

# **Balkanistic**

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**НАУЧНОТО ПОЗНАНИЕ -**  
**АВТОНОМИЯ, ЗАВИСИМОСТ, СЪПРОТИВА**

**SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE –**  
**AUTONOMY, DEPENDENCE, RESISTANCE**



**НАУЧНОТО ПОЗНАНИЕ – АВТОНОМИЯ,  
ЗАВИСИМОСТ, СЪПРОТИВА**

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**SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE – AUTONOMY,  
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**“Aesopian language” in the communist regime:  
a scientific article by the Bulgarian scientist  
Nikola Mavrodinov<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract:** *The resistance in intellectual milieu of countries with totalitarian regimes had different forms. The “Aesopian language” was another resistance form. In Bulgarian archeologist, professor Nikola Mavrodinov’s article “Excavations and researches in Bulgaria in recent years”, published in the scientific journal “Soviet archeology”, in 1955, there was a noticeable contrast to that landscape of “underdeveloped archeology of bourgeois Bulgaria” depicted by him in the beginning of his article with presented facts by him. N.Mavrodinov’s article was an evident example of scientist’s “Aesopian language”, whose country was occupied and the regime established by the metropolis country demanded of the scientist to downgrade all achievements, made prior to occupation. Using, namely, this “Aesopian language”, the scientist showed that, at least, not everything was negative in the past or generally, one shouldn’t see the past in negative.*

**Key words:** *totalitarianism; resistance; Aesopian language; Mavrodinov.*

Some ideologies played the principal role at formation of totalitarian regimes in different countries of the world in the XX century. The main feature combining these ideologies is a thesis about inequality of people, whether on physiological (racial), cultural (ethnic, linguistic, religious etc.) or class grounds. The dictatorships with ideological bases arose through historic processes in these countries (Tsarist Russian Empire, German Weimar Republic) or were introduced by means of foreign occupation (Ukraine, Transcaucasian Republics, Baltic Republics, countries of “the Warsaw Pact”).

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At the same time, the totalitarian regime, supported by similar ideology, on the one hand, saw the struggle against groups, possessing “hostile features” in the country, as a panacea for its citizens and all mankind. For example, Nazis supposed, that adherents of Judaism, gypsies, minority groups etc. caused all troubles and misfortunes of “Aryans” and the whole Europe.

On the other hand, the dictatorship with ideological tinting in the name of “compatriots and mankind” regarded liquidation of persons, who keep to alternative standpoints and opinions, as its main duty. Such power was entirely antipode to democratic one and was unable tolerating main human rights physically.

Observing the history of Germany, Italy, the former USSR and “people’s republics of the Eastern Block”, several countries of Central and South America and Asia, we can conclude, that resistance was always the case in intellectual milieu of countries with totalitarian regimes. However, that resistance had different forms. Starting from public manifest, urging people and international forces to boycott dictatorship and undisguised demonstration of non-acceptance of that regime or struggle via organization of secret structures up to scarcely organized expressions of weak and even, hardly tangible criticism of the people in power.

Taking the USSR, as an example, one may indicate, that after XVII congress of All Union Communist party of Bolsheviki in 1934, a new wave of reprisals brought resistance of intelligency entirely to nothing. The struggle against “anti-Soviet Russian, Ukrainian and other nationalist elements”, against “pan-Turkism” was so fierce, that actually, morally broken people were left in the ranks of intelligency. The regime proposed material benefits, as compensation for a loss of “moral shape”.

Just from the first years after establishment of the Bolshevik-communist regime in Russia archeologists were also subjected to reprisals. According to words of the Russian archeologist Formozov A.A. (1998, p.191), the Finnish archeologist Aarne Michael Tallgren, who frequented the USSR was forbidden to visit “Land of the Soviets” after he published the incomplete list of the repressed scientists - culture experts, historians, archeologists in 1936.

However, it is wrong to state, that resistance vanished completely. One may confidently state, that remembrance of repressed persons or of time, prohibited to talk about, was untold resistance principle within milieu of intellectuals in national republics of USSR. One of the ways to realize this principle was publication of works of repressed intellectuals after their rehabilitation, though strict condition on non-disclosure of reasons about their tragic destiny was considered. For example, founders of the Azerbaijan archeology were among 70 000 repressed Azerbaijani citizens of 1930<sup>th</sup> and 1940<sup>th</sup>. Alesger Alekperov was one of repressed persons (**fig. 1**), who was posthumously rehabilitated in 1956. His works were published by his pupils in 1960 (Kerimova-Kodjayeva, T., Sadygova, I., Aliev I., 2015, p.55,63-65). However, there was no any hint on cause of his death in the edition.

