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A Vision of Mount Holyoke in the Ottoman Balkans: American Cultural Transfer, Bulgarian Nation-Building and Women's Educational Reform, 1858–1870

Barbara Reeves-Ellington

Theodore Byington would not be satisfied with simply any American female teacher; he wanted a Mount Holyoke graduate. Writing to his corresponding secretary in the spring of 1866, Byington, a missionary with the Boston-based, interdenominational American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), called for reinforcements for the mission school for Bulgarian girls in the town of Eski Zağra (Stara Zagora). 'We want a Bulgarian South Hadley', he wrote, 'where the blessed spirit shall love to dwell'.[1]

Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, the innovative institution for higher education for girls founded by Mary Lyon in South Hadley, Massachusetts in 1837, had an excellent academic reputation. More important, for Byington's purposes, the Seminary trained female teachers and missionaries, instilling in them a desire for evangelical activism and moral reform. Byington's wife, Margaret, was a Mount Holyoke graduate. Together, they founded the Eski Zağra mission school in January 1863 to educate Bulgarian girls and inspire them to support their plan of religious and educational reform. The Byingtons expected that the graduates of the 'Bulgarian South Hadley' would form the vanguard of the mission strategy to promote a Protestant Reformation among Bulgarian Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire. The young women would shape the spiritual regeneration of the Bulgarian nation through their influence as teachers. Despite the academic successes of the mission school, however, the Byingtons made little

progress in promoting religious reform in Eski Zağra. No students converted to Protestantism in the first graduating class.

In his letters to Boston, Byington expressed confidence that an additional Mount Holyoke graduate would help effect the transformation he had planned, yet he did not inform his Board about a development that posed a major obstacle to that goal. Only six months after the Byingtons opened their school, the Bulgarian community council responsible for regulating local Bulgarian affairs (*obshtina*) in Eski Zağra established a girls' school specifically to thwart the Protestant project of religious reform.[2] The *obshtina* appointed as teacher Anastasiya Tosheva, a local young woman who had been educated in Russia. Although mission correspondence contains no mention of Tosheva's school, or the women's association she helped organise to support her in her work, Bulgarian sources confirm that the mission school was the catalyst directly responsible for the foundation of both institutions.[3]

Ironically, by promoting the model of Mount Holyoke Female Seminary and the American ideal of educated Christian womanhood, ABCFM missionaries ensured the failure of their Protestant reformation, and inadvertently contributed to Bulgarian women's participation in nation building during the final years of the Bulgarian National Revival (*Vuzrazhdane*).[4] Bulgarian women appropriated American cultural ideals, in which they recognised an expression of their own power in society as preservers and promoters of Bulgarian culture. This case study of American-Bulgarian interactions in the town of Eski Zağra illuminates a hitherto unexplored projection of American culture abroad, and the manner in which it was appropriated by urban-educated Bulgarians as an element in their shaping of a Bulgarian national consciousness during a period of Ottoman civil reform (*Tanzimat*). It builds on previous scholarship on American missionary women, American missions in the Balkans and Bulgarian women in the *Vuzrazhdane*, and it is situated within a growing scholarship that seeks to explore responses to the international extension of American culture.

Scholars have demonstrated the transformative power of the Mount Holyoke vision among its American students.[5] Mary Lyon argued that women were the cornerstones not only of the home, but also of the church, the school, the community and the nation. She believed that teachers were second only to Christian ministers in their potential to enlighten and reform the world. Lyon's approach to the business of teaching was more radical than that of her predecessors Emma Willard and Catharine Beecher: she believed that she was doing God's work.[6] She founded Mount Holyoke specifically to train the daughters of poor artisans and farmers as teachers, who would be imbued with the power of evangelical religion and saving grace. In this way, she developed a philosophy that enabled women

to remain loyal to traditional religious and societal values, while claiming the moral authority and intellectual capacity to explore new vocational avenues and exercise their talents outside domestic boundaries. In encouraging her students to develop missions of their own, she emphasised their God-given vocations, urging them to promote the Protestant message and educational reform for women. In her view, they were engaged 'in the great work of renovating the world'.[7]

As teachers and missionaries, Mount Holyoke graduates established daughter seminaries across the United States and around the world in the mid-nineteenth century, advocating female education and creating professional opportunities for themselves and the women among whom they worked. They associated Protestantism with the elevated status of women in society; consequently they associated their superior status as American women with the national progress and prosperity of the United States. Wherever they went, they promoted the idea that a people's progress depended on the education of its womenfolk, thereby representing themselves as the vanguard of civilisation and modernity. Amanda Porterfield has argued that antebellum missionaries practised a form of religious and cultural imperialism that caused them to disdain foreign traditions and shape cultural change; however, the results of their work varied, and were frequently unintended. Whereas in Persia (Iran) and Natal (south-east Africa) their work contributed to the destruction of the cultures in which they operated, in Maharashtra (western India) their promotion of female education inadvertently contributed to a movement of Hindu reform.[8]

Porterfield and other scholars who have examined the life and work of missionary women have suggested that the consequences of missionary work depended on the specific context in which missionaries operated; yet they have generally neglected the foreign-language sources that would illuminate cultural interactions in a broader context, and highlight the agency of local actors and other factors at work in the local environment.[9] In contrast, bilingual scholarship on the ABCFM mission in the Balkans has postulated an increasing Bulgarian national consciousness as a major factor in the failure of Protestant evangelism, while showcasing the contributions of missionaries to Bulgarian Bible translation and literary activities, and highlighting the success of missionary education for men.[10] It has all but ignored the work of American missionary women, educational projects directed toward Bulgarian women, and the repercussions of Bulgarian women's public activism in the missionary cause. Among scholars whose work has begun to explore the international connections of Bulgarian women's activities during the *Vuzrazhdane,* Velichka Koycheva explicitly makes a case for the contribution of American missionaries to female education in Eski Zağra in the 1860s.[11] This article examines American

and Bulgarian sources through the lens of gender to explore the ways in which Bulgarians in Eski Zağra negotiated the Protestant project of religious and educational reform.

New insights on the spread of American culture have emerged from reception studies that analyse how people at the receiving end of American cultural strategies react to the institutions, commodities, and ideas that are promoted among them, whether by US foreign policy programmes, business corporations, media conglomerates or philanthropic organisations.[12] As Rob Kroes noted, there are many ways in which recipients 'recontextualise American culture as it reaches them'.[13] Reception studies challenge the notion of the extension of American culture as a form of imperialism that produces a one-way street of hegemonic domination, suggesting instead a project of intentions with no guaranteed outcomes.[14] While this more fluid notion does not discount the imperial nature of the missionary endeavour, it forestalls an inevitable conclusion of oppression, and creates a space between the intentions of the transmitters and their short- and long-term consequences. Analysis is then open to the contextual exploration of alternatives that include the possibility of negotiation, selective acceptance or rejection of new cultural ideals and modes of resistance at the site of importation. This approach informs my study of American missionaries among the Bulgarians, which adds a mid-nineteenth century perspective to scholarship on cultural transfer that has emphasised the twentieth century.

