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TITLE: ETHNICITY, FOLKLORE, AND CULTURAL POLITICS IN BULGARIA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project analyzes the Bulgarian policy of monoethnism, its historical roots, its ideology, its administration, its cultural ramifications and the response to this policy in unofficial realms among Gypsies and Pomaks (Bulgarian-speaking Moslems).

In 19th century Eastern Europe, the emerging nation-states sought their definitions and rationalizations in the peasant traditions which had survived foreign invasion and dominance. The native peasants were viewed as the soul and identity of the nation, and folklore was the legitimate expression of the peasants. It is not an accident, then, that the rise of nationalism coincided with early collecting activities in folklore.

Bulgarians, for example, constantly speak of 500 years of "the Turkish yoke" or Turkish slavery. I will not here argue the validity of this image of Turkish oppression; I am merely noting that both Bulgarian scholars and lay people alike believe it to be true. Suffice it to say that Western historians present a very different view of the Turkish period. The biggest bone of contention is whether the Turks forcibly converted a group of Eastern Orthodox Bulgarians to Islam. Bulgarians believe wholeheartedly in the conversion of these Pomaks, forced by "fire and sword." Whether factual or not, the forced conversion of the Pomaks has become part of the historical national conscience of the Bulgarian people. The capitulation to Islam by the Pomaks is juxtaposed
against the stalwart defense of the true faith (Christianity) by the Bulgarian people, even in the face of death. From a native Bulgarian point of view, the difference between Bulgarian and Pomak is more than a difference in religion -- it is a difference in attitude (resisting vs. surrendering), and perhaps a living reminder of the 500 years of Ottoman domination which they are still lamenting. We can now better comprehend the government policy of the 1970s and 1980s which seeks to remove all Turkish elements of contemporary culture, leaving the "pure Bulgarian stock."

One of the most important ways in which the cultural policy of monoethnism is implemented is through folklore. Government involvement in folklore takes many forms--some overt, such as sponsoring folklore festivals, schools, and ensembles, and others covert, such as determining the direction of folklore research. Government involvement derives from a centralist cultural policy which is fraught with inconsistency. On the one hand, the avowed aim is the preservation of traditional folklore; on the other hand, traditional folklore is usually religious, ethnic, regional and conservative--traits incompatible with the goal of creating a unified socialist Bulgarian folk culture. The result is a government policy of selective preservation of folklore coupled with directed innovation to serve political aims.

For example, Bulgarian folk festivals supposedly present "authentic" folklore, whereas the folklore of ethnic minorities is not permitted at folk festivals. When Turks, Pomaks, and Gypsies
do participate, they perform Bulgarian music rather than anything that is distinctively associated with their ethnic group. No Moslem rituals are found; no Gypsy music or dance are permitted, even though these are some of the most active traditions in contemporary Bulgaria. In 1985, for example, the instrument zurna, which is played exclusively by Gypsies, was banned from the Pirin region folk festival. "Traditional" costumes are required at festivals, but the costumes of the Moslem minorities are purposely altered to appear less Moslem and more Bulgarian. Song texts are often reworked by the directors of the groups or by judges at pre-festival screenings. Moslem names in songs are changed to Slavic names and references to Moslem holidays are omitted.

Authenticity is, then, a concept used for ideological purposes in a discourse of cultural conversation. Purity and authenticity turn out to mean conformity to a unified, monoethnic image of the nation-state.

Monoethnism emerged as a theme in Bulgarian cultural policy of the 1960s and has intensified in the last few years. To understand the magnitude of the policy, one needs to examine population figures for the ethnic minorities. Out of a total of 8.5 million Bulgarians, over one million are ethnic Turks, 400,000 are Gypsies, and 75,000 are Pomaks. The minority population represents over 17% of the total population, all of whom are Moslem. The first targets of assimilation were Pomaks and Gypsies. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, they were forced to
accept new Slavic names and give up their Moslem ones. All written records with Moslem names (such as birth and death certificates) were re-issued. The nationality designations Ciganin (Gypsy) and Bulgaro-Mohamedanin (Pomak) were removed from the internal passport and from print entirely. Fines were levied for the wearing of Moslem clothing such as shalvari (Turkish balloon pants), veils, aprons, and headscarves, and for circumcising sons. In addition, certain types of folk music were made illegal; fines against zurna playing were instituted in some regions, and kjucek, a distinctive type of Gypsy music and dance, was banned from restaurants and parties.

In effect, Pomaks and Gypsies were legislated out of existence. According to the government, this was a step in abolishing discrimination and ethnic boundaries in the path toward building an egalitarian socialist society. In practice, discrimination flourishes and boundaries are maintained, because assimilation is desired neither by the minorities nor by the majority.

In 1985 the policy of name changes was extended to the Turkish minority of over one million, and violence ensued. The Turks resisted the changes, some taking up arms or committing suicide, and army troops were brought into villages to quell the unrest. Hundreds of people ended up in prison, and Amnesty International cited Bulgaria as a violator of human rights. The government seems to be trying to eradicate all traces of a Turkish presence and to force the Turks to accept a new identity based on a new history. The ideological preoccupation with purity,
homogeneity, monoethnism, and nationalism requires reconstructing not only the present and the future but also the past.

The latest chapter of monoethnism is now unfolding: the forced expulsion of the ethnic Turks to Turkey. This extreme move allows the government to escape the international wrath it suffered during the name changing episodes while physically cleansing the country of most of its Moslems. But the economic effects of losing nearly 10% of its population will surely handicap the country in the next decade.

Finally, my analysis of the unofficial realm has found Pomak and Gypsy ethnicity quite alive. In spite of compulsory education in the Bulgarian language and integrated housing, Gypsies continue to use their own language, Romani, at home, and use Moslem names among themselves. Furthermore, they confirm to the socialist work ethic just enough to reap the benefits of socialism, such as guarantee of work, medical care, pensions, and vacation benefits, without giving up the independence of the free market. They continue many traditional occupations plus run profitable black market enterprises. They are also defiant of the government in the realm of music and dance. Changing names and abolishing Gypsies as an official ethnic group has not altered the distinctiveness Gypsies embrace.

Pomaks also display their ethnicity in private settings, although not as flamboyantly as Gypsies. They still favor arranged marriages and keep alive much of the traditional folklore in their isolated villages.
To conclude, in Bulgaria, the oppression of the Ottoman empire is still vivid in people's minds and has informed post-war state cultural policy. The goal of Bulgarian cultural policy is to create a unified, modern, socialist culture and to erase traces of the religious, ethnic past. Along these lines assimilation has been promoted and the display of ethnicity has been curtailed. However, ethnic differences are also part of collective memory, and these cultural forms persist, albeit in covert and changed forms. These unofficial expressions confound ideological hegemony, creating a type of syncretism which may be suggestive for comparative research.
PHILOSOPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Folklore is a discipline which bloomed in Europe during the 19th century, an era when interpretation of the past assumed political ramifications for the formation of nations. Collecting, preserving, and analyzing the past played an important role in creating the emerging identity of nations and in rejecting foreign rule. As early as 1800, Herder's notion of the nation as the ethnos gained acceptance. According to Herder, every nation was an organic entity with its own native cultural institutions and pure spirit which are best reflected in the folk poetry of the peasants. If a nation is to seek political sovereignty, it must find its pure spirit and build its future on the cultural traditions of the past. For the Germans, this meant rejecting French influences; for the Greeks, it meant rejecting Ottoman Turkish domination and returning to the supposed unbroken continuity with classical Greece; for the Finns, this meant rejecting both Swedish and Russian domination and liberating the true Finnish spirit embodied in the rural poetry of the Kalevala (Herzfeld 1982; Karnoouh 1984; Wilson 1976).

Eastern Europe is a particularly fruitful area in which to explore the relationship between nationalism and folklore. In Eastern Europe, the emerging nation-states sought their definitions and rationalizations in the peasant traditions which had survived foreign invasions and dominance (Hammel and Halpern 1969:18). For the Central Europeans, the foreign ruler was the Hapsburgs, for the Russians the Mongols, for the Southeast
Europeans, the Ottoman Turks. The native peasants were viewed as the soul and identity of the nation, and folklore was the legitimate expression of the peasants. It is not an accident, then, that the rise of nationalism coincided with early collecting activities in folklore. The collection and publication of folklore was part of the rationalization of cultural and political unity. It may be claimed that the politics of culture of the 18th century and 19th century Europe gave rise to the discipline of folklore.

