

Donation in support of science (1911-1944)

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Abstract. In the period between 1911 and 1944, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS) and the Sofia University were the foremost institutions that society associated with the development of scientific cognition. That is why many of those who wanted to promote the started development of Bulgarian science entrusted precisely BAS with the fulfilment of their will. The resources accumulated throughout the years were far from small, and along with public subsidies, they made it possible to finance the construction and extension of the BAS building, to publish some of the best scientific works and scientific periodicals, to create a well-performing system for awarding scientific achievements. In using a variety of archive documents, the author reveals the most typical donation practices of that period and how the institution itself managed the donated funds and popularized beneficent trends; and outlines the general profile of the donor to science.

Keywords: BAN, beneficence, donors, memory

“Being the most authoritative institution in the Bulgarian land, the Academy will assist in educating generations not through words, but rather through living deeds and examples, which it will seek out and gather among the people itself as its greatest values...” (Stoyanova, Nikolova 2015, 211). These words by Dimitar K. Ikonov, written on 26 May 1924 in his letter to the Governing Council of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), sum up the attitude displayed towards the institution by an entire constellation of Bulgarians who contributed to the support of science. First established as the “Learned Society” before the emergence of the modern Bulgarian state, the Academy traveled a difficult road in order to grow and establish itself as a centre of scientific cognition. Throughout the whole period of its development up to the changes that began in 1944, the Academy received generous beneficence in the form of financial and material donations.

In this text I will try to present the most typical donation practices relevant to the Academy, to trace the general profile of the donor to science, and to re-

veal how the institution dealt with the donated resources and popularized the beneficent and material donations¹.

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In the decades after 1911, when the Society was renamed Academy, public trust in the institution grew. Hence, those who wanted to support science entrusted the fulfilment of their wills precisely to BAS. Without underestimating single cases of generosity, it should be said that the institutionalized donations were those that made possible a longer-term effect. The status of academic funds was identical with that of funds in ministries, municipalities, Sofia University, and the Church, which had been first created at the end of the 19th century. They were established through testaments or donations and possessed certain capitals and real estate property; beneficent activity was funded only through the interest drawn on capital or received income. The funds did not acquire the status of legal entities and did not have an autonomous governing body. According to the donors' will, the management was carried out by the leaders of the Bulgarian Learned Society (BLS) / the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

From 1892 to 1947, a total of 63 donor funds were established for the Academy. They were created over a long period of time, mainly after the Learned Society became an Academy in 1911. Until that year, there had been only three institutional donations. In 1912-1919, seven new beneficent funds were created; in the 1920s-30s, the newly created were 38, and from 1940 to 1947, 15. A glance at the history of these funds enables us to make some generalizations. First, it should be noted that BAS was in second place after the Ministry of National Education (MNE) by the number of charitable funds it managed. For the sake of comparison, I would point out that by the mid-1940s, there were 207 funds created at the MNE, 37 at Sofia University, and 44 at the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 3, 37-43, 93-111, 158-180). Academic funds possessed considerable financial resources: by 1923, the interests drawn yearly amounted to 73,865 leva, and their capital in 1947 was as much as 20,217,293 leva.²

It is relevant to ask what was donated and who made donations. Seven of the funds were created through collective donations or donations by organizations. Resources for science were given by the association "Napredak" ("Progress") (1892) and by the Headquarters of the Morava Military District Inspectorate - for the writing of works on the Western Territories (in 1918); by the Association of Prisoners of War in the Balkan Wars and the First World War - for awarding a scientific work dealing with the national catastrophes (in 1926); by the Bulgarian Commercial Bank, one of the most powerful financial institutions

¹ The text was prepared in the framework of my participation in the national scientific program "Cultural and Historical Heritage, National Memory and Social Development", funded by the Ministry of Education and Science.

² The data on the movement of donor fund capital are taken from "List of Funds at BAS by 31.01.1951" (SA of BAS, f. 1K, inv. 2, file 1103).

in the country, which donated for awarding a work on commerce, industry, and agriculture (in 1920) (Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 3, 118-141).

Voluntary contributions formed the capital of two other funds. During the so-called "University crisis" of 1907, many members of the Bulgarian intelligentsia and public figures deposited various amounts to support the activity of the dismissed teachers. Ten years later, in 1917, the remaining unused resources, amounting to 63,673 leva, were transferred to BAS. There, they were placed in a separate "Professor's fund", meant to finance the publication of popular science books and to organize public lectures and courses (SA of BAS, f. IK, inv. 2, file 1191, 1192). In 1930, the Academy assumed the management of another financial fund, called "Shumen". Its capital amounted to 115,580 leva and was accumulated through donations and contributions from natives of Shumen residing in Sofia. The interest drawn on the capital was used to encourage research on Shumen and its region.

