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ARMY, PUBLIC ORDER AND HOME SECURITY

**SEPTEMBER 1923**  
THE FAILURE OF AN ORDERED UPRISING

**ABSTRACT**

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## **GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION**

The object of research in the dissertation is a problem that has largely remained aside from the attention and interest of the society and historians in Bulgaria, namely the functions of the army for preserving the internal order and guaranteeing security in the peacetime periods of the Third Bulgarian State. This problem has been in the focus of my attention for years, and so far two monographic studies have been dedicated to it, covering the period from the restoration of the Bulgarian statehood and the army in 1878 to June 9, 1923.

The subject of the dissertation is the role of the army in the events of September 1923. Due to the exceptional place, importance and repercussions of these events for the overall social, political and state development, due to the fierce and continuous political, journalistic and historiographic skirmishes for the imposing of the "only correct" interpretation, as well as due to the absence, at least in the last three decades, of a serious scientific debate on the subject, the study goes beyond the strict concreteness and the purely military aspect of the events. It examines the processes and trends in Bulgarian society after the end of the First World War, the plans and drives of the individual internal and foreign political factors that caused the armed conflict, the way the conflict evolved, its effects and the alternatives that emerged after its end, together with their specific manifestations. Therefore, the chronological limits are effectively 1918 to 1924.

The research method is interdisciplinary. It mainly relies on the historical approach of finding, synthesizing and analyzing facts in an attempt to identify and reflect on the events and processes and to characterize leaders. A task that would be difficult to accomplish without the intertwining of theoretical perspectives coming from political science, law (constitutional, civil, military), philosophy, statistics.

The main sources used are documents from the era deposited in national and foreign archives, documents of state institutions (army, police, Council of Ministers, National Assembly), political and public organizations, periodicals. The available Bulgarian and foreign historiography, directly or even indirectly related to the issue under consideration, was searched and studied.

The study is the first of its kind, aiming to examine the dramatic and traumatic events of September 1923 from the point of view of the statesmanship, of the defenders of the existing

constitutional and economic system and above all of the army as their emanation, and to illuminate the motivations, motives and underlying actions of their opponents. The approach followed is that the intervention of the army in the domestic political life should be considered with a view to its legitimate use by the state and its institutions in order to protect the state system and ensure order and security as conditions without which the existence of neither the individual nor the society, nor the state itself is possible. The two sides of the problem are presented - the normative basis for the state to use the army in the internal political plan and the concrete, practical manifestations of this use, with the view that only in this way their linkage, evolution, legitimacy or illegitimacy, necessity or arbitrariness can be properly presented.

The dissertation sets several specific **tasks**:

1. To change the approach to the problem - from party-political to institutional-political.
2. To present the legal basis on which the Bulgarian state stands when dealing with internal disorders, riots, uprisings to guarantee internal order and security, as well as the condition, numbers and deployment of its forces - the army and the gendarmerie, in the eve of September 1923.
3. To outline the main social and political trends in the country after 1918, the alternatives they offered and the nature of the June 9, 1923 coup.
4. To present the goals, programme and actions of the 9 June power, as well as the positions of its opponents.
5. To identify the existing threats to internal security, the interference of the Communist International in the Bulgarian politics, the reaction of its subordinate Bulgarian Communist Party and the circumstances that led to a change in its legitimist behavior and taking a course of an armed anti-state action.
6. To reveal the level of political and military-technical preparation for a violent seizure of power and the countermeasures of the government, with an emphasis on police and especially military ones.
7. For the first time, on the basis of authentic documentation, to describe chronologically, day by day, the armed clashes in September 1923, and not, as is the previous practice, by region,

which would make possible to present the actions of the government, the army and the police in their logical sequence and connectivity.

8. To present the measures undertaken by the government in the wake of the clashes - military, political, legislative, financial, administrative, in the foreign policy, which, according to them, should lead to calming and pacifying the Bulgarian society and bringing it to the path of peace and upward development.

9. To reveal the motives, allies and concrete actions and plans of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the Comintern, which, despite the defeat, continue the course of an armed uprising to seize the power in Bulgaria as a prologue to the world communist revolution, intended to further destroy the "old world".

10. To propose analysis and conclusions about the reasons for the failure, in fact, of both opposing sides, about the role of force and violence, about the rule of law and its violation or circumvention in the name of higher state, party or class interests or in other words - for the cost of the destroying or preserving the order and security in Bulgaria in 1923-1924.

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## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation consists of an introduction, five chapters, a conclusion and a bibliography, in a volume of 498 pages.

In the introduction, in addition to outlining the aims and objectives of the work and the sources used, a detailed review of the historiography on the subject - Bulgarian and foreign - is made. Three periods of presenting and evaluation of the events in the historiography are distinguished and characterized - from 1923–1924 to 1944, to 1989 and after 1989.

The first chapter is devoted to the "**Background**" of the clash and consists of two parts. The first presents the main concepts on which the research is based and the Bulgarian legal framework regulating the use of the army to guarantee internal order and security. Working definitions of army, public order, internal security are given and the two main legal ways of using the army in the event of internal threats are described, from the foreign and Bulgarian practice - by "*providing assistance*" to the police and civil authorities and by declaring "*martial law*". The powers of the army in these cases, the existing constitutional, civil and military criminal law, the structure and functioning of the military court system are presented in details. The aim is to show not only the responsibilities that the state, in a situation of inevitable defense, assigns to the army, but also the framework and limits that the state outlines in view of the existing legal order. The transformation of the Bulgarian armed forces after the signing of the Treaty of Neuilly and their deployment in 1923 is presented, in order to reveal the resources available to the state. The conclusion drawn is that, in accordance with world and European practices, the Bulgarian state has available mechanisms, experience and means, albeit limited, to prevent, control and eliminate internal threats and dangers to the public order and security, and a key role among them is played by the army.

