



Between tradition and modernity: Bulgarian women during the development of modern statehood and society, 1878–1945

Tatyana Nestorova

To cite this article: Tatyana Nestorova (1996) Between tradition and modernity: Bulgarian women during the development of modern statehood and society, 1878–1945, *Women's History Review*, 5:4, 513-524

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09612029600200132>



Published online: 20 Dec 2006.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 1515



View related articles [↗](#)



Citing articles: 3 View citing articles [↗](#)

Between Tradition and Modernity: Bulgarian women during the development of modern statehood and society, 1878-1945

TATYANA NESTOROVA

Ohio State University, Columbus, USA

ABSTRACT The paper attempts to draw the general outlines of women's input in the establishment of the modern Bulgarian state and society in the period 1878-1945. Set against the background of traditional roles and attitudes that were prevalent at the end of the nineteenth century, women's contributions include active participation in the nation's economy and labor force, disproportionately significant representation among the educated élite, nationally and internationally recognized achievements in the arts, and the establishment and promotion of Bulgarian feminism. The paper suggests that a detailed study of the public role played by women will achieve a more accurate understanding of the modernization process in the Balkans since women have tended to act in a trend-setting manner. Furthermore, Bulgarian feminism is viewed as an example of the existence of elements of a civil society in the region.

Popular belief places a man in everything on a higher footing compared to a woman ... (Dimitur Marinov)

... why is it that, aside from the regular people, even the so called decent ones do not give full freedom to women? (A response to a questionnaire, end of the nineteenth century, Sevlievo, Bulgaria)

In 1896, Mrs Teodora Noeva, the directress of *Zhenski sviat (Women's World)*, a periodical aimed at women and edited by women in the Black Sea port city of Varna, Bulgaria, sent a voter registration document to the local authorities. She had pointed out in her application that the Bulgarian constitution did not specifically prohibit women from exercising full civil and political rights. Mrs Noeva was attempting to include her name in the lists of voters for the forthcoming elections. The mayor of Varna did not respond, however, and her claims did not produce the intended result. Most of the public was unaware that a woman had dared to demand the right to vote.

Throughout the entire existence of the small Balkan principality (which was proclaimed a tsardom in 1908), in the public sphere, women would remain the less visible and largely ignored part of the community. Full legal and political equality would be granted only after World War II, when the constitutional monarchy was replaced by a Communist dictatorship.

The modern Bulgarian state came into existence in 1878, following one of many Russo-Turkish Wars in the history of the two great empires. The re-emergence of Bulgarian statehood occurred in opposition to and in clear rejection of the Ottoman Empire. Both in the popular mind, and in the more sophisticated view of the educated Bulgarian, five long, oppressive centuries of existence under the Ottoman 'yoke' had finally ended – the slaves were free, and the moment had come to create and consolidate an independent nation-state. The intent of the builders of the new Bulgaria was to borrow from European statecraft and culture; Ottoman values and traditions were certainly not viewed as a viable foundation for the new country. From the very beginning, breaking with tradition (which was a part of the hated Ottoman past) and emulating European ways were the chosen means of state and nation-building.

These attitudes, familiar to any historian of the modern Balkan period, affected the lives of all Bulgarians. So far, however, there have been no attempts to approach these decades with the intent to gain knowledge of the general and specific roles played by Bulgarian women in the construction of their new country. More recently, Marxist-Leninist historiography in Bulgaria has been blind to gender issues. There have been only isolated and sporadic efforts to think about and study aspects of women's activities and influences in the public sphere. At present, our level of awareness and research into these issues has not improved significantly from the period of the 1920s and 1930s when scholars of peasant ethnography, folklore, and sociology produced empirical works on two related issues – the traditional standing of women in Bulgarian society and the emerging new roles, possibilities and obstacles for women.[1] These studies provide a useful framework for revisiting the descriptions of Bulgarian peasant traditionalism with an eye to the so far non-existent female perspective. Such an attempt will chart opportunities for new areas of scholarly research and will produce an initial set of questions that need serious academic and public consideration.

