Georgeta Nazarska

Orthodox charismatic communities and social change during the Bulgarian transitional period (1980s–1990s)

Intersections. EEJSP
9(3): 130–147.
https://doi.org/10.17356/ieejsp.v9i3.1141
https://intersections.tk.hu

[georgeta.nazarska@gmail.com] (University of Library Studies and IT, Sofia)

Abstract

The article is devoted to the relationship between religiosity and social action. It studies religious communities in Bulgaria as active subjects of social change in the period of transition from a totalitarian to a democratic society in the 1980s and 1990s. The subjects of the study are Orthodox charismatic communities, established formally as political formations in the mid 1980s but by the mid 1990s gradually transforming into religious ones. The article is based on the Weberian social action theory and value-spheres typology. Using historical and sociological approaches an analysis of documents and of semi-standardized interviews is done.

Keywords: Max Weber; social action; social change; charisma; value spheres; Bulgaria; transition

1 Introduction

The present article is devoted to the relationship between religiosity and social action. It studies the hypothesis that some religious communities in Bulgaria can be seen as active subjects of social change in the period of transition from a totalitarian to a democratic society in the 1980s and 1990s. Until 1989, they were elements of the Bulgarian dissident movement against the communist regime, characterized by latency, uneven intensity over time, limited scale and weak results compared to those in the Central and Eastern Europe (Znepolski, 2020). Since 1990, however, particular religious communities became part of the opposition political forces and were among the most radical in demanding complete de-communization. The subjects of the study are Orthodox charismatic communities, established formally as political formations in the mid 1980s but by the mid 1990s gradually transforming into religious ones.

In the present study, the sociological approach is mainly used, which is combined with the historical, since the described events and persons belong to the recent past. The Weberian sociology of religion, social action theory and value-spheres typology are put into the conceptual framework. Primarily the article emphasizes social action theory, which is carried out by individuals and collectives placed in a certain situation and under the influence of micro and macro milieus (traditions, education, social control and institu-

tions). Social action is perfectly flowing, but it also has its own dynamics. It is an alternative to impersonal behaviour. Decisions for it are a consequence either of mastered and instrumentalized moral values, or they are a function of desired outcomes (Weber, 1978c, pp. 25–32). Weber opposed them such as 'religious ethics' and 'ethic of ultimate ends', idealism and pragmatism (Weber, 1978a, pp. 466–467, 576–590; cf. Parsons, 1949, pp. 640–696; Camic et al., 2005). The author describes four types of social action: 'traditional', based on habit; 'affectional', based on emotions; 'value-rational', determined by beliefs and values and focusing on action; and 'goal-instrumental', subservient to reason and the thought of results (Weber, 1978a, pp. 24–26, 37, 49; Weber, 1978c, pp. 28–29). After the decision is made, the individual takes action and achieves the values or ideals that are in constant opposition. According to Weber, social actions take place as social relationships within social system institutions (clan, marriage, state, church, guild etc.), distinguished by a power hierarchy and goal-instrumental choices, and in social communities, where people are gathering voluntary and on the ground of attitudes ('friendship', 'love', 'piety', 'fidelity to contract', 'sense of patriotism') (Weber, 1978c, pp. 30–31). In the course of social action, the desire to impose the will of a given individual or group is manifested. Weber distinguishes 'personal authority' exercised in the private space from 'domination' in the public space, which, according to him, is legitimized through obedience to tradition (traditional), acceptance based on extraordinary gifts and qualities (charismatic), and respect for modern law and state (rational-legal) (Weber 1978a, pp. 215–216). Political authority has its parallels, according to Weber, in the religious field as well. He finds a direct connection between social action and four types of religiosity: the first three (magical, cultic, and sacred law religion) are inherent in ancient societies, while the ethical (religions of salvation) are attributed to more recent world religions. In the 'religions of salvation', the main figures are the prophets, who with their extraordinary personal qualities (charisma) present themselves as God-sent, become natural leaders and act goal-instrumentally. A charismatic religious community, including circles of disciples, friends, adepts, admirers, adherents, and supporters, expressing their trust, respect and personal devotion, is formed around them. According to Weber, charismatic authority is revolutionary in nature (Weber, 1978a, pp. 1111–1116); it has reformatory potential in order to change the world and 'life-orders' (Weber, 1978a, pp. 241–254). Gradually, the prophet routinizes his charisma and proceeds to create from his previously unstable circle of followers a congregation – a permanent organization, a community with rights and obligations, divided into clergy and laity and directed to the service of the prophet or God. This often brings the prophet into conflict with the mass of believers, but also with the bearers of the sacred tradition for whom he is an innovator (Weber, 1978a, pp. 246, 452–464, 590–597).

Secondly, the article applies Weber's understanding that the social action of individuals takes place in the world, divided into 'life-orders' ('spheres of life', 'life-spheres') – ideas and beliefs in the minds of individuals. Six 'value-spheres' correspond to them, which legitimize life-orders, represent value-rational orientations and express free will and inner essence. If they go through a process of sublimation, from the unconscious, they become conscious value judgments, beliefs and ideals, i.e. they are systematized in axiological axioms ('ultimate values') (Weber, 1958a, pp. 328, 345, 350–355). That is when they can transform into intentions and become social action. The analysis places an emphasis on the scientific (intellectual), political and religious 'value-spheres' where, according to

Weber, social actors must have a vocation, and to act with passionate devotion, irrational intensity and inner commitment to their cause (Weber, 1958a, p. 331; 1978b; 1958b). However, if they are hindered by political institutions, it is possible that the 'value-spheres' become meaningless and are transformed from a means to an end. 'Value-spheres' have their own autonomy, logic and rules and often come into conflict with each other. The result can be a value rejection of the world (Weber, 1958a, pp. 350–355; 1958b; cf. Symonds, 2022). However, it is also possible for them to interpenetrate, where the motivation in one 'value-sphere' is from another 'life-orders' and vice versa (Weber, 1978a, p. 32; cf. Symonds, 2022).