The Bulgarian Fatherland fund was specific in its way of creation and goals. Its establishment was connected with the initiative taken by Konstantin Velichkov, as minister of education, and the professors Mihail Dragomanov and Dimitar Agura early in 1895 to create an encyclopedic series containing "*a description of the Bulgarian lands and Bulgarian people*". In order to provide the necessary funding for the publication, that same year Knyaz Ferdinand I donated 20,000 leva and issued a rescript for gathering money; many Bulgarian municipalities responded. A committee was formed at the MNE, which entrusted eminent Bulgarian scholars with writing works on the country's geography, history, population, flora and fauna, and culture. Due to the University crisis of 1907, the editorial committee of the series ceased its activity, and in 1920, the Ministry transferred its capital to BAS. When receiving donations in the framework of the Academy, the fund retained its name, but by decision of the Governing Council, the interests drawn were used to make payments to Bulgarian scholars undertaking research trips, for the publication of monographs in the *Journal of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences*, for the publication of the *Folklore and Ethnography Collection*, and for other Bulgarian and foreign editions (SA of BAS, f. IK, inv. 2, file 1103, p. 73, 80).

It is hard to give a simple description of the professional and social profile of individual donors to science, as these were people working in various fields and in different spheres of public activity. Most generally, it may be said they all belonged to the highly educated and successful part of society at that time. In terms of their profession, 12 of them were occupied in economic activity (mainly traders and bankers), seven were jurists (lawyers, prosecutors, judges), five worked in the state administration, eight were teachers, one had a military career, and one was occupied in publishing. Many doctors - 11 in all - donated resources to the Academy. BAS maintained a close connection with the other main centre of science, Sofia University, which accounts for the large number of university teachers among the donors to science - ten in all. In fact, most of these were members of the Academy in addition to being university teachers. A donor to BAS among the members of the top-ranking clergy was Exarch Joseph I, from whose fund bonus payments were made for books written in defense of the Orthodox faith and the Bulgarian nation.

Underlying the dry statistics is a varied and ample range of characteristics. In addition to their main professional activity, the people who donated to science were active in politics at the national and local level, were elected as MPs - some of them, multiple times - or had a diplomatic career. More than a few were publicists, writers or translators, and the description “public figure” was applicable to nearly all of the donors to the Academy. Many of them (20) were corresponding, full, or regular members of BAS and were part of its leadership in the capacity of secretaries, treasurers or accountants. A revealing feature of their inclinations was that 25 of the individual donors to the Academy gave funds in support of other institutions and causes as well.

Perhaps the mention of some of the names of donors would give the most precise idea of the group in question. Among the donors to BAS were some of the best-known doctors in the country, such as: Dimitar Mollov, a surgeon, founder of the Bulgarian Medical Union and the initiator of organized state healthcare and prophylactics after the Liberation, a deputy in the Constituent National Assembly (1879), minister (1883-1884), mayor of Sofia (1895-1896); Stoyan Radoslavov, a surgeon, senior doctor and governor of the Ruse First-Class Hospital (1879-1898); Ilarion Burov, a military surgeon, banker, mayor of Ruse (1915-1916); Stefan Vatev, one of the outstanding specialists in children’s and internal diseases, director of the Directorate for the Protection of Public Health (1908-1911), professor and dean of the Medical Faculty of Sofia University, member of international medical associations, author, founder of the Union for the Protection of Children in Bulgaria; Sava Mirkov, the first senior doctor of the Alexander Hospital, chief surgeon of the Bulgarian Army (1882-1891), one of the founders of the Bulgarian Red Cross Society and its vice-chairman for many years, MP; Stefan Danadzhiev, neurologist and psychiatrist, head of the Neuro-psychiatric Ward of Alexander Hospital (1901-1924); Konstantin Pashhev, ophthalmologist, professor and dean of the Medical Faculty of Sofia University, founder and director for many years of the Bulgarian Ophthalmological Association, of the Union of the Blind in Bulgaria and of the first enterprise for the employment and professional training of blind people, honorary member of foreign academies and medical societies.