In the 20th century folklore continues to play an important role in defining historical and cultural identities and in legitimizing political regimes. Emerging nations have sometimes used folklore to forge a unified national culture replacing competing tribal, religious, regional, or ethnic cultures. Examples can be drawn from Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Soviet Union (Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983). On the other hand, in Yugoslavia, a nation of six major ethnic groups, early attempts to forge one united Yugoslav culture have given way to multi-ethnic tension. Yugoslav folklore studies have tended to document ethnic distinctiveness, particularly in the historical sense (Halpern 1970:328). Furthermore, minority oppositional movements, such as those of the Kosovo Albanians in Yugoslavia, and those of Quebec, Catalonia, and Brittany have used distinctive folklore (in addition to language) as one rationale for separatist doctrine (Handler and Linnekin 1984, Wollard 1985, McDonald 1986).
In Eastern Europe, the post-war centralized socialist nation-states have attempted to construct a symbolic order based on interpretations of the past. This symbolic order may be referred to as ideology (Geertz 1973:207), and its centralized praxis component defined as cultural policy, which is carried out by state cultural managers. Ideology, it will be shown, develops historical consciousness as a source of legitimacy for the state.

This research project concentrates on Bulgaria, a country whose cultural policy is perhaps the most dramatic of any East European nation, and perhaps more dramatic than that of the Soviet Union, the model for Bulgaria. Bulgaria is an excellent setting in which to examine the creation of cultural policy in the context of official ideology and historical consciousness. In Bulgaria the not-so-distant peasant past is viewed ambivalently. On the one hand the peasants are viewed as the soul and identity of the nation; on the other hand, contemporary peasants are somewhat embarrassing, having local and religious loyalties and having somewhat politically controversial views. The centralized Bulgarian socialist regime has developed far-ranging cultural policies to preserve a selected "authenticity" of the peasant past while simultaneously developing a new unified socialist culture. My research analyzed how "authenticity" is defined and how folklore is selectively reconstructed for performance and collection.

My first task in this report is to describe the relationship of folklore to the historical events which Bulgarians today
consider significant. In general, East Europeans view their pre-
nationhood past as a time of foreign domination. Bulgarians, for
examples speak of 500 years of "the Turkish yoke" or Turkish
slavery. I am not here contesting the validity of Turkish
oppression; I am merely noting that both Bulgarian scholars and
lay people alike believe it to be true, and this is what counts in
analyzing national collective memory. Suffice it to say that
Western historians present a very different view of the Turkish
period, noting a flourishing of trade and crafts in the early
centuries, plus a stimulation of the arts from the east. The
biggest bone of contention is whether the Turks forcibly converted
a group of Eastern Orthodox Bulgarians to Islam. Bulgarians
believe wholeheartedly in the conversion of the Pomaks, forced by
"fire and sword." On the other hand, many Western scholars claim
that most conversions were voluntary, in response to various
economic, legal and religious pressures (Sugar 1977, Inalcik 1960,
Vryonis 1972, Bajraktarević 1936).

Whether factual or not, the forced conversion of the Pomaks
has become part of the historical national conscience of the
Bulgarian people. The capitulation to Islam by the Pomaks is
juxtaposed against the stalwart defense of the true faith
(Christianity) by the Bulgarian people, even in the face of death.
From a native Bulgarian point of view, the difference between
Bulgarian and Pomak is more than a difference in religion -- it is
a difference in attitude (resisting vs. surrendering), and perhaps
a living reminder of the 500 years of Ottoman domination which
they are still lamenting. We can now better comprehend the
government policy of the 1970s and 1980s which seeks to remove all
Turkish elements from contemporary culture, leaving the "pure
Bulgarian stock."

Bulgarian scholars proudly claim that under the "Turkish
yoke" the peasant populace clung to their language and folklore in
an effort to maintain their Bulgarian identity. They did not
capitulate to Turkish cultural assimilation. "... Bulgarian
culture now became a weapon of the people by means of which they
resisted their conquerors, keeping their national spirit alive and
inspiring them in their struggle for liberation" (Kossev et al.
1963:125-126). Folklore, then, served as a rallying point around
which the spirit of rebellion grew. "In the dark years of Ottoman
rule, it was [on] the dance ground that the Bulgarians could get
together freely. Arm in arm, united by the rhythm of the tune and
dance, they became ever more conscious of the national unity"
(Kacarova and Dženev 1976:18).

During the nineteenth century, the Bulgarian National Libera-
tion Movement crystallized and directed its efforts toward
creating an independent Bulgaria, actualized in 1878. An impor-
tant counterpart of the liberation movement was the National
Revival in literature. The greatest writers of the Revival all
grew up under the sway of folklore (Dinekov 1976b:3). Continual-
ly, then, folklore has served as a tool of patriotic education.
We see this during the Turkish period, during the National Revival
and subsequently into the twentieth century with writers who use
themes and poetics from folklore to illustrate anti-capitalist struggles (Dinekov 1976a:370).

It is no accident that the rise of Bulgarian nationalism coincided with early collecting activities in folklore. As is true in many countries, concern for national history and independence often overlapped with pride in a distinctive folklore (Dorson 1966). Nor was it a coincidence that many writers of the National Revival were collectors of folklore. The collection and publication of folklore was part of the quest for cultural and political unity; folklore served as a basis for the nation's self-identification and self-definition. What was defined as the national folklore were peasant folk institutions and traditions which had survived invasions and foreign political dominance.

POST-WAR SOCIALIST PERIOD:
GOVERNMENT SPONSORSHIP OF FOLKLORE ACTIVITIES

The socialist revolution of 1944 ushered in a new era of Bulgarian history. Profound economic and political changes took place such as collectivization, industrialization, and the establishment of a centralized bureaucracy; simultaneously, cultural policy began to crystallize. Folklore research of the post-war era is motivated by political ideology. A significant concern of folklore scholars is demonstrating the socialist consciousness of folklore. Another concern of folklore scholarship is demonstrating national unity. The premise of cultural unity is often a politically sensitive subject, such as the use of folklore and
dialect studies to substantiate Bulgaria's territorial claim to Macedonia. Another example of the politics of folklore research concerns the question of Turkish influence on Bulgarian folk music. In an effort to substantiate Bulgarian purity, it is claimed that Turkish music "left hardly a trace among the local Bulgarian populace" (Kaufman and Todorov 1967:9). In virtually every work dealing with Pomak folklore, it is emphasized that despite their Moslem religion, the Pomaks display "pure" Bulgarian folklore. The themes of unity and purity are, then, recurrent in the scholarly rhetoric of the contemporary era.

Not only through folklore scholarship, but also through the large-scale organization of folklore activities has the government fostered a specific view of the past, with the goal of promoting ethnic unity. The government has created national and regional folk music and dance ensembles, amateur village performing groups, and a huge radio and television folk music industry. In addition, the government sponsors many folklore festivals. My research explored these phenomena with attention to motivation, ideology, and political symbolism.

On the village level, government-sponsored kolektivi, or collectives for folk music, were formed in the 1950s in nearly all Bulgarian villages. These amateur performing groups rehearse the folk music, dances, and rituals of the recent past, that is, pre-1950s. The result is a staged presentation of preserved folklore. Kolektivi are most visible at folklore festivals, where participation is carefully screened with an eye to "authenticity."
According to Venelin Krustev, director of the Institute of Music, the most distinctive trait of the national festivals is their presentation of absolutely pure folk music, dance, customs, and games. Folk festivals, are, then "living museums" of rural dance, music, and costume traditions of the recent past.

The definition of authenticity of material presented at folk festivals needs to be dissected more carefully. What is considered authentic is a highly selective, reworked, ideologically motivated group of performances. Rituals, for example, are re-enacted in condensed form; thus, a kolektivi stages a 20-minute performance of a five-day wedding. The selectivity of condensation often becomes standardized since there are government publications and trained coaches to assist in constructing a folklore performance. The performance evokes the past, but specific historical dates are omitted, contributing to the feeling that the folkloric past never changed. A contemporary wedding would never be staged at a folk festival.