By introducing American gender models into the process of Bulgarian educational reform, ABCFM missionaries created new opportunities for Bulgarian women, facilitating their entry into the public sphere as teachers and advocates of female education. Bulgarian female teachers aligned with the wives of prominent community leaders in Eski Zağra to spearhead the organisation of a women's association to demand education for their daughters. Bulgarian women appropriated American gender models to reinforce their position as preservers of the national religion and culture, while simultaneously developing a new position as harbingers of progress.

As Nira Yuval Davis has shown, women have acted, and been represented, as biological and cultural reproducers of communities where the concept of *Kulturnation* has predominated in nationalist discourses.[15] In Eastern Europe, the importance of women's education in the nineteenth-century national projects of Czechs, Latvians and Serbs has been recognised as a result of national struggles against imperial European powers, specifically the Austrian Empire and the linguistic domination of German.[16] What American-Bulgarian interactions reveal is the importance of religion in women's contribution to nation formation, and the perception of educated women as symbols of modernity as well as tradition. Bulgarian women 'recontextualised' American gender ideals to construct the ideal

of educated Orthodox womanhood as a marker of Bulgarian national development. The issue of female education became critical in the context of an ethnic movement for national recognition based on the elements of religion and language in the face of American religious reform and Ottoman secularising reform, which brings me to the last piece of the mosaic.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the Ottoman state pursued a programme of civil reform to eliminate non-Muslim disabilities, legislate equality of Muslims and non-Muslims and promote a sense of 'Ottomanness' (*Osmanlilik*) among all Ottoman subjects, so as to remove the religious differences that had previously determined civil and social status.[17] Ironically, as Gauri Viswanathan and Peter van der Veer have argued in the British-Indian context, during the process of state modernisation in which religion is de-emphasised, reformers inadvertently produce the opposite of their intended objective inasmuch as religion takes on a defining role at the centre of incipient nationalism.[18] Religion becomes 'less a marker of the subjectivity of belief systems than a category of identification'.[19] In the Ottoman Empire, as reformers began to remove religion as a basis of primary identification, Bulgarians insisted on their Orthodox religion as a major pillar of their identity. As they increasingly equated 'Bulgarianness' with Orthodoxy, educated urban Bulgarian men clamoured for reform within the Orthodox Church in the Ottoman Empire, eventually forming a movement for an independent Bulgarian Church.[20] In addition to their demands for cessation of venality, they insisted on the appointment of priests who could deliver the liturgy in Bulgarian, and worked to organise schools where teachers instructed in Bulgarian instead of Greek.

The Bulgarian movement for ecclesiastical, linguistic and educational reform attracted the attention of several ABCFM missionaries who had been working in the Eastern Mediterranean since the early 1830s.[21] Bulgarians also became an object of Great Power interest. Jockeying for influence in the Ottoman Empire, British diplomats supported American Protestant efforts to proselytise among the Bulgarians; the French-government funded Catholic missionary efforts to persuade Bulgarians to join the Catholic Church; Russian diplomats worked to counter the efforts of Protestants and Catholics and to retain Bulgarians within the Eastern Orthodox Church, and under the control of the Greek Patriarchate.[22]

Persuaded that Bulgarian endeavours indicated an interest in Protestant-style reform, American missionaries worked to promote a reformation within the Eastern Orthodox Church and to champion Anglo-American influence against encroaching Russian and French interests in the Ottoman Balkans.[23] They envisioned that the Bulgarians, once converted to Protestantism, would proselytise among the Greek and Serbian Orthodox in the Balkans, and eventually among the Muslims of the Ottoman

Empire. The missionaries organised Protestant church services wherever they resided, operated a press in Constantinople to produce Bulgarian-language publications and established a theological seminary for young men in Filibe (Plovdiv). The 'Bulgarian South Hadley' in Eski Zağra was the major element in their strategy that targeted women.

Eski Zağra was the third ABCFM station to be established in the Balkans after the Crimean War, as missionaries headed north-west from the Ottoman capital of Istanbul, settling first in the towns of Edirne (Odrin, Adrianopolis) and Filibe (Plovdiv, Philippopolis). Like many Ottoman towns, Eski Zağra was multiethnic and multicultural, with adherents of the major religions (Muslims, Christians and Jews) and the major ethnic groups (Turks, Greeks, Bulgarians, Armenians and Roma) living in the town. Bulgarian speakers predominated in a population of approximately 20,000 inhabitants.[24] In his first report from the town, Theodore Byington remarked on the presence of several primary schools, and two upper-level schools for boys. The Bulgarian community no longer used the Greek language in their schools and churches, and the young men of the town had just opened a reading room. 'These facts will serve to indicate their progressive spirit', Byington wrote.[25]

There were, however, no upper-level schools for girls, and illiteracy among women was widespread. Although private initiatives to organise schools for Bulgarian girls funded by wealthy merchants had begun in the 1840s, these efforts were frustrated by lack of trained teachers, a dearth of reading material and a general perception that girls did not need to be educated.[26] The initial impetus for female education in Eski Zağra came from the town's native sons who had travelled farther afield – French-educated Alexander Ekzarkh (1810–1891), a newspaper editor and later employee of the Ottoman diplomatic service, and Russian-educated Zakhariy Knyazheskiy (1810–1877), a teacher and later employee of the Russian diplomatic service. Ekzarkh desired to make Eski Zağra 'the mother of learning'.[27] With funding from the Imperial Russian government, he supported elementary parish schools for Bulgarian girls operated by Orthodox nuns in Eski Zağra and neighbouring towns through the 1850s. Knyazheskiy had succeeded in acquiring Russian sponsorship for two young girls – Anastasiya (Mikhova) Tosheva and Alexandra Mikhaylova – to study in a female boarding school for the daughters of the Russian lesser nobility in Odessa.[28]

Tosheva and Mikhaylova were the first well-educated Bulgarian female teachers. On returning from Odessa to Eski Zağra in 1857, they opened post-elementary schools for girls with serious curricula and an ideology that supported female education and teacher training; however, their teaching careers were of short duration. Among the reasons discussed in the press for the closure of their schools after the first year were lack

of parental interest, scepticism about the validity of the curriculum and the ability of the teachers, and poor teachers' salaries.[29] Thus, when the ABCFM missionaries established their station in Eski Zağra toward the end of 1859, there were no girls' schools, except for the elementary school taught by Orthodox nuns.[30]

The Byingtons immediately recognised their opportunity, and Theodore Byington discussed a plan to open a girls' school with Khadzhi Gospodin Slavov, a leading member of the *obshtina*.[31] Byington believed the plan would win the Bulgarians over to the mission cause because it would meet a critical Bulgarian need for well-educated female teachers. Members of the *obshtina* did not look favourably on Byington's proposition, however. Slavov gave Byington to understand that the *obshtina* was responsible for girls' education as well as that of boys in their town, and the Bulgarians had no need of foreigners doing good deeds.[32] Despite its declaration of responsibility, however, the *obshtina* made no effort to make good its declared obligations toward its daughters.