1.1 Political and sociocultural context

Weber's sociological theory of religion is necessary because the main subject of the study is a charismatic religious community formed by believers of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (BOC). Since its creation in the ninth century it had been part of the Orthodox local churches. Its modern existence as an autonomous Exarchate (1870–1953) and an independent Patriarchate (from 1953) was accompanied by a number of obstacles: international isolation after the schism with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and all the Orthodox Churches (1872–1945), falling into complete dependence on the Russian Orthodox Church after 1948, and encapsulation during the Cold War, regardless of retained ties with the World Council of Churches. Its internal problems were also numerous. In the 1910s-1940s, the prestige of the clergy declined and there was an outflow from the profession; the conservative and pro-ecumenical wings of the upper clergy clashed sharply; the new Christian-based religious movements spread widely. Since 1947, the communist regime practically deprived of right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (professing and practicing) all religious denominations, following the Soviet model. Atheist politics was particularly intense in the period from 1957 to 1989 (Kalkandzhieva, 1997; Metodiev, 2010; Denev, 2012; Znepolski, 2020; Merdjanova, 2022; Nazarska, 2022).

1.2 State of art

The existing state of art connects the social change in Bulgaria in the 1990s with two political subjects: on the one hand, the Bulgarian Socialist Party, included remnants of the former totalitarian Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) and of the former nomenclature, which resisted the rapid reforms, and on other hand, the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) – a coalition of opposition formations, consisted of heterogeneous elements (heirs of the former bourgeois class, intellectuals, part of the working class, etc.), which insisted on the radical destruction of the totalitarian system (Daynov, 2000; Pastarmadzhieva, 2013, pp. 167–175; Tepavicharov, 2018; Karakachanov, 2020, pp. 69–78). The researches rarely mention religious figures and in particular the Orthodox ones as members of this anti-communist opposition.[1] However, some of them were themselves political dissidents and

[1] This is done only with regard to Muslims (see Gruev & Kalionski, 2008).

trying to reform the BOC from within, they became active subjects of the Bulgarian political and social transition. So far, their activity has been studied mainly biographically or in view of the dissident structures (1988–1989) and the church schism in the BOC (1992–2004) (Hristova, 2005; Kalkandzieva, 2012). The *Salvation* Christian Union is not researched yet, and its activity was not considered either as part of longer-lasting processes of resistance of the Bulgarian clergy and laymen, or as part of the political allies of the UDF.

1.3 Sources and techniques for collecting and analysing information

The present article is based on historical analysis of archival and published documents and content analysis of semi-standardized interviews. Although they were established in the 1980s and 1990s, the two associations (the Committee for the Protection of Religious Rights, Freedom of Conscience and Spiritual Values (1988–1990) and the *Salvation* Christian Union (1990–1995) are not well documented. Most archival materials are still in the private possession of their leaders and members, while a limited range of documents has been published or given to state archives. The audio and visual documents have also not been collected, except in private collections of the Committee and of the Union leaders. Therefore, I decided to supplement my analysis of available official and narrative documents by oral sources. In 2022–2023, I conducted four semi-standardized face-to-face interviews with former figures of the Union and an adept in Sofia and Plovdiv. All had spoken in detail about the founding of the formation and their motivation to participate in it or to follow its activities. In January 2023 I had a long talk with the Metropolitan of Sredetz Christopher (Sabev), during which he specified some facts and provided me with written, audio and visual documents from his private archive.

2 The emergence and rise of the charismatic religious community: The Committee for the Protection of Religious Rights, Freedom of Conscience and Spiritual Values (1988–1990)

On October 19, 1988, the Committee for the Protection of Religious Rights, Freedom of Conscience and Spiritual Values was founded in the city of Veliko Tarnovo – the capital of the medieval Bulgarian kingdom and former headquarters of the Bulgarian Patriarchate. Since its founding, it had drawn symbolic capital from both religious and political sources. The holiday of St. John of Rila (the patron saint of Bulgaria) was chosen, but at the same time the anniversary of the murder of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko (1947–1984) – chaplain of the *Solidarity* Trade Union, killed by Polish State Security because of accusations that he had slandered and plotted against the government and was in contact with the enemies of the country such as Pope John Paul II. It was paradoxical, but it was a fact that in the following years it was the courage and willingness to sacrifice of this charismatic clergyman from the Roman Catholic Church that became the 'role model' followed by the founder of the Committee. Its members wanted to look like the *Solidarity* workers – the Popiełuszko's charismatic community, especially in asserting their own identity as human rights defenders and dissidents (Sabev, Archbishop, 1994, pp. 23–31).

The subsequent history of the creation and development of this organization can be traced through the lens of Weber's theory of the exercise of charismatic authority and the nature of charismatic communities. The man who established the Committee was Hieromonk Christopher (Sabev) – an Orthodox junior clergyman from Veliko Tarnovo and from the Arbanassi Monastery. In the early biography of the future religious leader, the so-called Weber 'particular situation' in which a person is motivated for his social actions, could be described (Weber, 1978c, p. 13). It is connected at the micro level with family and local traditions, with the received upbringing and formed morality, and at the macro level – with educational institutions and other social actors.

In 1988, Father Christopher was 42 years old and had clearly formed religious and political views. Self-defined as a critic of the regime, he was arrested for anti-atheist statements in 1973. Subsequently, he graduated in theoretical physics at Sofia University, worked in the field of cosmic radiation, and specialized in the P. N. Lebedev Institute of Physics of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in Moscow (1975–1977), where he became closely acquainted with the Soviet human rights movement of Prof. Sakharov. A radio ecologist by profession, Sabev became active especially after the Chernobyl accident (1986) (Sabev, Archbishop, 1994; Interview of Christopher Sabev, 2020).

Sabev's actions in the following decade were motivated by both political and religious motives, confirming Weber's observations that the political and religious 'value-spheres' constantly interacted and interpenetrated. Thus, those 'contradictory or mutually conflicting impulses' (Weber, 1978c, p. 13) are discovered in the young person: he was politically motivated to engage in religious activity, and after a while, being a monk, he received impulses to engage in politics.

Sabev describes himself as highly religious since childhood under the influence of his grandfather and mother and the religious literature he read. In his youth he received divine revelations and therefore decided to follow his 'inner voice' and became a clergyman. During his studies at the Sofia Academy of Theology (1980–1985), he communicated with his professors and fellow students with oppositional views (Nikolchev, 2014, pp. 138–139; Metodiev, 2011). He was also influenced by the dissident Blagoy Topuzliev – a parish priest who served a 5-year sentence for anti-communist activity. Founding the Independent Society for the Protection of Human Rights in Plovdiv in 1988, it was he who enrolled Father Christopher in it.[2] Sabev formed his 'revolutionary' attitude towards the world also in the circle of opposition-minded metropolitans, declaring themselves for urgent reforms in the BOC and personally – opposed by Patriarch Maxim, who contributed to its complete submission to the communist power. Father Christopher was described as a clergyman with a strong personal charisma: highly religious, phytotherapist, pretending to be a miracle-worker, with a strong character, vocation, dedication, wayward, conflicted and defiant (Simeonov, 1996, p. 639). Quite naturally, what Weber calls a 'circle of fellow believers' was formed around him, who recognized his charisma and gave him trust, respect and personal devotion (Cf. Weber, 1978a, pp. 452–464, 1143).