Folk festival performances require "traditional" musical instruments. "Western" instruments such as clarinet and accordion are prohibited even though these instruments have been played in Bulgaria for over 100 years, and are often combined with "traditional" instruments in village contexts. Theoretically, only amateurs can perform, but in practice festivals often feature professionals from regional ensembles and students enrolled in folk music schools.
In general, the folklore of ethnic minorities is not permitted at folk festivals. When Turks, Pomaks, and Gypsies do participate, they perform Bulgarian music rather than anything that is distinctively associated with their ethnic group. No Moslem rituals are found; no Gypsy music or dance are permitted, even though these are some of the most active traditions in contemporary Bulgaria. In 1985, the instrument zurna, which is played exclusively by Gypsies, was banned from the Pirin regional folk festival. The rationale was that the instrument is Turkish and Moslem and hence, not pure Bulgarian. This is an ironic stance since the zurna is found in every country from India to Italy and is the most characteristic instrument of the Pirin region.

"Traditional" costumes are required at festivals, meaning holiday costume of the pre-1950s. The costumes of the Moslem minorities, however, are purposely altered to appear less Moslem and more Bulgarian. For examples, the fez is prohibited and Turkish balloon pants are replaced with dresses. Song texts are often reworked by the directors of kolektivi or by judges at pre-festival screenings. Moslem names in songs are changed to Slavic names and references to Moslem holidays are omitted. Amplification of instruments is prohibited because it is too modern. Yet, amplification is widely employed for folk music in both village and urban contexts.

The competitive aspect of folk festivals is quite prominent. Gold, silver, and bronze medals are awarded for authenticity. A
"cult of the jury" has developed where the participants perform virtually anything for a prize. The judges are folklorists, ethnomusicologists, and ethnographers. Thus the scholarly world of studying the authentic, and the festival world of performing the authentic, coincide in terms of definition and aesthetics.

Authenticity is, then, a concept used for ideological purposes in a discourse of cultural conservation. If the purpose of a folk festival is preservation, we must note that preservation is highly selective; no Moslem folklore, no matter how old, is permitted. Moreover, the concept of folk as "the purity of the past" is reinforced; nothing from contemporary life, no matter how vital, should spoil this purity. Purity and authenticity turn out to mean conformity to a unified monoethnic image of the nation-state.

Monoethnism emerged as a theme in Bulgarian cultural policy of the 1960s, and has intensified in the last two years. To understand the magnitude of the policy, let us examine population figures for the ethnic minorities. These figures are only crude approximations, since census data on minorities have not been released since WWII. Out of a total of 8.5 million Bulgarians, over one million are ethnic Turks, 400,000 are Gypsies, and 75,000 are Pomaks (Eminov 1983:132). The minority population represents over 17% of the total population, all of whom are Moslem. The first targets of assimilation were Pomaks and Gypsies. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, they were forced to accept new Slavic names and give up their Moslem ones. Thus Ali Ramadan became
Ilija Ramadanov. All written records with Moslem names (such as birth certificates) were reissued. The nationality designations Ciganin (Gypsy) and Bulgaro-Mohamedanin (Pomak) were removed from the internal passport and from print entirely, and replaced with the unspecified designation "Bulgarian". In effect, these ethnic groups were legislated out of existence. According to the government, this was a step in abolishing discrimination and ethnic boundaries in the path toward building an egalitarian socialist society. In practice, discrimination flourishes and boundaries are maintained, because assimilation is desired neither by minorities nor by the majority.

Besides name changes, many other measures went into effect in the 1970s in the attempt to Bulgarize the Pomaks and Gypsies. Fines were levied for the wearing of Moslem clothing such as shalvari (Turkish balloon pants), veils, and even headscarves. In the 1980s, women wearing distinctive Moslem aprons were harassed, as were men wearing a distinctive type of Moslem hat. Harassment took the form of bus drivers refusing to pick up people wearing Moslem clothing, or ticket sellers refusing to admit them into theaters. In addition, certain types of folk music were made illegal; fines against zurna playing were instituted in some regions, and kjucek, a distinctive type of Gypsy music and dance, was banned from restaurants and parties.

In 1985 the policy of name changes was extended to the Turkish minority of over one million, and violence ensued. The Turks resisted the changes, some taking up arms or committing
suicide, and army troops were brought into villages to quell the unrest. Hundreds of people ended up in prison, and Amnesty International cited Bulgaria as a violator of human rights (Amnesty International 1986, 1987; Popovic 1986). Many Bulgarian intellectuals were surprised at this extreme move of the government. It was somewhat understandable to call the Pomak name changes "restorations" since the Pomaks were originally Slavs. But to call the Turkish name changes "restoration" is a gross revision of history. The government seems to be trying to eradicate all traces of a Turkish presence and to force the Turks to accept a new identity based on a new history. The ideological preoccupation with purity, homogeneity, monoethnism, and nationalism require reconstructing not only the present and the future but also the past.

The policy of monoethnism can be seen as part of a larger goal of creating a unified Bulgarian culture rather than competing ethnic, local, or religious cultures. Not only has ethnic display been curtailed, but a modern socialist culture has been created in its place.

By the 1960s, following the lead of the Soviet Union, the Bulgarian government instituted a system of contemporary rituals composed in part of traditional rituals which were significantly altered and in part of newly composed rituals. Selected traditional holidays have been secularized, restructured and reinterpreted. Religious references are removed, such as saints' names, priests' blessing, and church ceremonies. Thus, Cheese Fast
before Lent is now Day of Parental Respect. "The holiday was renamed to differentiate it from the religious requirements of fasting . . . . This holiday takes its proper place in the socialist life of our people, for it aids in strengthening the basic kernel of socialist society--the family" (Janev 1970:31-33). Similarly, Christmas, as a Christian holiday, has been eliminated and the secular New Year's has taken its place, including New Year's cards and gifts. Easter has been eliminated entirely and does not appear in printed guides, but the custom of sending "first day of spring" cards is widespread.

In addition to refashioning traditional rituals, the government has introduced many political holidays, such as International Workers' Day and International Women's Day. These holidays, as well as the folk festivals previously discussed, are the occasion for political speeches linking folklore to patriotism. In all major cities, parades take place on political holidays which include massive folklore displays. For example, on September 9, the anniversary of the socialist revolution, thousands of school children perform Bulgarian folk dances in the central squares in perfectly rehearsed synchronization. Similarly, a trademark of the Rozen festival is an ensemble consisting of 100 Rhodope bagpipers playing simultaneously. While traditionally, music-making was a solo or small group tradition, the trend of contemporary government sponsorship is toward massive numbers of people playing, singing, and dancing together. These mass phenomena
serve as symbols of the political and cultural harmony of the national and reinforce the image of worker's unity.

Another role of cultural planners involves professional government-sponsored folklore ensembles. In 1951, for the first time on such a large scale, musicians and singers from all parts of the country were combined into one group. From their very inception, ensembles did not play village music, but instead, a new Westernized, national, unified form of Bulgarian folk music. Ensemble music consists of harmonized arrangements of village melodies or composed melodies for large groups of instruments and voices. Likewise, songs are arranged in non-traditional multi-part harmonies for large choruses. During fall 1988, the Bulgarian Radio Television Female Choir toured the United States to rave reviews.

Traditional texts of folk songs are often reworked by state poets into subtle political statements. For example, in a number of songs in the Pirin Ensemble's repertoire, the word "Macedonia" has been replaced by "Bulgaria," representing a territorial claim. Frequently, entirely new texts which reflect political and economic concerns are grafted onto traditional melodies. Here is an example of such a political text sung by the ensemble at Radio Sofia:

The moon shines brightly among the stars
as the factories shine in the mountains
in the mountains, and in the plains.

The birds sing, mother, in the valleys
and in the factories, the machines are lined up.
They sing for the heroes
at the power plants, at every turn.
The birds sing from the forest
like the combines in the meadows.
They sing strong-willed and happy
about the tables, full and abundant.

The ensemble repertoire is chosen carefully by cultural
planners with an eye to ideological content and entertainment.
All regional ensembles are required to perform folklore not only
from their own region, but from other regions as well, thereby
presenting a concert program which expresses the unity of the
country. Unfortunately, regional styling suffers in this process.
Furthermore, the ensemble repertoire always includes at least one
Russian song to symbolize friendship with the Soviet Union. The
ensemble aesthetic is transmitted to the younger generation at
government-sponsored folk music schools. At the schools, students
learn the technique, style, and often the exact repertoire which
ensembles play. This contributes to a marked standardization and
homogenization of folk music throughout the country.

