecting sources for Bulgarian history. Within a few years microfilms of about 5,600 manuscripts were collected and made available for Bulgarian scientists (SA of BAS, f. 163, inv. 3, file 1272, p. 5-9).

The most prominent among those was *Codex Assemanius*, Glagolitic Old Church Slavonic canon evangeliary dating from the 11th century and owned by the Vatican Apostolic Library. The Librarian of the Vatican Library at the time, Alfons Maria Stickler, made a grand gesture by not only providing Savova with 370 colour slides of this valuable document but also gave his permission

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<sup>7</sup> Reference provided by the Central Library of BAS, S. Naydenova, Director, 2018.

for the publication of a phototype colour edition by BAS and the Vatican on the occasion of the 1300th anniversary of the foundation of the Bulgarian state. To that end a special agreement was signed between BAS and the Vatican Apostolic Library (SA of BAS, f. 163, inv. 3, file 1272, p. 9).

The microfilm collection of the CL-BAS was also enriched by manuscripts, stored in the library of the Sinai Monastery of St. Catherine, of 4,807 documents in total. 40 of them were Bulgarian and the rest were: 2,254 Greek, 97 Georgian, 2 Armenian, 696 Arabic, 6 Ethiopian, 1,727 firmans, of which 670 were Turkish and 1,067 Arabic. This acquisition became possible thanks to the management of the Congressional Library in Washington, with which CL-BAS has kept an intensive book exchange over the years. The management of the Congressional Library granted the request of Prof. Savova, who during a 1974 Bibliography convention in Washington saw the catalogue of those manuscripts and asked her colleagues at the Congressional Library for assistance. By virtue of the fact that it found its way to the CL-BAS, the Sinai microfilm collection became available to European Bulgarian studies scholars for the first time (SA of BAS, f. 163, inv. 3, file 1272, p. 10).

Few years later, in 1977, Prof. Savova established close relations with the Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies in Thessaloniki (i.e., the studies of texts by the post-apostolic church fathers of the 2th-4th centuries, that set up the central religious doctrines) during a working visit by invitation of the Association for Slavonic Studies. It was then that she not only arranged a regular exchange of literature and microfilms but, as a goodwill gesture, also personally received from the Director of the Patriarchal Institute P. Christou microfilms of 10 manuscripts kept at the Zograph Monastery at Mt. Athos (SA of BAS, f. 163, inv. 3, file 1272, p. 92).

In 1981 the Director of the British Museum Library helped Savova find the original source of Edmund Fry's *Pantographia; Containing Accurate Copies of All the Known Alphabets in The World*, published in London in 1799. A copy of the book was found by Elena Savova in the National Library of India in Calcutta in 1979 and incited her to start looking for its source as *Pantographia* contained Old Bulgarian Glagolitic alphabet along with over 250 other alphabets. The graphic presentation of the 24 letters is accompanied by the following comment: "Bulgaria is a province of Turkey; the character favors much of Illyrian, but the dialect is Sclavonian". That particular comment aroused Savova's curiosity and made her attempt to find E. Fry's original source. With the help of the Director of the British Museum Library she did manage to find the source in Pierre-Simon Fournier le Jeune's *Manuel typographique utile aux gens de lettres et à ceux qui exercent les différentes parties de l'art de l'imprimerie* (t. 2, Paris, 1766) (SA of BAS, f. 163, inv. 3, file 1272, p. 1-11, 22).

The good will to donate by assisting the efforts of colleagues was the guiding motive of those Bulgarian and foreign donors. Certainly, they were made possible by the policy of improving the relations between the two Cold War blocks and were part of the policy of cultural influence pursued by the countries involved. But Savova always emphasized the purely human responsiveness of the foreign benefactors and insisted that "Men of letters around the world get along excellently" (Sreshta 2008).

Many ordinary foreigners who became friends of Bulgaria under the influence of their Bulgarian acquaintances also manifested willingness to donate. Such is the case with the Cypriot citizen, Thanos Kanistras. On 1 August 1983 he wrote a letter to Marin Zhechev (1935-1996), councilor at the Embassy of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and director of the Bulgarian Cultural-Information Centre in Nicosia. In the letter Kanistras offered to donate his personal library. He explained that he was motivated by the good Bulgarian-Greek relations and his wish "to contribute to a better mutual knowledge of the cultures of the two nations to promote peace and progress" as well as by his high respect for the "erudition and expertise" of Marin Zhechev. Kanistras's library consisted of numerous volumes of historical, encyclopaedical and other publications and was located in Athens. He stated that he was "ready to send the library wherever" Zhechev found "appropriate". Marin Zhechev informed his direct superior, the Deputy Chairman of the Culture Committee Milen Marinov, the Foreign Affairs Ministry, the Director of CL-BAS and his former colleague, the Director of the Institute for Balkan Studies. M. Zhechev himself was a prominent professor in Greek Studies, an assistant at the Institute for Balkan Studies and a lecturer at Sofia University. Apparently, the view that the most appropriate thing to do was to give the library to CL-BAS predominated. At its meeting on 9 November 1983, the BAS Scientific Secretariat accepted the donation of Kanistras's library as a separate collection to be housed in CL-BAS with the latter sending a donation certificate to Thanos Kanistras (SA of BAS, f. 1s, inv. 50, file 93, p. 5, 22, 24).

Some scientific assistants who worked on the "Long-term national programme for finding, microfilming and acquiring documents and materials related to Bulgarian history from foreign countries" also demonstrated generosity and donated to the Academic Library manuscripts they managed to discover. Though they worked on state-assigned tasks and were being seconded on a specific programme, it was a matter of ethics and "highly patriotic" professional researcher consciousness for them to submit to CL-BAS the found manuscripts. That was pointed out in Elena Savova's letter of 19 August 1981 to the BAS's Scientific Secretary-General. She expressly stated that "the stock of microfilms and other manuscript copies has been enriched thanks to the donations of BAS scientific assistants". Among the specially mentioned was Prof. Bonyu Angelov (1915-1989), the renowned literary historian of the Old Bulgarian period who was "the first one to readily donate to CL 67 microfilms and 14 photocopies of manuscripts, acquired during his long scientific activity" that began in 1946 at the Institute for Bulgarian Language and since 1949 continued at the Literary Institute. Prof. Romyana Pavlova (1933-2011) of Sofia University was also mentioned. Prof. Pavlova was a linguist, expert on Russian and Slavonic studies, head of the Linguistic-textual Laboratory for the study of Old Bulgarian texts at Sofia University (1981-1991), who donated two microfilms to CL-BAS. The eminent expert on mediaeval poetry Stefan Kozhuharov (1934-2000) at the Literary Institute also donated a microfilm of a valuable manuscript, kept at the Odessa State Library (SA of BAS, f. 163, inv. 3, file 1272, p. 20).

The examples listed give reasons to conclude that during the socialist regime donation initiatives were neither numerous, nor crucial for the functioning of the Academy, but were, nevertheless, characteristic for the whole 1944-1989 period. Most donations were of literary heritage items, but there were also real estate bequests. As expected, due to the political realities, the donor's will was not always observed, yet they show that the tradition of support for science and intellectual pursuits was kept alive. A tradition continued by BAS scientists from different generations as well as intellectuals and common citizens. Particularly impressive were the goodwill gestures to the Bulgarian scientists made by their peers at prominent international cultural institutions. The revival of the practice of private donations to BAS after 1989 demonstrates the significance of the preserved tradition of donating.

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