

SOFIA UNIVERSITY "ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI"



Faculty of History

Department "History of Bulgaria"

Denis Bogomilov Ivanov

**Ivan Drasov - the unknown and  
underrated activist of the Bulgarian  
National Liberation Movement**

**ABSTRACT**

of a dissertation

for awarding an educational and scientific degree

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(History of Bulgaria - History of the Bulgarian Revival)

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The dissertation was discussed and proposed for defense by the "History of Bulgaria" Department at the Faculty of History in the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" on February 13, 2024. The text of the dissertation is in volume of 501 typewritten pages and includes: introduction, four chapters divided into separate paragraphs and subsections, conclusion, list of used archival materials, published documents, periodicals, memoirs, reference literature and research. A list of abbreviations used in the text is added at the end.

## **I. General characteristic of the dissertation work**

Ivan Drasov is an active figure in the Bulgarian National Liberation Movement in the 70s of the nineteenth century. Drasov's name is mentioned in all the more important works devoted to various aspects of the so-called "committee decade". Historiographical evaluations and comments about Iv. Drasov are both positive and negative. Until now, however, the activity of Iv. Drasov, as a national revolutionary, was not the subject of a complete and thorough scientific study. Drasov's appearances as a cultural activist, a church independence activist, a writer and a member of the first municipal administration in the city of Lovech have also been insufficiently studied. The reason for all of this is definitely not lacking of documentary material. In the last decades, a number of new sources were given in scientific circulation, on the basis of which the activity of Iv. Drasov to the Liberation of Bulgaria can be traced in detail. The available information also allows the disclosure of the place that Drasov occupies in the Bulgarian historical memory.

**The chronological scope** of the study is concentrated in the period from the birth of Iv. Drasov in 1848 until the Liberation of Bulgaria in 1878. The choice of the upper chronological limit is predetermined by the fact that the life and activity of Drasov in free Bulgaria is a very extensive and comprehensive topic, which implies an independent study in the context of the overall post-liberation development of the Principality of Bulgaria.

**The main goal** of the dissertation work is to outline and evaluate the participation of Iv. Drasov in the various aspects of the Bulgarian revival. As a secondary goals, we can point the clarification of some controversial facts and events from the history of Bulgarian committee movement in the period 1870 – 1877, the education of the Bulgarians in the Czech lands, the attitude of the activists of the national-revolutionary movement towards the so-called "legal struggles" etc.

To achieve the set goals, various **research methods** were used – critical analysis of the available documentary data and the theses and hypotheses imposed in the historiography; comparison between different sources; an attempt to reconstruct some documents that have not reached us.

**The literature used** is diverse. In the introductory part of the dissertation, the main cited titles are divided into four groups – 1) biographical and other works dedicated to Iv. Drasov; 2) works dedicated to the Bulgarian Nation Liberation Movement; 3) works dedicated to the development of the Bulgarian culture and enlightenment during the Bulgarian revival; 4) works dedicated to the municipal administration in the city of Lovech. The review of the historical

literature containing any information about Drasov shows that the interest in his personality arose immediately after the Liberation of Bulgaria. The earliest biographical works on Iv. Drasov date from the period 1902 – 1944. However, the first studies devoted to the individual moments of Drasov`s life and activities date back only to the 1990s. In the works of the second group, Drasov`s name appears as early as the 80s of the nineteenth century, in the works of the third group – in the 90s of the same century, and in those of the fourth group – in the 30s of the twentieth century. Among the researches who contributed to the clarification of various aspects of the appearances of Iv. Drasov as Bulgarian revivalist, it is worth mentioning Yurdan Ivanov, Dimitar Strashimirov, Ivan Urumov, Alenxander Burmov, Nikola Kondarev, Mikhail Dimitrov, Emil Georgiev, Todor Abadzhiev, Krumka Sharova, Petar Cholov, Ivan Lalev, Vladimir Penchev, Plamen Mitev, Teodor Tonchev and others.

**The source base** used for writing the dissertation work is also the most diverse. In its predomination part, it consists of documents originating from the personal archive of Iv. Drasov, which are stored in the State Archives – Varna, the Bulgarian Historical Archives at the National Library "St. St. Cyril and Methodius", the Scientific Archives at the Institute for Historical Studies – BAS, the Central State Archives, the Regional Historical Museum – Lovech and other archives. Documents originating from the archival funds of various persons with whom Iv. Drasov contacted until the Liberation of Bulgaria – Danail Hristov Popov, Panayot Hitov, Nikola Obretenov, Todor Peev, Svetoslav Milarov, and others were also used. Some of these documents were included in the documentary collection "Ivan Drasov in the Bulgarian National Revolutionary Movement (1870 – 1877)" published in 2007 and other thematic collections. The variety of sources used includes – official documents, school notebooks, personal correspondence, periodicals from pre- and post-liberation era, old printed books, autobiographical and memoirs works.

## **II. Structure of the dissertation**

In **the introductory part** of the dissertation, the above underlined reasons for choosing the topic, the objectives of the research, the used methodology, literature and source base are indicated. Some clarifications have also been made regarding the chosen approach for arranging the exhibition, the selection of the included information, etc. It is explained why the problem-chronological approach, not the purely chronological one, is preferred; the reasons why, unlikely most biographical works, the current dissertation work does not begin with a presentation of the birthplace of the researched person are indicated. It is pointed out that despite the effort to use the as diverse sources as possible, the source base itself is such that the

restoration of some moments of the activity of Iv. Drasov is possible only on the basis of information derived from his epistolary heritage. It is explained why some issues are covered in more detail and others more concisely. The history of the archive of Iv. Drasov is also mentioned in the introduction. Attempts are also being made to establish the authorship and approximate dating of some anonymous biographical texts about Drasov.

**The first chapter** of the dissertation is entitled "**Life and socio-political activity of Ivan Drasov until 1872**". This chapter presents the initial period of Drasov`s appearances as a Bulgarian revivalist. Her **first paragraph** is devoted to **the factors that made Iv. Drasov a public figure**. In order to outline the environment in which Drasov grew up, the available information about his *family* – parents, brothers and sisters, uncles and cousins – is presented.

Next, attention is paid to *Iv. Drasov`s early years, initial education and livelihood*. On the basis of various documentary data, the opinion is defended that the date of Iv. Drasov is not March 15, as claimed in most studies, but March 19, 1848. Brief information about the school and teacher under whom the young Drasov studied in his home town of Lovech was presented. It is note that after leaving the school, Iv. Drasov mastered the tailoring craft, and a few years later opened his own shop for manufactured goods.

The third highlight is *Iv. Drasov`s first public appearances*. Here, Drasov`s activities are presented as a supporter of the Bulgarian Revival literature, a founding member of the community center (established at the beginning of 1870) and a Saving Society "Persistence" in Lovech (established in 1871), and a participant in the Bulgarian Church National Movement.

As the last fourth emphasis, the question of *Vasil Levski`s first visit to Lovech* is raised. The information about the acquaintance between V. Levski and Iv. Drasov, which the latter presented in his famous memoir-historical work "The Sofia adventure at the end of 1872 or one hundred Bulgarian exiles", is commented. By comparing different types of sources, the assumption is made that this fateful event for Drasov took place during Levski`s second tour of the Bulgarian lands (from the beginning of May to the end of August 1869).