GYPSIES
History, Culture, Policy, and Adaptation

Gypsies have played significant economic and cultural roles
in Bulgarian society since their arrival at least six centuries
ago. In the 1970s, however, the ethnic category "Gypsy" was
abolished, and since that time the word has begun to disappear
from print. Despite the official denial of the existence of
Gypsies, they are indeed a growing population with a complex
relationship to the socialist centralized government. Foreign
scholars estimate that there are between 260,000 and 450,000 Gypsies out of a total population of 8.5 million Bulgarians, representing 2% - 5% (Puxon 1980; Kenrick 1985). Statistics from the late Ottoman period demonstrate that the Gypsy population has increased significantly during the last 100 years. Mihov, in his *Naselenieto Na Bulgaria i Turtsia prez XVIII i XIX Vek* (The Inhabitants of Bulgaria and Turkey in the 18th and 19th Centuries) sets the figure for Gypsies in late 19th century European Turkey as 200,000 (Georgieva 1966:25). Georgieva's statistics for the Bulgarian city of Sliven reveal that the population of Gypsies jumped from 1074 in 1874 to 5,134 in 1956; this represents an increase from a 5% Gypsy population to an 11% Gypsy population (Georgieva 1966:27). Today Sliven has approximately 30,000 Gypsies, making it the largest Gypsy settlement in Bulgaria (Puxon 1973:17). Moreover, the Gypsy birth rate is significantly higher than the Bulgarian birth rate. Families of 4-6 children are still common among Gypsies, whereas the Bulgarian average is now 1.5 children.

Gypsies seem to have been well established in large numbers throughout the Balkans by the 14th century, some settling and others remaining nomadic (Soulis 1961:152,163; Kenrick and Puxon 1972:15). Soulis claims that they entered Byzantium from north India as early as the 11th century (1961:163) although Kenrick and Puxon cite the 14th century (1970:54; 1972:15). Initial curiosity about Gypsies by Balkan peoples and governments eventually gave way to hatred and discrimination. In Romania they were serfs
during the 13th and 14th centuries (Kenrick and Puxon 1972:51). Indeed, their very name came to assume an insulting connotation (Soulis 1961:163). The Bulgarian appellation Tsigani comes from the Greek atsingani, the name of a heretical sect (Soulis 1961:145-146; Kenrick and Puxon 1972:15).

Although despised and perpetually falling at the bottom of the Bulgarian social hierarchy, Gypsies have been indispensable suppliers of diverse services to non-Gypsies. These include fortune telling, music, horse dealing, bear keeping, entertainment, animal training, acrobatics, blacksmithing, coppersmithing, tinsmithing, woodworking, sieve making, comb making, basket weaving, shoemaking, and seasonal agricultural work (Soulis 1961). Many of these occupations continue today. Nineteenth century sources consistently document a distinct economic niche for Gypsies while underscoring their separateness and their exoticism as a culture. In the twentieth century, more thorough ethnographic work was published in Bulgaria, including linguistic analyses of the dialects of Romani, the Gypsy language, and descriptions of occupational groupings.

According to Bulgarian scholars writing in the 1960s, the Gypsies lived in misery during the Ottoman period. The "backwardness" of the Gypsies before 1870 (the date of the Bulgarian liberation from the Ottoman Turks) is blamed on the oppressive "Turkish yoke." After 1870, the situation did not improve, because of the "exploitation by capitalists." Another official reason given for "the slow progress" of Gypsies was their Moslem
religion (Georgieva 1966:25-31). Bulgarian scholars view 1944 as the turning point in Gypsy history: since the 1944 socialist revolution, Gypsies have become "cultured, advanced, and educated." Today, it is claimed, they are equal citizens of Bulgaria; prejudice is gone and assimilation is the happy ending (Georgieva 1966:43-44).

My research contests this conclusion. I have found Gypsy ethnicity thriving and adapting in creative ways to the pressures of assimilation. In spite of the fact that Gypsies do not exist on paper in Bulgaria, they make an indelible imprint on the cultural landscape. Ethnographic work on Gypsies has halted, but occasional magazine articles have appeared on traditional Gypsy crafts with a conscious omission of the word Gypsy. For example, articles on bear trainers as children's entertainment nowhere mention that all bear trainers are Gypsies (Ivanov 1984; Ivanova 1982). Similarly, ethnomusicologists no longer refer to zurna players as Gypsies, and education journals refer to Gypsy children as children with Gypsy ancestry. This silence in print belies the current situation where both Gypsies and Bulgarians are acutely aware of their respective distinctiveness. The aim of government policies is to instill in Gypsies the socialist work ethic (working diligently for the good of the nation), the Bulgarian world view and culture, and the desire to be like other Bulgarian citizens. Gypsies, however, strategically subvert these policies for their own aims, which involve maintenance of their distinct culture and ways of life.
Sedentarization and Resettlement

A number of Gypsy groups have been sedentary in Bulgaria for centuries, while others have more recently settled (Petulengro 1915-6). The abolition of nomadism has been a goal of virtually every European government: an 1886 Bulgarian decree prohibited nomadism plus the entry of Gypsies from abroad (Kenrick and Puxon 1972:54). Gypsy neighborhoods have grown up on the outskirts of towns, facilitating access to city trades, and many Gypsies have built their own homes. In Sofia, the neighborhood Fakulteta occupied by home-owning Erlija Rom, is dated from the early 20th century and is still growing. There, and in the Gypsy neighborhoods of towns like Razlog, two and three story houses are being built to accommodate extended families. These homes, often luxuriously furnished, are showpieces for both Gypsies and the government. In general, housing for Gypsies has improved in the last 20 years because of the rising standard of living.

Since the 1950s the socialist government has embarked on a policy of integrated resettlement of Sofia Gypsies, tearing down many old neighborhoods and assigning families housing in new apartment complexes. The crowded Sofia neighborhood Konjovitsa, home to thousands of Erlija Gypsies living in small houses, is being torn down, and the inhabitants are being given new apartments scattered all over the city. Many mourn the passing of the old neighborhood and extended family living, while others eagerly claim their right to live interspersed among Bulgarians. A number
of Gypsy families have been given apartments in the Ljuljin apartment complex in Sofia. There, amidst concrete terraces, playgrounds, and the hostile stares of Bulgarian neighbors, they still celebrate open-air weddings and baptisms. One weekend they may congregate at one relative’s apartment, the next weekend at another’s. Although the entire extended family rarely lives together in an apartment, they still gather frequently. In short, scattered housing has not prevented Gypsies from congregating and celebrating.

Although they may be considered sedentary in terms of residence, most Bulgarian Gypsies still travel because of their occupations. Bear and monkey acts, music, ironworking, woodworking, and selling old clothes, trinkets, and black-market items all involve servicing the customer population on their own territory. Travel away from home can be as long as a month or as short as overnight. Travel is also encouraged by in-group rituals such as kin weddings, funerals, and hospital visits.

**Occupations**

Contemporary Gypsy occupations in Bulgaria are quite diverse, encompassing traditional trades as well as wage labor. The selling of family-produced wood items is still common among the Kopanari (also known as Rudari, Ludari) who are Romanian-speaking Christians. They produce spoons, bowls, troughs, distaffs, and parts for the loom, as well as baskets and brooms. Kovachi, iron workers or blacksmiths, sell family-produced knives, hammers,
sheep shears, sheep bells and supplies for horses and for the hearth. They are Moslems, usually speaking Turkish as well as Romani, and many live in the city of Madan in the southern Rhodope Mountains near the Greek border. Some iron workers do sheet metal work or make stoves and pipes. Kopanari and Kovachi sell their products at local peasant markets or to state enterprises.

One family of Kovachi has successfully made the transition from free enterprise peddlers to a state-regulated business. Located on a busy Sofia street, their shop draws a steady stream of customers. On the wall a state-supplied schedule of prices is posted; the family keeps a percentage of all sales and also pays annual taxes. The shop is run by two brothers, whose teenage sons already know how to forge iron and make repairs. This case illustrates adaptation to state socialism with the loss of neither the traditional occupation nor the family transmission of skills.