The present level of knowledge relating to the conventional role played by women in Bulgaria is focused on the traditional patriarchal family, which was also the essential productive unit. The man/husband was the head and master of the family and made all important decisions. The woman/wife was always subordinate and always had to defer to the will of the man. The submission of women was sanctioned and regulated by the Orthodox Church. The woman, however, was valued and could even approach the status of near equality in the family productive unit in her capacity as a co-worker (*stopanka*). In the families of guild craftsmen (*esnafî*) the role of

the woman/wife was particularly pronounced, and Ivan Khadzhiiski, the noted scholar of the socio-psychology of the Bulgarian people, has observed that husbands would never make a decision without consulting their wives.[2] Among peasant families, including those belonging to the village *zadruga* (the extended family found mostly in Western Bulgaria), the patriarchal authority of the man was practically absolute. Nevertheless, the vital contribution that women made to the economic sustenance of the family has been traditionally the reason why women enjoyed a degree of respect and even autonomy within the family unit. In fact, several foreign and domestic male observers have indicated that Bulgarian women were treated in the most honorable manner compared to women of the other so-called 'Eastern' nations.[3]

Upon closer examination, however, the supposed high standing of women in traditional Bulgarian society seems to mean mostly equality in family and work obligations, where women were regarded as vital in maintaining the family economic unit. Aside from that, the popular understanding of the worth of women and their relative significance in the general scheme of things could be best represented by a wealth of folk and popular sayings, which clearly establish an inferior status for Bulgarian women. As folk wisdom condescendingly maintained, 'women have long hair, but are short on brains', or 'whoever is beating his wife without reason, he is beating his own head'. Still, the observations of many scholars regarding the important role played by women in the family economy may serve to indicate an important distinction of traditional, agrarian Bulgarian society - women were actively involved in providing for their families and as long as domestic labor represented the backbone of the economy, there were probably more or less equal expectations for women in terms of work and obligations.

Women were valued not only as laborers but as mothers, too. A married childless woman was regarded as an unqualified evil for the family and she was to bear exclusively the responsibility for such a great tragedy. Popular beliefs did not allow for any of the blame to be placed on the man. Similarly, illegitimate children were regarded as a great evil not only for the household but for the entire community. Some of the more ancient customs that were no longer practised during the last century involved the burning alive of the mother and child.[4]

Other restrictions imposed on women did not result directly from the patriarchal order but came as a consequence of the Ottoman legacy. Reflecting Islamic practices and standards, gender segregation in public life was the norm. All women, and particularly unmarried women, attended important public functions separately (including church and the traditional dance, *khoro*); even going on a family walk meant that women were several steps behind men; women were prohibited from making eye contact with unknown and unrelated men; married peasant women wore the traditional

head kerchief; women often served standing at the family meal and ate only after the men.[5] Typically, women in the new Bulgaria of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century could not engage in conversation with men to whom they were not related, and young, unmarried women of the better-off class could not leave their homes without proper chaperoning. The experience of many female teachers (teaching being the first public occupation open to women) included scandalized communities who attempted to intervene and limit female teachers' unsupervised travel and meetings with male colleagues, even though these were usually a necessary part of the job. Ivan Khadzhiiski has interpreted these restrictions upon women as not only resulting from the Turkish model of relations among the sexes, but also as an attempt to maintain the old sexual morality. Rather predictably and perhaps reflecting Balkan attitudes of the time, such views maintain that there was no intent to humiliate women as individuals.

Even this brief description of the more typical features of the traditional Bulgarian patriarchal family unit is sufficient to indicate the wide field of unresolved and unexplored issues. The apparent tripartite status of women which revolved around the three major roles of wife, domestic laborer and mother, needs to be studied in a more detailed and differentiated manner. It is important, also, to attempt to separate the Ottoman impact on Bulgarian social institutions and to determine the extent of accommodation to foreign influences on the position of women. Similarly, the evident differentiation between peasant women, on the one hand, and women belonging to the crafts-producing segment of society, on the other, has not yet been studied by scholars. Once these issues are aired, a more complete reconstruction of this stage in Bulgarian history might be possible, which, in turn, would allow the formulation of meaningful observations regarding the nature and direction of the subsequent process of state-building and of the somewhat uneven process of modernization.

The establishment of an independent Bulgarian state set the scene for a change in the nature and quality of women's input in public life. Female participation may be traced in several general directions. There is substantial statistical information regarding women's share in the labor force and in the various professions and occupations. Important empirical studies have been completed by such economists and sociologists as Liuben Berov and Mariia Dinkova. However, a sophisticated interpretation of this information is lacking, as is a general analysis of the implications of female participation in public life in Bulgarian society.[6]