Donations to the Academy were made by the large-scale entrepreneur and tobacco merchant, the great benefactor of Plovdiv, Dimitar Kudoglu. In 1920, he provided 100,000 leva to the Academy to form a fund for publishing and awarding literary works. It was with the interest drawn from that fund that Prof. Yordan Ivanov’s work *Bogomil Books and Legends* was published in 1925. In the late 1920s, Kudoglu changed his will so that the BAS fund would be in harmony with, and complement, his other great charitable undertaking, the construction and opening of a medical institution in Plovdiv, entitled “Home of Charity and National Health”. In accordance with his desire, starting from 1929, the interests drawn from the financial fund were used to award works devoted to the fight against tuberculosis, child mortality, and venereal diseases (SA of BAS, f. 1K, inv. 2, file 1149; Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 1, 204-206).

In 1931, the well-known social activist, writer and diplomat Stefan Panaretov bequeathed a fund to the amount of 2,180,847 leva to BAS. This beneficence provided scholarships to poor students in Sofia University, to school children

(boys and girls) studying in Sofia high schools (SA of BAS, f. 1K, inv. 2, file 1121, p. 1-89; Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 1, 285-286). Generosity towards BAS was also shown by respected scholars like the jurists Anton Kableskov, Dimitar Zagorov, Stefan Bobchev, Filip Popov, the geologist and paleontologist Lazar Vankov, the botanist Ivan Urumov, the mathematician and cartographer Georgi Y. Kirkov, etc. General Hristofor Hesapchiev was also a benefactor of the Academy. After his death, according to the clauses of his will, BAS received securities to the amount of 170,000 leva, three original paintings by Russian painters, and 31 volumes of *La Grande encyclopédie* (Paris) (SA of BAS, f. 1K, inv. 2, file 1205; Entsiklopediya, 2011, vol. 1, 157-158; vol. 3, 118-141).

Their being part of the nation's intellectual elite and the specificity of the institution they donated to were the factors determining the objectives these people had in making their donations. Most of the Academy's charitable funds - 44 of the total 63 - were meant to award scholarly works in various fields of science. This financial support was given to historical and literary works, books on trade, industry and agriculture, books in defense of the Orthodox faith and the Bulgarian nation, works studying the causes of the national catastrophes that resulted from the wars, medical studies (10 funds), etc.

Especially prestigious were the awards given by the Kiril Berlinov Fund. The donation for these was made by the entrepreneur Kiril Berlinov. Born in 1867 in Zheravna, he graduated from the Shumen Pedagogical School and worked as a teacher and in the civil service, from which he was dismissed for political reasons. In 1895, he began commercial activities, dealing in import of gas and salt: he engaged specialists from Ukraine to create the salt pans in the village of Atanaskyoy (now Atanasovo, Burgas district). In 1925, he donated 200,000 leva to BAS, to which he added further sums in the following years. The prize awarded from the fund and named after him was one of the most prestigious; it was given for achievements in the field of science, the arts and literature³. The first winner of the award was the historian Prof. Petar Mutafchiev. Over the years, the Berlinov laureates included some of the most prominent names in science and culture, such as: the sculptor Ivan Lazarov, the painters Kiril Shtarkelov and Ilia Beshkov, the composer Pancho Vladigerov, the writers Yordan Yovkov, Elin Pelin, Nikolay Liliev, Dobri Nemirov, Kiril Hristov, and Elisaveta Bagryana, the mathematician Nikola Obreshkov, etc. (SA of BAS, f. 1K, inv. 2, file 1108; Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 2, 30-32).

The fund established with the financial resources of Samuel Patak (1858-1930), owner of paper factories in Belovo and Sofia, awarded the best books "on Bulgarian grammar, the geography of Bulgaria, or a study on the development of spiritual culture in Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Dobruja". Winners of this award were Aleksandar Teodorov-Balan, Stefan Popvasilev, Stefan Mladenov, Ivan Duychev and Lyubomir Andreychin. Despite the large number of donations made for awarding research in various areas of medicine, the only active funds were those established by Dimitar Kudoglu and Dr. Stefan Danadzhiev. The will of one

³ The Berlinov Award was also called the Cyril and Methodius Award because it was given on the Holiday of the Slavic Alphabet and Culture.

of the most prominent schoolteachers and educators from the Revival period, Rada Kirkovich, made more particular donations. In 1928-1934, she donated on two occasions to BAS the sum of 100,000 leva meant to award scientific and artistic literature written by Bulgarian women. Winners of the award over the years were Fani Popova-Mutafova, Evdokia Peteva-Filova, Tsvetana Vranska, and Maria Brachkova (SA of BAS, f. 1K, inv. 2, file 1103; Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 2, 264-265).