**The second paragraph** of chapter one is about **Iv. Drasov and committee movement in Lovech in 1871 – 1872**. This paragraph comments on some discussion questions that are directly related to Drasov`s first appearances as a national revolutionary – when was the Private Revolutionary Committee in Lovech established; when and why was "the business trip" of Iv. Drasov and Marin Poplukanov in Romania; when and how was the Central Bulgarian Revolutionary Committee (CBRC) in Bulgaria with headquarters in Lovech established; why

did V. Levski choose the city of Lovech as a center of revolutionary organization in Bulgaria? The following answers are offered to the mentioned questions:

First, the question when the Private Revolutionary Committee in Lovech was established – an event that marked the beginning of committee activity of Iv. Drasov, remains controversial. However, it is most appropriate to date this event in the period of the end of 1870 – the beginning of 1871. Second, the available documentary data confirm the thesis supported by Ivan Undzhiev that Iv. Drasov and M. Poplukanov left for Romania on March 24 – 25 and returned from there on April 6 1871. The main goals of the "business trip" of Drasov and Poplukanov were two – to establish contact with the representatives of the Bulgarian revolutionary emigration and to order a certain amount of weapons for the needs of the future national revolution. The opinion maintained by some researchers that Iv. Drasov and M. Poplukanov traveled to Romania not once but twice, is rejected. Third, the CBRC in Bulgaria was established at the end of September 1871 as a completely new and separate organizational unit from the Lovech`s Private Revolutionary Committee. Documentary data extracted from various types of sources are indicated in support of these conclusions. The reasons why in the entire text of the dissertation work the name "CBRC in Bulgaria" is used to designate the Lovech`s Central Revolutionary Committee, and not the one imposed in historiography "BRCC in Bulgaria", are also indicated. Fourth, the choice of Lovech as a revolutionary "capital" was probably predetermined by the fact that it was where that V. Levski met people sincerely ready to work for the liberation of Bulgaria. One of these people was Iv. Drasov.

Further on, the presentation continues with the important question of *Iv. Drasov`s duties as a member of the Lovech`s Private Revolutionary Committee and CBRC in Bulgaria*. Handwriting analysis of various documents confirms the opinion imposed in the historical literature that Drasov held the position of secretary initially of the Private, and then simultaneously of both the Private and the Central Revolutionary Committees in Lovech. The statement of Iv. Drasov himself that he was the chairman of the Lovech`s Revolutionary Committee is rejected as not supported by reliable documentary data. For the same reason, the thesis supported by some researchers that, in addition to secretary, Drasov was also the treasurer of CBRC in Bulgaria, is rejected too.

The next highlight is *the activity of Iv. Drasov as a Lovech`s co-conspirator outside of his official secretary duties in the Private and the Central Revolutionary Committees in Lovech*. Information is presented about Drasov`s specific merits for the development of the committee movement in Lovech, expressed in – 1) Attracting new revolutionary co-conspirators such as his cousins Dimo and Todor P. Drasovi and his friend Dimitar Pashkov. The possibility of Iv.

Drasov making contribution to the development of the committee idea among the residents of the city of Teteven, where his maternal line originated, is also commented here. 2) The provision of material means for the national revolutionary by taking a loan from the manufacturing guild in Lovech and participation in the shares of the so-called "revolutionary terror". 3) The resolution of important organizational issues such as the discussion of the Draft Statute of the BRCC and the distribution of the regions for revolutionary agitation of between V. Levski, Dimitar Obshti and Angel Kanchev.

The thesis imposed in local lore studies that Iv. Drasov`s house was one of the most secure "committee residences" in Lovech is confirmed on the basis of various sources, and the statement contained in the older historical literature that Drasov was one of the participants in the First General Assembly of BRCC (April 29 – May 4, 1872) was rejected. In the same place, the participation of Iv. Drasov in the first theatrical performance in Lovech, organized by A. Kanchev and the members of the Lovech`s Revolutionary Committee, is noted too.

**The third paragraph** of chapter one deals with the questions – **when and why Iv. Drasov leaves Lovech?** After reviewing the available documentary data, solidarity is expressed with the opinion of T. Tonchev that Iv. Drasov set off from Lovech around August 8, 1872, stopped in Svishtov, where he obtained a passport, and soon after left Bulgaria and headed for the Czech lands. This action of Drasov was result of his desire to continue his education and not due to any persecution by the Ottoman authorities. In support of the thesis maintained by Tonchev, some additional arguments are indicated. The claim that before setting in the Czech lands, Iv. Drasov spent some time in Romania is indicated as admissible, but at the moment not supported by reliable documentary data.

**The second chapter** of the dissertation – "**First emigrant years (September 1872 – June 1875)**" is dedicated to the life of Iv. Drasov in the Czech lands or the second conditional period of his activity before the Liberation of Bulgaria. In the first paragraph of this chapter, attention is paid to the learning of Iv. Drasov in Pisek and Prague. To the questions – why Drasov decided to continue his education in the Czech lands; why his initial choice falls on the city of Pisek; what knowledge did Iv. Drasov get during his learning in the Czech lands and how long exactly did this learning last, the following answers are suggested:

1) Iv. Drasov`s decision to study in the Czech lands was predetermined by his desire to specialize in the field of chemistry and technology – an opportunity that was not offered in any of the Bulgarian high schools that existed in the early 70s of the nineteen century. 2) The choice of Drasov fell on the city of Pisek due to the fact that at the same time other residents of Lovech

were heading to this town. 3) During his learning at the Pisek`s Real High School, Iv. Drasov studied mathematics, physics, chemistry, mineralogy, zoology, Czech language, Czech literature, German language, etc. 4) The learning of Iv. Drasov in the Czech lands lasted until the end of June 1875, when he graduated from the real high school in the city of Prague.

In the same paragraph, the questions about Iv. Drasov`s financial support during his learning in the Czech lands; his contacts with other Bulgarians studying abroad; Drasov`s plans to study in Odessa, Constantinople or Zurich; the unsuccessful attempt of Iv. Drasov and the rest of his fellow citizens studying in Pisek to move to the Austrian city of Linz and their subsequent settlement in Prague are commented on.

**The second** paragraph of chapter two is entitled "**Ivan Drasov and the Bulgarian National Liberation Movement from the autumn of 1872 to the middle of 1875**". This paragraph presents Drasov`s various committee appearances during his stay in the Czech lands. The first emphasis is *the revolutionary-organizational activity of Iv. Drasov among the Czech Bulgarians*. The means by which Drasov tried to attract the representatives of the Bulgarian colony in the Czech lands to the members of the BRCC and the various difficulties he faced in this activity are outlined. Iv. Drasov`s initiatives to send a representative of the Czech Bulgarians to the second General Assembly in Bucharest, held on May 11 and 12, 1873, and to direct his compatriots who graduated in the Czech lands to Bucharest or Belgrade, where they would be instructed how to work for the homeland after returning to it, are presented.

The main conclusions of the commentary emphasis read – 1) The idea of creating private revolutionary committee among the Bulgarians in the Czech lands was adopted by Iv. Drasov in the late autumn of 1872. 2) At the beginning of 1873, Drasov managed to convince his compatriots in Pisek and Tabor to organize themselves into private revolutionary committees. However, his attempt to involve the Bulgarians in Prague in the struggle for the liberation of Bulgaria ended in failure. 3) Despite the efforts of Iv. Drasov, his revolutionary agitation among the Czech Bulgarians did not lead to lasting results. The committees established by him in Pisek and Tabor gradually disintegrated.

The next highlight is *Iv. Drasov`s attitude towards the fate of the committee organization in Bulgaria and V. Levski* after the Arabakonak adventure. The information is indicated, according to which Drasov believed that the most correct steps in the created situation were the announcement of the uprising or the submission of an official petition to the High Gate with a request for the release of Levski and the other arrested committee members. Iv. Drasov`s first efforts to find out the truth about who was responsible for the revelations and arrests in Bulgaria in the fall of 1872 are also commented on. In this connection, attention is



drawn to Iv. Drasov`s trip to Belgrade at the end of January 1873, the purpose of which was to meet with Lyuben Karavelov, who was there. It is pointed out that the main reason Drasov undertook this trip was his desire to learn what exactly happened to V. Levski.

The third emphasis of paragraph 2 of chapter two is the role of Iv. Drasov in *conducting revolutionary propaganda among the Bulgarians in Odessa*. The opinion is expressed that without the help of Iv. Drasov, expressed in sending campaign materials and giving various directions, the "Odessa worker" Illiya Poplukanov could not have start his efforts to attract the representatives of the Bulgarian colony in Odessa to the struggle for the liberation of Bulgaria.

