

THE PERSONALITY OF ACADEMICIAN MIKHAIL ARNAUDOV IN THE CONTEXT OF THE TEN ARNAUDOV READINGS¹

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***Abstract:** The article studies the personality of Academician Mikhail Arnaudov from the standpoints of the texts, published in the ten Arnaudov collections. When constructing the image of Michael Arnaudov's personality, we observe the main requirement to seek the truth about his life, and thus we protect ourselves from subjectivism and manipulation, from an apology for the apology's sake or from ignoring facts. The present study clarifies the motives of Acad. Arnaudov to engage in political activity, as well as the specifics of the dossier, written in two different political systems. For the writing of Acad. Arnaudov's biography there are also irrevocable essentials of the research, in which the information about his life in Ruse is presented. The families, belonging to the Veliko Tarnovo clan of the Simidovs and to the clan of the Arnaudovs were reconstructed, as well as his student's years in Ruse and the participation of Mikhail Arnaudov in the educational initiatives of Dorostol and Cherven bishoprics in the 30s of the 20th century. The study ends with the emphasis that the great teachers and spiritual mentors of Mihail Arnaudov, whose humanistic ideals and visions of the world, man and people he follows steadily, are Prof. Ivan Shishmanov and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.*

***Keywords:** Academician Mikhail Arnaudov, personality, Arnaudov collections.*

"What has been of greatest importance to me and has prompted me to study the past, the Bulgarian past, has been my living interest in personalities, customs, ideas, in which the Bulgarian spirit, the national characteristics and the history of the Bulgarian people have been revealed."

Mikhail Arnaudov

INTRODUCTION

The scope of the Ten Arnaudov Readings from 1998 to 2017 naturally includes the incessant and vivid presence of Academician Mihail Arnaudov. The great scholar, dedicated patriot, democrat and humanist, is the key figure that organizes discourses both in research in multiple fields of humanities and in interdisciplinary research. Acad. Arnaudov, manifesting his various scholarly interests, helps to keep the boundary of referencing between literature and psychology, literature and philosophy, to establish a dialogue between folklore and ethnography, to synthesize essential language laws.

Nikola Benin points out that he "follows consistently two methods in his studies of the authors and works of our and foreign literature" - the "biographical-genetic interpretation" and "aesthetic interpretation", specified in his study "Werther and Goethe" (1908), (Benin, N., 2010). His biography and the study of his numerous creative works, however, are in process. A good start for the writing of a future extensive study of the life and work of Acad. Mihail Arnaudov are the books by Iskra Arnaudova, "Mihail Arnaudov - the Man and the Scholar. Literary Inquiry and

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Characteristic" (2013) and "A Creative Life" (2013), as well as the monographs by Russi Russev, "The Scholarly Text of Mikhail Arnaudov" (1998) and by Emil Dimitrov, "The dossier of Mikhail Arnaudov" (2007) and "The Journalism of Mikhail Arnaudov" (2014). It could be said that the ten Arnaudov collections, published in twenty years, are a valuable and timely source for the writing of the great book on the life and work of Acad. Arnaudov - one of the most prominent representatives of Bulgarian humanities. Todor Iv. Zhivkov summarizes: "In this sense, a renewed dialogue with him and about him is a possible one, to meet his spirit and time is possible" (Jivkov, T. I., 2000). Here is the place to say that in the course of 100 years, Acad. Arnaudov lives in two epochs and he himself is an epoch in Bulgarian and European humanities.

EXPOSITION

The purpose of our study is an interpretation of the articles in the Arnaudov Collections with an emphasis on the basic facts and those that make up the image of the man Mikhael Arnaudov. To achieve this goal, we will keep to the essential requirement to search for the truth of his life. According to Kalin Yanakiev: "The desire to stay with "the truths", to "live" with them, the desire not only to find them and to "let them stay" in the social mesocosmia as cultural "monuments" is to live them ..." (Yanakiev, K., 1992). Only by being present in the bosom of truth and being a follower of it, the researcher not only provides information and expresses speculations, but lives as an "immortal being" (Badiu, A., 2004). In the description of Acad. Mihail Arnaudov's life and work, we are guided also by the reflection of Acad. Ivan Radev: "... in this absence, an attempt to evaluate a person's work is threatened by the risk of reticence of interpretation, when taking into account its specificity and merits, by subjectivism and manipulateness, by apology for apology's sake or ignorance "(Radev, 2014).

