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**Abstract**

of dissertation on the topic:

**Bulgarian-Polish political relations**

**(1945-1989)**

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The dissertation was discussed and proposed for defense at a meeting of the Department of History of Bulgaria at the Faculty of History, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ", held on January 18, 2022.

Contents:

I. General characteristics of the dissertation .....	4
II. Main content of the dissertation .....	8
III. Contribution to the dissertation .....	17
IV. Publications on the topic .....	17

## **I. General characteristics of the dissertation**

World War II dealt a severe blow to all of humanity. For six years, humanity, justice, human rights, individual freedom have been completely trampled upon. Millions of people around the world, both military and civilian, are losing their lives. In order not to repeat such a tragedy even before the end of the war, the forces of the Anti-Hitler Coalition agreed on spheres of influence in the post-war world in order to build lasting peace. While the United States took control of Western Europe, Bulgaria and Poland came under Soviet influence and began building socialism.

### **1. Relevance of the topic**

The two countries have maintained diplomatic relations since 1918, which were interrupted for the period 1941-1945. Being in a common bloc, they began to develop their political, economic and cultural relations much more significantly. The relevance of the study is to examine the relations between the two countries during the Cold War. Although the two countries seem to take a common path of development, there are many differences between them. By analyzing the two "brotherly countries" and their contacts during this period, a clearer idea of Bulgarian foreign policy during socialism can be obtained.

### **2. Object and subject of the research**

The objects of the dissertation are the processes taking place in the relations between Bulgaria and Poland in political terms. The focus is on the contacts between the first / general secretaries, the prime ministers, the foreign ministers, the deputy the ministers of both countries and other officials. An important factor is the periodic Polish crises, as well as the development of international relations during the Cold War.

### **3. Objectives of the study**

The purpose of this study is to trace the development of political relations between the two countries in the period 1945-1989, reflecting the meetings between their rulers.

### **4. Tasks of the research**

To achieve these goals is set:

- To differentiate the chronological stages in the relations between the two countries

- To trace the Bulgarian reaction to the periodic Polish crises
- To show the differences between the two "brotherly countries" in their attempt to build a socialist society

## **5. Structure and chronological framework of the research**

Structurally, the dissertation consists of an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, sources used and an appendix. The chronological framework follows the period 1945-1989, and before that the period of the Second World War, the two countries during the war and the severance of diplomatic relations between them. The geographical scope of the study covers Bulgaria, Poland, the Eastern bloc, the dissertation mentions some local and global conflicts during the Cold War.

## **6. Methodological basis**

A chronological approach to the development of Bulgarian-Polish political relations has been applied. Methods of historical and comparative analysis were also used.

## **7. Historical overview**

The available and accessible archival documents, newspapers, collections, memoirs, monographs and articles in Bulgarian, Polish and English were used to achieve the objectives of this dissertation.

For the period after the Second World War there is no monograph describing the relations between the two countries during the Cold War, but there is literature covering local events for the years from 1945 to 1989. One of the greatest contributions to this is Prof. Iskra Baeva, in her monographs "Eastern Europe after Stalin 1953-1956", "Eastern Europe in the XX century ideas, conflicts, myths", "Bulgaria and Eastern Europe" and many other articles related to Polish history, the author draws attention to the relations between Bulgaria and Poland during the years of socialism<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Baeva, I., Establishment of the Polish Peasant Party. - Bulletin of the Bulgarian Historical Society, vol. XXXIV, S. 1982, 251-279. Baeva, I., The Crisis in the Polish Peasant Party and Its Overcoming (1945-1949). - Historical Review, № 2, 1984, pp. 12-34. Baeva, I., Building the party system in the Polish People's Republic (factors, stages, principles). - In: Development of the political system of socialism, Sofia, 1984, pp. 128-137. Baeva, I., Forming the constitutional structure of the people's democracies in Central Europe. - In: Normative system of society, Sofia, 1986, pp. 205-213. Baeva, I., Political Parties in Poland 1944-1950 - Centuries, № 4, 1986, pp. 40-49. Baeva, I., On People's Democracy - Controversially (From the Historical Experience of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary). - Vekove, № 6, 1989, pp. 36-46. Baeva, I., Problems of the Development of the