In the absence of Bulgarian efforts on behalf of female education, several ABCFM missionaries began to promote to their Board the idea of a school to train Bulgarian female teachers. Byington's colleague James F. Clarke wrote that the time was propitious 'for preparing a body of faithful teachers acquainted with the truth of the gospel, to have a moulding influence at the outset of this movement'.[33] William Meriam also hastened to propose a school for girls as 'our entering wedge to the hearts of the fathers and mothers'.[34] For his part, Byington claimed that Providence was giving them the opportunity to supply the Bulgarians with female teachers who would be 'brought under the Gospel truth, and thus be prepared to go forth to their important works, with hearts full of the love of Christ and ready to sow the good seed of the word'.[35]

The Istanbul-based ABCFM committee appointed to consider the issue of education for the Bulgarians recommended that a girls' school be founded at Eski Zağra as 'the most direct way of getting access to the people, and of preparing what the Bulgarians so much need – Christian instructresses for their common schools'.[36] Attached to the recommendation was a six-point plan for the girls' school.[37] The first point stipulated that a female teacher be sent from America. The school should accommodate both day pupils and boarders, about fifteen of each. If practicable, parents should pay fees to reduce expenses. The three-year course of instruction should include reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, vocal music, needlework, and daily instruction in the Bible. Pupils would be trained to be teachers and receive 'right ideas' about schools and the preservation of health. The girls would retain their native habits of dress and modes of living, and would do their own cooking and washing.

Thus, the mission school was set up on the Mount Holyoke model, including domestic chores, a sliding-scale fee structure, and religious instruction. Its course of study was not as advanced as that at Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, which was a college-level institution, and reflected current Bulgarian needs for a level of schooling beyond elementary instruction.[38] As a missionary wife's duties extended to the supervision of boarding departments, Margaret Byington took on that responsibility; hence the appeal for a single woman who would be free to focus on teaching. The Byingtons opened the mission school in Eski Zağra in January 1863, using one floor of their house. While awaiting the arrival of a female American teacher, they hired Fannie Meisner, a Bulgarian-speaking Austrian national of Czech ethnicity who had become a Protestant while living with the Clarke family.[39]

Within two weeks, the missionaries clashed with the Bulgarian community when students suddenly stopped attending the mission school. Parents kept their daughters away because one of the girls had been punished at school (by whom is unclear) for making the sign of the cross. Byington reported that the absences were connected with 'the zealous efforts of a Bulgarian nun', perhaps a teacher in one of the elementary schools. The Byingtons were obliged to suspend the school for several weeks; they weathered this storm, and by May of 1863 the school had twenty regular students. Encouraged by the progress of the school, Byington expected that it would 'with God's blessing … accomplish much for the evangelization of the Bulgarians'. According to Byington, the school was patronised by 'several of the most influential families in the town', and was regarded favourably by 'the better class of citizens,' an assessment that is confirmed by Bulgarian sources.[40]

In targeting the daughters of the leading families of Eski Zağra, Byington sought a 'wedge', as Meriam had predicted, into the hearts and minds of influential men and women in the community. Given local customs, however, Byington was aware that such well-placed young women were unlikely to set out to teach in neighbouring towns and villages. The second part of his strategy was to appeal to poorer families to send their daughters to the mission school – particularly daughters of widowed mothers who would be unable to provide dowries, and hence were unlikely to procure good matches for their daughters' future marriages. Frail health would also count against a good marriage match. For such young women, the convent was the only alternative until lay teaching became a potential profession in the 1860s. This was an option that appealed to poor young women.[41]

The mission school seemed poised for success as Mary Esther Reynolds was appointed its first American female teacher in 1863. Though not a graduate of Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, Mary Reynolds spent some

time at the Seminary in the summer of 1862 preparing for her appointment.[42] Arriving in Eski Zağra in July 1863, she wrote to the Board almost immediately, indicating that the school was flourishing.[43] In December of that year, the missionaries began to operate a Sunday school. The following June, when they inaugurated their new schoolroom, sixty-six local women attended, among them the mothers and other female relatives of the mission school students.[44]

Bulgarian parents were pleased with the education their daughters received and continued to send them to the mission school, which graduated its first class at the end of 1865. Two graduates – Maria Gencheva and Elena Khadzhi Ivanova – were retained as assistant teachers in the mission school. Other graduates returned to their hometowns and villages and opened elementary schools. Several older girls organised a summer school in the nearby town of Kazanluk, where Byington had established an out-station, teaching older women to read. Other girls helped their fathers keep their business correspondence and accounts.[45]

The success of the mission school and the cause of female education in general were furthered by the debate in Bulgarian-language newspapers about Ottoman proposals for educational reform within the empire. Educational reform for professional military and administrative classes had long been a concern of the Ottoman government. In the 1860s, Ottoman bureaucrats turned their attention to instruction outside the traditional schools (*medreses*) run by religious scholars (*ulema*). The educational network established by ABCFM missionaries in the Ottoman Empire, which was the most extensive of all foreign school systems, provided the standard against which Ottoman officials sought to pursue their project of public educational reform in the second half of the nineteenth century.[46] According to historian Selim Deringil, the missionary schools threatened the very legitimacy of the Ottoman state.[47] At a time when Ottoman secularising reform was promoting the concept of Ottomanism for all Ottoman subjects, American missionaries were translating the Bible into the languages of Ottoman Christians, and organising schools based on the Protestant religion that taught in the languages of local communities, thereby promoting difference and contributing to local nationalisms. In the Balkans, Ottoman reformers perceived an additional obstacle: Bulgarian teachers trained in Russia were seen as tools of Russian influence, and as threats to the programme of Ottomanism. Ottoman statesman Midhat Paşa inaugurated a major attempt to foster a common Ottoman identity through public educational reform in the Balkans.

Following a review of Christian and Muslim educational institutions in the Danubian province between 1865 and 1867, Midhat Paşa proposed that Christian and Muslim community schools be closed, and replaced by schools controlled by the state.[48] Schools financed and supported by the

state would provide superior education for Christians and Muslims, and prevent Bulgarians from attending mission schools or going abroad for their education, thus limiting foreign influence. His proposals included instruction at the elementary, middle, and high-school levels. While students in elementary school and lower-middle school would be instructed in their native language, instruction beyond that would be only in Ottoman Turkish. Thus, Ottoman-supported state schools would complete the homogenisation of the multiethnic empire by removing the obligation for provision of education from the religious communities, and imposing an empire-wide educational structure.

Ottoman proposals for educational reform did not sit well with members of the Bulgarian community in Istanbul. They were concerned that post-elementary multiethnic secular classrooms where instruction was provided in Turkish would eventually lead to loss of both faith and language among the Bulgarians.[49] Interestingly, one prominent Bulgarian newspaper, *Vremya* (Time, 1865–1866), countered the Ottoman model with an American model. In an introduction to the series 'Public Education in American Schools', Todor Burmov, the editor of *Vremya*, who was acquainted with ABCFM missionaries in Istanbul, advised against the model of state-controlled education that the Ottomans were proposing.[50] Instead, he pointed to America, where education remained under local community control, as the example to be followed. The series was a glowing account of education in America, where the New England spirit of the teachers, the majority of whom were women, was diffused among the many different peoples of the nation. The report claimed that women exercised untold influence on the intellectual and moral development of the nation through the educational system, instilling in their pupils such virtues as piety, obedience, love of truth, love of country, and industriousness. Consequently, women in America were truly and profoundly respected. According to the writer of the report, no father in Europe would send his children to a school run by women; yet, he urged, this type of prejudice had to be overcome. America was the model to follow.