The exhibition continues with an exposition of Iv. Drasov`s positions on *the revelations made by Atanas Uzunov* after so-called "Haskovo adventure", and about the passage to Bulgaria of *the squad of Stoyan Softyski and Yordan Stoyanov* in 1873. The most important conclusions on these issues are that Drasov was one of these committee activists who condemned Uzunov`s act and believe that the passage of small detachments into Bulgaria was rather harmful to the national liberation movement. On the basis of the last conclusion, the opinion is expressed that at that time Iv. Drasov was an opponent of the Chetnik tactics.

Next, the appearances of Iv. Drasov as a national revolutionary in the period *from the Haskovo adventure to the Third General Assembly of BRCC* are presented. The opinion is expressed that despite the difficulties encountered, Drasov was convinced that the preparations for an uprising ( the "holy work") should not stopped. Attention is paid to the various to the various ideas for the development of the committee movement, expressed by Iv. Drasov in the summer of 1873 – concluding an alliance between the Bulgarians and the rest of the South Slavic peoples subject to the sultan, providing material means for the Bulgarian national revolution by committing robberies, buying of arms for the Bulgarian national revolution from an American or European arms factory and attracting Czech military commanders. There are reports proving that Drasov did not remain indifferent to the attacks directed against the representatives of the revolutionary emigration by the editor of the evolutionary newspaper "Law" – Ivan Naydenov. The negative position of Iv. Drasov towards P. Hitov`s plans from the spring of 1874 to enter Bulgaria with a squad is indicated. The positions shared by Iv. Drasov in the period 1873 – 1874, on the issues of whether L. Karavelov was guilty of committee documents falling into the hands of Ottoman authorities and whether priest Krastyo Nikiforov was a traitor, are also commented on. The opinion is expressed that during the mentioned period Drasov did not listen to the accusations against Karavelov and his position to the "Priest Krastyo" case remains unclear.

The next emphasis of paragraph 2 of chapter two is *Iv. Drasov and the Third General Assembly of BRCC*. Drasov's tour of the centers of the Bulgarian emigration in Romania in the summer of 1874, the purpose of which was to campaign for sending representatives to the Third General Assembly being prepared in Bucharest, is presented here. The route and duration of this tour, as well as the results achieved by it, are determined. The other two events to which attention is drawn are the holding of the Third General Assembly of BRCC from August 20 – 21, 1874, and the trip of Iv. Drasov and Mikhail Grekov to Belgrade, which took place immediately after the end of the assembly, in order to inform P. Hitov for the decisions taken in Bucharest.

The penultimate highlight is *Iv. Drasov and the crisis in the BRCC at the end of 1874 – the beginning of 1875*. The information known to the historical science about Iv. Drasov's attitude to the activities of the Temporary Central Committee elected during the Third General Assembly; the contradictions between two of the members of this committee – L. Karavelov and T. Peev; the retreat of D. Hr. Popov from the committee movement and the conflict between Hristo Botev and L. Karavelov, which started at the beginning of 1875, are commented and analyzed. The main conclusion is that Drasov was dissatisfied with the quarrels and inaction of the Bucharest revolutionary activists; he reproached both Peev and Karavelov. At the same time, it is noted that although he condemned the conflict between T. Peev and L. Karavelov, in the fall of 1874, Iv. Drasov contributed to the exacerbation of the contradictions between two other revolutionary figures – D. Hr. Popov and P. Hitov. Additional arguments are presented in support of the thesis supported by some researchers that during the first months of the Botev – Karavelov conflict, Iv. Drasov did not take sides, but tried to "find the truth".

In the same part of the exhibition, attention is paid to the editorial notes left by Iv. Drasov on a copy of the Statute of the BRCC. After a comparison between the notes and one of the Iv. Drasov's letters, the opinion is expressed that Drasov's recommendations for amendments and additions to the Statute of the BRCC were prepared in the first half of December 1874 and sent to the participants in the Fourth General Assembly on the 26th of the same month which Drasov could not attend.

The last part of paragraph 2 of chapter two comments on the question – *why did Iv. Drasov leave for Belgrade at the beginning of July 1875?* After reviewing the available documentary data and historiographical achievements, the conclusion is reached that Iv. Drasov went to the Serbian capital at the invitation of P. Hitov, who tried to move up the committee affairs. The calls that Hr. Botev and Stefan Stambolov made to Iv. Drasov after his arrival in

Belgrade are also commented. The thesis that at that time Drasov simply carried out the "orders" given to him by P. Hitov or Hr. Botev, it is contested.

**The third paragraph** of chapter two is devoted to Iv. Drasov`s attitude to **the revolutionary propaganda**. First, Drasov`s activity as *a supporter of the Bulgarian revolutionary periodical press* is presented. Information is provided about the importance that Iv. Drasov attached to propaganda through the press, about his moral and material support for the newspapers "Freedom"/"Independence" of L. Karavelov and "Flag" of Hr. Botev, and also for the printing the book "Chetovanie or War with squads" translated from Serbian.

The question of Iv. Drasov *as a distributor of a propaganda-revolutionary materials* – for example, the portrait of V. Levski, taken in Bucharest in 1872, and the book of P. Hitov "My journey in the Balkan Mountains", is treated in the next place. An attempt is also made to clarify the reasons why Drasov`s archive preserved two auxiliary lists for the translated by Hr. Botev book by General Ivan Liprandi "The Bulgarians and the Eastern Question".

The last emphasis of paragraph 2 of chapter two is the appearances of Iv. Drasov *as a translator and author of revolutionary literature*. It is agreed with the opinion held by some researchers that during his stay in the Czech lands, Drasov collaborated with materials of the newspaper "Independence". Special attention is paid to Iv. Drasov`s translation of the book "Apostle of freedom" – a biographical work on Giuseppe Mazzini, written by Karel Tuma, as well as to Drasov`s memoir-historical work "The Sofia adventure at the end of 1872 or one hundred Bulgarian exiles", started on May 11, 1875. Looking for answers to the questions – how Iv. Drasov came up with the idea of translating Mazzini`s biography by K. Tuma; what actions he took and whose help he relied on to publish this translated work of his; why, despite his efforts made, Drasov`s attempts to publish "The Apostle" in 1874 and the first half of 1875 ended in failure; who prompted Iv. Drasov to start writing a history of the Bulgarian National Liberation Movement; what sources did Drasov look for his work on "Sofia`s adventure". The following answers are offered to these questions:

- 1) The person who prompted Iv. Drasov to translate the biography of G. Mazzini, was the Czech professor Adolf Heiduk.
- 2) Iv. Drasov`s attempt to publish his translation of "Apostle of freedom" was supported by L. Karavelov, Hr. Botev and D. Hr. Popov. During Drasov`s stay in Bucharest in the summer of 1874, he, Karavelov and Botev prepared a special "Announcement" to recruit facilitators for "The Apostle".
- 3) The idea of publishing Ivan-Drasov`s translation of Mazzini`s biography failed mainly because of the beginning of the Botev – Karavelov conflict.
- 4) The prevailing opinion is historical literature that Iv. Drasov started writing "Sofia`s adventure" after a call made by Hr. Botev, sounds reasonable.
- 5) As

soon as he started his work on description of the committee movement until the end of 1872, Iv. Drasov turned for information to some activists more familiar with this issue, as well as some of the Bulgarian exiles at that time – for example, his old friend Mikhail Radoslavov. Based on the content of "Sofia`s adventure", the opinion is expressed that this work has the character not only of memoirs, but also a kind of first attempt to take stock of what was done in the first years of the "committee decade".

The subject of **the fourth paragraph** of chapter two are the contacts between **Iv. Drasov and the "people`s sufferers"**. Various documentary data, testifying to Drasov`s great compassion for his friends and associates who were arrested and exiled in Asia Minor – M. Poplukanov, D. Pashkov, M. Radoslavov and others; for his attempts to establish a written relationship with them and his desire to help improve their situation, are presented. However, it is pointed out that for Iv. Drasov the freedom of a hundred exiles was not more important than the issue of the liberation of the entire Bulgarian people from Ottoman rule.

