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**MACEDONIAN BULGARIANS BETWEEN THE PATRIARCHATE  
OF CONSTANTINOPLE AND THE BULGARIAN EXARCHATE  
AT THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY. THE BRUSNIK CASE**

(Summary)

Towards the end of the 19th century, approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the Orthodox Bulgarians in the historical-geographic region of Macedonia remained loyal to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which served the Greek national idea. In the past, as well as today, this fact has raised the question of the national affiliation of the Bulgarian-speaking population in the European domains of the Ottoman Empire. Why did these people, despite the long-term efforts of the Bulgarian Exarchate to attract them to itself, remain loyal to the Patriarchate? The author points out the unequal position of the two church institutions in the Ottoman administrative system as a leading factor that hindered the normal functioning of the Bulgarian Church and severely limited its ability to guarantee the political, religious and cultural-educational rights of the Bulgarian exarchists. On the border between the two centuries, at the center of the struggle for the distribution of the Ottoman heritage in the Balkans, the Bulgarians in Macedonia were faced with a difficult choice, on which depended not only their personal well-being, but sometimes even their lives.

**Keywords:** Macedonian Question, Bulgarian Exarchate, Ecumenical Patriarchate, Eastern Question, Nationalism.

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