Since the organization was secret, in the next two years its members became only personally verified, known and faithful to the leader parishioners from Veliko Tarnovo

[2] Blagoy Topuzliev (1946–2010) was expelled abroad in the spring of 1989.

and the surrounding area, Shoumen, Gorna Oryahovitsa and Plovdiv. They were young people (born in the 1940–1960s), men and women, with diverse professions (priests, teachers, students of Theology, musicians, carpenters and drivers) (Simeonov, 1996, pp. 640–641). It can be argued that they represented the typical charismatic religious community, united much more by religious synergy, emotions and by Sabev's charisma than by the mutual interests to work for the restoration of religious rights and freedoms. Over time they constructed their collective identity as well on a religious basis – initially in the local space of the Veliko Tarnovo Diocese, and subsequently built it up with political elements and expanded the 'space' to trans local (all the country) and virtual ('exporting' its ideas abroad through the means of large western radio stations).

Forced to quickly legitimize itself and under the influence of the rapidly changing international situation, the organization began to turn into a congregation (Weber, 1978a, pp. 452–464). The initially announced program statement of the Committee testified to reformism directed from the outside in, to combine religious ideas (for the study of religion in secondary and higher schools, for the return of the congregational beginning in the management of the BOC and for the restoration of the Julian calendar) with moderately political ones (for lustration of the metropolitans, recruited by the State Security), but practically not going beyond the reformism inside the BOC (Sabev, Archbishop, 1994, pp. 23–34; Cf. Kunicki, 2021). This tensions between the religious and political 'value-spheres', noted by Weber, can also be traced back to the spring of 1989, when the community began to act from the inside out. In the Committee's program, drawn upon the basis of those of the German Christian-Democratic Party, political demands based on the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Helsinki Accords prevail (PACS). Religious issues were brought to the fore, but viewed through the political perspective of universal human and civil rights (introduction of Sunday catechism, foundation of theological seminaries in each diocese, creation of youth and children's religious organizations, permission for radio and television broadcasts of Sunday and holiday services, projection of religious films, mass sale of the Bible and religious literature, legitimization of the social activity of the Church through hospitals, old and orphanages and boarding houses). With this, the Committee attacked atheism, one of the main policies of the totalitarian regime, but began to codify its new doctrine (PACS; Cf. *Tsarkoven vestnik*, 1989a, 1989b. Cf. Weber, 1978a, pp. 457–463). It is no coincidence that the authorities suspected that the ultimate goal of the Committee will be its legalization in the Christian-Democratic Party (Simeonov, 1996, p. 639). This is confirmed by the visible expansion of both its social base and its homogenization as a charismatic congregation with the participation of elements from other charismatic communities on an Orthodox and Protestant basis: the *Christian Unity* Orthodox Movement, the *Sons of Light* Hesychast Brotherhood, and the Protestant God's church. In 1989, negotiations were even held with the Bulgarian Muslims (Pomacs), who at that time were subjected to repression by the communist regime (Darzhavna, 2014, p. 1142; cf. Mollov, 2006; Altanov, 2011).[3]

[3] Since 1972, the communist regime has pursued a policy of assimilation towards Muslims in the country (see Gruev & Kalionski, 2008).

What united the members and supporters of the Committee in conditions of illegal, informal existence for two whole years (1988–1989) was the figure of Father Christopher. He showed undeniable qualities of a spiritual leader with 'inner-worldly asceticism', described by Weber in contrast to the 'world-fleeing asceticism' of Orthodoxy (Weber, 1978a, pp. 541–550). The monk set out to 'master the world' and achieve 'this-worldly salvation', working through social action to transform it according to God's will (Weber, 1978a, pp. 541–544, 546–547, 551, 553): he boldly advertises the existence of the association through public litany processions, water consecrations and liturgies, which he carries out in Veliko Tarnovo, Gabrovo, Dryanovo and in the village of Samovodene (Sabev, Archbishop, 1994, pp. 24–31, 33). In response, he received bans from the administrative authorities; a refusal to register from the judicial authorities, and the ecclesiastics-imposed punishment on him and publicly condemned the demands of the Committee in their official position. In 1989, the leader of the Committee was subjected to several investigations by the State Security and surveillance, censorship of correspondence and was arrested for about 50 days (PACS; *Narodno delo,* 1992). Since the end of 1988, Father Christopher was looking for the legitimation of his charismatic authority not only by his followers, but also by external factors: he constantly reported his every action on the Radio Free Europe, the Deutsche Welle and the BBC, coordinated his activities with other human rights organizations, and had met with American, West German and French diplomats (Sabev, Archbishop, 1994, pp. 32–34). In the fall of 1989, it was the foreign embassies with their protests that managed to free him from arrest (Darzhavna, 2014, pp. 832, 862–865, 879–881; Sabev, Archbishop, 1994, p. 27; Simeonov, 1996, p. 639; Doynov, 1999, pp. 196, 202, 224). After his release, Father Christopher appeared as a charismatic actor both political and religious. In an Orthodox temple in the capital, he formally led the liturgy on the occasion of the great Orthodox feast of St. Dimiter (October 26), but at the same time he held a memorial service for the victims of natural disasters,[4] bearing in mind that at the same time the Ecoforum under the auspices of the Conference on Security and Cooperation was held in Sofia. It was possible that this action of his was in imitation of the so-called Masses for the Homeland, performed monthly by Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, which brought him great popularity, gathered thousands of participants and strengthened their confessional-national identity. In the same sequence of rational decisions, Father Christopher and members of the Committee participated in the first authorized mass march of dissidents in the country, organized on November 3 in Sofia – the day of Father Popiełuszko's burial in 1984, turned into a half-million-strong demonstration of Polish patriotism and a prominent Catholic identity.

According to Weber, charismatic religions are in constant interaction, but also tension, with the political field. Often the reduction of political pressure leads to a withdrawal from political activity and to indifference to the secular or a return to the religious 'value-sphere'. This finding can apparently be traced in the activities of Father Christopher after the fall of the communist regime in Bulgaria, as at first, he retained his commitment to politics, combining it with religious-ethical values and activities, but subsequently demonstrated a 'religious rejection of the world' (Weber, 1958a, pp. 345–355; cf. Weber, 1978a, pp. 590–592).