Mentioning of some repressed representatives of science was undesirable even after Stalin's death and the Khrushchev's Thaw. One may use Jakob Hummel's tragic fate (**fig.2**), as an example. He came from a family of German colonists, settled in Azerbaijan. Like all Soviet Azerbaijan citizens of German nationality, he was exiled to Kazakhstan in 1941 by the Stalin's regime and died there in 1946 (Auch, E.-M., 2009). It was prohibited to disclose any information about him. His last articles were delivered by his relatives to B.B.Piotrovsky and were published only on the eve of the collapse of the USSR in 1990 (Gummel, Y.I., 1992, p.12-13). However, as early, as in 1958 the famous Azerbaijan archeologist Ideal Narimanov (**fig. 3**) in his work "Archaeological monuments of Ganja region" on the most harmless reason criticized J.Hummel's theory several times, which had no any particular importance. For all that, he repeated J.Hummel's surname almost in 10 pages of the book, in each paragraph, cited exuberantly J.Hummel's reports on excavation (Narimanov, I.H., 1958, p.67-75) (**fig. 4**). It is possible to assume that I.Narimanov aims jog memory of the scientific community, the younger archeologists about J.Hummel's heritage. And this "criticism" not fitting into general character of the work, was the only way to remind the name of the repressed archeologist. It is impossible to find another logic explanation to this. Probably, that was the first expression of specific Aesopian language in scientific researches, conducted in Azerbaijan during the post-Stalin period.

After the Khrushchev's "thaw" another form of resistance — "samizdat" — was elaborated. Even persecutions of writers Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel ("the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial") caused a protest act in the form of petition signatures. There were several street demonstrations too. However, such forms of resistance were quickly and brutally suppressed (Denisenko, V.A., 2014, p.71).

The same unique "Aesopian language" was another resistance technique. Normally, Soviet writers, poets and cinematographers applied that technique. By displaying in their works "the bourgeois past" and the modern "capitalist world" from negative view point, they raised the conceptions of "political pluralism", free elections, freedom of speech, gathering, adversarial court system, protection of rights to the Soviet community. From the mouth of "the anti-Soviet elements" they criticized socialist system, colonial policy and propagated national interests etc., indicated the drawbacks of the Soviet society by means of allegories. Among literary works it is possible to mention Vladimir Voynovich's "A Degree of Trust. The Story about Vera Figner" (Denisenko, V.A., 2014), a historic-surrealistic plot of Isa Huseynov's (the pen name was Mughanna, he was called "the Azerbaijani Dostoyevsky") "Ideal" novel, etc. Thus, it is possible to call several films, where this "Aesopian language" is traced during blooming period of the Soviet cinema of 70<sup>th</sup>-80<sup>th</sup>. For example, "The winds blow in Baku" film in Azerbaijan, "Fiery roads" TV series in Uzbekistan, "Long Road in the Dunes" TV series in Latvia etc.

Working on scientific papers about archeology of Bulgaria within frames of the Horizon 2020 program of European Commission, our attention was drawn to the

article of the outstanding Bulgarian archeologist, culturologist, historian Nikola Mavrodinov (fig. 5).

A word on N.Mavrodinov's biography. Nikola Petrov Mavrodinov was born in 1904, in Tutrakan, in a family of a teacher Peter Mavrodinov. His father and his uncle had small publishing house and printing office, dealing with translation and printing of books in the Bulgarian language, for example, “Ancient Society” Lewis H.Morgan and modern Bulgarian poets just as well, for example, “Dream of happiness” by Pencho Slaveykov etc. Nikola ran away from his house to Bulgaria at his age of 14, in 1918. His father was imprisoned in Constanța (Romania) in 1920.

The Kostadinka Paskaleva's article (Paskaleva, K., 1968) served for our article, as a main source of N.Mavrodinov's biography. The pressure of communist censorship is perceived in K.Paskaleva's article about N.Mavrodinov. For example, a special attention is drawn to the fact, that N.Mavrodinov's uncle was a fellow-fighter of a socialist Georgi Kirkov, or he especially underlined that 14-year old Nikola, who ran away to Bulgaria, participated at student protest strikes in Gorna Oryahovitsa.

Young N.Mavrodinov approved himself, as a diligent pupil in the Gorna-Oryahovitsa grammar school. He wrote verses in student's “Lebed” (Swan) magazine under his pseudonym Nikolay Chernyaev. He finished his last courses of a grammar school in Sofia. In 1923 he left for Belgium and entered the Higher Institute for Art History and Archaeology of the University of Ghent. On completion of his higher education in the Institute for Art history of the University of Liège in 1926, he deepened his specialization in Paris. Like in Sorbonne he read lectures about ancient Bulgarian architecture.