The funds devoted to book publication (six in number) and to the purchase of medical literature (one) were similar in their goals and means of use. Several donations (five) were made “*for the needs of the Academy*”. By this formulation, the benefactors expressed their full trust that the leadership of the Academy would be the best judge of the needs of the institution. An illustration of this attitude was the donation made by Dobre Ganchev, a teacher, publicist and social activist. His donation amounted to approximately 3,500,000 leva in stocks of the company “Granitoid”. The fund was controlled by the Governing Council of BAS, and the interests were used, according to the donor’s will, “*for the needs of the Academy*” (SA of BAS, f. 1K, inv. 2, file 1116; Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 1, 221-222).

The money from donor funds was used to support academic publications and to provide literature for libraries. In 1922, thanks to the initiative and gesture of Ivan Kovachev, the well-known banker and benefactor of the city of Ruse, the exceptionally valuable archive of Konstantin Jireček was purchased. Dr. Hristo Momchilov donated money for awarding doctors with outstanding achievements. Other academic funds were meant to support research in geology and the activity of inventors (SA of BAS, f. 1K, inv. 2, file 415, 1156; Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 1, 349-351, 393-395).

Along with the donations listed above, used to sponsor research or award high scientific achievements, there were some that did not correspond to the notion of support for science, although they were attached to, and administered by, BAS. Along with giving awards for “*valuable achievements in the field of national science and culture*”, the fund established with resources of the Plovdiv industrialist and merchant Stefan Obreykov provided for monetary awards for poor high school students in the Plovdiv Commercial High School. The donation of Stefan Panaretov provided scholarships for students in philology at Sofia University and for high school students from Second High School for Boys and Third High School for Girls, both in Sofia. Despite the mismatch between the donor’s will and the nature of BAS, the Academy administered both funds. The scholarship students were chosen by the leadership of the University and the boards of teachers of the high schools (SA of BAS, f. 1K, inv. 2, file 1177, p. 1-52; file 1178; Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 1, 287-288; vol. 2, 293-295).

Two other beneficent funds at BAS also differed from the usual profile of such funds. In 1924, the above-mentioned Dimitar K. Ikonov, a merchant and entrepreneur, benefactor of associations and organizations, made a generous donation amounting to 500,000 leva. The fund was in memory of his brother Stefan Ikonov. The donor believed this was the institution able to promote “*the capacity and creativity of men of letters*” and to educate the rising generations in the spirit of the famous program of the American President Thomas Woodrow Wilson. The principles underlying this program - peace, freedom, brother-

hood, humaneness, the right of self-determination for nations, the idea of creating an equitable Society of Nations, should exert influence over the Bulgarian public as well. In the spirit of these ideals, the donor insisted on supporting the publication of works devoted to the issue “*of morality and democracy*”. Part of the annual interest was allotted for awarding beneficent action in schools, army barracks, and in public life (Stoyanova, Nikolova 2015, 210-213). Despite the donor’s unusual will, the fund was one of the most often used in the Academy. The BAS leadership sought the cooperation of various state and public institutions in order to popularize the donation and the principles underlying the awards. As a result, starting from 1927, these awards were given to people who had taken part in helping and saving victims of natural disasters and catastrophes, people committed to raising orphans or providing for schools, etc. (SA of BAS, f. IK, inv. 2, file 1132-1134; Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 1, 85-87).

The donation made by Lukretsia Petisheva-Semerdzhieva was similarly oriented. Graduating from the School for Nurses of the Bulgarian Red Cross, she had worked in a hospital in Sofia, and bequeathed nearly her whole property to the Red Cross. This explains her will with regard to BAS. In addition to awarding scientific works written by “*a military person on physical and mathematical science*”, the fund also gave awards to “*a nurse who has displayed the quality of humaneness and care for one’s fellow human being*” (SA of BAS, f. IK, inv. 2, file 1196).

Having been indicated as executor of the will of the donors, the Academy displayed a responsible attitude when preserving and using the resources. The legal grounds and procedures for the establishment of funds were in accordance with the development of legislation and practice in Bulgaria. The decisions to establish funds based on a will or through donation were made based on the Inheritance Act and the Law of Obligations and Contracts at sessions of the Governing Council. None of the donations were accepted through a special law, although such a practice was current in the country. As experience grew, statutes for the activity of all funds were elaborated. The capital was usually invested in government securities and strict rules of financial accounting were introduced. An obligatory element in dealing with donations was the strict respect for the will of the donor. For people heading the Academy, this was not simply a legal norm but a moral duty, the violation of which was deemed unacceptable and was strictly censured. This fact had some negative aspects. In cases when the funds were small and the interests would not allow the donor’s will to be fulfilled, they were left to accumulate capital. The inflation trend, especially after the First World War, and in the second half of the 1940s, additionally limited the possibility to utilize the resources. As a result, 25 of the created funds never fulfilled their purpose. A characteristic feature was the transparent procedure for the selection of works to be awarded. The ample documentation preserved in the Scientific Archive of BAS shows that, first of all, an announcement regarding the respective award was made in the press. The submitted works were reviewed by two or three members of the Academy who were outstanding specialists in the respective field of science. The works and reviews were examined by a committee in the respective branch and a well-argued decision was made to award the study. The decision was discussed at a session of the Governing Council, which submitted a proposal at the Annual Assembly of the Academy. Thus,

