

**SELECTED PAPERS ON THE
DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT
IN BULGARIA**

HISTORICAL DEMOGRAPHY

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**THE NEWSPAPER ANATOLIKOS ASTIR
(1861–1877) AND THE DEMOGRAPHIC
POLICY IMPLEMENTED ACROSS
THE BULGARIAN LANDS AND IN
RESPECT TO THE POPULATION
INHABITING THEM DURING
THE BULGARIAN NATIONAL REVIVAL**

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Abstract. *The main goal of this study is to summarise and analyse the articles issued by the Anatolikos Astir during the period 1861–1877 and having relevance to the demographic policy implemented across the Bulgarian lands and in respect to the population inhabiting them during the Bulgarian National Revival. The implementation thereof leads us to the understanding that the pages of that newspaper contain some articles relative to all lines of the studied agenda. However uneven its location is both in the timeline and in terms of the individual areas of the studied space this type of information comprises the whole of the reference period and the entire reference territory. This opens the opportunity to ascertain the significant part played by the newspaper Anatolikos Astir as a source revealing the historical development of demographic policies implemented in our lands.*

Keywords: study of historical sources; historical demography; history of Bulgarian lands during the Bulgarian Revival.

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The source base is the foundation any historical knowledge is built upon. In this context, carrying out an in-depth scientific historical research appears to be unthinkable without all-embracing knowledge and making use of all available historical sources. This type of sources is based on a rich variety of springs among which the periodicals issued during the researched epoch have their uniquely outlined place. In this quality the periodicals are so important as to be a defining factor for the purposes of studying the demographic policy carried out in the Bulgarian lands and the demographic policy implemented in respect to the population inhabiting those lands throughout the Bulgarian National Revival.

There are records on the agenda of our interest that are encountered in the pages of a number of periodicals issued in those times in the Empire in many languages: Ottoman Turkish, Bulgarian, Greek, etc.

The number of the Greek newspapers printed within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire during the period up to 1878 exceeded one hundred. Some of those newspapers however gained distinction with their long history, comprehensiveness of the information provided and quality of presentation. This group includes, among others, the newspaper issued by three teachers from the Μεγάλη του Γένους Σχολή [Megali tou Genous Sholi] meaning ‘The Great People’s School’, Ioannis Filalitis, Konstantinos Fotiadis and Vasilis Kalifron (Γεδεών, 1932: p. 16 et seq., p. 89 et seq., p. 122 et seq.; Μαρκς, 2005: p. 442 et seq.; Σταματόπουλος, 2008), Ανατολικός Αστήρ (the *Anatolikos Astir* meaning *Eastern Star*). This belongs to the group of the most long-standing privately owned Greek newspapers issued in Istanbul during the researched epoch whose printing was initiated on 06.10.1861 and continued until mid-1890s¹. Its editing enjoyed the work of some of the best Greek journalists of the time living in Istanbul. The facts showed that this newspaper proved to be a schooling centre educating and later thrusting forward the publishers of the leading issues of the then Greek Istanbul periodicals to their autonomous development along their professional pathways (Σταματόπουλος, 2008; Παπαϊωάννου, 1961: 165-187; Αντωνόπουλος, 2007; Ταρίνας, 2007: p. 82 et seq.). That was another circumstance allowing this newspaper to turn into the flagship of the Greek journalism existing in the Empire until late 19th century.

Given the purpose declared in its Programme, namely “... for the public education, church matters, philology, trade and a variety of news” (the newspaper Ο Ανατολικός Αστήρ, year I, no. 1, 06.10.1861), the newspaper published articles encompassing all domains of public life and relevant to the whole territory of the erstwhile Empire. This essence thereof predetermined the printing of information associated with Bulgarian lands’ development on its pages. Nevertheless, the content of that newspaper stays virtually unknown to the Bulgarian historiography as is large part of the remaining Greek periodicals issued in the 18th and 19th centuries (Several Bulgarian publications noted the mere presence of such a newspaper just incidentally, or what was cited was just some articles from a handful of that newspaper’s numbers. See: Shterionov 2008: 557; Shterionov 2009: 226; Muchinov 2013: 232).

¹ The first number of the newspaper came to light on 06.10.1861 (the newspaper Ο Ανατολικός Αστήρ, year I, no. 1, 06.10.1861).