While the report on American schools was used to reject the concept of universal Ottoman education, it also provided some support for the Ottoman proposals under discussion. By remarking on the moulding of children that was produced by general education in America, the report emphasised that the New England spirit of education ensured that immigrants acquired 'Anglo-Saxon Puritan ethics'. By analogy, universal Ottoman education would provide a fusion of ethnic groups and races, producing a sense of Ottoman identity. On the other hand, the report worked to the advantage of ABCFM missionaries, who could not have wished for a better advertisement than the *Vremya* series. While arguing against the proposed Ottoman reforms, the series provided clear support for the gender models

and concepts that the Byingtons were introducing at the 'Bulgarian South Hadley'.

As student numbers increased at the mission school, Mary Reynolds was joined in her teaching duties by Mary Long, daughter of Methodist Episcopal Church missionary Albert Long, stationed in Istanbul. By 1866, forty-five girls were enrolled at the mission school: twenty-seven local girls attended as day students, and eighteen girls boarded, from towns across the Balkans.[51] Yet Byington was not entirely content. Despite the school's educational successes, the Byingtons were disappointed by the low number of conversions inside and outside the school. Their model of educational reform was working; their model of evangelical activism was not. It was during these years that Byington increasingly appealed to Boston for reinforcements from Mount Holyoke Female Seminary.

Byington was to get his wish when Roseltha Abigail Norcross, a Mount Holyoke graduate, arrived in Eski Zağra in the spring of 1867. With the addition of Norcross to the teaching team, Byington planned to institute a higher course of study. Some of the more advanced pupils began to study algebra, natural philosophy, elementary astronomy, physiology, and history from American books that had been translated into Bulgarian.[52] Norcross later introduced the study of English. In his annual report for 1867, Byington wrote 'We thought it desirable to show the Bulgarians that the Creator had endowed woman with mental capacities not inferior to those of man, and that they therefore ought to make as thorough provision for the education of their daughters as for the education of their sons'.[53]

Byington's remark contains not a little irony, inasmuch as the Bulgarians were indeed endeavouring to provide an education for their daughters, and had hired a mission-school graduate to assist in the process. The only acknowledgement Byington lent to Bulgarian action was his comment that, of the first mission-school graduates, 'one of the eldest of these girls has been employed by the Bulgarians as a teacher'.[54] As it was part of the mission objective to prepare teachers for Bulgarian schools, his silence about developments in education for Bulgarian girls seems strange. Despite his desire to impress upon the Board the progress of the mission school, Byington had failed to mention a very direct consequence of the mission school – the opening of a Bulgarian girls' school in Eski Zağra only six months after the missionaries established their school. The success of the mission school and concern about Protestant-style reform during a period of intense struggle for an independent church and a growing sense of Bulgarian nationhood forced the *obshtina* to reconsider the issue of education for girls.

Bulgarian memoirs of the period indicate that the mission school was a major factor contributing to renewed efforts to promote female education in Eski Zağra.[55] According to Khadzhi Gospodin Slavov, the community

owed a debt of gratitude to the Protestants for goading the *obshtina* into action. The presence of the missionaries 'could not but nettle our self-respect and challenge us to emulation', he wrote; on the other hand, the success of the mission school raised fears that Protestant teachings 'might take root in young girls' hearts'.[56]

The disquiet of the *obshtina* is easily understandable in the Eski Zağra context of 1863. Since it had been organised to represent the Bulgarian community of the town in 1849, the *obshtina* had worked steadily more boldly in the national cause, moving to counteract Ottoman and Greek influence and celebrate Bulgarian culture.[57] In 1858, Bulgarians replaced the old Ottoman name of the town, Eski Zağra, with the Bulgarian name of Zheleznik. (The town was later renamed Stara Zagora.) During that same year, on 11 May, the town celebrated for the first time the feast day of Saints Cyril and Methodius, the patron saints of Slavic literacy. And on that same date in the year 1860, gathered together in the church of Saint Dimitur, the townspeople repudiated the Greek bishop of the Turnovo diocese, to which the community belonged. In so doing, they took decisive political action, following the example of the Istanbul Bulgarians who, on the previous Easter Sunday 1860, had repudiated the Greek Patriarch.

But the *obshtina* was far from united. Lack of agreement among its members on questions of education, the organisation of boys' schools, and payment of teachers' salaries dated from 1851 and continued into the 1860s. The discord reached its height during the debates on the Uniate (the movement for alliance with the Roman Catholic Church, whereby Bulgarians would recognise the Pope but retain the Orthodox rites) in 1860–1861, which were aired in the press.[58] Just as the danger of the Uniate had passed in Eski Zağra, American Protestant missionaries opened a girls' school, and the Bulgarian *obshtina* faced a new challenge. This time, the *obshtina* united against what they perceived to be a danger to the future mothers of Bulgaria. The *obshtina* was particularly irked by the boarding section of the mission school. As members of the *obshtina* saw things, young girls who boarded would not have the counsel of their parents in the evening to counteract the Protestant instruction they received during the day. In her autobiography, Anastasiya Tosheva noted that this concern obliged the *obshtina* to take steps to 'eradicate the evil threatening our nation'.[59] In the struggle for national recognition and an autonomous church, the 'evil' was no less than a challenge to the Bulgarian national faith and identity. According to Tosheva, some members of the *obshtina* argued that Bulgarian girls needed a Bulgarian school, where they would be educated as good, Orthodox mothers.

The idea that women should be educated to pass on language, religion, and culture had been growing among educated Bulgarians, and was promoted by priests who were increasingly aware of the lack of religious

knowledge among Bulgarians.[60] That the presence of the mission school appeared to be threatening not just Eski Zağra but the entire Bulgarian nation-in-the making is evident from the correspondence of Nayden Gerov, the Bulgarian-born Russian Vice Consul in Filibe. In his reports to the Imperial Russian government, he repeatedly appealed for funds for Bulgarian girls' schools as a way to counteract Protestant influence.[61]

Thus, the mission school in Eski Zağra became a catalyst for renewed efforts on the part of Bulgarians to open a viable girls' school beyond the elementary level. But the school needed a female teacher. In 1863, the only candidate was Anastasiya Tosheva, who was by then married with two children. According to Tosheva, the *obshtina* managed to persuade her husband 'to place himself above the mindless attacks that "he was sending his wife out to teach for money" and unite with them to work for the good of the town and the nation.'[62] As a reasonably well-to-do artisan-merchant in a period of incipient embourgeoisement, Tosheva's husband clearly had a certain status to uphold, and it appears the townspeople would have ridiculed him for sending his wife out to work for pay. However, ridicule was a small threat compared with the tools of persuasion in store for Tosheva. Members of the *obshtina* motivated her to take the teaching post 'to oppose the foes of Orthodoxy and our nation' lest 'the curse of God' and 'the scorn of the nation' befall her.[63] Tosheva did not need to be threatened with divine wrath and the people's disdain. She wanted to teach. She opened a two-room Bulgarian girls' school in the summer of 1863.