Before and after 1989, various monographs and articles were published in Bulgaria related to one of the biggest crises in the Eastern bloc - the creation of Solidarity. Before 1989, Boyko Mladenov published the monograph "The Socio-Political Crisis in the Polish People's Republic 1980-1981" in 1986, in a style typical of his time. Another similar monograph was published in 1988 by Boris Dankov, "Poland - Yesterday and Today." ., Vladimir Migev in "The Polish Crisis, Solidarity and Bulgaria (1980-1983)" from 2008 and others.

In 1992, the memoirs of the leader of the Solidarity trade union, Lech Walesa, „The Way of Hope“, and the Polish dissident, Adam Michnik, „Kneel Only Before God“ (1993), were published in Bulgarian. The monographs "History of Poland" by Mikhail Timowski, Jan Kenevich, Jerzy Holzer in 1998, "The Polish Way" by Adam Zamoyski in 2006, "A Brief

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European Socialist Countries in the Period 1945–1956 - Historical Science and Reconstruction, S. 1990, pp. 225–245. Baeva, I., The Intelligentsia in the Socio-Political Crises of Socialism after the Second World War (Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary) - Philosophical Thought, № 5, 1990, pp. 35–42. Baeva, I., "Eastern Europe" - past and present. - Bulgarian Quarterly, № 3, 1991, pp. 33–43. Baeva, I., Crisis in the Political System of Socialism (from the Historical Experience of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary 1948–1953). - In: The Crisis in Historical Development, Sofia, 1991, pp. 140–153. Baeva, I., Central Europe - and now what? - Novo Vreme, № 3, 1992, pp. 15–23. Baeva, I., Eastern Europe - the alternatives of the transition. - Novo Vreme, № 3, 1993, pp. 14–22. Baeva, I., Was there an alternative in the post-war development of Eastern Europe? How much and when? - In: The Person in Historical Development. The alternative in history. S., 1995, pp. 221–230. Baeva, I., Bulgarian Foreign Policy within the Eastern Bloc - Lessons for the Present. - In: Bulgarian Foreign Policy Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. S., 1996. Baeva, I., Periphery and center in Eastern Europe in the twentieth century. - In: The Periphery in History, Sofia, 1996, pp. 86–95. Baeva, I., Changing the elite and cadres in Bulgaria and Eastern Europe (1944–1948) - In: Faces of Time, TsIPI, Vol. 1, 1996, Sofia, 1996, pp. 65–90. Baeva, I., Bulgarian Propaganda in Eastern Europe from the End of the Second World War to the Death of Stalin in 1953 - Balkanistic Forum, № 1-2, 1996, pp. 115–126. Baeva, I., Models of Political Culture in Postwar Poland and Bulgaria. - Epochs, № 4, 1996, pp. 118–124. Baeva, I., BRP (k) and others in the Cominform Bureau. - In: Bulgaria in the sphere of Soviet interests (Bulgarian-Russian scientific discussions). S., 1998, pp. 360–368. Baeva, I., The Second World War and the Slavic Unity - Pros and Cons. - In: World War II and the Slavic world. Slavic Chronicles, Vol. IV, Sofia, 1998, pp. 147–160. Baeva, I., Polish March 1968: power against the intelligentsia. - In: The Modern Historian. Imagination, awareness, generations. S., 1999, pp. 147–160. Baeva, I., Eastern European Socialism - the society we came from. - In: Beyond the transition - modernization. S., 2000, pp. 65–98. Baeva, I., The Polish Workers' Unrest in December 1970 - A Challenge to the System. - In: The Irony of the Historian. In memory of the historian and friend Prof. Milcho Lalkov. S., 2004, pp. 385–412. Baeva, I., The Warsaw Uprising of 1944 in History. - Novo Vreme, № 12, 2004, pp. 159–164. Baeva, I., The Birth of Polish Solidarity in 1980 as an International Problem. - In: Breakthrough times. Anniversary collection in honor of the 65th anniversary of Professor Lyubomir Ognyanov. UI "St. Kl. Ohridski ", Sofia, 2006, pp. 817–839. Baeva, I., The Polish March '68 as an International Problem. - International Politics, № 1, 2008, pp. 89–103. Baeva, I., The Image of Poland and the Poles before the Second World War and during the War Years. - In: Poland and the Poles in the New Bulgarian History (mid-nineteenth - mid-twentieth century). Publishing House of BAS "Prof. Marin Drinov ", Sofia, 2015, pp. 188–204. Baeva, I., Eastern Europe - from a new Europe to a problem for the European Union.// In: European differences and global chaos. UNWE Publishing House, Sofia, 2018, pp. 21–31. Baeva, I., Eastern European 1968 - revolt, reforms, hopes and their collapse.// In: 1968. The year that changed the world. Avangard Prima, S., 2018, pp. 176–221. Baeva, I., The End of the Cold War in Eastern Europe - Geopolitical and Political Consequences. - In: Religion, national identity and statehood in the Balkans in the XIX - XXI century UI "St. St. Cyril and Methodius ", Veliko Tarnovo, 2018, Vol. II, pp. 11–29. Baeva, I., Eastern Europe - change of the integration direction from East to West. - In: The end of the Cold War and European integration / disintegration in the 90s of the twentieth century. Kliment Ohridski ", Sofia, 2019, pp. 50–71.