**The fifth paragraph** of chapter two is entitled "**Ivan Drasov and the legal struggles in the period autumn of 1872 – summer 1875**". The first emphasis of this paragraph is *Drasov`s positions on the Bulgarian Church Question*. Some information from the correspondence of Iv. Drasov from the mentioned period, as well as two of his texts testifying to his views on the Church Question are commented and analyzed. Based on these sources, the following conclusions are drawn:

- 1) During his stay in the Czech lands, Iv. Drasov showed keen interest not only in the National Liberation Movement, but also in the development of the Church affairs, especially those in Lovech; 2) Iv. Drasov was a supporter of the idea of completely church independence of the Bulgarian people and an opponent of any compromises with the Ecumenical Patriarchate; 3) Iv. Drasov was an opponent of the idea of changing the Ferman for the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchy from February 27, 1870; 4) According to Drasov, one of the main duties of the Bulgarian Exarchy should be to care for education of its dioceses.

The next highlight is *Iv. Drasov and the development of Bulgarian education and culture*. Some of Drasov`s ideas for improving the level of the education both regionally and nationally are presented. Additional arguments are given in favor of the already expressed opinion that during his stay in the Czech lands, Iv. Drasov acted as an agitator for sending Bulgarian youths practical education abroad. It is pointed out that even during this period Drasov continued to show interest in the whole variety of the Bulgarian Revival literature, not only revolutionary publications. The contacts between Iv. Drasov and L. Karavelov on various literary issues are commented. Special attention is paid to the three letters preserved in Iv.

Drasov's archive by the Viennese Bulgarian Yanko Kovachev to an addressee in the city of Prague called "Joseph Emiger", from the content of which it is clear that the later collaborated with the Bulgarian magazine "Letostruy". It has been suggested that "Joseph Emiger" is a pseudonym used by Iv. Drasov.

At the end of paragraph 5 of chapter two, Iv. Drasov's contribution to the development of *the Bulgarian-Czech relations until the summer of 1875* is considered. Information is provided about Iv. Drasov's interest and participation in the celebration of the centenary of the Czech cultural figure Josef Jungman (1873); his attempt to convince his fellow countrymen to respect this cultural manifestation; Drasov's participation in the school celebrations in Tin nad Vltava in the summer of 1873, and the attempt by Iv. Drasov and his comrades to organize a "Bulgarian ball" in early 1874, through which the Czech people would be introduced to the Bulgarian history and culture. The issue of contacts between Iv. Drasov and Czech intellectuals was also discussed. The mutual influence between Iv. Drasov and Adolf Heyduk is noted, as well as Drasov's efforts to find some information necessary for Konstantin Irechek to write his "History of the Bulgarians". The claim maintained by some researchers that Iv. Drasov was also in contact with the Czech engineer Georgi Proshek is rejected as untenable. Iv. Drasov's attitude towards the so-called "passive resistance" of the Czechs against the Austrian rule is presented in the same place.

The last **sixth paragraph** of chapter two is devoted to **the private life of Iv. Drasov in the Czech lands**. From the commented and analyzed documentary data, it is clear that during his stay in Pisek and Prague, Iv. Drasov filled his free time with Czech folk dances, skating, gymnastics and other entertainment; he dreamed for the moment he would be able to return to Lovech to see his old friends; had a love affair with a Czech woman; he did not forget his family and especially his mother, whom he met in Romania in the summer of 1874.

**The third chapter** of the dissertation is entitled "**Ivan Drasov and the Eastern Crisis (1875 – 1878)**". This chapter deals with the last and the most active period of Drasov's pre-liberation activity. Her **first paragraph** is dedicated to the activities of Iv. Drasov as **a member of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committee and a participant in the organization of the attempted uprising in Bulgaria from 1875**.

First of all is looking for an answer to the question – what reasons led to *Iv. Drasov joining the Botev group*. The analysis of Iv. Drasov's relations with Hr. Botev, on the one hand, and L. Karavelov, on the other, until the summer of 1875, leads to the conclusion that the choice of Drasov could not have been predetermined by his closer ties the revolutionary poet. The

possibility that Iv. Drasov believed Hristo-Botev`s claims that L. Karavelov "gave up" the idea of working for the liberation of Bulgaria is also rejected. After a detailed follow-up of Iv. Drasov`s activities from his short stay in Belgrade to the beginning of his joint activity with Hr. Botev and St. Stambolov, agreed with the thesis supported by Pl. Mitev that Drasov arrived in Bucharest with the aim to of working for the unification of our revolutionary emigration, and not to support the Botev group.

By the method of exclusion, it is concluded that the most likely reason for Iv. Drasov`s joining the group of Hr. Botev and St. Stambolov must be the failure of his negotiations with L. Karavelov and Kiryak Tsankov. And on the basis of the available documentary data, the opinion is expressed that the failure of Iv. Drasov`s attempt at reconciliation between the Botev group and the Karavelov group is the result of the fact that Drasov`s position on the question of when the planned general assembly should be convened, was identical to that of Hr. Botev and St. Stambolov. An attempt is also made to clarify the reasons why Botev, Stambolov and Drasov insisted that the assembly be held earlier.

The next highlight is the activity of the so-called *initiative "Commission"* of Hr. Botev, St. Stambolov and Iv. Drasov. All the known activities of the three "commissioners" are presented sequentially. A correction is proposed for the approximate dating of the two letters known only in transcripts, with which Botev, Stambolov and Drasov tried and ultimately succeeded in winning over N. Obretenov as their confidant in Bulgaria. Prepared by the "Commission" the appeal "To all our friends in Bulgaria" and a "letter" from Kubratovtsi, Asenevtsi, Krumovtsi and Atilovtsi, i.e. the revolutionary committees in Ruse, Tarnovo, Shumen and Stara Zagora, are also commented on and analyzed. It is noted that the "letter" from Kubratovtsi, Asenevtsi, Krumovtsi and Atilovtsi is a part of the campaign of the Botev group against L. Karavelov, in which Iv. Drasov is already participating. An answer is sought to the question – why in his fabricated document Hr. Botev, St. Stambolov and Iv. Drasov decided to bet on the authority of the mentioned four revolutionary committees in Bulgaria. Attention is drawn to the additions made by the "Commission" to the invitation letters prepared by P. Hitov for the planned committee assembly, and the decision to send repeated invitations to prominent representatives of the Bulgarian revolutionary emigration. The opinion is expressed that the author of the repeated invitations is Iv. Drasov. Finally, an attempt is made to evaluate what was done by the initiative "Commission" and the conclusion is reached that in the summer of 1875 Hr. Botev, St. Stambolov and Iv. Drasov really managed to activate the committee movement, but some of the methods they used ultimately lead not to overcoming, but to deepening the crisis in the BRCC.

The third emphasis of paragraph 1 of chapter three is *Iv. Drasov and the decisions of the assembly of August 12, 1875*. First of all, the historiographical achievements regarding the question of where the commemorative assembly of August 12 is held and who are its participants are indicated. After that, the plan prepared during the assembly for a "general uprising in Bulgaria", which foresees the entry of armed squads from outside and preparation in the interior of the country, is presented. The opinion is expressed that the reason why Iv. Drasov approved this plan is most likely the influence on him exerted by P. Hitov and Hr. Botev. Attention is paid to the discussion question – do the authors of the plan for uprising of August 12, 1875 deviate from the covenants of V. Levski. Arguments are given, according to which actions for more recent uprising in the presence of a favorable international situation are not in contradiction with the ideas of the Apostle.

The second important decision taken on August 12, 1875 – the election of the five-member Bulgarian Revolutionary Committee (BRC) is also commented on. Additional arguments are presented in support of the prevailing opinion in the historical literature that Iv. Drasov was a member-secretary of the BRC. It is suggested that Drasov`s election to this responsible position was predetermined both by his experience as a secretary of the Lovech`s Private Revolutionary Committee and in the CBRC in Bulgaria, and by his overall experience as a national revolutionary, which was greater than that of the other members of BRC.