the final decision was to give the award out of the academic funds was made after the proposal passed through a long series of expert opinions.

Quite a few real estate properties were donated to BAS during the donor's lifetime or bequeathed in wills. As a rule, these donations were made by people closely connected with the Academy or involved in science. Besides Ivan Evstratiev Geshov, another Bulgarian politician of merit, Andrey Lyapchev, in his last will, likewise entrusted a valuable real estate property to the Academy. His will, drawn up on 26 October 1933, states, "... *the property is left in the shared possession of BAS and BES [the Bulgarian Economic Society]. I leave to them to decide how best to use it. My desire is to support those ventures that aim at the elevation of Bulgaria*" (SA of BAS, f. 1K, inv. 2, file 1150, p. 3; f. 138, file 1, p. 82, 468, 469). Based on this will, BAS received valuable real estate properties in the centre of Sofia: three houses on 21 Krakra Str., and a plot at the corner of Krakra Str. and Tsar Osvooboditel Blvd. His wife Konstantsa continued to live in the house and use the property until her death. With the consent of the Academy and BES, in 1934 the donated plot was sold for 4,200,000 leva. Upon it was built an apartment building in which the recipient institutions of the donation possessed a large apartment and two shops. The assessed market value of the properties by 1942 was as follows: a terrain with a surface area of 620 square metres (21 Krakra Str.), upon which there is a massive house with a surface area of 405 square metres and another two houses, valued at 1,922,000 leva; two shops on Tsar Osvooboditel Blvd., valued at 858,600 leva, and an apartment in the same apartment building priced at 613,600 leva. After the death of K. Lyapcheva in 1942, the property passed into the possession of BAS and BES, and after the self-dissolution of the latter in 1949, it became the possession of the Academy alone (SA of BAS, f. 138, file 1, p. 82, 468, 469). Today, the so-called "House with the flowers" at 21 Krakra Str., in which the eminent statesman and benefactor lived, houses the Institute of Art Studies. It was built in 1900 in a neo-classical style and is of confirmed architectural and historical value; the Academy looks after its preservation. As could have been expected, by a decision of the Sofia Municipal Popular Council of 29 April 1958, the apartment was transferred under the management of Sofzhilfond; it was later given to the Ministry of the Interior and ultimately sold to a private person (1969).⁴

Another valuable acquisition of the Academy is connected with the eminent Bulgarian scholar, member and president of BAS, Prof. Bogdan Filov. He specialized in archeology, museum studies and numismatics in Bonn, Paris and Rome and for many years worked in the National Archeological Museum in Sofia, heading the excavations of important archeological monuments in the country. The Bulgarian Archeological Society was founded on 16 December 1901 in Sofia; in 1920, it was reorganized as an independent Archeological Institute. A well-known and valued scholar, Filov made a particular contribution to the creation of this institute and its development. He was its first director

⁴ The Department of Property Management, BAS. Reference on properties bequeathed and donated to BAS in our country and abroad, 2019.

and remained in that position until 1940. The Institute became an authoritative scientific institution, whose members included outstanding Bulgarian historians, archeologists and art specialists. Understandably, it attracted the attention and care of important Bulgarian public figures, who supported its activity with financial donations. Until 1948, several specialized donor funds devoted to it were established and functioned. On 9 December 1926, the director B. Filov provided 10,000 leva for the formation of a fund in memory of his mother Elisaveta D. Filova. In the same year, the banker Ivan D. Burov made a donation of 5,000 leva for archeological work in the country. On 9 December 1939, the fund was enlarged with an extra 50,000 leva, given by the Bulgarian Commercial Bank and First Bulgarian Insurance Society "Bulgaria". A benefactor of the Archeological Institute was the well-known doctor Vasil Mollov. Knowledgeable in archeology and numismatics, in 1931 he provided 10,000 leva for the formation of a beneficent fund named after Institute's director Bogdan Filov. These funds were meant to finance archeological excavations and other studies. In 1933, Angel Nikolov, a member of the Archeological Institute, donated to it securities amounting to 72,000 leva. The prominent public figure and educator Toma Vasilyov also allotted 50,000 leva from his modest estate for excavations and the study of antiquities in Bulgaria. In November 1944, the Governing Council of the Institute was informed that the deceased assistant member of the Archeological Institute, Dimitar Pantelev Minchovich, had bequeathed to it 1/3 of his property (in money and securities). The donation amounted to 2 million leva and was formed as a beneficent fund, the gains from which were to be used for archeological excavations and the publication of their results (SA of BAS, f. 116K, file 52).