Starting from 1926 till 1934 he was an inspector (urednik) of the museum at the People's Library of Plovdiv. During these years, for the first time he participated at archeological excavations. In 1934-1944 he worked as an inspector of the art department of the Sofia People's Archaeological Museum in Sofia (Paskaleva, K., 1968, p.36). At that period he participated, as the member or the head of the expedition in several archeological excavations in Pliska, Preslav, Sozopol. At that date he became the author of articles on history, architecture, art of the ancient Bulgaria. Additionally, at that period his fundamental monographs “Single nave and cruciform churches in the Bulgarian lands until the end of the 14th century” were published in 1931, “Boyana church and its murals” were published in 1943, he made reports at the 4th International Congress of Byzantologists in Sofia, at the 5th International Congress of Byzantologists in Rome. Additionally, N.Mavrodinov dealt with problems of the modern Bulgarian art (Paskaleva, K., 1968, p.37-38). His book about young, for that time, sculptor Lubomir Dalchev was issued in the German language; following that, he prepares monographic research about Ivan Lazarov's creativity. However, unfortunately, the edition was suspended due destructive bombardment of Sofia by Anglo-American aviation,

which related to anti-Hitler coalition, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, 1944 (Paskaleva, K., 1968, p.40).

After establishment of the socialist regime from 1944 till 1949 N.Mavrodinov was the director of the National Archaeological museum. He opposed to joining with the newly reorganized Institute of Archeology and soon he was dismissed from that position (Stefanova, R.B., 2014, p.180). In 1946 he was elected, as a member-correspondent of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences/BAS, from 1949 till 1958 he became a teacher and then a professor on the history of art in the Architectural faculty of Engineering-Construction Institute. From 1955 he also taught in the Higher Institute of Arts 'Nikolai Pavlovich' in Sofia. At that period his fundamental works, such as, "The Old Bulgarian Painting" (1946), "the New Bulgarian art" (1946), "New Bulgarian painting", "The New Bulgarian Painting. The history of Bulgarian arts from Paisiy Hilendarski until the Liberation and of Bulgarian painting from the Liberation to the present day" (1947), three-volume edition "General Art History" (1950-1952), "The Byzantine architecture" (1955), "Links between Bulgarian and Russian art" (1955), "The Bulgarian Revival Art" (1957) had been published.

Professor N.Mavrodinov died on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, 1958 (Paskaleva, K., 1968, p.37-40). After his death his non-printed works and writings, prepared by him for reprinting with additions: "Old Bulgarian art. The art of the First Bulgarian kingdom" (1959), "Old Bulgarian art 11<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup>c." (1966), "Boyana Church. Architecture and murals" (1972), were published.

It is known about his private life, that he was sent on business trip, as an assistant by the museum at Plovdiv national library to the National Archaeological museum in Sofia, in 1931. He acquainted and married Vera Yordanova Ivanova (1896-1987) (Stefanova, R.B., 2014, p.40,44) (**fig. 6**), a daughter of the famous historian and archeologist, academician Jordan Nikolov Ivanov.

The daughter of professor Jordan Ivanov, Vera Jordanova Ivanova-Mavrodinova was also a medievalist. She was born in 1896, in Sliven. She finished studies in the faculty of Slavic philology and ethnography in the Sofia University. Her scientific interests were connected with medieval archeology and medieval art. She was the first woman-archeologist in Bulgaria. From 1926 till 1928 she got specialized in archeology and history of the Byzantine culture. She was an assistant (1922-1938), an urednik (1938-1946), a senior urednik (1947-1950) and a senior research assistant of the National Museum of Sofia (1950-1964).

According to the words of a young Bulgarian researcher, Yavor Mitov (2018, p.111-112): "Observance of traditions in her family was very strict. Her father was a strong example for her". Her important study was "Codex Assemanius. Ancient Bulgarian glossary of the 10<sup>th</sup> century" and the first volume "History of the Bulgarian visual arts". Among her multiple works one may indicate her researches of churches and monasteries in IV-XII centuries, the Great Basilica of Pliska, in-

scriptions of chargobilya (ichirgu-boil) Mostich, inscriptions in Batoshevo and Vratsa etc..