History of Poland" by Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki in 2011 The three monographs cover the entire Polish history - from the 10th century to the country's accession to the European Union (2004). In 1999, Georgi Asyov published the monograph "Poland: Fates and Modernity", in which, albeit briefly, he wrote about the history, culture, economy, traditions and language of Poland.

For the period 1945-1989 various books and magazines were published, such as "Brotherly Cooperation between Bulgaria and Poland" from 1948, which contained the Treaties of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance of May 29, 1948 and the Cultural Agreement, as well as the communiqué. from the meetings. Various magazines can be found in the National Library, such as the Polish Information Bulletin, available for the years 1950-1962. The bulletin serves information related to culture, economy and politics in Poland and aims to acquaint the Bulgarian people with the socialist development of Poland. Materials from the congresses and plenums of the PRDP and speeches of its first secretaries are also published in Bulgaria<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Gomułka, Wł . . Selected speeches, reports and articles: Collection / Władysław Gomułka; Prev. of sex. Dimitar Ikononov. - Sofia: BKP, 1965. Polish United Workers' Party. Warsaw. Materials from the IX Plenum of the Polish United Workers' Party. 1967 in agriculture. Sofia, 1967. Gomułka, Wł., The German Question: Collection / Prev. of sex. Dimitar Ikononov. Sofia, 1970. Gierek, E., Building Poland on our dreams: [Selected] speeches and articles / Edward Gierek; Prev. of sex. Magdalena Atanasova. - Sofia: Partizdat. 1976. Polish United Workers' Party Warsaw 1975 Congress VII Reports and decisions of the VII Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party. December 8-12, 1975 / Prev. of sex. Ventsislav Karaivanov. - Sofia: Partizdat. 1976. Polish United Workers' Party Warsaw 1980 Congress VIII Reports and Decisions: 11-15 February 1980 / Prev. [from pol.] Vasil Ivanov. Sofia, 1980. Jaruzelski, W., Speeches: Delivered at plenums of the Central Committee of the PRDP and sessions of the Sejm of the Polish People's Republic, before various conferences, national conferences and meetings, at meetings with workers Wojciech Jaruzelski. Prev. of sex. Magdalena Atanasova and others. Sofia, 1985. Polish United Workers' Party Warsaw 1986 Congress X [Tenth] X Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party, June 29 - July 3, 1986: Reports and Decisions / Prev. [from pol.]. Sofia, 1987.