At the opening of her school, Tosheva did something most unusual: she made a public speech before a mixed audience, in which she connected the urgency of female education to themes of God-given vocation and national progress.[64] Tosheva's speech has been strangely ignored by Bulgarian historiography, yet it was one of the earliest on record by a Bulgarian woman, and it placed her at the forefront of a radical movement that promoted female education in the name of the nation. If Bulgarians wanted progress and prosperity, she remarked, they had to educate their daughters; she called on the inhabitants of Eski Zağra not to remain indifferent to the question of female education. While the need for education had been associated with the notion of progress in *Tsarigradski vestnik* (Istanbul Herald, 1848–1862), the only Bulgarian-language newspaper in the 1850s, Tosheva emphasised the connection of female education and progress. Though she did not directly say so, she implied that Bulgarians were living in ignorance and failing to prosper because their womenfolk were uneducated, and held in disdain. These associations were the focus of Tosheva's later writings.[65] Whether she developed these ideas at school in Odessa in the 1850s, whether she was influenced by missionary perspectives on the status of women in society, or whether she had developed

her thinking in some other framework is unclear. What is clear is that the ideas expounded in her speech provided fuel for the public debate on the 'woman question' that began in the late 1860s, but was clearly heralded by Tosheva in 1863.

In her autobiography, Tosheva remarked that it was difficult to work against the general prejudice that women could do without education. She had to persuade Bulgarian mothers of the need for and use of education for their daughters. Moreover, she had to work with tact and discretion, not only to attract students away from the mission school but also to draw students' mothers away from Byington's sermons and back to the Orthodox Sunday services. This is how she came to invite the women of the town to the Bulgarian girls' school after church on Sundays to read one of the daily texts from the Gospel and interpret it for them. She also gave speeches on female education and the instruction of children, paying particular attention to religious instruction in the spirit of Orthodoxy.[66] This aspect of Tosheva's work has also received little attention from historians, yet it was arguably one of the earliest instances among Bulgarians of a laywoman interpreting the Scriptures for other women in an institutionalised setting, and training them in the instruction of their children. It was unusual even for Orthodox priests to interpret the Scriptures to their flocks. Expounding on the Gospels was a particularly Protestant endeavour. Tosheva was making bold strides into the public sphere using Protestant tactics to consolidate the Orthodox faith among the women and girls of Eski Zağra.

As Tosheva's school progressed and she added a third-year to the course of study, the *obshtina* hired Tonka Boycheva from the first graduating class of the mission school. Together, Tosheva and Boycheva taught the first graduating class of Bulgarian-trained female teachers. Their graduates set off to teach in Bulgarian settlements throughout the Ottoman Empire. They established schools on both sides of the Balkan Mountains and in Macedonia. Tosheva called her graduates 'the first pioneers'.[67]

As one group of pioneers left Eski Zağra, another group returned. When the *obshtina* founded the Bulgarian girls' school in 1863, its members also recognised the dearth of well-trained teachers. They sent three young women from the town to study at the Belgrade Women's High School in Serbia at the expense of the Serbian government. Having gained autonomy from the Ottoman Empire in 1830, the Serbian government had been obliged to hire Serbian nationals from the Austrian Empire to teach in the first state-operated Serbian schools. The first elementary school for girls in Belgrade was opened in 1846, but the first school to graduate Serbian female teachers from a five-year course of study was the privately operated Educational Institute for Female Children, opened in 1853. In seeking to develop an educated citizenry, the state recognised the

need to educate the future mothers of the nation. Educated Serbs called for girls to be educated because they would be responsible for nurturing 'the future citizens of the fatherland in a real Serbian spirit and in the Serbian nationality.'[68] Independent Serbia, like Greece, also had expansionist aspirations in the Balkans, and Serbian-Bulgarian cooperation in the area of education (and revolution) was of short duration, as Serbs and Bulgarians soon disagreed on the issue of Balkan Slavic unity.[69]

Balkan disunity notwithstanding, when Zyumbula Talimova, Zhelka Ivanova, and Samarayda Nacheva returned from Belgrade in 1867, the *obshtina* hired them as teachers and Tosheva was able to add more advanced subjects – physics, chemistry, pedagogy, and ethics – to her curriculum. In the academic year 1868–1869, Tosheva's school became the first Bulgarian girls' school to graduate students from a five-year course of study.[70] The graduates often were hired in towns far from Eski Zağra. Khadzhi Gospodin Slavov set their salaries and their terms of appointment, which generally including housing, firewood in winter, and travel expenses.[71]

In the meantime, the *obshtina* publicly declared its intention to enrol out-of-town boarders after an incident in Eski Zağra permanently soured relations between the townspeople and the missionaries. At the centre of these events was Maria Gencheva, an assistant teacher in the mission school who converted to Protestantism. While Maria's widowed mother appreciated the free education Maria had received from the missionaries and welcomed Maria's ability to earn her own living, she was distressed by Maria's conversion from her Orthodox faith. Her unsuccessful attempt to remove her daughter from the mission environment in September 1867 precipitated a minor altercation that swiftly escalated into an attack on the mission, and which resulted in legal proceedings. Several Bulgarians were briefly imprisoned, including Maria Gencheva's mother.[72]

The *obshtina* declared that it was obliged to make public the missionaries' 'murderous objective'.[73] Eski Zağra residents removed their daughters from the mission school, and the *obshtina* advised parents in other towns who had sent their daughters to the mission school to remove them. As members of the *obshtina* saw things, if parents were true Bulgarians, if they loved their nation and their religion, and if they desired to teach and instruct their daughters in the Orthodox faith, then they could send their daughters to the Bulgarian school in Eski Zağra. The *obshtina* offered to provide free tuition to all young girls as long as parents provided for their clothes and board. The open denouncement of the mission school in the newspaper *Makedoniya* (Macedonia, 1866–1872) was an embarrassment for its editor, Petko Slaveykov, a prominent member of the Bulgarian community in Istanbul and a major advocate of church reform. Slaveykov worked in a salaried position with Istanbul-based missionaries as a member of the Bible translation team, and he sent

his sons to the mission-founded Robert College in the Ottoman capital. Nevertheless, he too felt obliged to condemn the actions of 'some of the missionaries', in what he termed 'the domination of the Reformation' in Eski Zağra.[74]

It was at this point that Anastasiya Tosheva's informal gatherings of women after church on Sundays took on a more formal aspect. The women who met to improve their own knowledge and discuss educational matters and childhood instruction sought approval from the *obshtina* to form a women's association, which they called 'Maternal Love'. In reporting on the association, one newspaper commented that 'the head female teacher' (Tosheva was not mentioned by name) had given a speech at the inaugural meeting of the association in early 1869, at which considerable monetary donations had been made in support of the local girls' school. Another newspaper stated that the women of Eski Zağra had organised 'having recognised their own want of learning' to support six poor out-of-town girls in their school. The girls would be obliged to return to their villages as teachers at the end of their education.[75] Thus, the Bulgarian women of Eski Zağra organised publicly, as mothers, to promote female education and raise funds to support the training of female teachers for the villages surrounding their town. Interestingly, the first young girl to be supported as an Eski Zağra boarder was Penka Chirpanlieva, whose widowed mother had removed her from the mission school because her brothers 'did not want to see her become a Protestant'. She graduated in 1873 to become the first female teacher in her village of Shipka, near Kazanluk. As a poor young woman faced with a bleak future, she was relieved that 'the teaching profession would provide her living'.[76]

Anastasiya Tosheva was unable to enjoy the fruits of this advance, however. She was relieved of her duties by the new school board formed within the *obshtina* in 1870. By Tosheva's account, her dismissal was the result of personal intrigues among school board members, though her biographer suggests that the reason for her dismissal was a consequence of ideological differences between more progressive and more conservative elements in the town, with the conservative element gaining the upper hand.[77] It may be that the *obshtina* no longer saw a need for Tosheva's skills once the mission school no longer attracted local girls. It may also be that the conservative members of the *obshtina* were threatened by Tosheva's emerging power base in the town as head teacher of the Bulgarian girls' school and founder of a formal and public women's association.