Nikola Mavrodinov's daughter Liliana Mavrodinova (1932-2016) (**fig. 7**) was an art expert, historian and medievalist. She finished her studies in the faculty of the Bulgarian philology at the Sofia University on specialty “Art criticism” in 1953. In 1965 she defended her dissertation under the name “Church murals in Zemen”. The art expert Asen Vasiliyev from Kyustendil was her Academic Supervisor. By words of her creativity researchers, Mavrodinova was a supporter of iconographic Millet Gabriel's school. According to Y.Mitov's words (Mitov, Y., 2018, p.114): “She followed the path of her parents Vera Ivanova-Mavrodinova and Nikola Mavrodinov”. Her numerous studies, connected with painting and iconography in Bulgarian territory during the Middle Ages, were widely known beyond the limits of Bulgaria.

The main object of our research is Nikola Mavrodinov's article (Mavrodinov, N.P., 1955), published in the Soviet scientific journal “Sovetskaya arkheologiya” / “Soviet archeology”) the XXIVth issue, dated 1955. The name of the article was “Excavations and researches in Bulgaria in recent years” and it was in the Russian language.

It is necessary to mention forthwith, an orthographic mistake was admitted in the author's initials. “N.D.Mavrodinov” was written instead of “N.P.Mavrodinov” in the journal's title, headlines and content. The information about mistake is provided in the last 336<sup>th</sup> page of the journal.

The article was in form of the report on archeological state in Bulgaria after establishment of the communist regime. Naturally, the author had to indicate in the article backwardness and “reactionary spirit” of the archeology in the “bourgeois” Bulgaria and prosperity during the period after “liberation” of Bulgaria “from the fascist yoke” by “victorious army of the Soviet Union, jointly with the Bulgarian guerrillas” (Mavrodinov, N.P., 1955, p.122).

It is noticeable from the first pages, that the author follows the fixed schemes and draws “an awful” picture of the Bulgarian archeology of the capitalist period. However, his statement about “bourgeois archeology” reflects illogic moments or they mustn't be regarded, as a criticism's target. For example, N.Mavrodinov criticizes the authorities of bourgeois Bulgaria that “the fascist state did not spend finances for excavation and all was made on base of personal relations of the Bulgarian archeologists with ministers” (Mavrodinov, N.P., 1955, p.121).

It is necessary to add clarity to the mentioned theme. There are two interesting researches on topic of social institutionalism and formation of legal basis of archeology, protection of historical heritage in the royal Bulgaria. The first of them is Magdalena Stamenova's research on “Models for protection of the archaeological heritage in Bulgaria” (Stamenova, M., 2012). The second one is Radina Stefanova's dissertation on competition of Doctor of science on theme “The Central Scientific



Institutions and their Scientific Communities in the Field of Archaeological Science in Bulgaria until 1944” (defense of the thesis took place on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, 2015 at the Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) (Stefanova, R.B., 2014). These researches are valuable due to the point, that for the first time after collapse of the socialist camp, the historic process of formation and establishment of archeology, as a social institute in Bulgaria prior to establishment of the Pro-Soviet regime was analyzed.

In the beginning of the XXth century the economic growth started in Bulgaria. The Bulgarian Archaeological Society was established on the 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1901 by the initiative of the Holy Synod. According to the Charter, the organization obtains financial sources from membership fees and from the charitable organizations; from gifts, testaments and certificates; state grants, donations of the Synod, municipalities etc.; from sales of own editions and branches, also incomes from interest to own financial assets. The Bulgarian Archaeological Society chairman, an outstanding literary historian, a folklore specialist, ethnographer and publicist, professor Ivan Shishmanov was a minister of education in 1903-1906. From that moment the financing of archeological excavations by the state became regular. The state allocated an amount of 20 000 levs in 1904 and 28 000 levs in 1905 for archaeological researches. For that time and Bulgarian proportions the amount corresponded to the advanced world practice for financing of excavations. Additionally, in parallel with the Bulgarian Archaeological Society, in the country the National Archaeological Society, Department of history and archeology of the Sofia University and other archaeological public organizations (Stamenova, M., 2012, p.156-160; Stefanova, R.B., 2014, p.36-37) also functioned.

By the resolution of the Ministry of National Education the Bulgarian Archaeological Institute/BAI was established on the bases of the Bulgarian Archaeological Society, on the 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1920, in Bulgaria. BAI was the first archaeology institute in Balkans. The law on BAI came into force on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July, 1921, where it was indicated that the institute would be financed by the state and also by the public funds. During the period of 1919-1944 all archaeological researches in the country were conducted on base of compiled Archaeological map of Bulgaria. The voluntary organizations, such, as “the Bulgarian olden time” and “the Union of archaeological societies of Bulgaria” (Stamenova, M., 2012, p.167,170; Stefanova, R.B., 2014, p.39) operated too.