[4] The largest of which was the USSR's fault in Chernobyl.

Contrary to expectations, however, at the first free rally of the opposition forces in Sofia on November 18, 1989, Father Christopher gave a speech filled not with political appeals, but with religious images. Citing the Holy Scriptures, he emphasized 'spiritual darkness, fear, uncertainty, repression, evil deeds, moral laxity, crime and soullessness' to which he contrasts 'the bright day, the day of truth, forgiveness, repentance, peace and love'. However, due to the stereotypes formed for the dissident organizations and specifically for the Committee as a political formation, his message was perceived as a political call for a peaceful transition, without confrontation and bloodshed (CSA, coll. 1466, inv. 2, file 10, f. 1–3; Sabev, Archbishop, 1994, pp. 39–40). After the rally, he led a procession to collect signatures for the legalization of the Committee (Darzhavna, 2014, p. 1124). It combined political and religious elements: participants carried placards, as in stenciled communist demonstrations, but also banners in the tradition of solemn Orthodox processions. In the next two months, Father Sabev asserted himself as an invariable participant in political actions in the capital and provincial cities, but he sought to introduce a religious element into them. This is a kind of 'innovation', because after the separation of church and state in Bulgaria (1949) for 45 years the political and the religious were autonomous, but in fact it represented a return to the pre-communist tradition of the BOC and at the same time following at least the Polish model and the Hungarian experience of the participation of the Catholic Church in the processes of democratization.

On December 7, 1989, the UDF was established as a coalition of ten dissident organizations, which were joined in 1990 by six more restored or newly formed parties. Although it was composed of extreme left to extreme right formations, at least until 2000 this union represented the main political force, insisting on the de-communization of the state and the democratization of Bulgarian society (Daynov, 2000). Its adherents form a specific collective identity based on anti-communism in various aspects (Tepavicharov, 2018; Karakachanov, 2020, pp. 69–78). The Committee for Religious Rights, which became one of its founders, ensured the connection of the political formation with the religious sphere in the next five years (until the emergence of authentic Christian-Democratic parties). Due to the transfer of its activity from a local (Veliko Tarnovo Diocese) to a national level, the process of forming a religious congregation was stopped, and numerous sympathizers, supporters and followers entered into the committee on the grounds of charismatic-religious or political motivation.

On the day of the establishment of the UDF, the Committee held a rally-procession together with the Committee of the Repressed Victims. Since the 1980s communist government's ban of all church processions, liturgies, etc., in this first free display of religion, 15 000 people took part, crossing the capital carrying icons, banners and posters 'God is Love' and 'a Bible for Every Home' and singing hymns. After delivering a petition for religious freedoms to Parliament, participating Orthodox priests, believers and bystanders held an open-air Christian vigil in the square in front of the Mausoleum of communist leader Georgi Dimitrov (Sabev, Archbishop, 1994, p. 28). In the winter of 1989–1990, these silent vigils gathered more than 100 thousand people daily. In his memoirs, Sabev describes them as common religious rites, typical for the Orthodox in times of disaster, which, according to him, were collective prayers for a peaceful transition to democracy as

well (Sabev, Archbishop, 1994, pp. 28–29). Today, the clergyman adds details that actually prove his charismatic actions, which managed to attract a mass of followers in a short time: 'Well, it's true that I gathered the people. In fact, the God was gathering them. I didn't use anyone; even the UDF used me to collect people. My task all along was spiritual, though things went awry after that' (Interview of Christopher Sabev, 2020). This statement confirms Weber's claim that preaching is one of the main means, along with the codification of doctrine and the creation of dogmas, to legitimize charisma and therefore is intensified in periods of prophetic agitation (Weber, 1978a, pp. 464–467).

Such kinds of vigils are also an excellent illustration of Weber's thesis about the short-lived and extraordinary but irresistible effect of charisma before its routinization (Cf. Weber, 1978a, pp. 243, 246), but contrary to Sabev's claims, they are not widespread in the Orthodoxy. If they are practiced, they take place in the enclosed temple space or in the adjacent churchyard, possibly in sacred, pilgrimage sites, and gather only the most faithful. In this case, the most politicized *'stage'* in the country was used for this purpose, where demonstrations and military parades were organized over the decades and communist leaders were welcomed, and which was decorated with party symbols. It is obvious that even then, Father Sabev drew many of his ideas from the experience of the Polish *Solidarity*, which was the first to introduce liturgies and communions in the factories, and clerics such as Father Popiełuszko gathered thousands of people with sermons on air.

In the Bulgarian case, however, most of the participants in the open vigils were learning to say the 'The Lord's Prayer' for the first time, attracted by the reading of the Scriptures and from the performances of a church choir. Some went casually after work but continued to visit for months, bringing friends and acquaintances, others activated their passive religiosity, sharing that they felt 'stunning and mystical' (Interview with E.I.). For others, the evening collective prayers with lit candles were a political act that affirmed democracy in a symbolic place, under the windows of the political headquarters of the former Communist Party, in front of the Mausoleum of Georgi Dimitrov and in the square, spontaneously renamed from the *9th of September* (the date of the coup d'état in 1944) to *Democracy*. For them, the vigils were the embodiment of the bloodless Bulgarian revolution (Interview with A.D.; Cf. Sabev, Archbishop, 1994, p. 211).

In the period 1989–1990, the Committee, now part of the UDF, still retained its form as a charismatic religious community, strongly connected to the political 'value-sphere'. The organization was at the forefront of several landmark political rallies in the capital: the student protest against Art. 1 of the Constitution on the leadership role of the BCP (December 14, 1989), when Father Christopher barely succeeded in pacifying the participants, determined to invade the parliament by force; at the memorial service of Academician Andrey Sakharov and at the procession to the Romanian embassy, where, in the midst of the so-called Romanian Revolution, Sabev anathematized the totalitarian leader Nicolae Ceaușescu (December 18–20, 1989); as well as at the rally for reconciliation between Bulgarians and Turks, who raised a request to the government to restore the Muslim names of the Turks renamed by the communist authorities in the country (1990) (Sabev, Archbishop, 2008).