## **II. Main content of dissertation work**

The dissertation consists of an introduction, presentation and conclusion in a total of 341 pages. The exposition includes four chapters, each of which is chronologically divided into several subchapters. The chronological approach most clearly reflects the development and dynamics of political relations between the two countries.

### **1. Introduction**

**The introduction** to the dissertation includes a brief historical overview of Bulgarian-Polish relations from the Middle Ages to the end of World War II, relevance of the topic, goals, objectives, object and subject of research, review of available historiography and presentation of the dissertation.

**The introduction** includes the various trials the two countries went through during World War II. For Bulgaria, this is the policy of maneuvering, its inclusion in the Tripartite Pact until the coup of September 9, 1944. For Poland, these are the six difficult years in which the country was occupied by Hitler and Stalin, until the suppression of the Warsaw Uprising (1944). During this period, relations between the two countries were severed after March 1941, but even before 1941 the Bulgarian authorities forbade the issuance of visas to Poles seeking asylum or wishing to transit through the country.

### **2. Chapter One - Bulgarian-Polish Political Relations in the First Years after the Second World War (1945-1956)**

The first chapter examines relations between the two countries after the end of World War II until 1956. It focuses on the restoration of diplomatic relations between them (1945) and their slow take on the path of building a Soviet-style state socialism. The chapter ends with the change of 1956, for Bulgaria it is the April Plenum of 1956, and for Poland it is the protests in the city of Poznan and the change of leadership of the PZPR and the takeover of power by Władysław Gomułka.

**The first subchapter** covers the period of "people's democracy" in both countries. In it Bulgaria and Poland resumed their diplomatic relations on August 24, 1945. Immediately after the coup on September 9, a Slavic Committee was established in Bulgaria, which included the Slavic countries of the new Bloc, including Poland. Also at the end of 1944, the Bulgarian authorities re-established the Bulgarian-Polish Committee. Important for these first



years of the restoration of relations between the two countries is the Polish support for Bulgaria during the Paris Peace Conference of 1946.

**The second subchapter** is the process of Stalinization, which proceeds relatively identically in both countries. Included was the meeting in Szklarska Poręba in Poland in September 1947, at which the Eastern Bloc countries formed the Cominform Bureau. This subchapter reflects another unification of the Kremlin's satellites - the creation of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance in January 1949, in which the founding countries are Bulgaria and Poland. During this period, the similarities between the two countries in building the new system are shown.

**The third subchapter** covers the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between Bulgaria and Poland in 1948. The unexpected disputes under the treaty are described and finally signed on May 29, 1948.

**The fourth subchapter** deals with the process of de-Stalinization in both countries from Stalin's death (1953) to the turning point of 1956. Before the events in Poland in 1956, in 1955 the Eastern Bloc states established their military organization, the Warsaw Pact (WTO). After the XX Congress of the CPSU, more drastic changes began in the Bloc. For Bulgaria, this is the April Plenum of 1956, at which Valko Chervenkov was removed from the post of Prime Minister, and Todor Zhivkov gradually began to take over all power. For Poland, the changes were much more radical, in June 1956 workers from the city of Poznan went on strike, which was bloodily suppressed by the authorities. In October 1956, a change of government took place when Władysław Gomułka took over the Polish government. The Bulgarian Communist Party does not stay away from the events in Poland, although poorly informed, the Bulgarian Communists express their concerns about the change in Poland, some of them believe that among the Polish rulers there was the Communist Party.

### **3. Second chapter - Bulgarian-Polish political relations in the period 1957-1970**

**The first subchapter** includes the meeting between Zhivkov and Gomułka in May 1958. It clearly shows the different preferences between the two countries regarding their foreign policy. While the BCP wants to emphasize its closer ties and closer relations with the USSR, the PZPR feels anti-Soviet sentiment among its people. The position of Bulgaria and Poland in relation to the United States is also different. The Bulgarian Communists want to emphasize the hostile policy of America, as a country that is at the heart of "world

imperialism in the fight against socialism", while the Polish rulers want to maintain their good relations with Washington.