Middleman peddling is another visible Gypsy niche in contemporary Bulgaria, especially at local markets. Horse dealers (dzhambazi) are rare, but sunflower seed peddlers are found at every gathering. Old clothing peddlers solicit items from house to house and set up stands at subori (festivals or gatherings for political or religious purposes). Trinket sellers are common at subori, enticing children with toys, hair ornaments, jewelry, belts, and balls, and their parents with scarves, cassette recordings, and velvet wall hangings. Selling trinkets is actually a government-sponsored job given to people who can prove
they are disabled. Thus, many Gypsies claim handicaps to be entitled to this occupation.

Black-market peddling provides supplementary income for Gypsies with the necessary connections to suppliers. Currently, blue jeans from Italy, lingerie from Greece, scarves from Turkey or Japan, tee shirts from the United States, and electronics from Japan are in great demand. Gypsies with relatives in Yugoslavia or Turkey can sometimes establish illegal trade routes. If caught, they end up in jail, but may try to bribe their way out with connections. Vruzki (connections) are the key to getting anything accomplished in Bulgaria, and Gypsies artfully cultivate vruzki. Vruzki also help obtain scarce Bulgarian goods such as building materials, and help wade through the bureaucracy.

Many traditional Gypsy services are still viable in contemporary Bulgaria, while others have declined. Fortune telling and begging are now quite rare, but on several occasions I observed children begging in Tsum (the central department store in Sofia) and soliciting from house to house in villages. Bulgarian Gypsies laughed when I told them that American Gypsies generate a large portion of their income through fortune telling, but in 1985, I was approached on a Sofia street by a Gypsy woman offering to help me "solve my problems." Customers seem to be foreigners rather than the typical house to house pattern of earlier decades. Kalajdzhi, on the other hand, still solicit work from house to house. They repair tin and copper vessels and can occasionally be seen camping outside villages.
Perhaps the most colorful Gypsy service trade is animal entertainment. Bear and monkey trainers still travel from village to village for festivals since the popular proverb claims, "a festival without a bear trainer is a waste of time." These Romanian-speaking Kopanari live mostly in North Bulgaria but during the summer months they can be found throughout the country. From an early age, the bears are trained to dance, wrestle, salute, ride bicycles, and do acrobatics. They are purchased from zoos for large sums of money, approximately 2000-3000 leva, a factory worker's annual salary. Bulgarian folklore includes many beliefs related to the power of the bear, such as if a woman wants children, she should pluck a few hairs from a bear's stomach and tie them around her waist, with a black string for a boy and with a white string for a girl (Ivanov 1984:48). Also, it is believed that the smoke from burning bear hair can cure a variety of illnesses. In extreme cases the bear should walk over an ill person or the ill person should be pulled through the bear's open mouth Ivanov 1984; Ivanova 1982). Since bears can cure, very rarely will a trainer be turned away empty-handed from a house. Rather, clothing, food, and money are solicited for the bear's musical performance, plus extra fees for curing. A number of Kopanari have modest homes and earning from this trade.

The musical portion of the animal trainer's performance has received less attention in the literature than the animals' tricks. The trainer often sings improvised historical ballads or humorous songs while accompanying himself on the gudulka, a pear-
shaped bowed lute. Many Kopanari make their own instruments since they may be woodworkers in addition to animal trainers. The following song, sung by a monkey trainer in a Sofia market, cleverly comments on the advantages and disadvantages of socialism:

We Bulgarians used to be fond of our property
Now we're fond of living.
Our property has been collectivized,
Our money is in the bank,
My wife is at the Black Sea,
My son is with someone else in the mountains.
There aren't any more kjuchetsi
Instead there's the hully gully, the shake,
and discotheques;
Cars and strange women,
Years for love, years for life,
All this dear Uncle Dimitrov gave us.
Women no longer fight over the children,
For the children are in day care centers.
Our worries are taken care of by the state.
The years, you have flown by like fleas,
It's good for the young but bad for the old.

Indeed, Gypsy street singing may be a unique forum for social commentary.

In recent years, animal trainers have been subject to state regulation. The trainer must obtain a license, and bears are usually barred from large cities. However, some trainers have been hired to perform at kindergartens and at hotel shows. Few young Gypsies seem to be following this trade, probably due to the commitment to the years of training. But numerous trainers still follow the summer circuit of festivals and markets.

Music is a profession that has continuously provided Gypsies with a viable economic niche in Balkan society. In Bulgaria, Gypsies have a virtual monopoly of some instruments, namely zurna
(oboe) and **tupan** (two-headed drum). Whatever instrument they play, Gypsies learn the repertoire of the local peasants in order to be indispensable at weddings, baptisms, house warmings, saints' day festivals, etc. Many proverbial expressions attest to the musical ability of Gypsies, such as playing "like a Gypsy", meaning excellently. Gypsies themselves tell the following riddle: Who has first, second, and third place for musical skill? Gypsies have first place and Bulgarians have third place. O.K., then, who has second place? Gypsies, they have second place too!

While Gypsies have been professional musicians for at least 600 years, the past 20 years have witnessed a grossly inflated market in Bulgaria. Since the 1960s, electrified bands playing folk music have become the rage, both at Gypsy and at Bulgarian celebrations. Some musicians are as famous as rock stars in the West, and the family who hires them earns status in their community. A typical contemporary band consists of clarinet, saxophone, accordion, electric bass guitar, drum set, singer, and sound man (who owns the amplification equipment). Each of these seven people can earn in one day what a factory worker earns in a week. A well-known musician can earn a factory worker's monthly salary in an evening. It is not surprising, then, that in many Gypsy neighborhoods, almost every male plays an instrument.

The economics of this music scene is important to grasp in order to understand recent government intervention. The hiring of a band for an event has always been in the realm of the free market. A family would approach the leader of the band, and they
would bargain until an amount was agreed upon. In addition to the decided amount, a musician would also collect tips. In the 1970s the state began to tax musicians on their incomes, and also began to put pressure on them to accept regular state jobs, such as playing in restaurants. Many Gypsies have successfully combined a Sunday to Friday restaurant job with Saturday wedding jobs. The restaurant job entitled them to pensions, paid vacations, free medical care, etc., while the weekend work generates extra money. Other Gypsies, who prefer to play only at private events, are faced with heavy taxation.

In 1985 the state began to regulate the "free market bargain- ing process itself. In a few targeted regions a state commission rated each band and assigned to it a category which dictated how much it could charge. Musicians are extremely upset over this intervention, and have already begun to circumvent it by charging the official amount of money over the table, but requiring more money under the table.

A further effort at state control involves the kind of music Gypsies play. Bulgarian Gypsies are noted for a type of dance and music called kjuchek, which is heavily influenced by Turkish music. In the past five years, the state has attempted to prohibit any Turkish or other foreign influences in folk music. The goal, absurd as it may seem, is to purify folk music to its original Bulgarian state, devoid of foreign traces. The playing and dancing of kjuchek has been prohibited, but despite these sanctions, it is still the most popular Gypsy dance and music. It
is performed at every Gypsy celebration and is disseminated via unofficial cassette recordings.

Another recent ruling prohibits the playing of the zurna because it is supposedly a Turkish instrument. Although it was banned from weddings in certain villages as early as 1980, Gypsy zurna players are still locating audiences by traveling to districts where the ban is not enforced. As mentioned earlier, in August 1985 the zurna was banned from the Pirin Pee Folk Festival, even though the instrument is distinctive in the Pirin region. Ironically, Gypsy zurna players arrived at the festival after the official activities to play offstage in an open field. Hundreds of people gathered to dance, and the Gypsies earned a great deal of money from tips. This example illustrates that although Gypsy music may be excluded from official contexts, it has a secure place in unofficial contexts.

Wage Labor

The Bulgarian government has succeeded quite well in reducing poverty among Gypsies, and, in fact, among all citizens. Employment is available for all willing persons, and Gypsies have been integrated into some occupational spheres. As early as the 1950s, the government urged Gypsies into state-sponsored wage labor. Gypsies have indeed filled a low status economic niche: unskilled factory jobs are common, as are agricultural jobs on cooperative farms. Also widespread are Gypsy toilet and street cleaners, railroad station cleaners, and train cleaners. Working for the
state transportation agency gives the employee and his or her family free travel on the trains, an important bonus for Gypsies. More important, working in any government (i.e. wage) job entitles the worker to a pension, medical benefits, vacation packages, and occasional bonuses.