We will start with the first article, published in Arnaudov Collection V. I., "About Michail Arnaudov - Eight Years Later" by Todor Iv. Zhivkov, which could be adopted as a program text for the conducting of the Arnaudov readings. The scholar folklorist publishes unknown letters of Mikhail Arnaudov, kept in the Central Military Archives, about his participation in the Balkan and World War I as a war correspondent. These documents express the patriotic position of Acad. Arnaudov unequivocally through his ideal of national union. For example, in one of the letters from North Dobrudja, he writes that the ethnographic and folklore studies "come to reaffirm the correctness of our national and political aspirations" (Iliev, B., 1988: 52). This gives Todor Yves. Zhivkov the reason to say: "For me this is the motive that pushes Arnaudov into political reality to make him a victim of this reality. And, as it is widely known, not only him "(Jivkov, V. I., 2000).

In the article "Mikhail Arnaudov as a Politician" (Arnaudov Collection, V. 6), Vasil Balevski presents another point of view on the motives of Acad. Arnaudov to engage in a political activity. We will recall that Balevski was Mihail Arnaudov's collaborator at the Institute of Literature at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences from 1971 to 1978 and had the opportunity to communicate closely with him and to receive valuable information about his life and work. As a result of this fruitful dialogue, he wrote the article "Acad. Mihail Arnaudov - as I Saw Him" (Arnaudov Collection, V. 8). From the text of the article "Mikhail Arnaudov as a Politician" it becomes clear that in 1934, Academician Arnaudov was elected member of the executive committee of the National Liberal Party (a fact, which has not been known to the wide public). At its first congress in Veliko Turnovo, he delivered a memorable speech on the union of its separate wings. It is also not a coincidence that he has had a personal dossier since 1935. It is obvious that the politician Arnaudov believes in the national and liberal ideals. In both his scholarly activities and politics, he has one mission - to be useful to the Bulgarian people, to protect their freedom and rights, to clarify the identity of the Bulgarian spirit and to serve faithfully, with dedication to the Bulgarian cause of unification of people and homeland. In the political brochure, entitled "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow: A Letter to My Friends" about Prof. Al. Tsankov's aspiration to impose a non-democratic political system of government (published on July 15, 1936), Mikhail Arnaudov stated boldly: "We have been driven by equal motives and we have walked together under one flag, the

banner of the liberal democracy ... Now this gives us the courage to continue our faithful public service not fearing counteracting by dark anti-constitutional forces"(Arnaudov, 1936). Democratic and liberal ideals define his acceptance of Bagryanov's proposal to enter the penultimate government before September 9, 1944. According to Arnaudov, when he discussed this with Vassil Balevski, "... his meeting with Bagryanov happened by accident while the latter came back from Tsarska Bistritsa" and he "immediately agreed to accept the position" (Balevski, 2010).

In order to emphasize Mikhail Arnaudov's unceasing striving for research, Roussi Russev recalls his words after the verdict of the First Chamber of the People's Court of February 1, 1945 in his article, entitled "Acad. Mikhail Arnaudov - Language and Personality", published in Arnaudov Collection. V. 1: "When the sentences were read to us, the only words we heard were "death", "death", "death". My turn came too - I was sentenced to a life imprisonment. I said to myself - there would be enough time to work!" (Kaloynov 1995: 80). This dedication to scholarly work has been highlighted like a bright hatch in his portrait by Anni Gergova, as well, in the article "Some Hatches to the Portrait of Prof. Michael Arnaudov." She writes: "An important hatch in the jubilee portrait is the proverbial dedication, perseverance and methodicity in scholarly and literary creation" (Gergova, An., 2000).

The two dossiers of Academician Arnaudov (before September 9, 1944 and during the Republic of Bulgaria), initiated because of his political activities, were studied and popularized by Emil Dimitrov in the article, entitled "The Dossier of Michael Arnaudov". Undoubtedly, the researcher perceives this dossier as one, written in two different political systems. The common elements between the two discourses of the dossier is the large number of motivated professional agents and volunteers - "a total of 34 (thirty-four) different "handwritings"- all of them inspired - uniformed and civilian - "writers" from 1935 to 1938 "exactly 21 (twenty one) agents reported about the unsanctioned political activity of Prof. Mikhail Arnaudov "(Dimitrov, Em., 2008). At the end of the text, Emil Dimitrov, who frankly states that he was afraid of what could come out of the cover of the dossier, pathetically exclaims: "There is no "compromise" about Arnaudov: in order to be "found such, it has to be written. The name of Mikhail Arnaudov is not only a "visiting-card" of the native Ruse, not only a "trademark" of our humanitarian knowledge, not only a top "extract" of the Bulgarian spirit. It is much more: "sign, banner, portent" of the honor and dignity of *the human name in general* "(Dimitrov, Em., 2008).