3 The charismatic religious congregation: the Salvation Christian Union (1990–1995)

In 1990, Father Christopher still driven by his vocation (Cf. Weber, 1978b) entered politics on behalf of his committee, which he renamed the *Salvation* Christian Union (SCU). Although it still bore the marks of a dissident structure against communism, its members had had a specific religious identity and a set of Christian values that distinguished them from other political unions and newly created parties.

In January–April 1990, Father Christopher expressed his desire to participate with devotion and 'inner-worldly asceticism' in politics in order to create a new democratic order. He was chosen to participate in the Round Table – one of the most important political mechanisms of the transition, where the ruling party from the BSP negotiated with the opposition from the UDF, and in the following months he was often sought to calm crisis situations (Kalinova & Baeva, 2001). Thus, on February 25, 1990, the cleric prevented the rallying anti-communists from smashing the Mausoleum and destroying the embalmed mummy of leader Georgi Dimitrov (Cf. Todorova, 2006). Today, the Bishop claims that he thus prevented serious and unnecessary political clashes (Interview of Christopher Sabev, 2019), possibly identifying with his idol Jerzy Popiełuszko, who had a similar role during martial law in Poland in 1981–1983. In April the same year Father Christopher set an example of national reconciliation by holding a memorial service for the fallen victims of the regime in the concentration camp near the town of Lovech, thus starting a commemorative practice that is still followed today. Twice more, after losing an election of the UDF in June 1990 and after the burning of the BSP Headquarters in August, the leader and priests of the SCU did not hesitate to use their eloquence and authority to stop extremist actions.

Since the beginning of transition, Father Sabev gradually withdrew from the political sphere in order to devote himself mainly to the crisis in the BOC, which began as a result of its passive position towards political and social changes. This decision was completely predictable, since, according to Weber, it may be a reaction to the already ended high pressure of the totalitarian regime, but also a search for an opportunity to demonstrate his true devotion to religion outside of power, in the religious 'value-sphere' (Weber, 1978a, pp. 590–597). The priest already supplemented his 'value-rational' orientation with a 'goal-instrumental' one. According to him, his charismatic mission to reform the BOC, called by Weber an 'internal task', included not only its activation, but above all its de-communization. Elected chairman of the Commission on Religions in the Parliament (1991–1994), Father Sabev invested systematic efforts in this area (Sabev, Archbishop, 1994, p. 13; *24 chasa*, 1991b). 'We were idealists', he comments on the events today, 'I was in politics because of religion' (Interview of Christopher Sabev, 2019; Interview of Christopher Sabev, 2021).

At the beginning of the 1990s, Father Christopher also set about strengthening his congregation, improving relations with his followers and increasingly sharply distinguishing himself from the *'sacred tradition'* that represents the BOC (cf. Weber, 1978a, pp. 452–464). For this purpose, he initially created a new religious symbolism in the political social field, with which to outline the autonomy of the new church he envisioned. A large

part of his ideas was borrowed from the experience of the Polish *Solidarity* (Sochaczewski, 2015) and specifically from his example, Father Popiełuszko. Thus, the political manifestations of UDF always began with prayer or worship; on every major Christian holiday, processions, rallies, concerts and even motorcades with political slogans 'Communism Never More' were organized; the emblems of the UDF and the SCU were carried in political processions together with icons and banners; priests used the gesture of blessing together with the sign of victory; the blue color of the UDF replaced the traditional Orthodox purple color in the vestments of priests and bishops.

In 1991–1992, Father Christopher proceeded to what Weber called a 'permanent association of laymen' (Weber, 1978a, p. 452), creating 15 branches of the SCU throughout the country. In general, the registered members are dominated by people of a youthful and active age who share the ideas of political democratization (CSA, coll. 1466, inv. 2, file 771). Former members explain their motivations for joining the Union in different ways. According to some, membership in the UDF and generally the desire to change society for the better and more elevated brought them to it (Interview with D.A.). Raised in families with religious traditions, others believed that the BOC was collaborating with the communists and must be reformed. So, the Union became the desired institution with which to realize their ideas (Interview with A.D.). Others talked about their personal sympathy for the leader Father Sabev and mainly about his charm and ability to communicate with people. They said that their first impetus was the night vigils, and then enrolling in the Union became a natural step for closer contact with him and his work (Interview with H.M.). It was this segment of the formation that subsequently became the nucleus for its transformation into a completely religious charismatic congregation. Bonding for the formation, as a community based on affective ties according to Weber's typology (Weber, 1978c, pp. 30–31), were blood-kinship and neighbor-territorial networks: in most branches, entire simple or extended families, neighbours, friends and colleagues, often living in the same neighborhood, on one and the same street or block of flats. Its social composition was heterogeneous and included: a core of Orthodox priests and of people of various occupations and professions (medical doctors, scientists, lawyers, entrepreneurs, workers, students, housewives and pensioners), with a total number of about 115 people in 1995 (CSA, coll. 1466, inv. 2, file 771, f. 3–5, 14–16, 18, 20–21, 29–29gr.; Sabev, Archbishop, 1994, p. 31), and a periphery of hundreds of people, both sympathizers of the Union and Orthodox believers. An interviewee says that she has not missed an initiative of SCU in Sofia, regardless of her own commitments. She fondly remembers her participation in a rally when Father Sabev and deputies from the SDS demanded the resignation of the metropolitans from the 'red vestments' (Interview with E.I.; *24 chasa*, 1991a; *Standart*, 1994). This brought the formation closer to similar charismatic religious movements that arose or were activated in the early 1990s in post-communist countries (e.g. the Catholic *Radio Maryja* of Father Rydzyk in Poland or the Protestant Nazarenes in Romania and Serbia) (Bria, 1998; Gog, 2006; Płachecka, 2022; Djurić Milovanović, 2022; Alexov, 2017).

Wanting to turn the SCU congregation into a mass charismatic movement that would set in motion the processes of reforming the BOC, Father Christopher made maximum use of the resources of the political 'value-sphere'. A large part of the ideas of the SCU were implemented at the local level through its members, who were elected municipal councilors or deputy mayors in large cities (SA-Sofia, coll. 65, inv.15, file 480, f. 81–86).

The SCU gained full support of the UDF's leadership for the de-communization of the BOC: Father Sabev held the high post of Vice-Chairman for spiritual affairs of the UDF, and in 1991–1992 ministers, deputies, and mayors from the UDF supported the demands of the Union for the resignations of the bishops of Holy Synod of the BOC. The headlines of posters stretched at rallies were: 'To cleanse the Church of the effects of communism' and 'Orthodoxy or Communism' (*24 chasa*, 1991a). In June 1991, the National Conference of the UDF adopted a Declaration for the renewal of the BOC, insisting like the SCU that the bishops and the patriarch appointed by the dictator Todor Zhivkov's regime resign, and for renewal and a 'true spiritual life' (*24 chasa*, 1991b; CSA, coll. 1466, inv. 2, file 154, f. 11).