Adaptability is the key to Gypsy occupations, whether in the private or in the state-sponsored sphere. When working a government job, Gypsies often mold the job to their own family's needs and fail to display the Bulgarian work ethic which stresses pride and devotion to the nation. For example, one 41-year-old woman cleans the train station in her home town of Septemvri but skips work at least one day a week to help with a new grandson at home. Yet she was sure to report to work the day the supervisors distributed free watches to employees. In addition, her family liberally travels for free on the entire country's railway system. Gypsies also commonly miss work on Fridays and Mondays during the summer, when weddings take place.

Occupations are often changed and recombined, so a typical person may have 3-4 sources of income. For example, one 50-year-old man is a porter who waits with his horse and cart at the train or bus station for customers with goods to transport. His father was a self-employed carter and his grandfather was a horse dealer. His family owns a small plot of land (the maximum plot allowed by the government) on which he plants corn for animal feed. He buys calves and lambs cheaply by travelling to remote villages. He fattens them up (sometimes by force feeding) and then sells them
to the state meat processing plant for a sizeable profit. One season he planted grass for brooms. His family harvested the grass and cheaply hired a craftsman to make brooms; they then sold the brooms to a state enterprise for a profit. In addition to this agricultural and animal dealing, this man also privately sells cement, bricks, animal meat for consumption, and black market clothing. His network of connections (vruzki) is large and secure, and for this reason he is the "big man" of the neighborhood. Typically, economic exchanges are accomplished through reciprocal favors, both among Gypsies and between Gypsies and Bulgarians.

Education, Language, and Religion

Gypsies have been integrated into the Bulgarian educational system to a remarkable degree. Compulsory education to the 8th grade is enforced, and most young Gypsies are now literate in Bulgarian, while speaking Romani at home. Many Gypsies also speak Turkish. Bulgarians boast of Gypsies who have completed secondary school and university. Integrated education, however, like integrated housing and work, has not erased the distinctiveness Gypsies feel. Even though many children can pass as non-Gypsies at school, at home they display a pride in being Gypsy, and, more important, they marry Gypsies.

In the 1960s ethnographers boasted of Gypsy cultural organizations such as drama groups, music ensembles, and newspapers. Perhaps the most famous of these was the Romski Teatur which was
composed entirely of Gypsies and performed plays about Gypsy life in the Bulgarian language with songs in Romani. Unfortunately, it was disbanded in the late 1960s along with Gypsy dance ensembles. The Gypsy newspaper Nevo Drom is now called Novi Put and is printed in Bulgarian; it follows an assimilationist line. In 1984 Gypsy music and songs were removed from restaurant shows and from phonograph recordings; the last recording of Gypsy songs was released in 1983. Dissemination of Gypsy music continues, however, through unofficial channels such as cassette recordings.

As mentioned above, in the early 1970s Gypsies with Moslem names were forced to accept new Slavic names. "In picking new names, some Gypsies creatively chose the names of famous politicians, composers, or music stars. There are now Gypsies named Todor Zhivkov (Communist Party Secretary), Filip Kutev (Director of the national folklore ensemble), and Lili Ivanova (popular singer). Multiple names, like multiple occupations and languages, are not a burden to Gypsies.

The majority of Bulgarian Gypsies claim to be Moslem, but they are not devout. Under the policy of monoethnism, Gypsies have not suffered as much as the ethnic Turks for whom ethnicity is vested in a single religion and language. Gypsies continue to privately celebrate Moslem holidays such as bajram and ramadan, to wear shalvari at home, to henna their brides, and a few even to circumcise their sons although the fine is over 500 leva. Gypsy folk religion is actually an eclectic combination of Moslem, Christian, and pre-Christian ritual.
In concluding this section, let me relate a joke popular in the Balkans today:

A Gypsy was standing in the road striking his donkey with a stick and shouting, "Be a horse! Be a horse!" A policeman ran over and said, "How can you be so stupid as to think you can change a donkey into a horse?" The Gypsy answered, "Well, if you can turn a Gypsy into a Bulgarian then you can certainly make a horse out of a donkey."

The joke, of course, refers to the assimilationist policy of the Bulgarian government, and points out that just as one cannot change a donkey into a horse, one cannot change a Gypsy into a Bulgarian. In spite of compulsory education in the Bulgarian language, Gypsies continue to use their own language, Romani, at home, and use Moslem names among themselves. Furthermore, they conform to the socialist work ethic just enough to reap the benefits of socialism, without giving up the independence of the free market. They continue many traditional occupations plus run profitable black market enterprises. They are also defiant of the government in the realm of music and dance.

It is clear that Bulgarian Gypsies are adapting well to the socialist environment. Indeed, most Gypsies claim the government has done much to help them. In comparison to the economic exploitation by landowners in the pre-war period, their current situation seems improved. They are officially entitled to the same jobs, the same education, and the same medical care as other Bulgarians. However, this does not add up to the same wage opportunities for Gypsies as for other Bulgarians. Furthermore, prejudice certainly has not disappeared and assimilation is not
likely. The success of Gypsy adaptation to the Bulgarian socialist environment lies not in combating discrimination but in ignoring it. Gypsies display an attitude of freedom and daring in cultural and economic spheres which other Bulgarians do not enact.

POMAKS: HISTORY, CULTURE, POLICY, AND ADAPTATION

To recap, Pomaks (Pomaci) are Bulgarians who converted to Islam during the Ottoman occupation of the Balkans (14th-17th centuries) and retained their Bulgarian language. They should not be confused with ethnic Turks (Turci) who remained in the Balkans after the demise of the Ottomans and speak Turkish. The largest concentration of Pomaks are in the Rhodope Mountains and the southeast slopes of the Pirin Mountains; until the 20th century there were a small number of Pomaks in North Bulgaria near the cities of Lovech and Pleven.

Late 19th century census reports indicate that in 1878 there were half a million Pomaks (the majority of the Rhodope population), in 1912 there were 400,000, and by 1934, there were 134,000. This decline in population is the result of repeated exchanges of population between Bulgaria and Turkey from 1878 to 1950 (after the War of Liberation, after the Balkan Wars, after World War I and after World War II). In 1950 Pomaks were given the option to change their nationality designation of "Bulgarian-Moslem" to "Turk" and thereby were allowed to emigrate to Turkey. Many thousands of the 200,000 "Turks" who went to Turkey in the
1950s were actually Pomaks. According to Pundeff, Pomaks continued to emigrate in greatly reduced numbers through the 1970s. Currently, the Bulgarian Pomaks population seems to be increasing. Most of the Moslem villages in the Rhodopes have grown steadily since the 1920s (with a slight drop in the 1950s) in contrast to Christian villages which are being depopulated due to urbanization. The Pomaks birth rate is higher than the Christian birth rate; families with four to six children are very common whereas the Bulgarian average is approximately 1.5 children. Most Pomaks still live in villages, although there is a sizeable population in the towns and the cities of southwest Bulgaria.

There is considerable debate over the etymology of the word Pomak. Some Bulgarian scholars claim Pomak derives from the Rhodope dialect term moka, pomocheni, meaning forced or coerced. Others connect Pomaks with pomagach (helper) since Pomaks assisted the Turks in the Russo-Turkish war of 1878; still others cite the verb pomamili sa, meaning lured or tempted. Scholars do concur that the appellation Pomak was originally used by Bulgarians (Eastern Orthodox Christians) for those who had converted to Islam; it was not used by the Pomaks themselves. Actually the word Pomak does not appear prior to 19th century Ottoman documents. The Slavs who converted to Islam refer to themselves as Ahrijani in the Rhodopes and Torbeshi in Macedonia and southern Serbia. (In Greece those who converted to Islam were called Vallahadhes by the Christian population.) Ahrijani may derive from the Greek agarjani meaning opponent of Christianity. Menage
traces the evolution of the meaning of ahrjan from "Turk" to "Moslem convert" to "unrefined person of questionable religious belief." Other scholars claim ahrjan comes from Ahridos, a geographical term for the valley of the Arda River, or from Agrijana, a Thracian tribe which settled near the Struma River. The origins of the appellations of the Pomaks are thus still questionable. Since 1878 Bulgarian scholars have used the term Bulgaro-Mohamedanin to avoid any connotation whatsoever.