**The second subchapter** concerns the Macedonian question in Bulgarian-Polish relations during socialism. It shows the Bulgarian defense after 1963 against Macedonia. Bulgarian diplomats in Poland will more than once have to explain the historical truth related to Bulgarian history, culture and people to their Polish colleagues and among the scientific community.

**The third subchapter** deals with the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance signed between the two countries in April 1967. It marked a change in international relations, highlighting the development of economic and scientific-technical relations, while the 1948 Treaty the first chapters are on providing military assistance in the event of a new aggression.

**The fourth subchapter** covers another turbulent year for the Bloc in 1968. It describes the protests of students in Poland in 1968 and the ensuing anti-Semitic wave in the country. During the events, the BCP again did not remain indifferent. Bulgarian diplomats have been following what has been happening since the beginning of March and report that Gomulka is showing "moderation towards the Zionists". Bulgarian students in Poland also do not stay away from the events, and some of them even clearly state that "student unrest is not organized and is not the work of the Zionists." The chapter continues with one of the most tumultuous events in the Eastern bloc - the suppression of the Prague Spring, in which Bulgarian and Polish troops also took part.

**The fifth subchapter** is on the development of Bulgarian-Polish political relations until the end of 1970 (until the end of Gomulka's rule). It discusses the meetings between the first secretaries of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the PZPR, the prime ministers, the foreign ministers and the deputy ministers. The foreign ministers of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the People's Republic of Poland. Attention is also paid to the relations between the security services of the two countries in the period 1965 to 1970.

#### **4. Chapter Three - Development of Bulgarian-Polish political relations in the 70s**

**The first chapter** deals with the protests in Poland from December 1970 to February 1971. The events in the cities of Gdansk, Gdynia and Szczecin and the change of the first secretary of the PRDP are followed. The talks between Polish Foreign Minister Mieczysław

Moczar and Todor Zhivkov on January 8, 1971, and after the end of the protests in March 1971, the meetings between Bulgarian Foreign Minister Ivan Bashev and Polish Governors Piotr Jaroszewicz, Prime Minister of Poland. and the President of the State Council of Poland Józef Cyrankiewicz.

**The second subchapter** covers the development of Bulgarian-Polish relations in the years of enlightenment until 1975. The meetings between the first secretaries T. Zhivkov and Ed. Gierek, as well as between the foreign ministers of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the People's Republic of Poland. These meetings discuss the development of relations between the two countries, as well as the situation in the international arena. During this period, relations between the security services in the two countries also continued to develop. The subchapter concludes with the Helsinki Final Act, which was also signed by the Bulgarian and Polish leaders.

**The third subchapter** deals with the next protests in Poland since the summer of 1976. The first visit to Poland of the new pope of Polish origin - Pope John Paul II is described. The cultural policy of Lyudmila Zhivkova and its reflection in the People's Republic of Poland in the years 1979/1980 is also traced. both sides.

#### **5. Fourth chapter - Bulgarian-Polish political relations in the 80s**

**The first subchapter** deals with the protests in Poland in August 1980. The strike wave, the signing of the agreement between workers and government and the creation of the independent Solidarity trade union are traced. The subchapter describes the reaction of the Bulgarian leaders to the crisis in Poland, as well as the attitude of the Bulgarian society. It ends with the introduction of martial law in Poland by Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski and the internment of "Solidarity" leaders.

**The second subchapter** traces the complex situation that the two countries went through in the period 1981-1988. For Bulgaria, this is the fabricated "Bulgarian trace" in the assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II and the beginning of "The Revival Process". For Poland, the difficult situation in which the Polish authorities and Polish society found themselves during the years of martial law until the next protests in 1988. During this period, the Bulgarian rulers provided both economic and political support to the "brotherly country". The subchapter also includes the changes that began in the entire Eastern bloc and the USSR with the arrival of Mikhail Gorbachev and the beginning of his "perestroika."