As director and legal representative of the institution, Filov initiated the purchase of valuable real estate property. In 1926, in the name of the Institute, he purchased the property of Georgi A. Hranov, consisting in a building, a half-timbered construction and a plot of land with no building on it. The plot was located in the centre of Sofia, on 139 Rakovski Str., and the purchase amounted to 1,250,000 leva. In the following years, the plot was sold, the new owner being obliged to build "*a residential apartment house with two buildings*". The preserved contracts, the description of the construction work, the sketch of the apartment building, and the correspondence with the tenants, indicate that seven of the apartments were used by the Institute or were rented by it (SA of BAS, f. 116K, file 52). In 1948, the Archeological Institute, together with its liabilities and assets, including the obtained apartments on Rakovski Str., became part of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Its legal successor today is the National Archeological Institute with Museum, created in 1949.

It is well known that one of the most generous donors to the Academy was Ivan Evstratiev Geshov. Less familiar are the charitable gestures of his son Evstrati. Born in Plovdiv in 1883, he graduated in commercial and finance studies in Paris and specialized in London. In the period 1912-1915, he conducted the affairs of his father's bank in Bucharest. Later, he became the director of the Bulgarian Commercial Bank. In his attitude to philanthropy, he was closest to the views of his father and conducted extensive charitable activities (Entsiklopediya, 2011, vol. 1, 53). Two of his contributions are related to the Academy.

On 10 August 1934, Evstrati Geshov created a foundation in the name of his early deceased wife (a victim of tuberculosis) Anka Geshova, née Gubidelnikova (1902-1934). The foundation donated an empty plot of land with a surface area of 1,687 square metres in Sofia, in Krasno Selò neighborhood. There he built and furnished with his own resources the Anka Evstratieva Geshova Home. In the yard, he erected a chapel and a domestic church dedicated to Saint Anna. The total value of the home, furniture and inventory amounted to 2,201,730 leva. It was meant to serve as a dormitory for needy girls studying in the upper two grades of high schools in Sofia, in Sofia University, or in the Art Academy. The foundation maintained the Home and a canteen, organized lectures in religion, literature, and science, and looked after the household. The donor provided for the material support of the Home, which housed between 24 and 42 girls. The foundation had a special fund for awards, scholarships and specializations, with a room of its own in the university campus in Paris, given free of charge for use by Bulgarian women specializing in the French capital (Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 1, 53-55).

The change of the situation after 1944 led to changes in the status of this donation. In 1946, the Ministry of National Education proposed that the Home become part of the general fund for assistance to students in the higher education institutions in the country. Evstrati Geshov declined the desires of the state, but only temporarily. In order to save the Home, in 1949 he activated article 14 of the Constituent Act of the foundation, which stipulated that, if it were to discontinue its existence, the property would be transferred to BAS. Thus, all the monetary and material assets, the building of the Home, the room in Paris, and one more property, in Sofia, came into the possession of BAS. The data on the use of this donation are very meager. It is known that, until 1952, the Home building was a student dormitory; unsuccessful attempts were made to enter into possession of the foundation's property in Paris. In 1952, the Standing Committee of BAS decided to house the Institute of Microbiology in the Home. Over the years, the building was used for various purposes: it was a kindergarten and at other times a section of the Sofia City Court. Irreparably damaged, the building, which was designed by one of the most famous Bulgarian architects of that time, Stancho Belkovski, was torn down in 2007 (Milkov 2014, 186-189).