In the second part of the chapter, against the background of the pan-European trends, the political situation and alternatives in Bulgaria after the end of the Great War are examined. The conclusion is that the democratic constitutional-parliamentary way of governing is preserved but with visible eroding trends and with the strengthening of the positions of left and extreme parties and movements. The emphasis is placed on two of them - the Bulgarian Social Democratic/Communist Party (narrow socialists) and the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union



(BZNS), because of their radical programme and practical actions aimed at a fundamental change of the existing order. In 1919, the Bulgarian Communist Party (BKP) subordinated itself to a foreign political party/state, openly accepted as its goals the violent and armed seizure of power, the establishment of dictatorship by one part of society, at the expense of all others, the total destruction of the existing legal and state constitutional-monarchical order and its replacement with republican Soviet rule. Moreover, the party proceeded to create an illegal military organization to achieve the stated goals. Among the agrarians, there is an obvious like-mindedness with the communist views on establishing a new power in the name of the "working" majority, at the expense of the "parasitic" classes, although the agrarians reject the revolutionary actions. The main steps on the path of the BZNS to impose a "class dictatorship" are marked - dealing with the "internal enemies" outside, but also inside the party, creating its own party militia, the obsessing of the whole party and state power by the party leader AI. Stamboliyski. In this way, once the party leadership, the Council of Ministers and the National Assembly are under control, practically all state and military power is concentrated in the hands of the party leader. His intention to break with the democratic and legal principles and values on which the Bulgarian state was built after 1879 and to start imposing a new model of one-party uncontrolled authoritarian power, pretending to express the interests of only one class, are obvious. All factors and barriers that could impede this have been weakened or removed.

Already in 1922, Comintern and Soviet officials focused their attention on the possibility of a quick takeover of power in Bulgaria by the communists through a "coup d'état" and began to send weapons for this purpose, regardless of who was currently in power. This becomes the "red thread" in their thinking, which explains why, when in June 1923 the Bulgarian communists were overtaken by the military, by traditional and new political factors, Moscow would not stand idly by and exert incredible pressure to make its subordinate party to take the initiative and move towards a violent seizure of state power. At this stage, however, the BKP is betting on an expected open conflict between the old parties and the ruling agrarians, on a possible civil war that will exhaust both opposing camps, but increase its own forces, which will make its coming to power possible and somewhat inevitable. This logic also explains the benevolent, loyalist neutrality assumed by the Central Committee of the BKP on June 9, 1923 and observed for two whole months.

In a concise form, a characterization of the carried out "counter-dictatorship coup" was made, and a number of unsubstantiated and legendary statements in the historiography were questioned. It is emphasized that the army and the military play the key role in the power transformation and engage politically but do not become the leading governing factor.

The second chapter examines the "**road to the conflict**" between the Communist Party and the new rulers. The analysis shows that the aim of the latter is the return to the traditional principles of constitutional-parliamentary, democratic governance and revival of the state, political and economic life of the country - a goal that is supported by all traditional parties, even by the Communist Party. No intentions have been demonstrated, and no concrete steps have been taken to establish a supra-party or non-party authoritarian power in the state. The 9 June politicians, without being a model of democratic and legal governance, did not declare martial law, quickly withdrew the army to the barracks, did not resort to issuing regulations-laws, did not introduce extreme restrictive measures (internal censorship, banning of parties and organizations), did not hold mass repressions. An unprecedented situation is being witnessed in the country – the one of a practical absence of internal factors that would work against the newly established government or against the public order and internal security. The overthrown agrarians do not seek confrontation but dialogue with the authorities. The leadership of the Communist Party sees the change of government as an opportunity to intensify its activity, to propagate the only salvific workers-peasants' government but through peaceful means. Neither the agrarians nor the communists inside the country have any intention to enter into a direct confrontation, much less an armed one, with the government. But such intentions are promoted by two external factors - the established Overseas Representation of the BZNS in Prague and the Executive Committee of the Communist International in Moscow. The agrarian emigration aims at the violent overthrow of the 9 June government and the return of the BZNS to power, relying mainly on the support of the Serbo-Croatian-Slovenian Kingdom and Soviet Russia, which must ensure and guarantee the cooperation of the communists within the country. Already on June 14, 1923, the Comintern ordered the BKP to immediately start armed actions and to carry out a counter-coup together with the agrarians and the Macedonian revolutionaries. The aim of the required action is to turn the BKP into a real revolutionary party, to start a new revolutionary wave in Europe (and why not in Asia), to safeguard the Soviet power in Russia and to give an example and incentive to the other communist parties. Last but not least - to face-save the Comintern, despite its unrealistic and

inadequate forecasts and actions. But both centers failed to quickly implement their plans, to galvanize and start the desired civil war, because the BKP refused to get involved in it.

Key and decisive role in changing the position of the Communist Party's leadership and steering it towards an armed seizure of power in Bulgaria in near future was played by the Vienna illegal Centre of the Comintern and personally by its head V.P. Milyutin. He engaged most vigorously in turning into action the demand of the Moscow headquarters as of June 14 to secure allies by the Overseas Agrarian Representation and VMRO and provide resources for the forthcoming action. But only after sending a special representative of the Vienna Comintern bureau in Sofia - A.E. Abramovich-Chetuev, and "the pressure exerted by the Comintern", the Central Committee of the BKP took a decision – in the period after August 3 and before August 17 - to start off an armed uprising, most likely in September 1923. The local structures were notified of the decision. As for the built-up idea in the historiography of the "historical decisions" of the Central Committee of the BKP of September 5-7, 1923, it can be undoubtedly asserted that it was invented by V. Kolarov and was forged *post factum* in accordance with the demands of the Comintern head Gr. Zinoviev. The decision has nothing to do with the Marxist theory of the class struggle, it was not caused by spontaneous and mass dissatisfaction of the Bulgarian workers, by some "revolutionary upsurge" and is far from being in their interest. It is ideologically motivated, but not imperative, without social and political rationale. By submitting to the Comintern's demands, the BKP ceased to be an ideological, workers', social, revolutionary party and turned into a structure for a forcible seizure of power in order to satisfy ambitions and prove the rightness of the Bolshevik visions for the continuation of the world socialist revolution.