The research works, in which information about Akad Arnaudov's life in Ruse is presented, are also irrevocably essential for the writing of his biography. In the analysis of his descent, made by Ivan Markov, the genealogical method leads to a certain narrative, in which the families of the Simidovs and the Arnauds Veliko Tarnovo clans are reconstructed. The study, not claiming to be a thorough research of the family trees, does not worship myths, nor is the guardian of everything that has happened in time, e.g., it is not an antique story, but seeks to point out the genealogical relationships between the two clans. Thus, Ivan Markov constructs the history of the Simidovs and the Arnaudovs, in which the over-historical and total-informative point of view was removed.

In the text of the article, entitled "Professsor Mikhail Arnaudov's Place in the Family Scheme of the Tarnovo Clan of the Simidovs" (Arnaudov Collection, V.10) it is said that in the family of Michael Arnaudov there are seven children - four of his father's first marriage and three of his second one. His father, Peter Sabinov Arnaudov, comes from the town of Tetovo (Macedonia) and is a grain trader. His mother, Drumka, comes from the city of Ruse and she dies when Mikhail is 8 years old. His father's second wife looks after her stepchildren tenderly.

We also learn from the article that Assen Dimitrov Simidov's daughter, Stefana Simidova, becomes Acad. Mihail Arnaudov's wife. They got acquainted through a common acquaintance and married in the summer of 1915. At that time the charming Stefana Simidova was a geography student, she had a rich voice and took private lessons in opera singing with the music pedagogue Ivan Vulpe. Before their marriage, Prof. Ivan Shishmanov warned her: "Be careful, you cannot make a joke of a man like this, and, besides, it is not easy to live with a scholar." Mihail Arnaudov's daughter, Zlatka Arnaudova-Hristoskova adds in a questionnaire, compiled by Emil Dimitrov that the man who acquainted them, according to the the tradition at that time, was Stephana Simidova's

cousin and an acquaintance of Acad. Arnaudov. Zlatka Arnaudova-Hristoskova tells: "My mother was studying geography at the university, but she, like many of her fellow-students and the students from other specialities and philologies, used to attend my father's lectures as he spoke very entertainingly and interestingly and every cultured person was interested in and wanted to know more about literary issues. It was at his lectures that my father saw my mother from afar, and she impressed him with her appearance above all, my mother was considered a very pretty girl at the time... "(Dimitrov, Em., 2008).

About Acad. Mikhail Arnaudov's school years at Ruse State Secondary School for Boys, we learn from the article by Vesselina Antonova, entitled "The Student from Ruse State School for Boys" (Arnaudov Collection, V. 6). He enrolled as a student in 1888 in the 1st "A" grade of Rousse full-seven-grade school, which the same year was transformed into a State Secondary School with Dimitar Marinov as principal. Acad. Arnaudov graduated from this school in 1884, after taking a supplementary examination in algebra, geometry and discriminative geometry, receiving a "satisfactory" mark. These scientific subjects were hard for Arnaudov, the student, to master, the student, who showed a lasting interest in literary history and folklore.

This is evident from Acad. Mihail Arnaudov's greeting on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Secondary School, published in the article. He writes gratefully and movingly: "I remember with a sweet sorrow the happy days, when I was a student at your school, cherishing humble dreams of scholarly education ... Then I had the honour to be educated by teachers of personalities with a high order of spirit and with unquestionable idealism, such as Ognyanov, Lafchiev, Kovachev, Shkorpil and others. ... Their lessons and their deep faith in science whispered to me the first dreams of the kingdom of knowledge and true humanity. I am particularly grateful in this respect to my teacher Nikola Bobchev and I have always acknowledged with joy and gratitude to be his student in literary history and folklore "(Jubilee Book, 1935).