It is perhaps telling that Tonka Boycheva (the mission school graduate who worked with Tosheva) and Zyumbyula Talimova (one of the Belgrade graduates who supervised the boarding department of the Bulgarian girls' school) also left Eski Zağra at that time. Tosheva accepted a position to direct female education in Gabrovo, where Boycheva was also appointed

teacher. Talimova was appointed head teacher at a girls' school in the town of Sliven. With the three women gone, the political divisions in Eski Zağra were made public, and an anonymous contributor to the newspaper *Pravo* (Justice, 1870–1873) commented that the town had little to boast about in its newly constructed female boarding school.[78] Teofano Popova, who was a student at that time, recalled that she was unable to complete her education at the Eski Zağra school because she was needed to teach. At the age of fourteen, she was 'removed from the school bench and appointed to teach at the same school, in part filling the gap in the teaching contingent'.[79]

The departure of Tosheva and Boycheva from Eski Zağra benefited the town of Gabrovo, where the girls' school had a two-year programme of education. Tosheva, Boycheva, and other teachers developed a curriculum and a reputation that was to make the Gabrovo girls' school the second, after Eski Zağra, to graduate students from a five-year course of study. Until 1878, when Bulgaria gained independence from the Ottoman Empire and education became a matter for the state, Eski Zağra and Gabrovo were the only post-elementary girls' schools that offered a five-year course of study.[80] In the meantime, although Russian women in major Russian urban centres organised in benevolent associations to raise funds to support Bulgarian girls in Russian schools, only twenty-four young Bulgarian women studied in Russia in the 1860s and 70s.[81] Moreover, judging by the curriculum at the school where Bulgarian and Serbian girls were funded by the Moscow Women's Benevolent Association, the four-year course of study was inferior to that offered at the 'Bulgarian South Hadley' and at the Bulgarian girls' schools Anastasiya Tosheva organised in Eski Zağra and Gabrovo.[82]

The changes in female education caused by events in Eski Zağra took prominent Bulgarian male nationalists by surprise. When Anastasiya Tosheva opened her girls' school in Stara Zagora in July 1863, Petko Slaveykov quipped in his inimitable satirical style that he was amazed that female teachers could be found among the Bulgarians. He knew of one in Turnovo, he remarked, and half a one in Tryavna; but in other places there wasn't even half a one.[83] Slaveykov is hailed by Bulgarian historiography as the most ardent advocate of female education in the 1860s.[84] Yet his flippant reaction to the opening of Tosheva's school suggests that he was unaware of efforts to promote female education in Eski Zağra. This is not to deny his advocacy of education for women, nor to minimise the importance of his publications. It is to suggest that he joined the debate on female education after Bulgarian women had voiced their demands for educational reform, and taken action to ensure that their demands were met. Slaveykov's ideas about education for girls crystallised following promulgation of the Ottoman Public Education Law.

The proposals that Midhad Paşa made to merge Christian and Muslim schools in the Danubian province in the mid-1860s were incorporated into the Ottoman Public Education Law of 1869, although the law was heavily influenced by the French model of state education. In addition to instituting various control mechanisms on foreign schools, the Law called for three levels of schooling (primary, secondary, and teacher training) for Ottoman children, with Turkish as the language of instruction beyond the primary level. For the first time, the Ottoman state made provisions for the education of girls and for a female teacher-training institute, though the provisions were not put into effect until the 1880s. Nevertheless, faced with the possibility of universal, multiethnic education within the empire, with instruction in the Turkish language for boys and girls, Slaveykov and many other educated Bulgarians feared the loss of their nationality. If Bulgarian children did not learn their faith and language at school, where would they learn it? Originally, Slaveykov had recommended that this was the job of priests.[85] Ultimately, he decided it was the job of women.

In grappling with ideas about women and society, Slaveykov eventually argued for female education in the service of the nation because, he noted, the status of women was the clearest indication of national development.[86] Bulgarians, he wrote, should do twice as much for their daughters' education as for their sons'. Not only would this facilitate the education of the nation, because women, as mothers, would raise future generations; it would also have salutary effects on the morality of the nation. If women were educated, then families, schools, churches, society, and nation would flourish. Anastasiya Tosheva had expressed these ideas six years earlier when she opened a Bulgarian girls' school in Eski Zağra to counter Protestant influence in the town. In 1863, her speech had been a voice in the wilderness at a time when Slaveykov had not yet realised that there was even half a female teacher outside of Turnovo. In the meantime, the interactions of Americans and Bulgarians in the town of Eski Zağra, the pressure of Ottoman educational reforms, and the public actions of Bulgarian women who began to advocate female education had made the question of girls' schools a national priority. In 1869 and 1870, Bulgarian women across the Balkans founded twenty-five organisations to promote female education.[87] By 1870, it was the rare Bulgarian newspaper editor who did not publish articles calling for female education. That year, Slaveykov himself appealed, in vain, to the one existing Bulgarian national institution – the Bulgarian Orthodox Church established by Ottoman imperial decree in 1870 – to provide funds for a teacher-training school for girls.

The year 1870 was a watershed year for American-Bulgarian relations in Eski Zağra. Three critical Bulgarian players (Tosheva, Boycheva, Talimova) left the Bulgarian girls' school to teach in other towns. On the American side, the Byingtons, and their replacements – the Morses – had

returned to the United States. Roseltha Norcross died; Esther Reynolds returned to the United States because of ill health; and two assistant teachers at the mission school (Elena Khadzhi Ivanova and Stomata Dechkova) were frequently ill, as a result of which the mission school operated only spasmodically. In a major ABCFM reorganisation, the 'Bulgarian South Hadley' in Eski Zağra was closed. Reopened as the Female Boarding School of Samokov (western Rumelia) in 1871, it prepared female teachers for the small communities of Bulgarian Protestants that began to form across the Balkans. The Female Boarding School was adopted by the recently organised (1869) Woman's Board of Missions (WBM) in Boston. Among the single women missionaries sponsored by the WBM, Esther Maltbie was to spend 40 years among the Bulgarians. WBM pamphlets would later call her 'The Mary Lyon of Bulgaria'.[88]

Educated Protestant womanhood on a mission of moral renovation was one of New England's most enduring solutions for maintaining its cultural domination during the social upheavals of the antebellum era, as the United States expanded steadily westward. It was a solution easily adapted to the needs of the emerging Bulgarian Orthodox nation as it sought to shape its identity and redefine its allegiances during a period of social and political change. The Eski Zağra case study reveals the contributions of American Protestantism to the gendering of Bulgarian nationalism, and complicates our understanding of social change in the mid-nineteenth century Ottoman Balkans. Although ABCFM missionaries failed in their attempt to promote religious reformation in the Orthodox Church, the gender models they introduced in Eski Zağra helped fuel a movement of educational reform that was tentatively underway in Ottoman Bulgarian society. American-Bulgarian interactions reveal the extension of antebellum American culture abroad, but also the manner in which American ideals and models could be 'recontextualised' by individuals who recognised their potential transformative power.