It is certain that the Ottomans reached the Rhodope area in 1371 and by the 1700s a majority of Rhodope villagers were Moslem. As mentioned before, Bulgarian scholars claim the Pomaks were forced to convert en masse by the "fire and sword" of the Turks—through unprecedented terror and physical torture. The "forced" conversion of the Pomaks has become part of the national consciousness of the Bulgarian people and is detailed in many songs and legends. Non-Bulgarian scholars concur that conversion was almost everywhere voluntary, in response to various economic, legal and religious pressures. No doubt many Christians converted to avoid the increasing cizye tax demanded of non-Moslems by the Ottomans, or to gain preferred legal status. Some scholars, including Bajraktarevic, Vryonis, and Fraenkel, view conversion as a gradual long term process with various motives. Bulgarian villagers may have converted as a way of combating the spread of Greek Orthodoxy and language. The Bektashi order of Islam may have been particularly attractive to villagers since it embraced many pre-Christian and Christian customs. The Turkic nomadic
Yuruks and the Bogomils (a persecuted heretical Christian sect) probably accepted Islam to the degree to which it coincided with their own folk practices. Actually, folk Christianity and folk Islam (as practiced in the villages) were quite similar, both based on agricultural rites and shrines. Fraenkel suggests that conversion arose as a pragmatic decision, requiring at first only minor concessions to Islamic practice, such as the use of a Moslem first name. Only later did Pomaks adopt other Moslem customs such as the wearing of veils by women in front of strangers.

Interaction between Pomaks and Christians has varied depending on location. In general, Pomaks have lived in separate villages or in separate neighborhoods in mixed villages. In the central Rhodopes where the Christians predominated, Pomaks had frequent and friendly contact with Christians, including holding common orchards and grazing lands and celebrating holidays together. In the rest of the Rhodopes, where the Pomaks predominated (especially in the Dospat and Devin districts), they had little or no contact with Christians. This may account for the anti-Christian attitude of these Pomaks and for the fact that many of them fought on the Turkish side in the Bulgarian War of Liberation (1878).

During the 17th and 18th centuries, Pomak families prospered in agriculture and sheep raising and also assumed local administrative posts. They usually employed Christian shepherds to graze their flocks in a semi-nomadic fashion, with winters spent near the Aegean coast. By the 19th century, with the decline of
the Ottoman empire and the rise of a wealthy Christian artisan class, Christians began to purchase land and livestock from the Pomaks and the nomadic Yuruks. After the defeat of the Ottomans many Pomaks fled to Greece or Turkey and former Moslem villages were settled by Christians. Again in the 1920s, with the exchange of populations, Christians resettled Pomak lands. Pomaks have remained agriculturalists to the present day rather than herdsmen or artisans. Pomak men have thus not traveled as much as Christian men and Pomak women even less. This has contributed to a general conservatism in culture.

The major crops of the Pomaks reflect the ecology of the mountainous terrain and are shared by the Christians; they are rye, barley, corn, flax and hemp, and, since the 19th century, potatoes and tobacco. Bread is the staple food, supplemented by potatoes and beans, dairy products from sheep and cow milk such as yogurt and cheeses, and lamb and goat meat. In the past, only the wealthy ate wheat bread and the majority ate corn or rye bread; the shepherds ate corn meal gruel. Today wheat bread or grain mixtures are common.

Pomaks live in nucleated villages surrounded by agricultural and grazing land and dense forests. Like Christians, their houses are usually two-storied with the first floor used for animals and farm equipment and the second floor for human habitation. Houses were made of stone, wood, and clay, with sloping slate roofs; in the 20th century brick and cinderblock and ceramic tile roofs were
introduced. The interiors of wealthy homes often had elaborately carved ceilings.

**Pomak** culture is actually a combination of pre-Christian, Christian, and Moslem elements. The Pomak ritual calendar, like the Christian, is based on an agricultural cycle and included magical and propitiatory acts to ensure a good harvest, good health, and fertility for man and animal. In general, Pomaks, especially the women, have continued to enact Christian and pre-Christian rites such as keeping holy water and crosses, venerating Christian shrines and priests, and making offerings to saints and pagan deities. Pomaks share with Bulgarian-Christians many institutions such as fictive kinship (god-parenthood) and many customs such as the exchange of red eggs on Easter, the tapping of cornel branches on New Year's Day, the divining of young girls' fortunes on St. John's day, and the decoration of the house on St. George's day. Shepherding rituals are noticeably absent since the Pomaks were not commonly shepherds. Pomak life cycle celebrations, such as weddings, conform to Christian practice with the addition of a few Moslem elements such as the dyeing of the bride's hair and hands with henna. Their lack of familiarity with official Islam fostered by their mountain isolation has made the Pomaks better preservers of the folk culture of the area than the Christians.

The rich musical culture of the Pomaks has attracted much attention. Bulgarian ethnomusicologists have concluded, after painstaking analysis of the Pomak repertoire, that Pomak songs are
identical with Christian songs of the same region in melody and text (except for the use of Moslem names). It should be noted, however, the Rhodope villagers label certain song variants as exclusively "Pomak." Also Pomak women do not sing or dance in public after marriage, and Pomak men's and women's song repertoires tend to be distinct, with men and women singing in separate groups. Furthermore, Pomak men do not play the gajda (bagpipe) which is extremely common among Christian men, but do play the bajlama (long-necked plucked lute). In addition, the Pomaks of the central Rhodopes do not have an active dance tradition which the Christians have; in the western Rhodopes and the Pirin mountains, however, the Pomaks seem to have a more active dance tradition which is shared by the Christians of this area.

The Pomaks have adopted many practices of the Moslem faith. They do not eat pork or drink alcoholic beverages. Until recently they observed Moslem holidays such as the ramazan feast and the bajram feast days with their accompanying singing, dancing, and wrestling. They also celebrate the circumcision of young boys (sunet). Men and women are segregated in public; while men congregate in village coffee houses, women visit and pray at home, and remain secluded from the public sphere. In the areas where there was little contact between Christians and Moslems, Pomak women wore veils (jashmak) in public and wore a black outer coat (feredzhe). In the central Rhodopes, however, the dress and behavior code was more lenient. Nevertheless, everywhere women could be immediately distinguished as Christian or Moslem by their
costume. Pomak women wore wide Turkish pants (șalvari), a shift (riza) and two brightly colored striped coats (anterija and elek), a short jacket (zhjube), an apron (mindil), and, if unmarried, a high pillbox hat (fes) covered by a white scarf (testemel). Christian women wore a darker costume of wool felt trimmed with silver braiding and fur.

Polygyny, now forbidden by law, was always extremely rare among Pomaks; only a few cases have been reported. Marriage was (and continues to be) endogamous and arranged by the parents of the couple. Even today, the bride and groom may be almost strangers. The bride does not participate in the dancing and merry-making, but remains indoors on display for the guests to admire. She may be quite young, in her mid-teens, with the groom slightly older. She is expected to prepare an extensive dowry of handmade items for her new home, including carpets, blankets, clothing and gifts for the wedding guests. Virtually all Pomak women weave and some of the finest Rhodope weavers are Pomak. It should be noted that all of these practices have continued to the present (especially in remote Pomak villages), whereas in Christian villages they are dying out.

Pomak society is patrilineal and patrilocal, based on the extended family (zadruga) which shares resources and money and divides agricultural, herding and household work among members by sex and age. This social structure is shared by the Christians, but again, it is better preserved among the Pomaks. Indoor and outdoor communal work parties are still regularly called to aid
villagers with handiwork such as spinning and tobacco stringing and with construction projects. Men and women usually work separately, but socializing and courting do occur.

In the 20th century many changes have affected Pomak life. With the closing of the Greek border in 1919 and the cutting off of Aegean grazing lands and markets, the economy declined. Cash crops such as tobacco and potatoes have become the agricultural mainstays; farmwork has been mechanized, except on steep slopes; logging, mining, and construction have greatly expanded. Most important, since 1944, land and flocks have been collectivized; only small garden plots remain in private hands.