Another beneficent gesture by Evstrati Geshov was related to enriching the archival collections of the Academy. On 2 July 1947, he informed BAS in his own name and in the name of the other heirs that he was transferring, free of charge, the commercial and personal archive of the brothers Evlogi and Hristo Georgievi. The documents were owned by the family, because Ivan Evstratiev Geshov was the universal heir of the great Bulgarian patron of the arts and philanthropist Evlogi Georgiev; up to that time, they were kept in Bucharest, where the two brothers had lived and worked. Evstrati Geshov organized and financed the transfer of the documents to Sofia on 13 July 1949 (Statelova 1994, 268). Even today, this is one of the most valuable collections preserved in the Scientific Archive of the Academy by its rich variety of materials, its large chronological range and its multi-linguistic features. The archive fund of the Georgievi brothers is an authentic and inexhaustible source of information on the commercial

and economic interrelations between the Balkan nations and Europe, and on the personal contacts and qualities of two eminent Bulgarians.

Other donors of real estate property to the Academy were Bogomil Radoslavov (brother of the famous politician Vasil Radoslavov), Prof. Aleksandar Teodorov-Balan (who donated a two-storey villa in Borovets), Tsvetana Rasheeva (a three-storey residential building on 15 Han Krum Str.), Georgi Ivanov Selyanovski (a two-storey house on Iskar Str. in Sofia and a real estate property of 10 decares with five villas, located in Russia), Elena Kolarova, Konstantin Ivanov, Emilia Belotipova, Tinka Krastevich, etc. According to an official reference from 1945 regarding buildings and properties, the Academy had acquired through donations: apartments and parts of homes in Sofia on 16 Yuriy Venelin Str., acquired from Dragomir Kazakov, and on 120 Georgi S. Rakovski Blvd.; a floor in a two-storey house in the Sofia neighborhood of Boyana; two houses and a yard at 22 Vazrazhdane Alley in Ruse, bequeathed by Atanas Mateev and his wife; a park and fruit garden in the locality of Kaletto, as well as two villas together with their whole furniture, acquired from Todor and Maria Markovi, etc.⁵

The long tradition of donating or bequeathing books continued. The donations were made by individuals or institutions and public organizations; according to the statistical data, over the years their shares fluctuated in the range of 7-10% of the total fund. Members of BAS set an example: as an unwritten rule, they donated a certain number of copies of their works and publications to the library fund and to the international book exchange. Some donated or bequeathed parts, or all, of their personal libraries. In 1917, the Library of the Academy received as a gift part of the book collection of Georgi Yakovlev Kirkov (1848-1929), a mathematician and cartographer who was a full member of BAS, the first director of the Sofia Public Library, one of the founders, and director, of the Cartographic Institute, an MP in the Constituent National Assembly. This collection is especially valuable. Kirkov had studied graphics and printing in Austria and Germany and had collected rare, richly illustrated translations of classical literary works.⁶

The library of Ivan Kasabov, the famous Revival activist and member of the BLS, also came into the possession of BAS. Donated by his heirs in 1917, it contained 189 volumes and 4 volumes of journals, mainly in the field of law. In 1919, another member of BLS, the famous public figure, teacher, linguist, folklorist, ethnographer and numismatist Atanas Iliev (1852-1927) enriched the library fund with complete series of 13 periodicals, including the newspapers *Maritsa*, *Yuzhna Bulgaria*, *Naroden Glas*, *Nezavisimost*, *Tarnovska Konstitutsia*, etc. In 1929, the Academy received for preservation and use the exceptionally rich and valuable personal library of the famous historian and politician Nikola Milev (1884-1925). It includes 836 works (1,100 volumes), including precious edi-

⁵ The Department of Property Management, BAS. Reference on properties bequeathed and donated to BAS in our country and abroad, 2019.

⁶ Reference of the Central Library of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, director: S. Naydenova, 2018.

tions - bibliographical rarities - from the 16th - 18th century related to Bulgarian and Turkish history. In the same year, a donation was made of a book collection (712 works in 1,010 volumes) belonging to the well-known public figure and politician Marko Balabanov (1837-1921), professor of Greek language and literature and Roman and Byzantine law at Sofia University, corresponding and full member of BLS. This donation enriched the fund by its variety, its valuable materials devoted to the history of the national ecclesiastical movement, works by Greek classics, and several old-print Bulgarian books. Among the most valuable additions to the Academy's library were approximately 300 Bulgarian early printed books donated by Nikola Nachov (1859-1940), a teacher, man of letters, bibliographer, member of the BLS; a library of books in the field of Bulgarian and Balkan history, ethnography, and literary history that had belonged to Gavril Zanetov (1863-1934), a jurist, historian, ethnographer and publicist, corresponding member of the BLS; the valuable collection of medical books of the already mentioned Dr. Sava Markov; approximately 5,700 works and 293 volumes of journals by the noted economist and public figure Nikola Sakarov (1881-1943); approximately 800 volumes exclusively devoted to the history of the Christian Church that had belonged to the teacher and educator, director of the Ethnographic Museum and of the National Library, Stanimir Stanimirov (1858-1943), etc.⁷