From the second half of August, the leadership of the BKP engaged in political and military-technical preparations for the upcoming uprising but with the typical doctrinaireness and lacking particular energy and enthusiasm. Following the Third International's understanding of the essence and character of "the united fronts", it practically does not search for allies but attempts to seize the membership of the left and center-left parties, weaken and depersonalize them, and logically suffers a complete fiasco. The documents from the era indicate that the long-promoted view in the historiography of an agreement reached on joint action with the BZNS and on preserving the neutrality of the VMRO in Pirin Macedonia does not correspond to the reality. Calls to create a "united front" do not expand the positions and influence of the party, which remains

isolated and further goes in self-isolation. This resulted from the fact that all other political players are aware of BKP's unrealistic and extremely dangerous for the future of the country intentions. The extremely exaggerated and unrealistic historiographical portrayals cannot change the real picture of the weak and insufficient military-technical preparation of the future action, for which no general plan, strategic and tactical, is drawn up, no common leadership is determined, no insurgent combat structures are built and no armament is provided. Attempts to win over the army also failed. The uprising cannot count on success also due to the fact that the 9 June government has already established itself and enjoys the support of both the security forces and a significant part of the society. External support is also lacking. Neither the Comintern, nor the Soviet Union, nor the "world proletariat" made any concrete commitments. The subsequent pseudo-revolutionary events in Germany and Poland testified to their weakness and helplessness and not to strength and upsurge. Support cannot be expected from the marginalized neighboring communist parties either. The international situation is far from "favourable" if only because of the fact that Serbian troops are concentrated on the western Bulgarian border. It remains to rely on the hatred cultivated for decades towards the state and its institutions, on the disappointment and dissatisfaction with the failure of the national idea, on the post-war crisis phenomena in the political, economic and spiritual area, on the feeling of insecurity and fear, and at the same time on the natural desire for quick and radical change, which cannot be achieved in any other way than by force, as well as the longing for revenge on part of the rural mass.

The "prevention attempt" of the rulers aiming at guaranteeing the internal order and the security of the state is presented in details. It is manifested in several aspects - strengthening and cleansing the army and the police, disarming the population, neutralizing the numerous Bolshevik agents who infiltrated the country during the agrarian rule, blocking the internal destabilizing factors. Measures that further limit the chances of successful implementation of the task assigned by the Comintern. Although the political and military leadership of the country, as well as the whole society, are aware of the change in the course of the BKP, the role of Moscow, possible allies and the decision to start armed actions, until the beginning of September the authorities do not take restrictive or prohibitive measures against the Communist party. Only then, and after receiving information that the action was being prepared for September 16, they ordered, and on September 12, proceeded with preventive "precautionary measures" - arresting the central and local leadership of the party, confiscating weapons from its followers and imposing a complete

control over the communications in the country, with the aim of interrupting the preparations and preventing the expected armed counter-coup. The implementation of the measures is mainly assigned to the police, but according to the current Regulations on the assistance that the army provides to the civil authorities, the army is also relied on. The action is not a provocation towards the Communist Party and has much more serious goals than preventing the Communists from winning the upcoming parliamentary elections (which is practically impossible). The found authentic instructions and orders for the action of the troops of the capital garrison, and of the army, in suppressing riots and internal disturbances, are presented and analyzed. It has been pointed out that they practically repeat documents already developed after the end of the First World War, that they sound arbitrary and extreme, but they do not contradict the current legislation dealing with cases of unavoidable defense and extreme necessity. It was concluded that the order to shoot anyone who attempted by agitation to influence the soldiers not to perform their duties is illegal and unlawful. Some of the measures ordered by the interior minister have the same character - the ban on meetings, on free movement, the introduction of censorship. They would only be possible under martial law, and that on the basis of recidivism, not constitutional justification. In their entirety, the measures testify that at the beginning of September 1923, the authorities were not only aware of what was to come but went on the offensive and seized the initiative from the conspirators, depriving them of one main advantage - surprise.

In Sofia, in the regional and the district centres, the police and military actions met no resistance. Not 2,000 or 3,000, as claimed in the historiography, were arrested, but 1,148 people, most of whom were quickly released. With two exceptions, nowhere on that day were effected the preliminary directives of the Central Committee of the BKP to undertake an armed resistance, and in the event of a general attack on the party and mass arrests - to hold protest rallies and call a 24-hour strike. The measures did not succeed in neutralizing the Central Committee of the BKP, but they disrupted its functioning and severed its ties with the provincial structures, deprived by their leaderships. The communication and the coordination within the party is paralyzed. The party meets the blow with apathy and resignation which is symptomatic of its condition.

In some villages with strong communist influence in the regions of Stara Zagora, Ikhtiman, Pazardzhik, where "the God is high" and the army is far away, there are manifestations of spontaneous counteraction, a first stage of a limited resistance. Although ideologically motivated,

this counteraction cannot be defined as the beginning of an uprising as it is a result of the self-initiative of individuals persecuted and threatened with arrest, small groups without potential, which act in an unorganized, isolated and uncoordinated manner, in a limited geographical area, without any connection with each other, with no common plan and no common leadership at the local, much less at the central level. The resistance shown is defensive, not offensive in nature, it does not demonstrate unity of time and place. It must be characterized as a riot, as fixed in the Criminal Law of 1896, art. 138.: "A crowd gathered for the purpose of obstructing: 1) the Bulgarian government or the National Assembly; 2) another public authority or its body to freely exercise their rights and duties, or to compel them to perform or not perform something within the scope of their rights and duties". Since September 13, the army has been actively involved in controlling the outbreaks of tension and restoring the order in the province. With the permission by the Liquidation Authority, the army has been increased by 1,000 (and in reality by much more) volunteers, which should strengthen the potential of the forces responsible for maintaining order in the country.

Chapter Three follows "**The Clash or the Doomed Measuring of Swords**" in three parts. The first part presents "the onset" - how the decision to declare an uprising was reached and the first organized attempts, albeit at the local, city level, to seize power from the communist structures. The role of the Vienna centre and V.P. Milyutin, who, dissatisfied with the passivity of the BKP on September 14, 1923 demanded that the party begin an open armed struggle in the province, abandoning the capital, where it was judged that there was no chance of success. It is difficult to prove whether this request reached Sofia but it is indicative that only after it the leadership of the BKP began to discuss options for a general, organized opposition to the government measures. The discussion is long and painful - a whole six days (September 15-20), which in itself is telling. After analyzing the versions of the two protagonists - V. Kolarov and G. Dimitrov, all with a late date, after taking into account the fact that the decisions taken appear in their complete form only in 1947, as well as the decision itself to start preparations for an armed uprising, and after analyzing reliable written testimonies of that time, it is concluded with a great deal of certainty that the Central Committee of the BKP made a decision and set the day September 23, 1923 for the beginning of an uprising but there is no clarity as to when exactly and by whom this decision was taken, who are the anticipated allies and if there are any at all, what is his leadership. The report sent on September 21 or 22, 1923 by the member of the Central Committee