Proceeding from the newest researches, it is possible to state, that N.Mavrodinov's words, that Bulgarian government didn't finance archeological excavations and all issues were settled by means of “personal relations”, wasn't consistent with the reality. And these N.Mavrodinov's words were based on pressing of politic environment.

Use of “trudovaks” (the trudovaks were paramilitary corps, as a part of the Bulgarian army and representatives of ethnic and religious minorities served, mainly, in these corps) or of students in archeological excavations in royal Bulgaria is

also criticized in N.Mavrodinov's article (Mavrodinov, N.P., 1955, p.121). The point is, almost similar practice was relevant for all countries, including the USSR. The rural population, prisoners from male and female camps, the German military prisoners (Wehrmacht POW) and students by hundreds too were forcibly involved to archeological excavations in the territory of the present of Mingachevir dam, purposed for construction of hydroelectric station (HES) in Azerbaijan, in the second half of 40<sup>th</sup>, in the beginning of 50<sup>th</sup>.

Let's add an interesting information. According to verbal memoirs of the late archeologists, prof. Dr. Gardashkhan Aslanov and prof. Dr. Rahim Vahidov, the Party organizations and People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) supervising the work on places, shortly removed imprisoned persons of male and female camps from Mingachevir archeological excavations due to constant protests of the latter ones. The People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs could not apply against them public punishment, as protests could be transferred to the rural Azerbaijanian population, which representatives worked equally with prisoners and could unwillingly witness physical punishments. And prisoners were replaced by military prisoners of the Wehrmacht at construction of Mingachevir HES and at archeological excavations (**fig. 8**).

Based on nomenclature positioning, N.Mavrodinov also criticized (Mavrodinov, N.P., 1955, p.121, 122), that due to lack of experts in several excavations in Madara, labor of archeologists, specialized in different historical periods was used. The author explains drawbacks of methods due to “bourgeois formalism”.

Every archeologist from the former USSR may confirm, that similar practice was applied in the USSR and it is applied now too, and not only in the countries of the socialist camp; simply because archaeological monuments are far more, than number of archeologists. And secondly, the archeologist, doing practical training, should know characteristics of archaeological cultures of different epoch in this region. At least, Azerbaijani archeologists with such experience and specializing in any specific period, are able to define quickly and precisely new findings, relating to another period and culture. Mistakes at cultural appertaining and periodization of a monument or artifact may be accounted for absolutely new discovery (which occurs very seldom) or for insufficiency of practice.

Additionally, based on political positioning, it is indicated in N.Mavrodinov's article (Mavrodinov, N.P., 1955, p.121,122) that foreign archaeological missions of German, Italian archeologists, as if, preparing an ideological soil for country colonization, worked in “bourgeois Bulgaria”. Though activity of the archaeological mission of the tsarist Russia is positively evaluated.

Actually, BAI itself was established on base of the model of advanced German archaeological institute. According to Radina Stefanova's words, that wasn't casual, “...taking into account that the majority of young Bulgarian archeologists were trained in Germany and were familiar with technique of scientific researches of the German archaeological school” (Stefanova, R.B., 2014, p.38). Natu-

rally, the foreign archaeological expeditions were to Bulgaria's favor, both in terms of researches, and in terms of scientific cooperation. It is clear, that N.Mavrodinov's words were dictated under the pressure of a politic milieu.

His idea on walking of "national nihilism and cosmopolitanism with the Bulgarian chauvinism" hand in hand in "bourgeois Bulgaria" was very curious. At least, this formulation with implication lets us understand that the science, particularly, archeology in "bourgeois Bulgaria" was for its time tolerant, pluralistic, as science may reflect these two mutually exclusive positions only in democratic countries.

For example, Ivan Marinov and Nicolas Zorzin (Marinov, I., Zorzin, N., 2017, p.93) mentioned, that between two world wars independent on political views and personal beliefs, "Bulgarian archaeologists of this period seem to have maintained a certain professional objectivity in their interpretations of the vestiges of the past".

