

KARAVELOV AND THE NATIONAL IMAGE OF THE GREEKS

Eleonora Naxidou

Abstract: This article aims to highlight how Lyuben Karavelov, one of the most important contributors to the Bulgarian national movement, perceives and portrays the national image of the Greeks. The reference point around which Karavelov's worldview revolved was the political independence of Bulgaria. As the optimal option for achieving this goal, Karavelov advocated a federal solution to the eastern question. He believed that the best prospect for the future political organization of the Balkans was the creation of a federation of Christian states, which would replace Ottoman and Habsburg rule in the region. But this plan could only be realized if the Christian nations co-operated sparking a war against foreign domination. In this context, the Greek nation occupy an important place in Karavelov's ideological structure. Despite the negative impressions that that he had from the Greeks in his youth, for quite some time he did not exclude them, even conditionally, from the members of his federation. However, in the middle of 1873, Karavelov definitively removed them from the list of partners and denied any kind of understanding with them due to the confrontation between Bulgarian and Greek national interests, which had already emerged in the 1860s in both the ecclesiastical and political domains.

Keywords: Lyuben Karavelov, Greek nation, Balkan federation, image of the Other, Greco-Bulgarian national antagonism

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