Finally, paragraph 1 of chapter three draws attention to *the role played by Iv. Drasov in the BRC* and the preparation of the attempted uprising in Bulgaria in 1875. From the commented and analyzed documentary data, it is clear that Drasov strictly fulfilled all his duties as secretary of the BRC – keeping the correspondence, protocols, diaries and other documental of the committee; familiarizing the other members with the content of the more important letters to the BRC; drafting of circulars, letters of attorney, etc. Both the preserved and non-preserved BRC`s documents prepared by Iv. Drasov are listed. It is pointed out that despite the commitment resulting from Iv. Drasov`s official duties, his appearances as a member of BRC were not limited to his writing activities. Information has been provided that proves that:

– At the end of August 1875, Iv. Drasov planned to undertake a tour of some Romanian cities in order to convince the representatives of the Bulgarian revolutionary emigration to give their material and moral support to the BRC. The reason for the non-implementation of this initiative of Drasov is the fact that after K. Tsankov and Ivan Kavaldzhiev joined the BRC, the émigré committees, hesitant until then, decided to contribute the money designated for them at the assembly of August 12.

– After the BRC delegates P. Hitov, Dimitar Tsenovich and Vasil Kulev left for Serbia, Iv. Drasov tried to facilitate the success of their negotiations for concluding a Bulgarian-Serbian union, seeking the assistance of his acquaintances in Belgrade – Josef and Alexandra Meisner, and perhaps also to the Serbian consulate in Bucharest.

– When the BRC members were forced to change their original plan for an uprising, Iv. Drasov made an effort to convince the internal committee members that as soon as they rebelled, they would receive a "great help" both from the emigration and from Serbia, Montenegro, Romania and Russia. The fact that these assurances of Drasov had the character of almost pure lie (there were hopes, and not particularly high ones, only for Serbian help) was not overlooked. However, this lie of Drasov is explained not by his "conceit", but by the very situation in which the members of the BRC find themselves due to the lack of material means.

– In order to gain international support for the event undertaken by the BRC, Iv. Drasov turned to K. Irechek, urging him to tell the Czech and German public that the Bulgarians had started their struggle for liberation. It is note that Irechek listened to Drasov`s appeals.

– Iv. Drasov and the other members of BRC really tried to fulfill their promise to prepare squads to come to aid of the internal committee members. As soon as they learned about the announcement of the uprising in Bulgaria, Drasov and company began to look for money and weapons, and to make plans for the transfer of the squads to Bulgaria. In the end, however, all the initiatives of the BRC failed, the main reasons for this being mistrust and negative attitude of part of the emigration, the failure to find new financial means and the rapid failure of the attempted uprising in Bulgaria on September 16 – 17, 1875 (so-called "Zaar adventure").

After the presentation of the facts, a critical analysis is made of the thesis supported by researchers that Iv. Drasov was a "central figure" and/or the real leader of the BRC and the entire preparation of the attempted uprising in Bulgaria from 1875. The bottom line is that the available documentary evidence does support such an opinion. Besides the great activity of Iv. Drasov in the months of August and September 1875, as other arguments were also indicated the fact that he had two special letters of authority – the first prepared by P. Hitov, and the second by the other members of the BRC, which gave him the right to "work for everything" related to the idea of a "general uprising in Bulgaria".

**The second paragraph** of chapter three deals with **the life-being of Iv. Drasov from the "Zaar adventure" to the April Uprising**. The first highlight of this paragraph is *the October tour of Iv. Drasov and Nikola Slavkov around the Bulgarian emigrant communities*.



Answers were sought to the questions – what were the reasons and goals of the tour made by Drasov and Slavkov, what was the duration of this tour and what were the achieved results.

Some solidarity was expressed with the thesis supported by Al. Burmov that Iv. Drasov and N. Slavkov tried to convince the emigration to collect funds for the purchase of a certain amount of melee and firearms, to be used to implement the decision taken by the BRC on October 1, 1875 to continue the uprising in Bulgaria. However, it is pointed out that, according to the available information, during their October tour, Drasov and Slavkov pursued the realization of two more goals – refuting the accusations of financial abuse directed at BRC and declaring P. Hitov as a main culprit for the "Zaar adventure". The hypothesis is proposed that the accusations against Hitov were part of the strategy adopted by the two BRC delegates to clear the name of the Bucharest Committee and gain support for its new plans.

The rest of the conclusions on this topic read – 1) the tour of Iv. Drasov and N. Slavkov began on the 14th and lasted until October 27, 1875; 2) their plan was to meet the representatives of fifteen of the emigrant committees, but in the end they managed to visit only seven or eight of the centers of the Bulgarian emigration in Romania; 3) the goals pursued by Iv. Drasov and N. Slavkov were not achieved, and the reason for this is most likely their attempt to turn the authoritative P. Hitov into a scapegoat for the failure of the attempted uprising in Bulgaria.

The second emphasis of paragraph 2 of chapter three is *the relations of Iv. Drasov with the other members and sympathizers of the BRC after the "Zaar adventure"*. Here attention is mainly paid to the contacts between Iv. Drasov and Hr. Botev, which during the months of August and September 1875 developed in an upward and then downward direction. The opinion is expressed that the main reason for the Drasov – Botev conflict is the fact that the two were on different positions regarding continuation of the rebel actions in Bulgaria. Kr. Sharova`s claim that Iv. Drasov is the person who accused Hr. Botev of misappropriating funds in order to shift the blame for the failure of the uprising to someone else is rejected as completely unfounded; the entire hypothesis of the existence of such accusations against the revolutionary poet is doubted. Specific information is given that shows that the disagreements that occurred in the fall of 1875 between Iv. Drasov and Hr. Botev lead to the termination of their joint activity, but not to a complete rift between them. In the same place, it was also noted that after the failure of the attempted uprising in Bulgaria in September 1875, Iv. Drasov stopped his joint revolutionary activity not only with P. Hitov and Hr. Botev, but also with St. Stambolov and the other future organizers of the April Uprising.

The next highlight is *Iv. Drasov and the Braila Assembly of March 6, 1876*. First of all, an answer is sought to the question of when Drasov moved from Bucharest to Braila. It is suggested that the transfer of the former secretary of the BRC from Bucharest to Braila should be referred to the days between 19/20 and 27 January 1876. Further, the available information and historiographical achievements for the Braila Assembly, at which a plan was adopted for the provision of material means for the publication of a new political newspaper; sending two Bulgarian delegates to Russia and Serbia; the submission of a special appeal to the Russian Emperor Alexander II and the preparation of three insurgent squads are recalled. Various information has been presented, proving that Iv. Drasov fully supported both this plan and the plan prepared by the activists of the Apostolic Assembly in Giurgevo. On the basis of this circumstance, it can be concluded that in the first months of 1876, Drasov continued to share the tactical views that he had adopted in the summer of the previous year.

Finally, paragraph 2 of chapter three examines *the cultural and literary manifestations of Iv. Drasov in the period July 1875 – May 1876*. The last (fourth) part of Iv. Drasov's memoir-historical work "Sofia's adventure", entitled "Brief but true notes on the affairs of the revolutionary movement among the Bulgarians in general, either in Bulgaria itself or outside since 1873", is commented on and analyzed; attention is drawn to Iv. Drasov's "Notes Diaries" – the main source for the Braila Assembly of March 6, 1876; of Drasov's new attempt to publish his translation of K. Tuma's work "Apostle of freedom", as well as the idea of Iv. Drasov to undertake the translation of K. Irechek's book "History of the Bulgarians".

It is suggested that Iv. Drasov's "Brief Notes" on the committee movement after 1873 and the "Notes" on the Braila Assembly were written in the first half of 1876, and not after the Liberation, as most researchers believed. The following arguments are given in support of this hypothesis – 1) It is clear from the content of the last part of "Sofia's adventure" that the text dates before M. Poplukanov's escape from exile, i.e. before July 6, 1876; 2) The available information shows that Iv. Drasov started looking for the information he needed to write the "Brief Notes" immediately after his establishment in Braila; 3) The individual paragraphs of the "Notes Diaries" begin by indicating the year, month, and sometimes even specific date of the described event – a practice more characteristic of diaries than the memoirs; 4) From one particular paragraph in the text of the "Notes Diaries" it is clear that they were begun before April 11, 1876.