The excavations, conducted in Bulgaria till the 9<sup>th</sup> of September, 1944, i.e. prior to establishment of the communist regime were mentioned in 17 pages from 33 pages of the article in different volumes and approaches. Excavations in Neolithic site Karanova (in 1936), ancient graves in Sozopol (in 1932), the roman settlement Ulpia Oescus, at the modern Gigen village of Pleven district, in the northern Bulgaria (in 1905, the expedition lider was V.Dobrsky, the director of that time of the National Museum in Sofia; in 1941-1942, the Italian mission of Antonio Frova and inhabited structure of the Madara village (in 1927) are mentioned in these references. The author underlines particularly archaeological studies in Pliska, starting from the end of XIX century (the founder of the Bulgarian archeology Karel Václav Škorpil), Konstantin Josef Jireček too, mission of the Russian Archaeological expedition in Istanbul (Fyodor Ivanovich Uspensky) in 1899-1900, the expedition of the academician Krastyo Miyatev (in 1930-1934), Feher Geza (in 1935), Petr Karasimeonov and Vera Ivanova (in 1938-1939). The information on excavation in Preslav, conducted in 1897 by Vasil Zlatarski, in 1905 by F.Uspensky and K. Škorpil, in 1909-1914 by Yordan Gospodinov, in 1927-1930 by Kr. Miyatev and Yordan Gospodinov (Mavrodinov, N.P., 1955., p. 124, 129-131, 133, 136, 138-141, 144, 145, 148-152) is presented in the article.

The moment, when the author rests on results of excavations of 1928-1929, conducted in "the Internal city", in Pliska, is interesting. Additionally, he mentions, errors of "the Small palace" layout scheme, compiled by P.Karasimeonov (Mavrodinov, N.P., 1955, p.139).

It is necessary to indicate especially, that in issue of the Bulgarian character of inscriptions of surrounding relief of "the Madara Rider", N.Mavrodinov especially marks and protects Krastyo Mijatev's position ("the Madara Rider", News on Bulg. arch. institute, v.V, 1928/1929), Veselin Beshevliev's position ("The first Bulgarian inscriptions", 1934). It is indicative that based on researches of "the underdeveloped bourgeois" period, the author criticizes Vsevolod Nikolayev's "revi-

sionism” of “the progressive socialist” period. And not only N.Mavrodinov, but other scientists (Gavril Kazarov, Dmitir Dechev, Andrey Protich, Ivan Goshev, Vladimir Georgiev, Alexander Burmov, Ivan Velkov) defend the conclusion of Kr. Miyatev and Vs. Beshevliev’s researches (Mavrodinov, N.P., 1955, p. 139-141).

Similarly, in the dispute with Dimitri Krundzhalov, the author put forward arguments, cited by “the largest expert on Thracian issues, academician Gavril Kazarov” still in 1925, he refers to his work about treasure of Nagyszentmiklós, published in 1943, i.e. during the epoch of “bourgeois formalism”, as he expressed himself about “bourgeois” period of archaeological researches (Mavrodinov, N.P., 1955, p.140-141).

References to bibliography of studies of Bulgarian “underdeveloped bourgeois” period of Bulgaria are not less in the article, than literature after “establishment of the socialism”. For example, studies of Andrey Protich, G.Feher, G Kazarov, Iv.Velkov, N.Mavrodinov himself etc. (Mavrodinov, N.P., 1955, p. 132,133,139,140-141,145,152).

As it is seen from examples, presented in N.Mavrodinov’s article, archaeological and cultural studies “in bourgeois Bulgaria” meet with requirements of its time and didn’t concede at all to studies, conducted in the USSR at the same period. Additionally, there were significant issues, connected with technological support in the Soviet archeology. For examples, archeologists of 20<sup>th</sup>-40<sup>th</sup> used a theodolite by turns, which belonged only to J.Hummel.

The criticism of some works of “bourgeois” Bulgaria’s archeologists was, purely, of scientific character. Naturally, even now there are mistakes at excavations and desk studies of archeologists; moreover, N.Mavrodinov criticizes both works of archeologists and culture specialists of “the socialist period” (for ex., Stamen Mihailov or issue about “Madara Rider”) in his article.

Thus, we observed in N.Mavrodinov’s article there was a noticeable contrast to that landscape of “underdeveloped archeology of bourgeois Bulgaria” depicted by him in the beginning of his article with presented facts, which proved completely opposite.

In our opinion, N.Mavrodinov’s article was an evident example of scientist’s “Aesopian language”, whose country was occupied and the regime established by the home country demanded of the scientist to downgrade all achievements, made prior to occupation. Using, namely, this “Aesopian language”, the scientist showed that, at least, not everything was negative in the past or generally, one shouldn’t see the past in negative.

For the Soviet community, he could be satisfied just with enumeration of researches after the 9<sup>th</sup> of September, 1944. However, he didn’t do that. And here was, namely, a weak, non-perceived form of resistance, expressed by “Aesopian language”. In this form he was demonstrating to the metropolis that prior to “triumphant liberation” in his country development of science complied with standards of science of its time.