The available data indicate that the tradition of active female participation in the predominantly domestic economy of the patriarchal society continued during the period of the accelerated breakdown of that traditional order and the infusion of more modern, capitalist relations in an independent Bulgaria. In fact, one might apply the observation made by the leader of the Radical Party, Stoian Kosturkov, in the mid-1920s: "With few

exceptions, in our country a woman usually works more than a man.”[7] During the period under consideration, Bulgaria was, and remained, a predominantly agrarian and underdeveloped economy. Even after decades of political independence, almost 80% of the active population of the country was occupied in agriculture, and land-owning patterns were dominated by the small- and medium-sized family farm. The often-emphasized egalitarian nature of Bulgarian society could be extended, within the limits of the patriarchal tradition, to the status of women among the ranks of the economically active population of the country. For example, during the first quarter of this century, women represented roughly 50% of the entire active population engaged in agriculture. Immediately following World War II, over 79% of women in the age group fit for labor were actively involved in the country's economy. At that time females represented 45% of the economically active population. This more or less equal representation of women in the labor force was also typical of the relatively small industrial sector. At the beginning of the century women, for example, represented 28% of the industrial workers and their proportional share increased to over 44% by 1939. Women predominated in the textile, tobacco and food processing industries.[8]

Perhaps even more revealing is the information relating to the great improvement in the educational status of women during the period from 1878 to 1945 and the ever-growing and visible presence of women among the educated élite of the country. In a peasant and relatively egalitarian society, education was valued and prestigious mostly because it represented one of the few vehicles for social mobility. Furthermore, a tradition established during the period of National Revival (in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) which emphasized the principles of secular education and equal education for boys and girls, played an important role in the general public support that female education enjoyed. Thus, a dramatic increase in the literacy levels among Bulgarian women took place in the first quarter of this century – from under 14% in 1900 to nearly 47% in 1926 (the respective numbers for urban women were roughly 40 and 67% while the percentages for male literacy during the same period were nearly 46 and 75%). By 1946 almost 21% of all Bulgarians with higher education were female – among them nearly 58% of all teachers with higher education, 53% of all pharmacists with higher education and 39% of all dentists with higher education being women.[9]

The interwar period also witnessed such novelties as women's basketball in the larger cities, a growing number of sports clubs for women, and female participation in organized tourism. Women also gained international recognition in the visual and performing arts and a few literary figures emerged as recognized talents in the country. In politics, women joined in small numbers the female groups associated with established political parties or with radical, revolutionary groups. In the political

category women who gained a degree of prominence tended to be the wives of well-known public men.

The 1920s serve as a good indicator of the distance travelled in the transformation of public attitudes and public opportunities for women. This is the time when virtually all political parties made the grant of voting rights to women a part of their programs. While full emancipation still eluded female Bulgarians, at least the expectation was that voting rights might be forthcoming.[10] In the early 1920s, during the tenure of the Agrarian government of Alexander Stamboliiski, a curious expression of these expectations for equal treatment was displayed in a piece of legislation that introduced obligatory labor service. The intent of the law required periods of labor for both women and men, and among the former for both single and married women. The program for labor service was never fully implemented due to the bloody removal of the Stamboliiski government, but its existence reflected the Bulgarian tradition of equality in expectations for women in terms of duties and obligations. Typically, while the Agrarian party proclaimed in its program the need for full political emancipation for women, there was never an attempt to act on it. In terms of labor service, however, women were deemed to be sufficiently fit.

The 1920s was also the time when 60% of polled girls from the female secondary schools in Sofia and Varna declared a desire to dedicate their lives to the so-called 'independent professions'. This decade witnessed the first exhibition of women artists, which included some 200 works of visual art, and the publication of the first bibliography of female literary figures, citing some 392 original and 520 translated works. In addition, throughout the entire period under consideration, women organized their own societies, maintained female vocational schools, petitioned the National Assembly, and supported (most often financially) the Macedonian struggles for independence in what was viewed as the patriotic duty of all Bulgarians.[11]

Even these few examples are sufficient to make the point that women continued to be an active component of Bulgarian society and were able to gain visibility in previously non-existent or inaccessible spheres of public life. The true meaning of these advances, and particularly the ones among urban women in the area of higher education and the creative arts, however, should be sought in contrast to the continuing vitality and validity of the values of patriarchal morality and even gender segregation. Bulgaria remained a society where women were excluded from politics and did not possess full voting rights, where women as a rule did not have the right to equal pay, where feminist ideas were initially equated with the dangerous radicalism of Marxism and socialism, where women could be trained in law but could not practise it, and where the occasional raising of women's issues in parliament typically resulted in infantile giggles among the male deputies.