of the BKP T. Petrov, discovered in the archives of the Communist International, testifies that on September 17 or 18 the Central Committee ordered a counter-strike with the aim of seizing the power in places and releasing the arrested communists - with the expectation that the action will evolve into guerilla actions or an uprising of the peasants' masses. Since T. Petrov did not inform about a subsequent decision of the Central Committee of the BKP to start a mass uprising, it can be considered that it was taken only by V. Kolarov and G. Dimitrov, with the knowledge but without the approval of the organizing secretary T. Lukanov. The documents indicate that not only the opponents, but also the supporters of the armed action have no illusions that it has, albeit minimal, chances of success. This is evident both in T. Petrov's report and in the actions of V. Kolarov, who, as a lawyer, realizes that his party, once it has left the rut of the legal political struggle, cannot help but be outlawed. Therefore, he pre-registers a new party in court, which should unite communist cadres after the pogrom, and prepares the publication of a new "independent" newspaper. What's more, Kolarov and Dimitrov had previously thought about and prepared a channel for leaving the country. This puts into serious doubt the existence of any plan and readiness to act in Sofia and the region. The passivity of the capital's workers after September 12, the lack of any attempt to organize and engage the miners in Pernik, the designation of Vratsa as the centre of the uprising and the departure of its main leaders from the capital, testify rather to a prior awareness of the unfeasibility of achieving any success in the capital. And without gaining control of the centre of power, or at least blocking it, the chances of success of any conspiratorial action are drastically reduced. Presented are the attempts on September 20, 1923, either by order from Sofia or as a self-initiative of the local communist leaders, to seize control of four Bulgarian towns in central southern Bulgaria in order to release the arrested communist leaders arrested, and their failure within hours as a result of the decisive action of the army and of volunteers. The anti-state and anti-government events continue in the villages, at that stage southwest of Plovdiv and northwest of Pazardzhik, but without established connection and coordination. These actions represent the second stage of the conflict with the state; they already became subject of treating in accordance with the relevant regulation in the Constitution - possibility to declare martial law, in the case of "imminent danger" originating from an internal armed uprising, which is present "when, with weapons in hand, known public strata or individuals rise up against the social and state order and system". In such circumstances, the state finds itself in circumstances of "inevitable defence" and is obliged to use all legitimate means to repel unlawful attacks by organized groups and private

individuals, including resorting to the institution of the martial law. What was happening in the province and the reliable information obtained that orders for general insurrectionary action had been given for September 22-23 made it urgent to announce the martial law on September 22, 1923. The army assumed full responsibility for ensuring order and security in the country, control over the police and administrative authorities and is given the right to act independently and with force in preventing or ending civil disturbances. The constitutional rights of citizens were restricted and military courts began to operate for civilians who have committed crimes that violate order and security – measures, envisaged and often practiced as a rescue to preserve the state and public organism.

The second part, "the culmination", follows by days, from September 22 to 28, and where possible by hours, the measures taken by the state institutions - the government, the Ministry of War, the Army Headquarters, the Ministry of the Interior and Public Health, to control the armed conflicts increasing in intensity and geographical scope. The main attention is focused on the decisions of the command and the behavior of the army and the volunteers supporting it. The algorithm of the decisions is presented: 1. The command orders taking measures to ensure completely security and safety of large urban and military centres by strengthening the security of barracks and stockpile warehouses and recruiting volunteers; 2. It requires ensuring the trouble-free functioning of the communications by establishing commandants and guarding of the railway stations, telegraph-postal stations, bridges, tunnels, as well as sending patrols along the roads; 3. Orders the formation of small maneuverable military detachments, well armed with machine guns and cannons which, without seriously weakening their garrisons, with all possible means of rapid movement - trains, trucks, cars, horse-drawn carriages - to appear at the threatened points and by swift, strict, and even harsh measures to restore order; 4. Delegates rights to local commanders who must act independently, on their own initiative and in view of the circumstances; 5. To control the areas with intense and large-scale insurgent activities and restore the state authority, larger detachments of one or two to three or four companies of regular troops, volunteers or mixed, are formed. The tasks assigned to them are either to gradually and successively eliminate the resistance hubs or to reach the critical point in the fastest way, jointly and in a coordinated manner to attack and capture it. The main donor of such formations is the Sofia garrison, but also these in Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, Burgas, Karlovo, Shumen, Tarnovo, Ruse, Pleven, Vratsa, etc.; 6. All available types of troops – land, air and sea – are brought into action. The main burden is on



the infantry units. The rifle and bayonet are the weapons most relied upon. Machine guns and cannons are heavily used in combat due to their effectiveness and intimidating effect. While there is no evidence of the illegitimate use of machine guns, for that use of artillery there are indisputable proofs - firing on populated areas without warning, destruction of homes after the end of the fighting. Cavalry, artillery, engineering and technical units are also involved in the fighting. Airplanes were used, otherwise prohibited under the Treaty of Neuilly, for reconnaissance, dispersal of propaganda and agitation appeals but also for machine-gun fire and bombing. The limited capacity of the navy is harnessed both for the transport of military units and for fire support for clashes near the coast; 7. After the end of the active fights, which must result in the encirclement and destruction or neutralization and capture of the rebels, the military units must deploy temporary garrisons in the settlements and, with the assistance of the administrative and police authorities, search and disarm the insurgents; 8. The remaining or new forces should be engaged in the pursuit and capture of the dispersed insurgents and the closure of the frontiers to prevent their passage into foreign territory.

It is concluded that, in contrast to the period until September 22, when the command and the army managed to act quickly, adequately and effectively, in the decisive period the military authorities were able to control the situation in South and North-Eastern Bulgaria relatively quickly and in a coordinated manner but encountered serious difficulties in the northwestern part of the country, which for five days was practically out of the control of the state and, to a large extent, of the army as well. The reasons are not due to the strength of the communist movement but to the oversights and mistakes made by the Ministry of War and the Army Headquarters, both in terms of command and organization. Some of their orders are chaotic, not well considered, unsystematic and even contradictory. The military authorities failed to organize and send in the fastest way sufficiently strong military units to the northwestern region, to monitor and coordinate their actions. The small detachments initially sent out proved ineffective and were quickly defeated and turned into arms donors. Neither the minister of war general Valkov nor chief of defence colonel Stoyanov went to the areas of the insurgency; they preferred to trust their proxy colonel Marinkov, commander of the Vratsa garrison, who did not cope with the assigned task in the best way and delayed the general offensive against the cities of Ferdinand and Berkovitsa. There is an obvious lack of a well established intelligence network and verified information. In such a situation the army command and the field commanders react to every signal from a "reliable source", order the

formation of squads and detach them to places where no real danger to the order and security exist. In doing so, they waste the army's already limited forces and resources. The loss of operational control at the central level "incentivizes" military commanders toward accountability but also toward self-rule and unregulated action. Throughout the campaign, the high military command remained out of touch with the garrisons in Vidin and Lom, which were at the epicenter of the uprising. The heads of the latter act independently, on their own initiative, but practically follow the same logic and algorithm set by Sofia. The case is indicative of the fact that even without preliminary plans for dealing with internal disorders, without orders and instructions at the highest level, officers and soldiers perceive the communist actions as a declaration of war on the state and react according to the laws of war.