In May–June 1992, the SCU initiated the split of the existing Holy Synod and the creation of a new one. Its members and followers took over the Headquarters of the BOC in Sofia, the Sofia Theological Seminary and the candle foundry. Thus, the reformation ideas of the charismatic leader became an impulse for the action of his charismatic supporters, but also for the disintegration of the SCU. The beginning of the internal church schism in the BOC, which ended only in 2004, was the cause of a serious internal crisis (Cf. Kalkandzieva, 2012). Today Archbishop Christopher denies his guilt for the schism in the BOC, claiming in a charismatic way: 'I am not a schismatic. I am for de-communization of the church. And they call de-communization a schism. I wanted those who were from the State Security to give up the positions they held in all areas [...] This was not a schism. In the 1990s, the de-communization of the Church was supposed to take place, but this did not happen' (Interview of Christopher Sabev, 2020).

In May 1992, the alternative Holy Synod that broke away ordained chose Hieromonk Christopher as a bishop and included him as a permanent member. By entering this institution, based, according to Weber, on authority, power and centralization (Weber, 1978a, p. 1159–1163), and taking entirely 'goal-instrumental' actions, the leader actually put the Union into crisis. Centrifugal processes began from the Plovdiv, where members dissatisfied with the 'arbitrary, authoritarian approaches and decisions' of the leader demanded his resignation, although his participation in the Holy Synod lasted only until June 1993, when the Supreme Court declared his election illegal (CSA, coll. 1466, inv. 2, file 771, f. 17).[5] In fact, the crisis was caused by Sabev's attempt, as a type of prophet, to come to an agreement with the 'sacred tradition' (Holy Synod), he had denied before, and to finally transform the charismatic community into a congregation with clear rules, rights and obligations. This tension became the cause.

Rejecting politics and focusing only on the religious 'value-sphere' Bishop Christopher set about constructing a new church, sharply differentiated from the BOC and the Alternative Holy Synod. In January 1993, he convened a council at which communism was condemned to eternal damnation as guilty of 'all the evils of humanity' (CSA, f.15; file 154, f. 58–60gr.). In the summer of the same year, an independent All-Orthodox Bulgarian Archdiocese was established in Veliko Tarnovo with a radical platform for 'purification of

[5] The disunity was also strengthened by the destructive political events in 1992–1995: the fall from power of the UDF, the management of coalition cabinets serving the former communist nomenclature and disagreements about economic reforms. See Daynov, 2000.

the BOC', including the return of the Julian (Old) calendar, separation from ecumenical activity and the World Council of Churches, and ideological resistance to heresies and (Protestant) sects (*Demokratsiya,* 1993).

Bishop Christopher's religious ideas and practices are not accepted by the majority of SCU followers, who are actually on the fringes of his spiritual congregation, because they are primarily attracted to the Union's political ideas rather than its religious character (Interview with H.M.). These tensions in the relationship between the prophet and the political community due to non-reciprocal expectations are analyzed in detail by Weber, who does not predict an optimistic outcome (Weber, 1978a, pp. 210, 452–464; Cf. Parsons, 1949). The SCU finally disintegrated after the departure of its charismatic leader to the United States in 1995, where he was granted political asylum. Subsequently, its members choose different ways to preserve their religious identity and desire for active social activity. Most of them focused on the political parties closest in profile, sharing the ideas of Christian democracy. Their natural choice became the UDF, which ended the schism in 2004 (CSA, coll 1466, inv. 2, file 154, f. 224–226) and the BOC needs unity and indivisibility. Some of the members joined other NGOs with a distinctly religious profile, and there were not a few members and sympathizers who entered the Old-Calendar churches, which continued to criticize the BOC (CSA, coll 1466, inv. 2, file 154, f. 7; *Prelom*, 1993).

Today, Archbishop Christopher refuses to comment on the collapse of the SCU (Conversation with Christopher (Sabev)). But it could be analyzed through the Weberian perspective, which claims that charismatic communities can only be stable as long as their leader stands at their head and they are subject to external pressure. Along with the emigration of Archbishop Christopher and the elimination of the atheistic regime as a protagonist, reasons for the disintegration of the SCU can be sought in the multiple motivations for social action of its members, in its failure to transform itself into a lasting structure, as well as to create written dogmas and canonical texts.

4 Conclusion

The conducted research allows some basic conclusions to be drawn. Above all, the Weberian methodology is a powerful analytical tool to understand possible collective and individual social actions and their historically outcomes.

Thanks to this perspective, it is established that the transition from totalitarianism to democracy, which began in the mid-1980s as a result of the reformation processes in Poland and Perestroika in the USSR, can be considered sociologically as a period in which a number of religious charismatic communities in the Eastern Europe, they tried to connect the religious and political 'value-spheres' and to use them for their own social action of the value-rational and goal-instrumental type. In Bulgaria, such communities were formed on the model of Polish *Solidarity* – a political community of a charismatic type, including a leader and followers (human rights activists, trade unionists and Catholic clergy), guided by a goal-instrumental choice, and combining the secular with the religious.

The Committee for the Protection of Religious Rights, Freedom of Conscience and Spiritual Values was founded in 1988 illustrating the Weberian model: by Father Christopher (Sabev), a charismatic Orthodox clergyman, who used kinship and territorial networks to

create a circle of supporters and followers and who subsequently activated them for social action primarily in the political sphere. Since the beginning of the political transition in the early 1990s, the community became an active agent of social change and civic mobilization. By decision of its leader, it was transformed into an Orthodox charismatic congregation, the *Salvation* Christian Union, whose task was to proceed with the reformation of the BOC, perceived as the guardian of the 'traditional power'. Led by a charismatic leader, it became a mass movement of Orthodox people from the country's big cities, connecting young, highly educated, politically active anti-communists, incl. Orthodox clergy and laity. It was strongly supported by the political parties and organizations working to dismantle the totalitarian regime.