The content of the new "Announcement" for the gathering of facilitators for the "Apostle of freedom", prepared by Iv. Drasov on April 4, 1876; the way in which the Bulgarian

emigration welcomed this new initiative of Drasov and the reasons for the non-implementation of the idea Iv. Drasov to translate "History of the Bulgarians", are also commented on.

**The third paragraph** of chapter three is dedicated to the appearances of Iv. Drasov **in the field of the journalism**. First of all, the question of *the formation of the three-member editorial board of "Revival"* – a Bulgarian political newspaper, published in Braila in the period June – October 1876 by Iv. Drasov, T. Peev and Sv. Milarov. Information has been presented proving that Iv. Drasov proposed to T. Peev that they both start publishing a common newspaper at the end of 1875, but then the latter refused. The claim maintained by some researchers that "Revival" Drasov and Peev published another newspaper is rejected as unfounded. As possible reasons for the fact that Iv. Drasov and T. Peev decided to invite Sv. Milarov to be the third editor of the newspaper "Revival" are indicated – 1) overcoming the claims spread among the Bulgarian revolutionary community that Milarov is a Turkish "spy"; 2) the fact that, although younger, Sv. Milarov had more experience as a newspaperman than both T. Peev and Iv. Drasov; 3) the knowledge and contacts of Milarov, which were useful for the achievement of all the goals indicated in the program article of the newspaper "Revival" – the coverage of the various steps taken by the Great Powers regarding the Eastern Question, acquainting the European public opinion with the interests of the Bulgarians through the publication of materials written in French and the conclusion of an alliance with the Serbs and Montenegrins directed against the High Gate.

The second emphasis of paragraph 3 of chapter three is *Iv. Drasov's publications in the newspaper "Revival"*. The excerpts from "Apostle of freedom", which Drasov published in the first three issues of "Revival" are commented and analyzed. On the basis of these excerpts, the thesis supported by E. Georgiev is accepted, that Iv. Drasov considered the slogans and pathos contained in K. Tuma's work to be suitable for Bulgarian people as well. The opinion is also expressed that the part of "The Apostle" published in the newspaper "Revival" presents the Macinist ideas about the independence of the national liberation movement and God's predestination in the destiny of nations ("God and People"). With this, Iv. Drasov's publication surpasses all earlier texts in the Bulgarian Revival periodicals dedicated to Mazzini's ideas.

It is assumed that Iv. Drasov may be author not only of the excerpt from "The Apostle of freedom" published in the newspaper "Revival", but also of an article about the April Uprising entitled "The Uprising in Bulgaria". As arguments that the authorship of the mentioned article may be belong to Drasov, some similarities between the information and the very expressions that we find in it and in the various parts of "Sofia's adventure" are pointed out. The question is also raised whether Iv. Drasov could not be the author of some of the reviews, analyzes and

translations of publications borrowed from the Czech and German periodicals published in the newspaper "Revival".

Thirdly, attention is paid to the discussion question about the ideology of the newspaper "Revival", which for some time was also the ideology of Iv. Drasov. It has been noted that, according to some researchers, the newspaper published by T. Peev, Iv. Drasov and Sv. Milarov had a revolutionary ideology; according to others, the ideology of the newspaper "Revival" was inconsistent (initially revolutionary, then evolutionist), and according to a third, "Revival" was a newspaper with a "liberal-democratic" direction. After a review and analysis of various sources, the conclusion is reached that from the newspaper "Revival" really stood on revolutionary position. In the autumn of 1876, however, this changed, and in the newspaper published by T. Peev, Iv. Drasov and Sv. Milarov ideas for a peaceful solution to the Bulgarian question by obtaining limited administrative autonomy within the Ottoman Empire did appear. Information is also provided proving that Iv. Drasov personally shared these ideas.

To the questions of what brought about this change and whether it should be interpreted as "inconsistency", the following answers are suggested – 1) The reasons for the editors of the newspaper "Revival" to change their views on the solution of the Bulgarian question were the brutal suppression of the April Uprising and the fact that at that time, due to the conflicting interests of the Great Powers, the idea of creating an independent or autonomous state, which would include all the lands, inhabited by Bulgarians, seemed unfeasible. 2) Diving the activists of our National Liberation Movement into "consistent" and "inconsistent" is an artificial and incorrect practice.

The next highlight of paragraph 3 of chapter three is *the attempt to move the newspaper "Revival" from Braila to Bucharest*. It is noted that T. Peev, Iv. Drasov and Sv. Milarov adopted the idea of publishing their newspaper in Bucharest at very beginning of their joint activity. Drasov's participation in this event is outlined. After reviewing the available sources, the conclusion is reached that the question of why Peev, Drasov and Milarov failed to move the newspaper "Revival" from Braila to Bucharest cannot be definitely answered.

The fifth emphasis of paragraph 3 of chapter three is the *attitude of the editorial board of the newspaper "Revival" to the National Liberation Movement in the summer and autumn of 1876*. Attention is drawn here to the support that T. Peev, Iv. Drasov and Sv. Milarov presented to the Vladimir Yonin at the establishment of the Bulgarian Central Charitable Society. It is suggested that there are three possible reasons why the editors of "Revival" decided to support Yonin's initiative – 1) the fact that from the first months of 1876 Iv. Drasov and T. Peev shared the idea of creating a new Bulgarian "central committee"; 2) at the same time, Peev began to

consider the idea of creating "charity committees", the implementation of which he, Drasov and Milarov began at the beginning of June 1876; 3) the desire of T. Peev, Iv. Drasov and Sv. Milarov to join the leadership of the new organization.

An answer is also being sought to the question – why in the end none of the editors of the newspaper "Revival" was elected to the composition of the BCCS. It is pointed out that, according to some reports, the reason for this was the contradictions between T. Peev, Iv. Drasov and Sv. Milarov, on the one hand, and the group of activists of K. Tsankov, on the other hand. But due to the fact that after the split in the BCCS, the editorial board of "Revival" supported not the breakaway group of Ivan Grudov, but the official leadership headed by K. Tsankov, it is concluded the latter may have simply been bribed as a culprit for the fact that T. Peev, Iv. Drasov and Sv. Milarov remain outside the new organization. As an argument in favor of this assumption, some documentary data providing that "Revival" is becoming a platform for popularizing the activities of the BCCS are also indicated.

Another issue that is addressed in the same place is the attitude of the editorial board of the newspaper "Revival" to the Bulgarian participation in the war of Serbia and Montenegro against the Ottoman Empire, which began on June 18, 1876. Based on various materials published in "Revival", the following opinions are expressed – 1) T. Peev, Iv. Drasov and Sv. Milarov welcomed the beginning of the Serbian-Turkish war and believed that one of the reasons for the beginning of this war was the April Uprising in Bulgaria; 2) The editors of the newspaper "Revival" are among the activists who criticized the voivodes of the Bulgarian squads in Serbia; 3) T. Peev, Iv. Drasov and Sv. Milarov blamed both the Serbian government and some Bulgarians for the various troubles that befell the Bulgarian volunteers; 4) Despite their dissatisfaction with the intrigues and lies of Belgrade, the members of the editorial board of "Revival" did not give up on the idea of a Bulgarian-Serbian union against the High Gate.

The final highlight of paragraph 3 of chapter three is *the end of the newspaper "Revival"*. Some additional arguments are indicated in support of Docho Lekov's thesis that the suspension of the newspaper published by T. Peev, Iv. Drasov and Sv. Milarov is the result of two circumstances – the lack of financial resources and the campaign against "Revival" undertaken by the newspaper "Balkan mountain". In the same place, it is also pointed out that although the role of Iv. Drasov in the publication of the newspaper "Revival" seems more inconspicuous, it should not be considered less important than that of T. Peev and Sv. Milarov.