In parallel, the reasons why Moscow and the Comintern fail to provide effective help to the Bulgarian communists who rose up under their pressure are also indicated.

The third part, "the denouement" follows the events until October 4, 1923, when the martial law was partially lifted. The actions of the military units in clearing the insurgent areas, disarming the population, pursuing and capturing groups that went underground and carried out sabotage and attacks were tracked. The measures that are being taken at the highest level to end the violence, calm and pacify the country and transfer the responsibility from the military to the civil authorities and above all to the judicial system are also presented.

The logic of processes in Bulgarian society indicates that the events of September 1923 had their presence and reflected on the entire political life in 1924 as well. This was a time when. On one side, the authorities undertook a series of legislative, economic and military measures to prevent the repetition of what happened and to guarantee lasting order and security and, on the other side, the BKP and the Comintern were doing everything possible for a quick and, hopefully, successful repetition of the uprising. Separate chapters - fourth and fifth - are dedicated to these problems. Considering the "**uncertain security**" in the country, the government is moving towards a pacification of the situation. The plan includes several steps - lifting the martial law and returning the army to the barracks; holding parliamentary elections that guarantee presenting of a broad range of political ideas; amnesty for the masses who took part in the uprising and legal accountability for its leaders; focus on the economic problems. The martial law was completely lifted on 7 November, the army returned to the barracks, and parliamentary elections were held on

18 November 1923. Although with certain restrictions, both the BKP and the BZNS were allowed to participate. No organized violence occurred on election day and the army did not intervene. The Democratic Party in coalition with the Social Democratic Party won an overwhelming majority but refused to propose a new, parliamentary appointed cabinet.

Among the members of the parliament who in principle approve of the government's measures to deal with the communist uprising, two camps are formed regarding the way of their implementation and the ways of pacification. The Social Democrats and the member of the Sgovor Prof. Vl. Mollov advocate the view that the rule of law and the Constitution, as irrevocable characteristics of the rule of law, must remain key both in dealing with extraordinary circumstances and in seeking accountability from those who caused them. They insist on condemning every outrage, committed not only by the insurgents but also by individuals or by authorities, committed not according to the rules of war, committed after the uprising and beyond the measures necessary to settle the situation. The aforementioned MPs insist that such actions be judicially investigated and punished as this is the only way to pacify the country. The other camp, presented by the "pure members of the Sgovor" N. Rachev, Sl. Vassilev and the Prime Minister Al. Tsankov, is categorically against holding judicially accountable those who defended the existence of the state itself and "today's state system" in a civil war circumstances where no clearly defined fronts and rules exist. It is precisely in this point that the essential divergence among the ruling majority is evident. While one part of them insists on holding legally accountable anyone who oversteps the limits of the legal actions, or for preserving order through justice and the rule of law, the position of the other part is ambivalent regarding legitimacy, putting this in dependence on whom and under what circumstances it is applied. The holders of this view are for an order at any price even imposed by force or violence which goes beyond the limits of legality and the Constitution. Both camps appreciate the key role of the army, express gratitude for the duty it fulfills "as the supreme guardian of the destiny of the fatherland".

Particular attention is paid to the rationale, discussions on and content of the State Protection Law (SPL), with a view to guaranteeing security and order in the state and the role of law enforcement institutions. For the first time in the historiography the predecessor of this law, the proposed by the agrarians "Law for the Protection of the State" but not voted by the National Assembly, is presented. A review of the assessments of the law in the historiography in the period

up to 1944, after 1944 and after 1989 was also made. The general conclusion is that the SPL does not aim to protect a specific administration but the principles of statehood established by the Tarnovo Constitution and to fill a significant gap in the legislation of that epoch which does not tackle cases of systematically propagated and organized activity for the violent destruction of the democratic-parliamentary order. Among its highlights are the preservation and guaranteeing the capacity of the main defenders of the state external and internal security - the army, the gendarmerie and the police, by cutting off any insurgent propaganda and not allowing disobedience. Proof that the State Protection Law is not exclusive and fascist in nature is the fact that its principles are enshrined in three of the articles of the currently effective Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria from 1991 (Art. 11. (4); Art. 39. (1), (2); Art. 44. (2)).

The Amnesty Law adopted in January 1924 and its amendment in April the same year is also presented in an ideological and practical context. It has been pointed out that, traditionally, these laws tend to be underestimated and belittled by the communists and agrarians as well as by the post-9 September 1944 historiography that adopted their assessments and even in modern studies. These assessments ignore the large time span of the amnesties, the wide range of amnestied political crimes and persons, the fact that the authorities not only promise but really give evidence that they actually seek to pacify and calm the country. Data has been sought and given, according to which by the end of 1925 only 84 people had been convicted and 374 were accused with pending cases against reports of over 9,000 arrested for the June and September events. With the subsequent banning of the BKP in April 1924, the series of legislative and judicial measures that were supposed to settle the consequences of the September events practically ended. In parallel, a series of economic and social reforms have been undertaken to pacify society.

The second part of the fourth chapter reveals the efforts of the state leadership to strengthen the army. Presented is the general goal - the return of the conscription system, with a view to preventing new challenges to the internal and external security of the country, as well as three accompanying goals: clarifying and considering the army's further intervention in political life; strengthening the discipline; financial and regulatory strengthening and development.

Regarding the causes for the bloody fratricidal conflict and the intervention of the army, the command staff considers not only the political ones but also the economic and social. In a typical military style the recommended measures to overcome the problems are firm and

uncompromising. As for the practical, purely military lessons learnt of the events such as strategy and tactics for waging an internal, guerilla war, they were noted very precisely by individual military chiefs but there is no information that the Ministry of War and Army Headquarters took note of them and transformed into specific instructions and requirements. There was not a single analysis of the actions of the high command, the regimental commanders and the individual military commands, with a view to taking into account the mistakes made in the running of the campaign and drawing lessons learnt. The ministry does not bother to track down and list the casualties the army inflicts but meticulously records the spent cartridges, shells and damaged or lost property.