Although the *Salvation* Christian Union was similar in social composition and orientation to the charismatic religious movements in Southeast and Eastern Europe (the Nazarenes in Serbia and Romania, those of the *Solidarity* Movement, of *Radio Maryja* and of the School of the Virgin Mary in Poland and Ukraine) (Djurić Milovanović, 2022; Stan & Turcescu, 2007; Gog, 2006; Mirescu, 2015; Bratosin & Ionescu, 2009), it did not achieve their reforming successes (Pollack, 2001; Pollack, 2004) towards the local Orthodox Church. The reasons for this can be explained again with the Weberian concept: because the Union soon disintegrated due to the multiple motivations of its members, because of the strong tensions that arose between them and their leader, and because of his own decision to carry out his true 'religious rejection of the world'.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the National Scientific Fund of the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science [grant number KP-06-N55/14, 2021]. The author expresses her thanks to the anonymous reviewers and the editorial team for the detailed and valuable feedback and overall guidance in revising the manuscript.

References

Primary sources

Archival documents

Central State Archives – Sofia (CSA)

Private Archive Collection of Christopher (Sabev) the Metropolitan of Sredetz (PACS)

State Archive – Sofia (SA-Sofia)

Field materials

Conversation with Christopher (Sabev) the Metropolitan of Sredetz, male, 1946, clergyman, Sofia, 18.01.2023. In *Field materials of author.*

Interview with A.D., male, 1940, member, scientist, Sofia section, 12.01.2023. In *Field materials of author.*

Interview with D.A., female, 1948, teacher, member, Kyustendil section, 03.11.2022. In *Field materials of author.*

Interview with E.I., female, 1944, engineer, sympathizer, Sofia, 14.11.2022. In *Field materials of author.*

Interview with H.M., female, 1946, member, economist, Sofia section, 26.10.2022. In *Field materials of author.*

Periodicals

Tsarkoven vestnik (1989a). 9, 30.03.1989.

Tsarkoven vestnik (1989b). 13, 12.05.1989.

24 chasa (1991a). 28, 13.05.1991.

24 chasa (1991b). 56, 22.06.1991.

Narodno delo (1992). 279, 28.11.1992.

Demokratsiya (1993). 135, 14.06.1993.

24 chasa (1993). 27.06.1993.

Prelom (1993). 28, 21.07.1993.

Standart (1994). 83, 03.05.1994.

Published documents

Darzhavna (2014). *Darzhavna sigurnost sreshtu grazhdanski organizatsii, 1988–1990 [State Security against Civilian Organizations, 1988–1990].* Komdos.

Doynov, S. (Ed.) (1999). *Shesto upravlenie sreshtu neformalnite organizatsii v Balgaria, 1988–1989 [Sixth Department against Informal Organizations in Bulgaria, 1988–1989].* Skorpion.

Nikolchev, D. (2014). Agenturnoto minalo na agent 'Maksim' (prof. Antoniy Khubanchev) i opredelenieto mu za Nikolaiy Berdyaev: 'viden antimarksist' [The Agent Past of Agent 'Maxim' (Prof. Antoniy Khubanchev) and His Definition of Nikolai Berdyaev: 'Prominent anti-Marxist']. https://diljannikolchev.files.wordpress.com/2014/12/maxim_huban.pdf

Memoirs

Simeonov, P. (1996). *Golyamata promyana, 10.11.1989–10.06.1990. Opit za dokument [The Big Change, 10.11.1989–10.06.1990. Document Attempt].* Otechestvo.

Sabev, Chr., Archbishop. (1994). *Svetlina za Balgaria [Light for Bulgaria].* Abagar.

Sabev, Chr., Archbishop. (2008) Hristianski sauz 'Spasenie' [the 'Salvation' Christian Union]. In Yossifov, K. (Ed.). *Nachaloto [The Beginning].* Zhelev Foundation, https://www.omda.bg/page.php?tittle=%D0%A5%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%8F%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8_%D1%81%D1%8A%D1%8E%D0%B7__%D0%A1%D0%BF%D0%B0%D1%81%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5&IDMenu=405&IDArticle=263

Video material

Interview of Christopher Sabev (2021), *BTV news.* 07.12.2021, https://bntnews.bg/news/hristofor-sabev-segashnoto-sds-ne-sa-nashi-priemnici-1177812news.html

Interview of Christopher Sabev (2019), *Lupa.* 09.11.2019, https://lupa.bg/news/dyado-hristofor-sabev-pred-lupabg-ds-vnedri-hora-v-sds-i-kompрometira-prehoda_30978news.html

Interview of Christopher Sabev (2020), *Lupa.* 7.09.2020, https://lupa.bg/news/dyado-hristofor-sabev-pred-lupabg-s-boiko-borisov-shte-se-sadim-v-strashniya-sad_77334news.html

Secondary sources

Aleksov, B. (2017). The Nazarenes among the Serbs: Proselytism and/or Dissent? In Al. Djurić Milovanović & R. Radić (Eds.), *Christianity and Renewal: Interdisciplinary Studies* (pp. 105–136). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-63354-1_7

Altanov, V. (2011). Protestantskite undargraund obshtestva na tinchevistite [The Protestant Underground Societies of the Tinchevists]. *Hristiyanstvo i kultura, 9*(66), 133–138.

Bratosin, S. & Ionescu, M. A. (2009). Church, Religion and Belief: Paradigms for Understanding. The Political Phenomenon in Post-Communist Romania. *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies, 8*(24), 3–18. https://jsri.ro/ojs/index.php/jsri/article/view/262

Bria, I. (1998). The Orthodox Church in Post-Communist Eastern Europe. *The Ecumenical Review, 50*(2), 157–163. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1758-6623.1998.tb00342.x

Camic, Ch., Gorski, P. S., Trubek, D. M. (Eds.) (2005). *Max Weber's "Economy and Society". A Critical Companion.* Stanford University Press.

Daynov, E. (2000). *Politicheskiyat debat i prekhodat v Balgaria [The Political Debate and the Transition in Bulgaria].* Balgarska nauka i kultura.

Denev, I. (2012). *BPTS pod komunisticheska vlast, 1944–1989 [BOC under Communist Rule, 1944–1989].* Sofia.

Djurić Milovanović, Al. (2022). Minorhas religiosas y polhtica estatal en la Yugoslavia comunista: Hacia metodologhas alternativas de investigaciyn [Religious Minorities and State Policy in Communist Yugoslavia: towards Alternative Research Methodologies]. *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea, 44,* 97–109. https://doi.org/10.5209/chco.83306

Gog, S. (2006). The Construction of the Religious Space in Postsocialist Romania. *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies, 15,* 37–53. https://jsri.ro/ojs/index.php/jsri/article/view/397

Gruev, M. & A. Kalionski (Eds.) (2008). *Vazroditelniat Protses: Miusiulmanskite Obshtnosti i Komunisticheskiat Rezhim [Revival Process: Muslim Communities and the Communist Regime].* Ciela.