Generous donations enriched the archival fund of the Academy as well. One of the especially valuable collections in the Scientific Archive of BAS - that of Slavic and Old Bulgarian manuscripts - includes 119 manuscripts, some of which were donated to the Learned Society in Brăila by Bulgarian emigrants and patriots. Some of the earliest of these manuscripts are a fragment of a triode from the late 11th century and a triode, pentikostarion and menaion from the second half of the 15th century (1472), donated by the clergyman Vasil Nikolov from Macedonia. There is also a book of hours from the middle of the 16th century, with a dedication "*To the Bulgarian Learned Society in Sofia, from D. S. Karparov, 3 July 1891, Panagyurishte*". Unknown donors sent to the Academy a typikon (14th c.) and a damaskin (from 1840). The full member of the BLS Vasil Popovich, heir to Stefan Ryapov, donated the so-called *Ryapov Collection* (14th c.), and the painter Hristaki Pavlovich contributed a *Bulgarian Grammar* from 1853.

The collection of documents and artworks of the Austro-Hungarian traveler, researcher and artist Felix Kanitz is particularly valuable as a historical source and in its artistic quality. After his death in 1904, his nephew Jacques Kanitz, a Hungarian state councilor, undertook to move the archive and some of the books to Sofia. On 28 November 1929, in a letter to the leadership of BAS, he announced that he had sent four crates containing photographs, several antique objects and minerals, a manuscript, an addition to Felix Kanitz's book *Danubian Bulgaria and the Balkan* and the artist's personal library. On 29 December 1929, the Secretary of the Academy Ivan Peev-Plachkov confirmed their receipt and expressed thanks for the donation. In the same year, on the occasion of the cen-

⁷ Reference of the Central Library of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, director: S. Naydenova, 2018.

tenary of the birth of Felix Kanitz, the Academy organized an official commemoration at which the professors Anastas Ishirkov, Stoyan Romanski and Bogdan Filov read a report on Kanitz's contribution to the study of the Bulgarian lands and history. To mark the event, his heir made a donation of 50,000 leva to establish a fund for supporting the publication, by the Academy, of works on geography and ethnography. In 1936, BAS received a donation of original sketches, engravings and watercolours by Kanitz (Entsiklopediya 2011, vol. 2, 333-334).

Over the years, the Archive received donations of materials by Stefan Verkovich, Konstantin Jireček, Ivan Shishmanov, Ivan Vazov, Elin Pelin, Mihail Madzharov, and many other scholars, writers, painters, public figures, and politicians. These materials were placed in separate archive funds. As a result, today the Scientific Archive preserves more than 500 personal and institutional funds and 25 collections, a large part of which were donated during their owners' lifetime or by their heirs.

In accepting the donations, the leaders of BAS tried to popularize the work of the benefactors. *Periodical Journal* regularly published lists of sponsors and of publications donated by various scholars, such as V. Zlatarski, A. Ishirkov, G. Katsarov, L. Miletich, B. Penev, etc. Part of the donated personal libraries and collections were placed in separate funds, named after the owners or donors: "Felix Kanitz" library, "Marko Balabanov" library, "Nikola Milev" library, etc. In this way, the integrity of the book collection was preserved and the gesture of donation was emphasized.

Albeit much later than the Ministry of National Education, the Academy published in 1937 a book about its donors (Kniga 1937). It presented all the funds established up to that time, complete with documentation and full biographical data and photographs of the benefactors. The fact that the edition was designated as volume 1 indicates that there was probably to be a continuation. Thus, BAS widely publicized the philanthropic gestures it had benefited by, and helped to preserve the memory of the people who had displayed generosity to science, thereby impelling others to follow their example.

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In the period 1911-1944, the Academy and Sofia University were the institutions that society recognized to be the foremost centres of scientific knowledge. That is why many of the people who wanted to support Bulgarian science entrusted precisely BAS with the fulfilment of their will. This high trust is eloquently attested to by the fact that, as regards the number of managed donor funds, BAS was second only to the Ministry of National Education and came ahead of Sofia University, the Holy Synod, and the Military School. The charitable gestures were in the form of monetary resources, securities, real estate property, books, and archive materials, and the benefactors belonged to the intellectual and economic elite of the nation. In addition to state subsidies, these considerable resources accumulated over the years made it possible to fund the building and expansion of the BAS building, to publish some of the best scientific works and scientific periodicals, and to create an effective system for awarding scientific contributions.

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