In a general environment that had not favoured education for girls, the Eski Zağra *obshtina* had not felt obliged to provide continued funding for Anastasiya Tosheva and Alexandra Mikhaylova to operate post-elementary girls' schools at the end of the 1850s. Members of the *obshtina* came to change their position in the face of what they perceived to be a threat to the religious cohesion of an emerging Bulgarian identity after the mission school for girls was opened in 1863. They did not want future Bulgarian mothers to be educated as Protestants. Thus, as American Protestants were perceived as an incubus, Bulgarian women became visible in the national struggle as mothers of the nation who would nurture their children in the Orthodox faith. For Anastasiya Tosheva, however, and indeed for graduates of the mission school, the ideals introduced by American Protestants were an inspiration. For them, women became visible as

teachers who would be agents of national formation. Moreover, as educated Christian teachers, young women in Eski Zağra became symbols of national progress. By associating the status of women in society with national development, Anastasiya Tosheva was able to carve out a space for her activities in the public sphere as teacher, organiser, and writer. By doing so in the presence of competition from a Protestant school, she constructed a position for Christian Orthodox women as both transmitters of culture and harbingers of progress. The absence of strong state (imperial or national) provision for female education facilitated her activities.

At a time when Bulgarians were re-assessing their shifting allegiances, Anastasiya Tosheva, like American women of the era, entered the public sphere on the foundations of her religion, with a mission to reform. Tosheva's training in Russia qualified her for the struggle against American Protestantism during a period of Ottoman civil reform in which Bulgarians were re-defining themselves against Turkish Muslims and Greek Christians in the Balkans. Tosheva's contributions to the constant readjustments of Bulgarian identity suggest that Bulgarian nationalism was forged in a multirelational context at the nexus of empire and religion. While Bulgarian nationalism began as a protest against encroaching Greek nationalism in the spheres of religion and education, and continued in response to Ottoman secular reform, the importance of women's education was recognised in Eski Zağra only in the face of the threat of American Protestantism.

The American project of religious reform was a losing proposition among a people who believed that it was precisely their rites and traditions that distinguished them as a separate people. In contrast, the model of the female teacher that ABCFM missionaries introduced in Eski Zağra was not threatening. To the contrary, the example of women who worked to promote cultural and religious transformation offered Bulgarian women a new base of cultural power on which they could justifiably build. Teaching was legitimised as a profession for women in Eski Zağra in the 1860s. However, the Mount Holyoke ideal carried with it the seeds of its own destruction. It offered a cultural model that could be adapted and turned against itself. Mount Holyoke Female Seminary had provided female teachers imbued with Protestant evangelism for the expanding American nation. The ABCFM missionaries expected the 'Bulgarian South Hadley' to do the same for the fledgling Bulgarian nation. Instead, the school that sent female teachers out to do the work of the nation was Anastasiya Tosheva's school. Its graduates represented the first generation of educated Bulgarian women. The specificity of the Bulgarian case illustrates the conditions in which the divergent message of Protestant reform could be appropriated. In a time of political and social upheaval, when religious affiliation was a pillar of national identity, the Protestant model of religious

reform did not serve the national cause, and could be resisted. In contrast, the American model of educated womanhood was recontextualised to serve the national cause as a narrative of progress and modernity. It was a model promoted and experienced by Bulgarian women before it was widely acknowledged in the Bulgarian press in the final decade of the *Vuzrazhdane*.

Notes

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7. Mary Lyon, A *Missionary Offering, or Christian Sympathy, Personal Responsibility, and the Present Crisis in Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1843), p. iii.
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26. Female education in the Ottoman Empire is an understudied subject. For a brief synopsis in the nineteenth century, see Chapter Two of Elizabeth Brown Frierson 'Unimagined Communities: State, Press, and Gender in the Hamidian Era' (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1996). On the history of Bulgarian female education, see Daskalova, 'Education of Women'; Angel Dimitrov, *Uchilishteto, progresut i natsionalnata revolyutsiya: Bulgarskoto uchilishte prez Vuzrazhdaneto* [School, progress, and the national revolution: The Bulgarian School during the National Revival] (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1987); L. I. Dorosiev, *Materiali za izuchavane na uchebnoto delo v Bulgaria* [Materials for the study of academic affairs in Bulgaria] (Sofia: Government Printing Office, 1925); Paskaleva, *The Bulgarian Woman*.
27. Papers of Alexander Ekzarkh, II.A.5189, Bulgarian Historical Archive, National Library, Sofia, Bulgaria. On Ekzarkh's efforts to obtain financial backing for educational projects among Bulgarians from the English, French, and Russian governments in the 1840s, see Julietta Velitchkova Borin, 'Les projets d'education bulgares au XIXe siècle: Affirmation

nationale et transferts culturels' (PhD diss., Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1998), pp. 229–507; Pierre Voillery, 'La renaissance bulgare et l'occident: La France et les bulgares 1762–1856' (Ph.D. diss., Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1980), pp. 136–96.

28. For Knyazheski's efforts on behalf of female education, see Tosheva, *Autobiography*, pp. 4–5.
29. *Tsarigradski vestnik*, 22 November and 20 December 1858, pp. 31–3 and 48–9; *Bulgaria*, 12 December 1859, p. 151.
30. The contribution of nuns to female education among Bulgarians has been neglected. See Valentina Drumeva, *Devicheskiyat manastir 'Sv. Vuvedenie Bogorodichno' i metosite v Kalofer* [The convent of the presentation of the Blessed Virgin and its cloisters in Kalofer] (Sofia: Publishing House of the Ministry of Defense 'St George the Dragon Slayer', 1998).
31. As a missionary wife, Margaret Byington had no official reporting capacity to the ABCFM, which has no correspondence in her name from the Balkans about these events.
32. Khadzhi Gospodin Slavov, 'Chronological description', p. 134.
33. Letter, James F. Clarke to Rufus Anderson, 7 March 1860, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, item 156.
34. Annual report from Philippopolis, 1860, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, item 27.
35. Letter, Theodore L. Byington to Rufus Anderson, 15 July 1861, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, item 122.
36. Report of Committee on Bulgarian Schools, Constantinople, 20 June 1862, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, item 46.
37. Six-point Plan of the Female Boarding School at Eski Zağra, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, item 45.
38. On the plan of instruction at Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, see Beth Bradford Gilchrist, *The Life of Mary Lyon* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1910), pp. 437–41.
39. Annual report from Eski Zağra, 1863, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, item 17. Tosheva reported that the Byingtons opened the school with the assistance of a Bulgarian Protestant female teacher, which perhaps speaks to the level of Fannie Meisner's Bulgarian language ability. Tosheva, *Autobiography*, p. 12.
40. Annual report from Eski Zağra, May 1863, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, item 17; Atanas Iliev, *Spomeni* [Memoirs] (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1926), pp. 33, 42, Tosheva, *Autobiography,* p. 11; Slavov, 'Chronological Description', pp. 119, 133.
41. Petrana Petrova Chirpanlieva, 'Avtobiografiya' [Autobiography], in *Kazanluk v minaloto i dnes* [Kazanluk in the past and today] (Sofia: Pridvorna pechatnitsa, 1923).
42. Sarah D. Locke Stowe, *History of Mount Holyoke Seminary, South Hadley, Mass., During Its First Half Century, 1837–1887* (South Hadley: Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, 1887), p. 210.
43. Letter, Mary Reynolds to Rufus Anderson, 12 August 1863, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, item 353.
44. Annual report from Eski Zağra, 1864, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, item 18.
45. Annual report from Eski Zağra, 1866, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, item 20.
46. Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Betül Başaran, 'American Schools and the Development of Ottoman Educational Policies During the Hamidian Period: A Reinterpretation,' in Ali Çaksu (ed.), *International Congress on Learning and Education in the Ottoman World* (Istanbul: Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture, 1999), pp. 185–206; Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1909* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998), pp. 112–34. On Ottoman educational reform in general, see Andreas M. Kazamias, *Education and the Quest for Modernity in Turkey* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).
47. Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains*, pp. 112–34.
48. Diana Karabinova, 'A Late Attempt to Find an Integrative Approach through Common Secular Education: Midhat Paşa as Governor of the Danube Province (1864–1868)', in *International Congress on Learning*, pp. 237–46.
49. See, for example, journalist Petko Slaveykov's comments in 'Obshtestvenoto obrazovanie' [Public education] *Makedoniya,* 20 May 1867 and 'Uchilishtniya vupros' [The school question] *Makedoniya,* 11 November 1867.