**The fourth paragraph** of chapter three is devoted to **the activities of Iv. Drasov on the eve of the Liberation of Bulgaria**. The first highlight is *the Chetnik initiative of Iv. Drasov and Georgi Minchev* in the first months of 1877. It is noted that direct information about this

initiative is contained only in one memoir of G. Minchev. Along with this, however, some indirect information is indicated, which give us reason to trust Minchev`s story.

Next, attention is paid to Iv. Drasov`s activities during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877 – 1878 and, more specifically, to his enlistment *in the service of the Russian army*. The question of Iv. Drasov`s participation in the arrangement of the "pigeon post" between Zimnich and Svishov in the days before Russian landing at the latter city is commented on. Solidarity is expressed with the opinion held by some researchers that Drasov is the author of an anonymous letter referring to the organization of the pigeon post. A comparison is made between the content of the mentioned letter and the other available information about the information channel Zimnich – Svishov. Attention is also paid to some statements, on the basis of which it can be concluded that Iv. Drasov continued to provide assistance to the Russian army even after his transfer in Bulgaria.

The third emphasis of paragraph 4 of chapter three is *Iv. Drasov at the head of the First City Management Council in Lovech*. Answers to the three specific questions are sought – how Iv. Drasov became the head of the First City Council in Lovech; what the City Management Council in Loven did at the time when Drasov was its chairman; did Iv. Drasov deserve to be defined as one of the "builders" of modern Lovech. After reviewing and analyzing the available documentary data, the following answers are proposed to the stated questions:

1) Two factors were decisive for the election of Iv. Drasov as the chairman of the First Lovech city Management Council – his authority among the residents of Lovech and the trust of the Russian military command, which Drasov earned during his participation in the pigeon post Zimnich – Shishov. 2) During its eleven-month activity (August 31, 1877 – August 1, 1878), the First City Management Council in Lovech, chaired by Iv. Drasov, undertook a number of initiatives in various areas – taxation; taking care of the Russian army in the city; public works; economy and trade; education; healthcare; maintenance of public order and personal safety; assistance of the sick and poor residents of the city, to the Bulgarian refugees who arrived from the Sub-Balkans and to the Bulgarian squads around Lovech; filing the first Bulgarian army with volunteers from Lovech and organizing the first solemn events in Lovech. 3) The fact that the foundations for solving almost all problems in Lovech were laid precisely in the period August 31, 1877 – August 1, 1878 allows both Iv. Drasov and the other members of the first municipal government to be mentioned among the people who contributed to the new post-liberation appearance of the city of the Osam River.

**The fourth chapter** of the dissertation is entitled "**Ivan Drasov and the memory of the Bulgarian National Liberation Movement**". The first paragraph of this chapter is dedicated to **the role of Iv. Drasov in creating the narrative of the "committee decade"**.

First of all, attention is paid to *the assistance that Iv. Drasov gave to the first chroniclers of our National Liberation Movement* – Zahari Stoyanov, Stoyan Zaimov, doctor Paraskev Stoyanov, and also to the first researcher of the Bulgarian periodical press – Yurdan Ivanov. The available documentary data on the case of Hr. Botev`s letters and some other committee documents, which Iv. Drasov provided to Z. Stoyanov and the latter did not return, are commented and analyzed. On the question of why St. Zaimov, P. Stoyanov and Y. Ivanov decided to seek the assistance of Iv. Drasov, two assumptions are made – 1) St. Zaimov and Y. Ivanov turned to Iv. Drasov because they have known that he was one of the people who had the most information to the issues of interest to them – the committee movement in the first half of 1870s and the history of the newspaper "Revival"; 2) The person who indirectly encouraged Dr. P. Stoyanov to seek information from Iv. Drasov was Hristo T. Drasov. It is pointed out that Iv. Drasov tried to support the work of St. Zaimov and Dr. Stoyanov not only by providing the requested information and documents, but also by referring them to some other sources. It is also suggested that Philip Simidov was among the chroniclers who turned to Iv. Drasov.

At the same place, attention is drawn to the fact that with part of the information he gave to Dr. P. Stoyanov, Iv. Drasov contributed to the popularization of two statements – 1) V. Levski was captured as a result of treason committed by priest Krastyo Nikiforov; 2) Part of the BRCC archive fell into the hands of the Ottoman authorities through the fault of L. Karavelov. The opinion is expressed that Drasov adopted the thesis about the betrayal of priest Krastyo even before the Liberation. As for the question – when Iv. Drasov became one of L. Karavelov`s accusers, Kr. Sharova`s thesis that Drasov began to suspect that the chairman of BRCC was guilty of committee documents falling into Turkish hands as early as 1874 – 1875 is rejected as unfounded. Various information is indicated, proving that Iv. Drasov began to have certain doubts about Lyuben and Natalia Karavelovi only at the end of his life. It is assumed that the information that Iv. Drasov received from Kiro Tuleshkov, and perhaps also from M. Poplukanov, contributed to the emergence of these doubts. However, it is pointed out that Drasov himself was not firmly convinced of Karavelovi`s guilt and defined it as a rumor that the future would confirm or reject.

The second emphasis of paragraph 1 of chapter four is *Iv. Drasov and the manifestations of the memory for the National Liberation Movement*. The available documentary data on Drasov`s attitude to the unveiling of the Monument to V. Levski in Sofia in 1895, the

commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the CBRC in Bulgaria in 1896 and the 25th anniversary of the hanging of Levski in 1898 are commented and analyzed. Looking for answers to the questions – why the interest in the celebration organized by Iv. Drasov, M. Poplukanov, D. Pashkov, Anastas Ts. Hitrov and Ivan Kolev on the occasion of the quarter-century anniversary of the creation the CBRC was too weak and why, despite his great respect for V. Levski, Iv. Drasov missed the organized in Lovech manifestation on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his death. Regarding the first question, the assumption is made that the reason that the celebration of "the remaining living members of the Bulgarian Central Secret Revolutionary Committee – I Department" was respected by only 15 people was the political struggles between Drasov, Poplukanov, Pashkov, Hitrov and Kolev, on the one hand, who were members of the People`s Liberal (Stambolovist) Party, and the activists of the ruling People`s Party. Iv. Drasov`s deteriorating health for several years, due to which he may have wanted, but was unable to travel long distances, or the possibility that Drasov was not invited to the celebration on the occasion of the quarter-century anniversary of the hanging of V. Levski are listed as possible answers to the second question. It is also noted that Iv. Drasov was awarded by the organizers of the celebration on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the April Uprising in 1901.

**The second paragraph** of the chapter fourth is devoted to the place of **Iv. Drasov in the Bulgarian historical memory**. The first highlight is *the official recognition of Iv. Drasov as emigrant rebel*. Drasov`s activity in collecting rebel documents certifying his merits in the National Liberation Movement and giving him the right to receive a higher pension is presented. The circumstances that led to the court case between Iv. Drasov and the Pension Board in the period 1895 – 1897, which ended with Drasov`s victory, are also examined.

The other emphasis of the same paragraph is *the memory of Iv. Drasov*. Attention is drawn here to the number of streets, schools, ect., named after Iv. Drasov; the presence of Drasov in the history textbooks, encyclopedias, reference books, periodicals; the state of the memorial places for the life of Iv. Drasov and the ways in which the memory of Drasov is honored in the past and nowadays. The following fact and circumstances were established:

- 1) The number of streets named "Ivan Drasov" is only three – one each in Varna, Plovdiv and Lovech. The only school named after Iv. Drasov was located in the village Smochan, Lovech region, and today it no longer exists.
- 2) Iv. Drasov`s name is well represented in encyclopedias and reference books, but absent from most textbooks. Publication of materials about Drasov in the periodicals became more common practice only after 1990.
- 3) The memorials for Iv. Drasov are not maintained – his native house in Lovech was demolished a



long time ago, and his house in Varna is in deplorable condition. 4) Information about any memorial events about Iv. Drasov before 1990 is generally scarce. Nowadays, however, Drasov`s memory is more revered; his documents and personal belongings are displayed at various temporary and permanent exhibitions organized by different institutions.