This mixture of traditionalism and modernity may be illustrated rather vividly in considering the women-related activities of one of the first political

groups to introduce the concept of female emancipation and to fight openly for full equality for women. The more radical faction of the Bulgarian social-democrats, the so-called 'narrowers' who transformed themselves into a communist party in the aftermath of World War I, attempted in 1905 to formulate a special strategy for the recruitment of women. At that time the mostly male leadership decided that separate women's educational groups should be organized so that a larger number of potential party members could be reached. The groups were led by female social-democrats but were placed under the control of respective party committees. These efforts were not particularly successful, however, and the number of female members remained relatively insignificant – the membership varied from roughly 1.3% of all social-democrats in 1900 to 1.8% in 1922 when the movement was already communist in name and goals. The social-democrats initiated their public campaign for full political and economic equality for women in 1908 and therefore were on record as early champions for women's emancipation.[12] They made special efforts to recruit women and their approach reflected an interesting combination of ideological radicalism and Balkan traditionalism. The campaigners for equality did not really practise what they preached in their own organization, where gender separatism was apparent at all levels. Rank and file women social-democrats worked through special female groups, and the leadership was in the hands of a central women's commission, directly subordinated to the central party leadership. In spite of the existence of organizational gender separatism, female social-democrats did not have a distinct agenda of their own but were regular 'soldiers' for the party. Furthermore, when the Communist movement organized an ill-fated revolt in the fall of 1923, female participation mostly took the form of food supply and food preparation for the rebels.[13] Clearly, the behavior of some of the most radical theoretical champions of gender equality was not sufficiently modified to break traditional attitudes in the treatment of women and traditional activity patterns among female members.

This overview of some representative aspects of the public input of Bulgarian women is indicative of one possible peculiarity in women's history at this time. Conceptually, women's developments could be represented as a case-study of the general, and rather uneven process of modernization and Westernization. Women have traditionally been viewed as passive, undereducated, overworked, limited in interests and ambition, conservative and inert by nature. These are characteristics that one can find, in fact, in much of the feminist or women-oriented literature during that time. It is reasonable to assume that many an illiterate Bulgarian peasant woman would fit that description to the letter. At the same time, among the educated urban women of the country one finds not only the adoption of so-called progressive Western concepts about society and women, but also significant efforts to live by these concepts. Perhaps, if one measures

modernization in Bulgaria at that time by the yardstick of female participation, activism and aspirations, the resulting picture will be of a society modeled on Western European ideas. As Stefan Bobchev remarked during the interwar period:

The Bulgarian woman of modern times - is perhaps the fruit of an evolution of neither the old, patriarchal nor the semi-patriarchal woman of the Turkish period. She jumped onto the scene as a child of new trends under foreign educational influences and socio-cultural directions.[14]

Of course, if one measures by the yardstick of visible and invisible barriers to these aspirations, the resulting image might be the more realistic one of Balkan traditionalism - occasionally weakened but still dominant. At the same time, female expanded entry into public life clearly pointed to a trend-setting increase in the variety and scope of opportunities for women and for the whole of society.

Another conceptually interesting aspect of Bulgarian women's participation in public life is the appearance of feminist ideas and organized activities. At present, Eastern European scholars and political and cultural figures like to shape their discussions of contemporary social issues around the concept of 'civil society'. In the Balkans, such discussions have found very little evidence of the existence of traditions and elements of civil society in the modern history of the region. Yet, the history of women's societies (especially feminist ones) in Bulgaria might be regarded as an example of autonomous, self-sustained, socially and politically oriented activity that would fit the requirements of institutions present in civil society. During the Communist period, when such activities were non-existent, one might argue that an important element of civil society was destroyed. Similarly in the post-Communist period, a revival of such activities might be construed as conducive to the restoration or, where necessary, the creation of civil society.

The history of Bulgarian feminism before the Second World War is brief, yet there is a wealth of information still largely untapped by scholars. With the establishment of the modern Bulgarian state, the flow of European influences was largely responsible for the formation of the first feminist national organization in 1901, the Bulgarian Women's Union (*Bulgarski zhenski suiuz*, hereafter BZhS). Many of the original founders of the organization were educated in Western Europe and openly acknowledged that the initial stimulus for a structured feminist movement came from the more advanced European countries. BZhS represented mostly urban and better-educated women. The initial number of member-societies was 27 and by the thirtieth anniversary of BZhS there were already 77 member-societies. By 1939, the union reported over 12,399 individual members.[15]

Throughout the years, the program of the organization underwent changes in the direction of greater radicalism. While initially educational

and professional equality and the general 'raising' of female moral and educational standards were emphasized, the Bulgarian feminists only demanded full political and civil equality 20 years after the foundation of their organization (1921). As explained by the members, most of society, including women, were utterly unprepared at the beginning of the twentieth century to consider the possibility of full emancipation. Only in the aftermath of World War I was female equality no longer viewed as an outrageous idea and, as mentioned earlier, virtually all political parties in the country included the demand for women's voting rights in their programs.