50. 'Obshtenarodno obuchenie v amerikanskite uchilishta' [Public education in American schools], *Vremya*, 5 March 1866 to 4 June 1866, reprinted from the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.
51. Annual reports from Eski Zağra, 1865 and 1866, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, items 19 and 20.
52. The translated textbooks were published by the Bulgarian firm of Khristo G. Danov of Plovdiv and Vienna. See Iliev, *Memoirs*, p. 74.
53. Annual report from Eski Zağra, 1867, ABC, 16.9, vol 4, item 21.
54. Annual report from Eski Zağra, 1866, ABC, 16.9, vol. 4, item 20.
55. Slavov, 'Chronological description', pp. 119, 133; Papers of Teofano Popova, State Archive, Stara Zagora, Collection no. 555k, inventory series 1, folder 17, p 1; Iliev, *Memoirs*, pp. 33, 42; Tosheva, *Autobiography*, p. 11; Nikolay Zhechev (ed.), *Avtobiografiy: A. Ivanov, R. I. Bluskov, Y. Nenov* [Autobiographies] (Sofia: Otechestven front, 1979), p. 30.
56. Slavov, 'Chronological description', 134.
57. Neycho Kunev, Liliya Filipova, Svetla Dimitrova, and Sofia Vasileva (eds), *150 Godini Obshtina Stara Zagora: Dokumentalen letopis, 1849–1999* [150 years Stara Zagora: A documentary chronicle, 1849–1999] (Stara Zagora: Thracian World, 1999), p. 7.
58. Slavov, 'Chronological description', 122–9; *Tsarigradski vestnik*, 17 May 1852, 20 June 1853, 1 November 1858, 22 November 1858, 20 December 1858, 14 January 1861, 11 February 1861, 25 February, 1861, 4 March 1861.
59. Tosheva, *Autobiography*, p. 13.
60. Kliment Rilets, 'Ieromonakh Neofit Rilski kato propovednik' [The priest Neofit Rilski as preacher], *Tsurkoven vestnik* 56 (1955), pp. 2–3.
61. M.G. Popruzhenko, *Arkhiv na Nayden Gerov* [Archive of Nayden Gerov], (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1911), vol. 1, pp. 300–303, 495–7, 511–15.
62. Tosheva, *Autobiography*, p. 13.
63. Tosheva, *Autobiography*, pp. 13–14.
64. *Suvetnik*, 24 June 1863, p. 5.
65. Anastasiya Tosheva, 'Pooshtrenie na bulgarkite kum napreduka [Motivation for Bulgarian women to look toward progress] *Pravo* 7 March 1870, and 16 March 1870, p. 10.
66. Tosheva, *Autobiography*, pp. 14–15.
67. Tosheva, *Autobiography*, p. 18; Anastasiya Tosheva, 'Spomeni za starozagorskoto devichesko uchilishte ot Anastasiya Tosheva bivsha direktorka na gimnaziyata' [Recollections of the Stara Zagora girls' school by Anastasiya Tosheva, former high school principal, Stara Zagora, 17 June 1906] State Archive, Stara Zagora, Collection No. 98k, inventory series 3, folder 1, p. 13.
68. Karanovich, *Development of Education in Serbia*, pp. 66–7.
69. Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804–1920* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977), pp. 128–40.
70. Tosheva, *Autobiography*, p. 18.
71. Letters, Khadzhi Gospodin Slavov to Vidin School Board, 16 August 1872 and 18 June 1873, Bulgarian Historical Archive, IIA.1750, IIA.1788, IIA.1793.
72. Annual report from Eski Zağra, 1868, ABC:16.9, vol. 4, item 22; Letter, Henry Elliot to Edward Joy Morris, 2 December 1867, U.S. Dept. of State, Diplomatic Despatches, Turkey, 1818–1906, Microfilm Ed. No. 757, reel 21; Slavov, 'Chronological description', pp. 219–235.
73. *Makedoniya*, 28 October 1867, p. 193.
74. *Makedoniya*, 25 November 1867, p. 212.
75. *Pravo*, 24 March 1869, p. 16; *Makedoniya*, 19 April 1869, p. 87.
76. Chirpanlieva, 'Autobiography', p. 193.
77. Elena Petrova Gospodinova, *Zhivot i pedagogicheska deynost na Anastasiya Tosheva* [The life and pedagogy of Anastasiya Tosheva] (Stara Zagora: Anastasiya Tosheva Pedagogical Institute at the Paissiy Khilendarski University of Plovdiv, 1996), p. 41.
78. 'Otvoreno pismo do suotechestvenitsite mi v Zheleznik' [Open letter to my fellow countrymen in Zheleznik] *Pravo*, 20 September 1871, p. 119.
79. Papers of Teofano Popova, State Archive in Stara Zagora, Special collection no. 555k, inventory 1, folder 1, p. 1.

80. Dimitrov, *School, Progress, and the National Revolution*, p. 89.
81. Nikolay Genchev, 'Bulgarskata natsionalna prosveta i Russiya sled Krimskata Voyna' [Bulgarian national education in Russia after the Crimean War], *Godishnik na Sofiyskiya universitet* 66 (1975), pp. 334–49.
82. 'Devicheskite uchilista v Moskva' [Girls' schools in Moscow] *Otechestvo* 17 July 1871.
83. *Gayda*, 13 July 1863, p. 19.
84. Cholakova, *The Bulgarian Women's Movement*; Krassimira Daskalova, *Ot syankata na istoriyata: Zhenite v bulgarskoto obshtestvo i kultura* [From the shadows of history: Women in Bulgarian society and culture] (Sofia: Bulgarian Group for the Historical Study of Women and Gender, 1998); Paskaleva, *The Bulgarian Woman*; Pundeva-Voynikova, *The Bulgarian Woman*.
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87. Cholakova, *The Bulgarian Women's Movement*, p. 35.
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