In order to strengthen the discipline actions in two directions are undertaken. One is to award the officers and soldiers who have shown stoicism and determination and punish those who have shown inaction, doubted the correctness of the applied punitive measures, sympathized with or openly assisted the anti-state elements. The fact is that the number of the latter is negligible.

Care for the officers and the army is manifested in increasing the funds allocated for them through additional credits and from the regular state budget as well as in the adoption of a series of laws. The military school is recognized as a higher specialized educational institution which should guarantee the high-quality training of the future officers. With the "Act for the compensation of active officers and non-commissioned officers who have left the army due to its reduction and reorganization according to the Treaty of Neuilly" a fairer compensation is given to those who have not voluntarily transferred to the reserve. Two more laws, that on the military personnel and that on amending the Military Courts Act, should reestablish the army traditions and correct the ill-advised changes made during the agrarian rule.

The events of September 1923 provided a solid argument for the Bulgarian authorities to once again place before the Areopagus of the victors in the First World War the problem of the destiny and future of the Bulgarian army and to demand the return of a regular conscription military service. After not having understanding and receiving a categorical refusal the Bulgarian authorities decided to stake on moderate, partial and temporary demands of a regressive nature - ten, five or three or four thousand soldiers to be recruited on a mandatory basis. The numerous reports of preparations for a new armed conflict lead the government to take a risk and carry out a partial mobilization, counting on the fact that temporary solutions are often the most durable and

that the allied control authorities will accept the fait accompli. Despite the resistance of the latter and their refusal to recognize the urgency and necessity of the measure, the government of Prof. Al. Tsankov managed to increase the composition of the army, albeit for a limited and fixed period.

As the actions of the outlaws increased in the spring and summer of 1924, it became clear that the police would have a hard time dealing with the problem. Traditionally, they sought support from the army. In this way, the army is once again and directly involved in the internal political conflict.

The last fifth chapter "**BKP and the Comintern – the Defeat as a Step towards Victory**" aims to give an answer to the question whether after September 1923 there continued to be real dangers for the order, security and the future of the state or whether they were a figment of the rulers' imagination and were used by them to justify their own "obscurantism". Disagreements and contradictions, the clash of the legitimist approach defended by T. Lukanov and the revolutionary approach dictated by Moscow and promoted by V. Kolarov and G. Dimitrov, have been presented and analyzed. Kolarov and Dimitrov, as soon as they leave the country, announce that a revanche is coming through a new uprising, the preparation of which they will immediately begin. In this way, they expect to receive an indulgence from Moscow for their failure and to be recognized and established as the undisputed leaders of the Bulgarian communists. Kolarov and Dimitrov actually received a pat on the shoulder from the Comintern head Zinoviev. This encouraged them to harness their efforts in the "correct" explanation and justification of what had happened and in the implementation of the new unequivocal directive to continue the attempts to seize the power by armed action. In this way, two opinions are formed in the BKP about the September events and about the future of the party. They overlap as to the transferring the responsibility and the accusations to the state authorities. But according to T. Lukanov, the party's response was a reckless, senseless, premature and unnecessary rebellion, an ill-considered action of impetuous comrades (Kolarov and Dimitrov) and henceforth the party must return to the ground of legal parliamentary political struggle. The second opinion is that of Kolarov shared by Dimitrov and the Comintern - that the party was obliged to lead the spontaneous uprising of the masses in order not to lose contact with them; that it is obliged to continue the illegal armed struggle, speedily preparing a new uprising. Self-proclaimed as a Foreign Committee of the BKP, Kolarov and Dimitrov began dictating their views to the internal leadership of the party and meddle in the

personnel issues. In November 1923, they were openly supported by the leaders of the Comintern and the RCP (b). Despite the obvious failure of the "second wave" of the world revolution not only in Bulgaria but also in Germany and Poland, the Comintern expects new clashes in the Balkans and in Bulgaria and recommend seeking unification in a single revolutionary stream of the workers, peasants and national liberation movements, with the communist parties penetrating and subjugating them. The deadly hostile relations of the VMRO with the BZNS and the BKP make the intended combination practically impossible but for the Comintern leaders this is not essential. For them, the alchemical approach to the revolution is important, in which the mixing of explosive ingredients cannot fail to cause a political explosion, expected in the spring of 1924. The positions in the structures of the Comintern that Kolarov retains and Dimitrov and Milyutin receive are unequivocal evidence of the confidence of the Bolshevik leadership in the three Mohicans of the revolution in Bulgaria. The Comintern is also committed to the financial provision of the future revolution, taking over the support of the foreign and domestic leadership of the BKP, as well as the party itself. From October 1923 to October 1924, the BKP received BGN 6,065,909, as much as the annual expenses of whole, and big, regions, such as Varna, which spent BGN 6,569,245 for 1923/1924, and Pleven – 6 BGN 099,204 The maxim: "Everything is a matter of time and money" applies.

In December 1923, the remaining members of the Central Committee of the BKP in Bulgaria demonstrated that they had completely renounced independent thinking and common sense and declared their readiness to unconditionally follow the directives of the Comintern, transmitted or initiated by Milyutin, Kolarov and Dimitrov. They envision revolutionary circumstances and revolution where none are available and engage in its preparation. With the combined efforts of the Comintern, the Foreign Committee and the internal leadership, critics of the adventurist September course, both on the right and on the left, were excluded from the party, which was seen as another step towards its Bolshevization.

In January 1924, a new centre called the Macedonian, Balkan or Bulgarian Commission was formed in Moscow to plan, organize, and control the "revolutionary" events in the Balkans. The presence in it of senior representatives of the Soviet security services, the Red Army and the Comintern, as well as the head of the Soviet foreign policy Chicherin testifies that the Balkans and specifically Bulgaria are once again becoming a priority region for new political experiments, after

the failure in Germany. This centre formulates two main problems, which in the coming months will become the sharpest and most debatable for the Comintern and the BKP. The first is a strategic one – for the creation of a political block to fight the Tsankov government, with the BKP in the centre and the flanks of agrarians and VMRO. The second is a tactical – whether or not to develop a guerilla movement in the country. After the defeat of the communists in Bulgaria, Moscow considers that without VMRO a successful revenge and destabilization of the Balkans and Europe is not possible. Moscow relies on direct negotiation with the leader of the organization, which is also the surest way for a quick change in its policy. Dimitrov and Kolarov feel neglected as they are excluded from the negotiations. They are also convinced that VMRO should be controlled and subordinated, but according to them this is possible only without T. Alexandrov. The position in relation to the BZNS has also been clarified - elimination of its Overseas Representation and mastering of its internal structures. The view is that in the absence of a rise of the revolutionary movement in Bulgaria, guerilla detachments will only justify repression and therefore their creation should not be encouraged. Emphasis is placed on the organization of a party Illegal Military Organization.