**The third subchapter** covers the changes in the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the People's Republic of Poland in 1989 and the disintegration of the Eastern bloc. The subchapter begins with the formation of the Round Table in Poland and the holding of semi-free elections in the country, where Solidarity wins almost all possible seats in the bicameral parliament. The reaction of the Bulgarian rulers during the Round Table negotiations and after the end of the two rounds of elections was also monitored. Since the summer of 1989, Poland has been the first country in Eastern Europe to make its transition. For Bulgaria, the summer of 1989 was one of the greatest trials of the Zhivkov regime. "The Revival Process" reached its peak when Bulgarian Muslims began a mass survey called the "Great Excursion" by Bulgarian authorities. At the end of the year, Todor Zhivkov finally lost the support of both the Bulgarian Communists and the Kremlin and was overthrown on November 10, 1989.

## **6. Conclusion**

After the end of the Second World War, profound changes in international relations took place. In divided into two Europe, Bulgaria and Poland fall into the orbit of the USSR. The two peoples faced a new socio-political system and began to build a Soviet-style state socialism.

In the relations between the two countries during the Cold War, one can get an idea of both the foreign and domestic policies of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. The similarities and differences between the two countries in terms of their paths of development can be clearly seen. On the one hand, the failures of Polish leaders to cope with the political, social and economic difficulties in his country, and on the other hand, Zhivkov's dexterity with which he negotiated new and new loans from the Soviet Union to ensure his economic stability and ability to avoid severe social unrest during his reign (at least until the mid-1980s). Although "fraternal countries", members of a common economic and military-political organization, once the crisis in Poland comes, the negative reactions of the BCP can be clearly seen. Bulgarian leaders have repeatedly criticized Polish society and the ruling party for each of their attempts to change the system.

But Bulgarian-Polish political relations are far from being limited to the BCP's negative reaction to Polish problems. During the years 1945-1989, the contacts between the two countries did not stop developing, both politically and economically and culturally. Meetings between heads of state are growing with each passing decade, they provide mutual support, both on domestic and international issues.

The two countries emerged from the world war with new rulers, who slowly took over until 1947/1948. During this time, contacts between them, broken in 1941, are restored. Even before the consolidation of the Eastern Bloc, at the end of the war a Slavic Committee was established (in 1944), which included not only the two countries, but also their future allies. After September 9, 1944, the Bulgarian-Polish Committee was re-established, which set itself the goal of "working for the comprehensive rapprochement of the Bulgarian and Polish people." On August 24, 1945, diplomatic relations between the two countries were also restored. P. Tagarov left for Poland as Minister Plenipotentiary, and his colleague Ed. Zalewski arrives in Bulgaria.

During the peace conference in Paris in 1946, after the speech of G. Kulishev, the first word in defense of Bulgaria was taken by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland Zhimovski. The diplomat called on the delegates to the conference for a fairer peace with Bulgaria. At the end of 1947, the integration of the two countries into the bloc was completed. In September this year, representatives of the communist and workers' parties gathered in the Polish resort of Szklarska Poręba and set up the Cominform Bureau. From that moment on, Bulgaria, Poland and the other countries of the newly formed Eastern bloc took their own path in building socialism. With the establishment of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (1949) and the Warsaw Treaty's organization (1955), relations between the two countries were further strengthened. An important moment for the rapprochement of Bulgaria and Poland in the first years after the war was the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance signed on May 29, 1948.

Until 1956, it can be said that the two countries underwent a relatively identical transition, both during the "people's democracy" and during the Stalinization period. In Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Communist Party became the main party and began to control every aspect of Bulgarian life, as did the PZPR in Poland. But the similarity in the regimes is exhausted at the first impulse for change. After Stalin's death (1953), the new Soviet leader, Khrushchev, embarked on a new course of enlightenment. The Moscow ruler does not consider the desire for a deeper change in the system of Poles (and Hungarians), which goes too far for the Kremlin's understanding. Thus, in 1956, while the BCP was holding its April Plenum, which did not show a drastic change in the system, Poland went through its first major unrest (June and October 1956). After 1956, the Bulgarian Communists began to follow their "April line", and the Poles took the "Polish path of socialism".