Early in the existence of BZhS, an ideological conflict matured among the leading members of the organization. By 1903, two conflicting opinions emerged regarding the nature of the movement. The purely feminist camp prevailed over the social-democratic view of the importance of class struggle for the full social and economic emancipation of women. After this split the women social-democrats worked separately, within the various Marxist groupings, and usually in opposition to what they perceived to be 'bourgeois feminism'. The latter maintained its so-called 'above-class and above-party' nature to the end of the period under consideration.[16]

The activities of the Bulgarian feminists included financial support for female vocational schools, publication of its own periodical *Zhenski glas* (*Women's Voice*) and other literature, affiliation to international women's and peace organizations, preparation of various petitions to the National Assembly or to the cabinet, various benevolent activities, active opposition to the spread of prostitution and its legalization, and most important of all, the dissemination of their ideas and demands by utilizing the existing channels of public persuasion. They need to be credited, too, with the introduction of a feminist vocabulary into the Bulgarian language, a contribution that is yet to be matched in contemporary Bulgaria where, for instance, even the term 'women's studies' is not yet a part of either public or academic discourse.

All these feminist-inspired activities and the very work related to the creation of an agenda aimed at the achievement of full emancipation for women might be viewed as possessing the quality of autonomy from state institutions. These public self-sustained efforts had as a goal significant legal, political and social change. These few thousand Bulgarian women who considered themselves organized feminists might serve as evidence of the existence of elements of 'civil society' in modern Bulgarian history, which has otherwise been dominated by statist and authoritarian concepts.

From one extreme - the well-educated Bulgarian urban woman with feminist ideas, to the other - the illiterate, overworked, unheard Bulgarian peasant woman, the participation of women in the establishment and the consolidation of modern statehood and society remains largely unstudied. The general outlines of this participation, however, provide a rather substantial and at times contradictory panorama of a society where the great

majority of women were actively involved in the dynamics of the general economy and society and where a tiny minority of women acted as the conscious agents of modernity. Restrictions on women abounded and were generated mostly from the traditional ways and attitudes and from the evident unwillingness or inability of the prevalent political forces to break the mold of traditionalism in the sphere of gender equality. Political and full legal emancipation remained unfulfilled goals.

In the light of this, however, women's activism should not be viewed as futile and ineffective but as evidence that in the periphery of Europe, in a relatively poor and backward agrarian setting, the study of women's history may sharpen and bring sophistication to the comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the process of social, political, economic, ideological and attitudinal change. The directional arrow of this change points from a traditional setting to a more modern 'European' one. Women in Bulgaria, as is true of the rest of society, both contributed to and resisted the process of change. Their traditional role as essential providers for the peasant domestic economy was preserved in large measure and at the same time they entered the field of public life in the new role of well-educated, independent and creative participants in the new, in the modern, in the more 'advanced' pockets of Balkan existence. This trend-setting quality of female contribution to the founding and shaping of modern Bulgaria might prove to be a fairly good indicator of the very nature and degree of success of the process of modernization and Westernization in the Balkan lands.

Notes

This paper has been prepared, in part, as a result of an IREX-sponsored research trip to Bulgaria in 1990.

- [1] Among the better-known studies of Bulgarian traditional peasant life are Dimitur Marinov (1981) *Izbrani proizvedeniia. Narodna viara i religiozni narodni obichai*, vol. 1 (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo); Ivan Khadzhiiski (1974) *Bit i dushevnost na nashiia narod*, (Sofia: Bulgarski pisatel); S. S. Bobchev (1906-07) *Bulgarska cheliadna zadruha v segashno i minalo vreme. Istoriko-iuridicheski studii, Sbornik za narodni umotvoreniia, nauka i knizhnina*, XXII and XXIII, pp. 1-207.
- [2] Khadzhiiski, *Bit i dushevnost*, p. 432.
- [3] See, for example, P. Kiranov (1929) *Zhenata, Pravno, ekonomichsko i sotsialno polozhenie. Kniga purva. Semeistvo i semeino pravo*, p. 143 (Sofia: Pechatnitsa 'Suglasie'). The author quotes the popular saying 'the rod is a remedy for all', but points out that the attitude towards the Bulgarian woman was more humane compared to similar relations among Russians, Romanians and Serbs. See, also, observations by K. Irechek & A. Golovin quoted in Petur