Additional fact from N.Mavrodinov's biography confirms this conclusion. After establishment of the Soviet regime in 1946, the Bulgarian painter Vera Nedkova (**fig. 9**) actually, lost her job and was doomed to starvation, as her works didn't fit into the "socialist realism". Rejected by the communist society and pursued by the regime, a daughter of "the bourgeois diplomat", brought up in the intellectual milieu, who received her education in the Viennese Academy of arts, just, thanks to N.Mavrodinov got employed by the restorative studio in the National Archaeological Museum, where she worked till 1961 (Mutafchieva, I., 2001). Thus, N.Mavrodinov was namely, from that number of intellectuals in totalitarian regimes, which though weakly, but resisted to the regime and tried as much, as possible to convey the truth about the past and help people repressed by the regime.

Finally, it is necessary to mention one point. N.Mavrodinov's remark on "continuation of the struggle against nihilism and cosmopolitanism in Bulgarian archeology" is interesting. One may understand, that in the fifties, a campaign launched against scientists, not standing on the platform of Marxism-Leninism and communist national-patriotism in the archeology of the Socialist Bulgaria. That is, it was the beginning of the end of the period of pluralism in historical science. One may observe in his words the point, when trends appeared in the Bulgarian historical science during that period, which after collapse of the communist regime subjected to criticism by M.Todorova (Todorova, M., 1995), D.Bailey (Bailey, D. W., 1998) and other researchers.

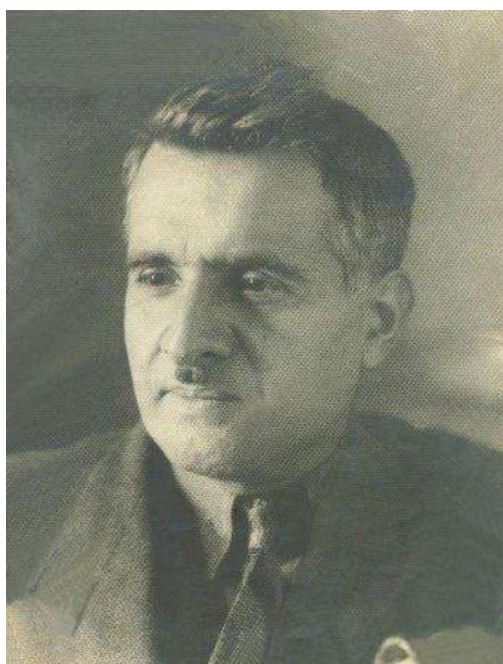
Let's recall, that the Bulgarian Communist Party till 1949 year supported Marxist "cosmopolitan, universalist" ideology of acknowledgement, self-determination and even the right of recession for its ethnic minorities. Besides, there was an idea to establish the Balkan Federation of nations, where Bulgaria was supposed to join too along with Yugoslavia, Romania, Albania (possibly Greece after accession of communists to power). Establishment of the Federation should have settled all ethnic issues. However, rift between Yugoslavian communist Party, on the one hand and Bulgarian and then the Soviet Communist Party on the other hand, undermined this idea. And after June of 1948, when influenced by the USSR, the Communist Information Bureau condemned Josip Broz Tito and expelled Yugoslavia from the organization, the idea of "Pan-Balkan socialist federation" was buried. Georgi Dimitrov died a year after, in the beginning of July, 1949 and the Bulgarian communist government radically changed its position. A new policy of the Bulgarian communist party rested on nationalism and assimilation of ethnic minorities (Marinov, I., Zorzin, N., 2017, p.94). According to N.Mavrodinov's words and based on his report to the Soviet scientific community ("struggle against nihilism and cosmopolitanism in Bulgarian archeology is still ongoing"), we can conclude that USSR's attitude to the policy of the Bulgarian Communist Party was regarded, as "natural and due one".



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### **List of Illustrations:**



**fig. 1 Repressed anthropologist, archeologist Alesger Alekperov<sup>2</sup>**



**fig. 2 Repressed archeologist Jakob Hummel<sup>3</sup>**



**fig. 3 Archeologist, Dr. Ideal Narimanov<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>2</sup> Kerimova-Kodjayeva, T., Sadygova, H., Aliev I., 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Auch, E.-M., 2009.