Hristova, N. (2005). *Spetsifika na balgarskoto 'disidentstvo'. Vlast i inteligentsiya, 1956–1989 [Specificity of the Bulgarian 'Dissident' Movement: Power and Intelligentsia, 1956–1989].* Plovdiv.

Kalinova, E. & Baeva, I. (2001). *La Bulgarie contemporaine entre l'Est et l'Ouest.* L'Harmattan.

Kalkandzhieva, D. (1997). *Balgarskata pravoslavna tsarkva i darzhavata, 1944–1953 [The Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the State, 1944–1953].* Albatros.

Kalkandzieva, D. (2012). Bulgarian Orthodoxy and the European Court of Human Rights: The Case of Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Metropolitan Inokentiy). In E. van der Zweerde & A. Brüning (Eds.), *Orthodox Christianity and Human Rights* (pp. 315–334). Peeters.

Karakachanov, Al. (2020). Politichekite subkulturi na Prehoda [The Political Subcultures of the Transition]. In A. Karakachanov (Ed.), *Subkulturite kato agenti na promjanata v Balgarskia prehod [Subcultures as Agents of Change in the Bulgarian Transition]* (pp. 69–78). Za bukvite.

Krzemiński, I. (2017). Radio Maryja and Fr. Rydzyk as a Creator of the National-Catholic Ideology. In S. Ramet & I. Borowik, I. (Eds.), *Religion, Politics, and Values in Poland* (pp. 85–112). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-43751-8_5

Kunicki, M. (2021). Lustration and the Roman Catholic Church in Poland. In L. Turcescu & L. Stan (Eds.), *Churches, Memory and Justice in Post-Communism: Memory Politics and Transitional Justice* (pp. 21–44). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56063-8_2

Communist Contexts. In H.-P. Grosshans & P. Kalaitzidis (Eds.), *Politics, Society and Culture in Orthodox Theology in a Global Age* (pp. 17–28). https://doi.org/10.30965/9783657793792_003

Metodiev, M. (2010). *Mezhdu vyarata i kompromisa. BPTs i komunisticheskata darzhava, 1944–1989 [Between faith and compromise. BOC and the Communist State, 1944–1989].* Ciela.

Metodiev, M. (2011). Darzhavna sigurnost i Dukhovnata akademiya [State Security and the Spiritual Academy]. *Hristiyanstvo i kultura, 64,* 29–32.

Mirescu, A. (2015). A Curious Case of Cooperation and Coexistence: Church–State Engagement and Oppositional Free Spaces in Communist Yugoslavia and East Germany. *Hungarian Historical Review 4*(1), 82–113.

Mollov, S. (2006). *Dukhoven spomenik za Bozhiya tsarkva, 1919–1990 [A Spiritual Memory of the Church of God, 1919–1990].* Sofia.

Nazarska, G. (2022). *Religiozno kulturno nasledstvo I ateizam v komunisticheska Balgaria (50–80-he god. Na 20 v.) [Religious Cultural Heritage and Atheism in Communist Bulgaria, 1950s–1980s].* Za bukvite & O pismeneh.

Oakes, G. (2003). Max Weber on Value Rationality and Value-Spheres: Critical Remarks. *Journal of Classical Sociology, 3*(1), 27–45. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468795X03003001693

Parsons, T. (1949). *The Structure of Social Action a Study in Social Theory with Special Reference to a Group of Recent Euopean Writers.* Free Press.

Pastarmadzhieva, D. (2013). *Politicheski subkulturi v Balgariya v protsesa na prekhod kam demokratsiya [Political Subcultures in Bulgaria in the Process of Transition to Democracy].* Paradigma.

Płachecka, A. (2022). Radio Maryja as an Example of a Catholic Fundamentalist Environment. *Krakowskie Studia Małopolskie, 1*(33), 161–176. https://doi.org/10.15804/ksm20220109

Pollack, D. (2001). Modifications in the Religious Field of Central and Eastern Europe. *European Societies, 3*(2), 135–165. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616690120054302

Pollack, D. (2004). Institutionalised and Subjective Religiosity in Former Communist Countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In D. M. Jerolimov, S. Zrinscak, I. Borowik (Eds.), *Religion and Patterns of Social Transformation* (pp. 79–88). Institute for Social Research.

Sochaczewski, J. (2015). *Overcoming "Psychic Catastrophe": Memory, Identity, and Religion in Polish* Solidarność. MA Thesis, Queen's University, Kingston.

Stan, L. & Turcescu, L. (2007). *Religion and Politics in Post-Communist Romania*. Oxford University Press.

Symonds, M. (2022). Weber's Theory of Meaning, Modernity and the Value-spheres. In A. Sica (Ed.), *The Routledge International Handbook on Max Weber*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003089537-5

Tepavicharov, V. (2018). *SDS – tova sam az! Politicheska antropologiya na privŭrzhenitsite na SDS [UDF – That's Me! Political Anthropology of Followers of the Union of Democratic Forces]*. Sofia University Press.

Todorova, M. N. (2006). The Mausoleum of Georgi Dimitrov as *lieu de mémoire. Journal of Modern History, 78*(2), 377–411. https://doi.org/10.1086/505801

Weber, M. (1958a). Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions. In H. H. Gerth & C. Wright Mills (Eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (pp. 323–362). Oxford University Press.

Weber, M. (1958b). Science as a Vocation. In H. H. Gerth & C. Wright Mills (Eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (pp. 129–156). Oxford University Press.

Weber, M. (1978a). *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. In Roth, G. & Wittich, C. (Eds.), *Economy and Society*. University of California Press.

Weber, M. (1978b). Politics as a Vocation. In W. G. Runciman (Ed.), *Weber: Selections in Translation* (pp. 212–225). Cambridge University Press.

Weber, M. (1978c). The Nature of Social Action. In W. G. Runciman (Ed.), *Weber: Selections in Translation* (pp. 7–32). Cambridge University Press.

Weber, M. (2004). Intermediate Reflection on the Economic Ethics of the World Religions. In S. Whimster (Ed.), *The Essential Weber* (pp. 215–244). Routledge.

Znepolski, I. (Ed.). (2020). *Bulgaria under Communism*. Routledge.