- Iv. Kepov (1933) *Belezhiti bulgarki ratnichki za rodnata kultura*, p. 7 (Sofia: Biblioteka 'Moderna domakinia').
- [4] Marinov, *Izbrani proizvedeniia*, pp. 233-235.
- [5] See, for example, Khadzhiiski, *Bit i dushevnost*, pp. 440, 443-445 and Nadia Velcheva (1983) *Bulgarkata prez vekovete. Bit, kultura, religiia*, p. 22 (Sofia: Partizdat).
- [6] Liuben Berov (1968) *Polozhenieto na rabotnicheskata klasa v Bulgariia pri kapitalizma*, (Sofia: Profizdat); Mariia Dinkova (1980) *Sotsialen portret na bulgarskata zhena*, (Sofia: Profizdat).
- [7] *Vestnik na zhenata*, (Sofia), 25 September 1926.
- [8] See, respectively, Pavel Egorov (1936) *Trudut v zemedelskoto stopanstvo, Trudove na Statisticheskiiia institut za stopanski prouchvaniia pri Sofiiskiiia durzhaven universitet*, 2-3, p. 104, Dinkova, *Sotsialen portret*, pp. 16, 41, and Liuben Berov, *Polozhenieto*, p. 59.
- [9] Penko Vuzharov (1936) *Naselenie, Trudove na Statisticheskiiia institut za stopanski prouchvaniia pri Sofiiskiiia durzhaven universitet*, 2-3, p. 42 and Dinkova, *Sotsialen portret*, pp. 59, 62. It might be useful to mention that, as a general trend, Bulgaria was ahead of the rest of the Balkan countries in numbers of secondary pupils and students in higher education. For more information, see John R. Lampe & Marvin R. Jackson (1982) *Balkan Economic History, 1550-1950. From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations*, pp. 502-503 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).
- [10] In 1937 married, widowed, and divorced women were granted the right to elect deputies in the National Assembly. Elections were held the next year. This limited success for women was further diluted by the reality of undemocratic government during much of the 1930s and during World War II.
- [11] Information on all these activities can be found in the pages of *Vestnik na zhenata* and *Zhenski glas* (Sofia).
- [12] Radka Bradinska (1969) *Vuznikvane i oformiane na zhenskoto sotsialdemokratichesko dvizhenie v Bulgariia 1885-1915*, pp. 47, 118, 123, 168 (Sofia: Izdatelstvo na Natsionalniia suvet na Otechestveniia front) and Dimitur Trifonov (1988) *Zhenite v Septemvriiskoto vustanie. Entsiklopedichen spravochnik*, p. 9 (Sofia: Partizdat).
- [13] Trifonov, *Zhenite*, p. 11.
- [14] S. S. Bobchev (1915) *Obshtestvenno-pravnoto polozhenie na zhenata v stara Bulgariia. Populiarna leksiia*, pp. 22-23 (Sofia: Pechatnitsa 'Balkan').
- [15] *Bulgarski zhenski suiuz. (Po sluchai 30-godishninata mu) 1901-1931*, (1931), pp. 9, 70-80 (Sofia: Pechatnitsa 'Pravo'), and Dinkova, *Sotsialen portret*, p. 121. As a matter of reference, it is important to consider that at the time the size of the Bulgarian educated class (the intelligentsia) was around 100,000 or 3.0-3.5% of the entire economically active population. See Krust'o Dimitrov (1974) *Bulgarskata inteligentsiia pri kapitalizma*, p. 53 (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo).
- [16] *Bulgarski zhenski suiuz*, pp. 10, 14, 15-16.

TATYANA NESTOROVA is a lecturer with the Undergraduate International Studies Program at Ohio State University, 2186 Derby Hall, 154 North Oval Mall, Columbus, OH 43210-1373, USA. Her publications include: *American Missionaries among the Bulgarians: 1858-1912* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1987), *Amerikanski misioneri sred bulgarite 1858-1912* (Sofia: Universitetsko izdatelstvo 'Sv. Kliment Okhridski', 1991), and Women's studies in Bulgaria: issues and possibilities, *Balkanistika: Bulgaria Past and Present*, 9, pp. 140-147.