From January 29 to February 14, 1924, the first special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (IKKI) Presidium on the Bulgarian question took place in Moscow after the September events, with the participation of the three big ones - Zinoviev, Bukharin, Radek. It adopted a political resolution, prepared by V. Kolarov, which set before the BKP the task of "immediately proceeding with military-technical preparations for an armed uprising" "in the near future". On February 19, 1924, the Balkan Commission approved a plan and allocated funds for the creation of an Illegal Military Organization in Bulgaria to prepare the new uprising. The necessary sums were calculated for 6 months and amounted at 56,600 dollars, equal to 7,709,486 BGN. At the then level of tariffs they were sufficient to pay 1,669 wage earners which means that the Communist Party would be able to provide for the sustenance not only of its political and military apparatus but also of its active members. The provision of significant amounts of weapons is also foreseen. In this context, the future uprising in Bulgaria is already not only ordered but also guaranteed and paid for by Moscow. The stake is not on the "wrath of the slave" but on a well-paid apparatus of professional revolutionaries, on corrupting and eroding of the state's security structures - the police, the gendarmerie, the army.



In March 1924, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RCP (b) agreed with the assessments made by the BKP and the Comintern in February that a "revolutionary aggravation of the crisis in Bulgaria is very likely" but stated that the Bulgarian revolutionary movement must rely exclusively on its internal forces - the Bulgarian workers and peasants and to bear in mind that in the near future the USSR cannot help with armed force nor even with a military demonstration. But the perspective is being reaffirmed as is the commitment at the highest level to send arms and funds.

After the decisions of the higher bodies of the Comintern and the Bolshevik Party, remittances, authorized Comintern representatives, chekists and military intelligence officers are sent to Bulgaria. They are supposed to assist the local communists in the preparation of the armed uprising and provide first-hand information about the situation in the country. However, arms deliveries are delayed.

The preparations for a new uprising in the first half of 1924 did not achieve significant results. In terms of foreign policy, the BKP cannot count on direct Soviet intervention and the support of the Balkan communist parties due to their disorganization and political weakness. Despite the agreement signed with the agrarian emigration in February 1924, neither anti-government actions nor even mutually beneficial cooperation could be expected on their side due to the lack of resources and the well-founded fear of disloyal communist behavior in the course of the struggle for and after the eventual taking of the power. There is no possibility of an uprising in Macedonia, organized by the VMRO, and of a Yugoslav-Bulgarian conflict which would open up the possibility of an anti-government action. Domestically, the balance of power is far from favourable for the radical opposition. VMRO sharpens the tone towards the Tsankov government, promises Moscow to fight against it together with the BKP but has neither come into contact with the communists nor taken any anti-government steps. BZNS has not yet recovered from the heavy blows inflicted on it and is in the initial phase of its organizational recovery. Its often-changing leadership is dominated by centrist-minded politicians who are not excited by an alliance with the Communists, much less by a desire to call on their followers to once again sacrifice themselves in the name of foreign interests. Under these circumstances the communists cannot even hope for political allies through which to expand the anti-government front. After all, they are not looking for allies but want to dominate and impose their control over the agrarians and VMRO. The

Communist Party itself is bled and paralyzed, disorganized and incapable of mass actions, especially after its official ban. Overly cheerful reports cannot hide that its membership has dwindled drastically and active Communists and Komsomol members do not exceed 1,000. Its available personnel and weapons would hardly be sufficient for a new mass armed uprising, even for local insurrections, and therefore the main question that preoccupies the followers of the idea of uprising is how to speed up and shorten the path to it. Two opinions on this issue are outlined - for giving priority to illegal preparation, by building a powerful military organization and conspiratorial activity, without neglecting the possibilities of the guerilla movement, and for entering into an open conflict by deploying a guerilla war. While the foreign representation of the party, and above all G. Dimitrov, supports the first option, V.P. Milyutin and the internal leadership are supporters of the second. In practice, the local communist operatives operate along both lines. In parallel with the construction of a professional and paid illegal military organization, they are also engaged in the organization of guerilla squads. Overwhelmed by a revolutionary impatience and haste, and on the advice of their Soviet instructors, the local activists decided to rely on already existing anarchist and vulgar criminal robber gangs aiming at subordinating them to the party's goals and tasks - staffing, procurement of weapons and funds. In this way, criminals, robbers, smugglers, murderers - the scum of society - are attracted as engines of the future social and political revolution.

Only seven months after Kolarov and Dimitrov's call for a new uprising and four months after the directives of the Comintern, on May 17, 1924, the Central Committee of the BKP managed to convene an illegal conference to recapitulate what happened after June 9, 1923 and to bring the new tasks before the party. The "Vitosha Conference" does not bring anything new and different to the analysis of the recent past, the upcoming tasks and the leadership of the BKP. It simply reaffirms the wrong and improper assessments of the situation in the country and officially, with considerable delay, confirms the unrealistic course towards a new armed uprising. Obviously, it cannot happen until the end of spring and for that reason the autumn of 1924 is emerging as a new time horizon. Such is the opinion of the Foreign Representation, namely of G. Dimitrov. This conference completes the transition of the BKP from an ideological, legal and mass party to a small, illegal, militarized, paid, terrorist structure for subversive, sabotage and punitive actions. A structure devoid of ideological and moral foundations, serving foreign state interests and fighting against its own state. The transition is not simply and solely result of its ban but because of the

extremist, ultra-leftist course consciously chosen and imposed by its own leaders and by the Comintern. Undoubtedly, in the spring of 1924, the BKP ceased to be a party in the political sense of the term.