After the turning point in 1956, the differences between the two countries became larger. At the first meeting between T. Zhivkov and W. Gomulka (1958) shows his preferences in the relations between the two countries towards the Soviet Union and the United States. While the BCP remained loyal to the center, the PZPR was well aware of the anti-Soviet sentiments among the Polish people. An important part of the Bulgarian rulers in relations with Poland after 1963 is the Macedonian question. The information found shows the clear position of the Bulgarian Communist Party on the issue. In the years up to 1989, the Bulgarian services continued to defend their thesis (since March 1963), although some of their Polish counterparts adopted the Yugoslav concept of Macedonia. In 1967, the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the People's Republic of Poland renewed the Treaty of Friendship, which strengthened contacts between the two countries.

With the end of the decade comes the time for another Polish crisis in 1968, caused by the dissatisfaction of the intelligentsia with the limitations of the system. As in 1956, the BCP did not remain indifferent to what was happening in the "fraternal country", assessing the events as "anti-communist, anti-state, anti-party" and taking the position of the PZPR for "vigilance against the Zionists." That same year, the two countries, together with the WTO, joined the intervention in Czechoslovakia, ending the Prague Spring.

Although the 1970s were relatively calm in East-West relations, at the beginning of the decade the Polish government was facing another, this time economic, crisis. Unlike the 1968 protests, Gomulka now has to step down and hand it over to the pro-Western Ed. Gierek. During the months of protests (from December 1970 to February 1971), the Minister of the Interior of Poland, M. Moczar, came to Bulgaria to acquaint Zhivkov with the situation even before the strikes were finally stopped. And after their end, the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of Bulgaria I. Bashev held a series of meetings in Warsaw with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland St. Jendrikovski, with the Chairman of the Council of Ministers Piotr Jaroszewicz and with the Chairman of the State Council of the Republic of Poland Józef Cyrankiewicz. Unlike the 1956 crisis, the BCP is now more knowledgeable and moderate about what is happening in Poland, although some circles in Bulgaria describe it as a "fierce ideological duel between the two worlds."

With the end of the crisis of 1970/71 came a period of relief. In Poland, Gierek is trying to implement the "great leap forward" by relying on Western loans for the modernization of his country, and in Bulgaria Zhivkov is consolidating his power with a new

state post and a new constitution. During this decade, state relations between the two countries significantly strengthened with the visits of both Zhivkov in Poland and Gierek in Bulgaria. The security services of the two countries are also developing their ties and expanding their knowledge in the field of intelligence. 1975 was also the culmination of the warming of East-West relations, with the signing of the Helsinki Final Act. This allows for a wider dissemination of Bulgarian culture. The ideas of Zhivkov's daughter Lyudmila Zhivkova were welcomed in Poland. The country takes part both in the children's assembly "Flag of Peace" and in the celebration of "1300 years of Bulgaria". But in the late 1970s, another conflict between the two blocs began, ending the enlightenment and the illusion of "peaceful coexistence."

The 1980s marked the beginning of the end of a more than 40-year experiment in building a socialist and then a communist society. In the summer of 1980, Poles again staged a protest caused by the country's severe economic problems. But this crisis will not be like any other. To end the strikes, the PZPR allows workers to form an independent union, which is contrary to ideology. The establishment of Solidarity is met negatively by the Bulgarian government. They reacted negatively to the situation in Poland, and in his conclusions T. Zhivkov stated: "anti-socialist forces and the petty-bourgeois turmoil in Poland create distrust in the socialist system." Of course, criticism is heard not only from the Secretary General, but also from other members of the Bulgarian Communist Party. Zhivkov's concern for the stability of the system forced him to write a letter to Brezhnev asking him to exert "decisive pressure" on the first secretary of the PZPR, Gen. W. Jaruzelski. But military intervention by the Warsaw Pact countries (like Czechoslovakia in 1968) did not occur. December 1981 Gen. Jaruzelski imposed martial law in Poland and interned Solidarity leaders. The Bulgarian rulers, in addition to approving the measures taken by the Polish Communists, also provided significant material assistance to Poland, hoping that the country would get out of the difficult economic situation.