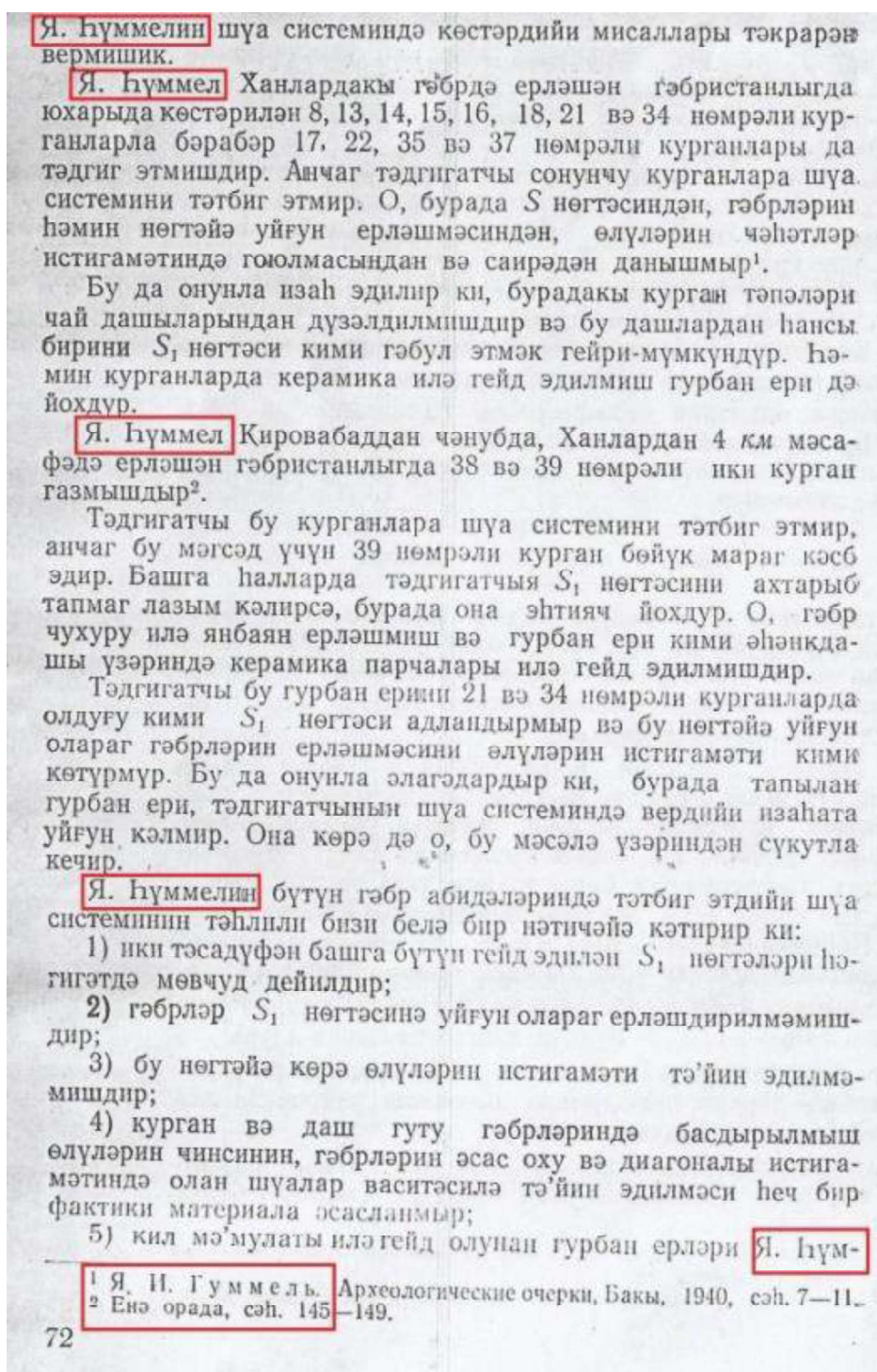


fig. 4 Example of “pseudo-critics” to J. Hummel in the “Aesopian language” of I. Narimanov<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <http://old.xalqgazeti.com/az/news/culture/79911>

<sup>5</sup> Narimanov, I. H., 1958.



**fig. 5 Archaeologist, culturologist,  
Dr., prof. Nikola Petrov Mavrodinov<sup>6</sup>**



**fig. 6 The first woman-archeologist in  
Bulgaria, Vera Yordanova Ivanova-  
Mavrodinova (provided by historian Ya-  
vor Mitov)**



**fig. 7 Kulturologist, Dr., prof. Liliana Nikolova Mavrodinova<sup>7</sup>**

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<sup>6</sup> Paskaleva, K., 1968.





**fig. 8 Wehrmacht POW cemetery in Mingachevir<sup>8</sup>**



**fig. 9 Painter Vera Nedkova<sup>9</sup>**

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<sup>7</sup> “Vyara i Obshestvo” page of journalist and historian Goran Blagoev on Facebook

<sup>8</sup> [www.azerhistory.com](http://www.azerhistory.com)

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<sup>9</sup> <https://sofia-art-galleries.com/en/event/vera-nedkova-1906-1996-representative-jubilee-exhibition-in-national-gallery/>