Stefka Marinova describes the fruitful cooperation of Acad. Arnaudov with Ruse Bishopric, mainly expressed in a series of lectures through the years, in her article, entitled "The Participation of Mikhael Arnaudov in the Educational Initiative of the Dorostol and Cherven Bishoprics in the 1930s "(Arnaudov Collection, V. 6). The article is based on the study of the archive of the Dorostol-Cherven Bishopric and of the "St. Trinity" Church Board of Trustees in Rousse. His first lectures were delivered on 23, 24 and 25 January 1938. The general theme of the lectures was "Spirit and the Makers of the Bulgarian Revival". The speech, delivered on September 15, 1940, on the occasion of the return of South Dobrudzha from Romania to Bulgaria on September 7, 1940, would remain in the memory of Rousse inhabitants. The topic of the lecture was "The Bulgarian from Dobrudja and Our Folk Creativity". Academician Mihail Arnaudov expresses the following message emotionally: "I want to take you to this now happy part of the country, where we can breathe the air of freedom again, as all of us, Bulgarians, breathed it here 22 years ago, and to observe a life, in which Bulgarian soul is manifested, as well as Bulgarian creativity, Bulgarian customs and traditions, Bulgarian folk culture "(Arnaudov, M., 1940).

In the article, entitled "Acad. Mihail Arnaudov and Peter Odjakov - Rousse Inhabitants, Called Europeans", Elena Georgieva analyzes their life and scholarly activity in parallel, emphasizing their European education and upbringing. The two prominent scholars have their own way in humanities. They both have achieved enormous results through their great erudition and scholarly expertise. Peter Odjakov published the first Bulgarian literature guide in 1871, which clarified the basic concepts of literary theory and discussed theoretical aspects of some folklore issues. At the same time, he collected folk songs, published by V. Cholakov in 1872 in "Bulgarian Folk Collection". Elena Georgieva explains: "Apart from scholarly activities, P. Odjakov also dedicates himself to poetry, and even prints his poem "Yugoslavia", written in 1867 in Odessa, and M. Arnaudov publishes stories" (Georgieva, El., 2006).

The article, entitled "Unfamiliar Texts by and to Prof. Mihail Arnaudov in Rousse Media (The Second Half of the 30s of the 20th Century) (Arnaudov Collection, V. 8) by Jivodar Dushkov also clarifies the issue of the place and role of the city of Ruse in Acad. Mihail Arnaudov's life. The author of the article highlights Acad. Arnaudov's essay, entitled "The Great Bulgarian Mother

Heroine", published in "Baba Tonka Memorial Sheet" (1936), as well as some publications in "The Bulgarian Post" newspaper, such as: "Prof. Arnaudov about the Nestinarstvo" by Nikola Stanchev and the texts of the lectures, entitled "Spirit and Makers of the Bulgarian Revival - Seliminski, Parlichev, Grigoriy Rusenski" and "The Lectures of Prof. Mikhail Arnaudov, delivered in the Church Hall.

We will finish the study of Acad. Arnaudov's life, mentioning the great teachers, who contribute to his growth as a scholar of European standard. Some of them were already mentioned, when we discussed his student's years at Ruse State Secondary School for Boys, the great teachers and spiritual mentors of Mihail Arnaudov, whose humanistic ideals and visions of the world, man and people he follows, are Prof. Ivan Shishmanov and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In the article "Mikhail Arnaudov and Goethe" (Arnaudov Collection, V. 6). After clarifying Goethe's concept of genius, which is fundamental to the presentation of Academician Arnaudov's scholarly findings, Nikola Benin sums up in his article, entitled "Genius and Humanity": Goethe's thought "related to the creative work of Mikhael Arnaudov, to the culture's significance it acquires, gives us the reason to call him, a "classical" scholar, if not a genius. This is not exaggerated because he finds "greatness in the aspirations of his compatriots, and depth in their feelings, and strength and consistency in their deeds", and penetrates into the national spirit, and throughout all the years of his life he fills with a revival's fervor and inspiration "a great creation" (Benin, N., 2010).

CONCLUSIONS

The summary we need to do is:

The life and work of Acad. Arnaudov is an opportunity to think of an experience, that exceeds our capacities.

The life and work of Acad. Arnaudov is an opportunity to talk about the spirit and identity of the Bulgarian.

The life and work of Acad. Arnaudov is an opportunity to touch the spiritual vault of mankind.

The life and the work of Acad. Arnaudov is an opportunity to believe in the future of Bulgaria.

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