While the Polish Communists tried to stay in power until the end of the 1980s, their Bulgarian counterparts faced a series of crises. The first is related to the assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II in 1981. After the capture of the terrorist responsible for the attack, with the help of American journalists and security services began fabricating the "Bulgarian trail" and presenting Bulgaria as a drug trafficking and the illicit arms trade. Considering the fact that the Pope is a Pole, negative statements are heard from the Poles regarding the Bulgarian rulers. The authors of the People's Republic of Bulgaria played a major role in the forcible

change of the names of hundreds of thousands of Bulgarian Muslims, an act called by the Bulgarian Communist Party "The Revival Process". Here, too, Poland expresses its disapproval of forced assimilation.

As the two countries go through difficult years, the Kremlin is once again pushing for profound changes in the system. In 1985, the new and last Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, launched a "perestroika" that would lead to the disintegration of the Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Union. Taking the wind of change, the Bulgarian and Polish communists also began changes in their countries. First, under pressure from the protesters, the Poles formed a Round Table (February-April 1989) and held semi-free elections (June 1989), in which Solidarity showed its superiority and full approval among the population. Again, the Bulgarian reaction is not late, and the conclusion is clear - the elections will have an impact on relations between the two countries in the future. After the end of the vote, Poland was the first of the Eastern bloc countries to take over its transition. The turbulent 1989 does not pass Bulgaria either. At the end of the year, Zhivkov's support and influence in both Bulgaria and the Kremlin ran out, and this logically led to his overthrow on November 10, 1989.

In 1989, Bulgaria and Poland began a new transition - from a planned to a market economy, from socialism to democracy. With the disintegration of the Eastern Bloc and the dissolution of the COMECON and WTO (1991), the two countries began to look for new ways to develop in the new system of international relations, shifting from East to West. Free to choose where to go, they will soon be members of the same economic and military organization (European Union and NATO) and will continue to develop their interstate relations, although not at the same level.

## **7. Appendix**

The dissertation is accompanied by photos from the meetings of the first / general secretaries of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the PZPR, the prime ministers, foreign ministers and other officials of both countries over the years.



### **III Contributions to the dissertation**

This dissertation covers the entire period in Bulgarian-Polish political relations during the Cold War. All Polish crises and the Bulgarian reaction to the events are traced chronologically. Unpublished archival documents were used (of those allowed for use, as the years 1963-1968 and 1984-1988 related to the foreign policy of Bulgaria were not available when writing the dissertation) stored in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, Central State Archives, the Commission for Disclosure of Documents and for Declaring the Affiliation of Bulgarian Citizens to the State Security and the Intelligence Services of the Bulgarian People's Army, newspapers and collections from the specified period. The two Friendship Agreements between Bulgaria and Poland were discussed. The differences between the two "brotherly countries" in their attempt to build a Soviet-style state socialism are also pointed out.

### **IV Publications on the topic**

1. "Polish Society 1956-1989" .// (in press) in Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference "History, Change, Society - XIX-XX centuries", Veliko Tarnovo, 2020.
2. "Solidarity" in the Bulgarian-Polish relations (1980-1981)".// ANAMNESA magazine, Vol. XV, 2020, vol. 4, pp. 44-49.
3. "Warsaw after the end of the Second World War" .// (in press) Collection of reports XI "March Student Readings", Veliko Tarnovo, 2021.
4. "The Macedonian question in the Bulgarian-Polish relations (1963 - 1989)" .// (in press) Anamnesis magazine, 2021.
5. "Security Services, as part of the Bulgarian-Polish relations in the 60s and 70s of the XX century." // ANAMNESA magazine, Vol. XVI, 2021, vol. 4, pp. 21-25.