Education in standard Bulgarian has been introduced to a previously illiterate population. Outside of school, however, the local dialect continues to be spoken. Pomak village girls usually go to school until the eighth grade, whereupon they take jobs in weaving or agricultural cooperatives; in weaving shops they are paid by the piece and often work long hours. The men more often go to school until the twelfth grade and then start to work, usually in state-controlled mining, lumbering or agricultural collectives. Few Pomaks attempt a higher education, being strongly oriented toward family, children and village rather than toward careers and the greater society. They are not conspicuous consumers (except for gold jewelry and cars) and lead very quiet lives.

Since the communist regime came to power, a policy of assimilation of the Pomaks has been in effect. This conforms to
the general anti-religious attitude of the socialist government and its program on monoethnism. As early as the late 1960s Pomaks had to assume Slavic names; more recently, the official designation "Bulgarian-Moslem" which appeared on all identification papers was replaced by the unspecified designation "Bulgarian." The word Pomak is now taken to be derogatory and is no longer allowed in print or in public use.

In general, Pomak religion and ethnicity have been gradually outlawed since the 1960s. Pomaks are encouraged by the government to be "Bulgarian." Indeed, some have given up their ethnicity totally and have managed to enter the political area. However, the majority of Pomaks still retain their ethnicity, somewhat under cover, because of their relative isolation. Although bajram and ramazan are now illegal, they are still celebrated quietly at home. Although more mosques are closed each year, pork and alcohol have hardly been adopted. Although Turkish pants and the veil are outlawed, women wear regular pants under their shirts and continue to wear Pomak aprons and scarves. Since 1985, even aprons and scarves have been outlawed. Although official names have been Slavicized, Pomaks still use their Moslem names among themselves. The contemporary Pomaks have certainly modernized like the rest of Bulgaria, but perhaps not as rapidly. Paved roads and railroad and bus lines now link their villages; running water and electricity have been introduced; cars, radios and televisions are now common in villages. So far, however, the
Pomaks have retained their distinctiveness simply because they feel themselves to be different from the Christian Bulgarians.

To conclude, the Bulgarian government has taken a markedly paradoxical view of Pomak ethnicity. On the one hand, they claim that Pomak folklore is purely Bulgarian; on the other hand they view it as sufficiently different from Bulgarian folklore to merit special prohibitions. The Bulgarian people echo this paradox by mimicking the government. They may state that Pomaks are pure Bulgarians, yet they object profusely when the thought of marrying a Pomak is suggested. I contend that the Bulgarians, however much they deny it, perceive differences between themselves and Pomaks. This is evidenced by the fact that Bulgarians still know who is a Pomak even when he has supposedly been assimilated by adopting a Bulgarian name, Bulgarian dress and even membership in the Communist party. For example, almost every time a Pomak person is mentioned in informal conversation with Christians, the fact that he is a Pomak is pointed out. Since the word Pomak is currently illegal in public use, a new humorous ethnic designation has arisen among Christians: the word Eruption is substituted for Pomak. This word comes from a Jamaican Rastafarian rock group, the Eruptions, who toured Bulgaria in the 1970s. The bizarre appearance of the Jamaicans somehow became associated with Pomaks. Ideology notwithstanding, ethnic differences cannot be legislated out of a people's consciousness; they remain vital in spite of political policy.
TURKS: THOUGHTS ON THE RECENT ASSIMILATIONIST CAMPAIGN AND DEPORTATIONS

Although my research on Bulgarian Turks did not involve fieldwork and is thus much less thorough than my research on Gypsies and Pomaks, I would like to offer some commentary. Fortunately, excellent scholarly articles are already in print detailing the suppression of ethnic Turkish rights (Eminov 1983, 1986, 1987; Popovic 1986; Baest 1985). This is not the case with Pomaks and Gypsies.

From Eminov's and Popovic's work, one realizes that the Turkish suppression has a long history and did not suddenly arise in the fall of 1984. It is clear that the name-changing campaigns against Pomaks and Gypsies were a prelude or trail to the Turkish campaigns. The fact that the Pomaks and Gypsies did not defy the government en masse (although many were jailed) must have reassured the government that the Turks would react similarly. That they did not, but instead resisted, caused the government to adopt measures of brutal terrorism, including the deaths and imprisonment of hundreds.

It is not surprising that the Turks resisted, given their larger numbers (10% of the country), their vocal ally in Turkey, and their strong consciousness as a historical entity. The Pomaks, on the other hand, know that they are a small group without an international ally. There was virtually no international outcry when they (and Gypsies) were subjected to human rights abuses. Gypsies, finally, have never been treated well by a regime, so they never expect better. Perpetual adaptors, they
resist control in cultural and economic spheres rather than participating in direct political confrontation. This is their form of resistance, and it has worked well for them during their 1000-year history in Europe. Only recently in Yugoslavia and Hungary and more strongly in Western Europe have Gypsies begun to organize politically and resist the discrimination they have endured. This movement is now beginning to spread to Bulgaria.

It is interesting to observe that the Bulgarian government, in justifying the name-changes of the Turks, used many of the same ideological themes that they had used with the Pomaks. Namely, they turned to the fields of history, folklore, and even physical anthropology, insisting that the name changes were voluntary. Bulgarian historians sought to document that the Turks were actually Slavs who adopted not only Islam but also the speaking of Turkish. A large research project was initiated at the Institute of Folklore to collect ethnographic information on Turkish villages with the precise aim of proving that underneath some superficial differences, the folklore of Christians and Turks is the same. Finally, the Institute of Brain Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences published a monograph in 1986, *Anthropology of the Bulgarian Nation*, "using, in particular, anthropometric measurements carried out in areas hitherto thought to contain members of Bulgaria's Turkish and Greek minorities".

What motivated the Bulgarian government precisely in the mid 1980s to embark on the policy of forced assimilation of the Turks? Baest points out that in the short range, there was the impending
termination of the five-year period (1980-84) for renewing identity cards (1985:25). In the long range, demographic trends were surely a factor according to other scholars such as Popovic. The Turkish minority was growing at a much faster rate than the Bulgarian majority despite a policy of encouraging population increase among the Slavs. The coming census of 1985 must have been a motivation to change the demographic picture at any cost. In addition, Baest point out that a labor reserve of 1.2-1.5 million Bulgarian Muslims, two thirds of whom are Turks, lacking the appropriate education and "consciousness," can only be completely integrated when potential sources of conflict -- e.g. national consciousness, religion, language, and education -- are eliminated (1985:26).

But the above three factors would amount to nothing if it were not for the active historical consciousness which helped formulate the policy of monoethnism. As Popovic reminds us, the nationalist ideology of Bulgaria was created directly against Islam (1986:3). The Ottoman yoke, in other words, is a living phenomenon. As early as the 1970s the term "unified Bulgarian socialist nation" began to appear regularly in the press, and in 1979 Todor Zhivkov asserted that "the national question has been solved definitively and categorically by the population itself... Bulgaria has no internal problems connected with the nationality question." In accordance with this policy no data pertaining to the question of nationality has been published since the census of 1965 (Baest 1985:25-26).
The most recent development in Bulgarian policy, the forced deportation of tens of thousands of Turks to Turkey which began in May 1989 is the latest and perhaps final chapter of monoethnism. After tens of Turks were shot by government troops while they were demonstrating against human rights abuses, international pressure increased (Haberman 1989). To remove the Turks is an easier solution for the government than to deal continuously with a resistance movement. Also, the government may be using the expulsions to stir up nationalist feelings at a time when the economy is faltering. In 1987 Todor Zhivkov announced plans to restructure the economy but very few concrete plans were implemented.

Bulgaria, unlike the Soviet Union and Hungary, has never really had an organized resistance movement. It has had neither a samizdat nor a human rights organization. Resistance to the government has existed in the cultural realm, as I have shown, by Pomaks and Gypsies, and in a few private intellectual circles. The organized, armed resistance of the Turks, however, coupled with international pressure, has turned Bulgaria on a course of expelling 10% of its population. The consequences have yet to be assessed, but they are surely to be felt in every aspect of society. Already, some factories are more than half empty. Already, glasnost has inspired a small human rights organization that has taken up the Turkish cause. We may also witness the radicalization of the remaining minorities.
REFERENCES