On June 19, 1924, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RCP (b) again considered the situation in Bulgaria. It again does not support the deployment of a guerrilla movement as a path to a mass insurrection and demands that the BKP concentrate on building the apparatus of the Illegal Military Organization. The top Soviet leadership took into account the continuous complaints and requests for arms and radically resolved the issue, ordering a huge quantity - 10,000 rifles - to be sent to Bulgaria. Bulgarian affairs were entrusted to a new commission, with the participation of the heads of the Soviet power structures - Frunze, Dzerzhinsky, Trotsky. They prepare a "Resolution on the Bulgarian Question", approved by the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the RCP (b) on July 29, 1924. The document categorically states that a victorious uprising in Bulgaria is not possible in the fall and it must be postponed "for example until next spring," covering up his hard preparatory work with the relevant political maneuvers. An earlier start of the revolutionary actions is also admitted. The decision was taken to allocate 50,000 dollars for the purchase and shipment to Bulgaria of 5,000 rifles and to provide an additional 43,000 dollars, 8,600 per month, to the commission until the end of the year.

The decisions of the Central Committee of the RCP (b) poured a cold shower on Kolarov and Dimitrov, who were overheated with revolutionary impatience, but did not cancel the revolutionary perspective, did not propose a radical change in the course of the BKP towards a new armed uprising and violent seizure of power. They simply postponed the start of the action for a few months, to the spring of 1925, in view of its better political, organizational and military-technical preparation. As early as July 29, 1924, Kolarov and Dimitrov, as disciplined officials, hastened to assure their superiors that they accepted the resolution, that they would continue preparations for an uprising but would not take an adventures and would not call the masses to immediate armed action. With a special letter they bring down to the party members the highest directives of the Central Committee of the BKP.

At the beginning of August 1924, the IKKI sent a special instruction to its Bulgarian section and its illegal military organization, which gave the go-ahead for the start of terrorist activity by the Bulgarian communists, directed against the traitors within the party and against the high-

ranking representatives of the authorities, who they cannot help but be "counter-revolutionaries". The terrorist activity itself must have an individual character before the insurrection and a mass character during the insurrection. Mass terror must be carried out according to a pre-prepared plan and by pre-prepared terrorist groups for the physical liquidation not only of the representatives of the state authorities but also of the leaders of parties and organizations that do not share the communist views - that is to say of everyone outside the Communist Party. In a quick manner and before starting to carry out the assigned tasks, the internal communist leadership almost immediately, before mid-September, carried out one of the orders - to create a special criminal terrorist group on the Soviet model. At the end of the year, the idea of organizing an assassination attempt was born to deal a devastating blow to the repressive apparatus of the authorities. It was not until the beginning of April 1925 that the various interested factors in Moscow began to develop a decision and resolutions to revise the tactics of the BKP, to withdraw the course on a new armed uprising, to dissolve the military organization, to refuse to form squads and to limit the terrorist acts only to ones for self-defense and against provocateurs. The resolution of the presidium of the IKKI with the above points is from April 15. Then April 16, 1925 follows.

In the **concluding chapter** assessments and conclusions arising from the content already presented are made. At the same time new problems that have not been addressed are posed and possible answers are proposed. The non-fascist nature of the 9 June government was reasoned and, accordingly, the definition of the September events as the world's first anti-fascist uprising was indicated as unacceptable. It has been contested that the purpose of the uprising was to establish a "democratic" workers-peasants' government. It has been argued that its real purpose was the destruction of the existing constitutional, monarchical, parliamentary-democratic and legal order and the imposition of Soviet-style communist dictatorship. It is not the government's actions that cause and led to the uprising but the Communist International and the ambitions of exalted individuals who, in the name of foreign interests, subject the Bulgarian people to a cruel and bloody test. An attempt was made to explain why the uprising was peasants' in nature and not workers', why in North-West Bulgaria it had the most massive character but in general it was not massive - only 14.2% of the population in the country rose up, the power was temporarily taken in 9.3% of the villages and hamlets and in 5.4% of the cities. Evidence is presented that, being rural, the uprising was not the work of the rural poor, but of the local communists, and was motivated not by economic and social reasons, but by purely ideological and political ones. It is pointed out that

the insurgent actions of September 1923 were practically a manifestation of the phenomenon of guerrilla warfare, that from the very beginning they pursued regional rather than national goals, failed to unite efforts even in individual areas, quickly abandoned their offensive intentions and go on the defensive. It is the guerilla nature of the insurgent actions that creates the most serious problems for the army in controlling and suppressing them. Specific information was given about the large number of volunteers who came to assist the army, the government and the state.

On the basis of documents from the era and court cases from the 1950s, examples of extra-judiciary violence practiced or allowed by individual officers and military units are presented. The "battle for casualties" on the part of the insurgents was traced and it was specified that they were not 5,000, nor 1,500, but about 800. In Ferdinand region the casualties are listed by day. From that is clear that  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the casualties were given in the days of intense fighting and  $\frac{3}{4}$  - after the end the clashes. At the same time, it was pointed out that what happened was not an exception, it fit into the examples of military violence that occurred in post-war Europe, that the murders and repressions carried out were politically motivated but not systematic. However, they cannot be justified, since the supremacy of the Constitution and the rule law is a principle that is considered inalienable even in extraordinary circumstances, war or general insurrection, when the very existence of the state or the state system is endangered. For comparison, it is indicated how the Bolsheviks act in crushing the "counter-revolutionary uprisings".

## CONTRIBUTIONS

1. The dissertation work is an attempt to objectively research and analyze an event occupying a key place in the new Bulgarian history and attracting constant public interest but which remained outside the attention of historians in the last three or four decades.

2. For this purpose, practically all available and accessible documentary material was involved, and new and hitherto unused evidences were introduced into the scientific circulation, opening up the possibility of a different view than the one purposefully imposed and reproduced for almost a century.

3. A huge volume of historiography has been subjected to a systematic critical analysis, without ignoring the results achieved by it in terms of presenting events and their evaluation.

4. A new approach has been applied, in which democratic and state-institutional principles and values are adopted as a starting point, at the expense of class-societal and party ones.

5. The examined events are placed in their natural legal-normative, social and political context and are presented in a unity of conceptual design/goal - practical action - results/consequences.

6. The role of the main external factor in provoking and deepening the internal political conflict in 1923-1924 - the Communist International and the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party "Bolsheviks" - is revealed in detail, including the used ideological, political, financial and personal instruments of pressure and impact.

7. For the first time in the historiography, the actions of the institutions and mainly of the Bulgarian army to prevent, control and defeat the anti-state communist actions are systematized and presented. In addition to being tracked at the central and local level, their expediency, effectiveness and legitimacy were also assessed.

8. The process of the emergence, growth, development and termination of the internal armed conflict in September-October 1923 is described in detail.

9. A number of permanently established notions have been re-evaluated and new problem circles have been set.