Based on all of the above, it is concluded that although in 1897 he was officially recognized as a "rebel and emigrant", soon after his death (1901) Iv. Drasov was generally forgotten. Over the past thirty years, however, this trend has gradually changed, and thanks to the efforts of historians, museum workers, archivists, publicists and journalists, Drasov`s name become more familiar than it was before 1990.

In **the final part** of the dissertation, the most important conclusions of the research are recalled.

– Iv. Drasov grew up in a rich and enlightened family, which produces a number of participations in the various aspects of the legal struggles of our people before the Liberation of Bulgaria. This circumstance helped Drasov to become one of the most enlightened and socially engaged young people in Lovech with a proven contribution to the cultural and education advancement of his fellow citizens.

– After his acquaintance with V. Levski, Iv. Drasov lived with the conviction that, in addition to modern education and church independence, the Bulgarian people should also fight for political liberation. At the very beginning of his committee activity, Drasov demonstrated great energy and willingness to sacrifice. As a result he was elected for a member-secretary of the Lovech`s Private Revolutionary Committee and of the CBRC in Bulgaria.

– In 1872, Iv. Drasov realizing that raising the level of his education would be beneficial both for himself and for its people. His interest in natural-mathematical and technical sciences, and the desire to live in the most comfortable environment possible, led Drasov to the Czech lands. In the case of Iv. Drasov, leaving to study abroad was not equivalent to refusing to participate in the various revival processes. After his establishment in the Czech lands, Drasov continued his appearances both as a national revolutionary and as a fighter for an independent Bulgarian church and for the development of Bulgarian education and culture.

– The activity of Iv. Drasov in the summer and the autumn of 1875 is another proof of his great dedication of the revolutionary struggle for the liberation of Bulgaria. Drasov was not just a secretary but a key person in the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committee established on August 12, 1875 in Bucharest; he worked for everything related to the preparation of the planed "general uprising in Bulgaria" and contributed to the activation of our National Liberation

Movement. But during his affiliation to the self-established "Commission" for converting a new committee assembly and the BRC, Iv. Drasov also got involved in some initiatives that contributed to strengthening the division among the Bulgarian revolutionary activists.

– Although from the fall of 1875 he fell into some isolation, Iv. Drasov did not give up the idea of working for the liberation of Bulgaria. In the summer of 1876, through his publications in the newspaper "Revival", Drasov contributed to the popularizing of the April Uprising. From the fall of 1876, Iv. Drasov realized that the Bulgarian question could not be resolved without the participation of the European Great Powers. Taking into account the positions of the European Powers, the until recently ardent supporter of the armed struggle for the complete rejection of the Sultan's power adopted the idea of a limited administrative autonomy of the Bulgarians within the Ottoman Empire. But for Iv. Drasov the acceptance of the option for a peaceful settlement of the Bulgarian question was not equivalent to a completely rejection of the armed struggle. When he found out that the troops of the Russian Emperor Alexander II were coming to the Balkans to free the Bulgarians from the power of the Sultan, Drasov immediately put himself at their service.

– In just eleven months, the First City Management Council in Lovech, chaired by Iv. Drasov, undertook a number of initiatives in various areas, with which it contributed of the transformation of Lovech from a backward oriental into a modern Bulgarian city.

– Confirming the name of Iv. Drasov in the Bulgarian historical memory turns out to be a slow process that started about thirty years after his death and has not yet achieved sufficiently satisfactory results. However, what has been done in recent decades gives reason to assume that this process will continue to develop in an upward direction.

### **More Important Contributions of Dissertation**

- An attempt at a comprehensive presentation and evaluation of the life and activities of Ivan Drasov until the Liberation of Bulgaria.
- Presentations of the ideological views shared by Ivan Drasov during the years of his activity as a national revolutionary and Bulgarian revivalist.
- Delineation of the relationship between Ivan Drasov and various prominent personalities from the era of the Bulgarian Revival – Lyuben Karavelov, Hristo Botev, Panayot Hitov, Todor Peev, etc.
- An attempt to clarify the place of Ivan Drasov in the Bulgarian historical memory.
- An attempt to clarify some debated and unresolved issues to Ivan Drasov`s activities as a national revolutionary – Vasil Levski`s first visit to Lovech, the establishment of the Private Revolutionary Committee in Lovech, the establishment of the CBRC in Bulgaria, the ideology of the newspaper "Revival" and others.
- Adding some new touches to the already known facts and circumstances from the history of the Bulgarian National Liberation Movement in the 70s of the nineteenth century, the education of the revival Bulgarians in the Czech lands, the Bulgarian-Czech relations until 1875, the Bulgarian revival periodicals etc.
- Rethinking some of the thesis and hypothesis that prevailed in the historical literature about the place and role of Ivan Drasov in the Bulgarian National Liberation Movement.
- Correction of some inaccuracies made in the documentary collection "Ivan Drasov in the Bulgarian National Revolutionary Movement (1871 – 1877)".
- Bringing into scientific circulation some previously unknown archival materials containing information about the life and activities of Ivan Drasov.

### **Publications on the subject of the dissertation**

- 1) **Ivanov, D.** Functions of Ivan Drasov in the Lovech`s Private Revolutionary Committee and in the BRCC in Bulgaria (1871 – 1872). – Plovdiv Historical Forum, V, 2021, № 2, pp. 30 – 42.
- 2) **Ivanov, D.** Ivan Drasov – family and early years. – In: Biographical Essays. T. II. Composition. P. Mitev. Sofia, University Publishing House "St. Kliment Ohridski", 2023, pp. 139 – 163.
- 3) **Ivanov, D.** Ivan Drasov and Konstantin Irechek. – In: The benefit of history from the Antiquity to the present day. A collection of reports from the international scientific conference "The benefit of history (from the Antiquity to the present day)", dedicated to the 300th anniversary of the birth of Paisius Hilendarski and the 260th anniversary of the writing of "Slavic Bulgarian History". T. II. Revival and modernity. Plovdiv, Plovdiv University Press, 2022, pp. 188 – 198.
- 4) **Ivanov, D.** Ivan Drasov and Macinism. – Bulgarian Revival. Ideas. Personalities. Events, XVII, 2022, pp. 131 – 140.
- 5) **Ivanov, D.** Ivan Drasov and the Bulgarian Revival in Macedonia. – Bulgarian Revival. Ideas. Personalities. Events, XVIII, 2023, pp. 77 – 83.
- 6) **Ivanov, D.** Ivan Drasov and the first manifestations of the memory of Vasil Levski. – New documents and research. T. 4 (in print).
- 7) **Ivanov, D.** Ivan Drasov and the rumors about BRCC archive falling into the hands of the Ottoman authorities. – In: Kyustendil readings 2022. Collection in memory of Prof. Dr. Todor Popnedelelev. Composition. V. Stanev, S. Zhivkov. Sofia, University Publishing House "St. Kliment Ohridski", 2023, pp. 95 – 102.
- 8) **Ivanov, D.** Ivan Drasov`s opinion on Chetnik tactics. – New documents and research. T. 2. Vasil Levski, the Chetnik actions and the committee movement 1867 – 1873, 2022, pp. 128 – 140.
- 9) **Ivanov, D.** Ivan Drasov`s revolutionary and organizational activity among the Bulgarian students in the Czech lands. – In: Levski, the revolution and the future world (in print).
- 10) **Ivanov, D.** The committee activity of Ivan Drasov in 1872. – In: The rebellion of spirit – a main force on the path of freedom. A collection of reports from an international scientific conference dedicated to 150th anniversary of the First General Assembly of the BRCC and the 150th anniversary of the death of Angel Kanchev. Ruse, 2022, pp. 99 – 118.
- 11) **Ivanov, D.** The learning of Ivan Drasov in Pisek and Prague. – History, XXXI, 2023, № 2, pp. 163 – 184.

12) **Ivanov, D.** The relations between Ivan Drasov and Hristo Botev at the end of 1875 – the beginning of 1876. – Botyov list. Anniversary edition of the Public Initiative Committee – Vratsa, May 25 – June 4, 2022, p. 10.