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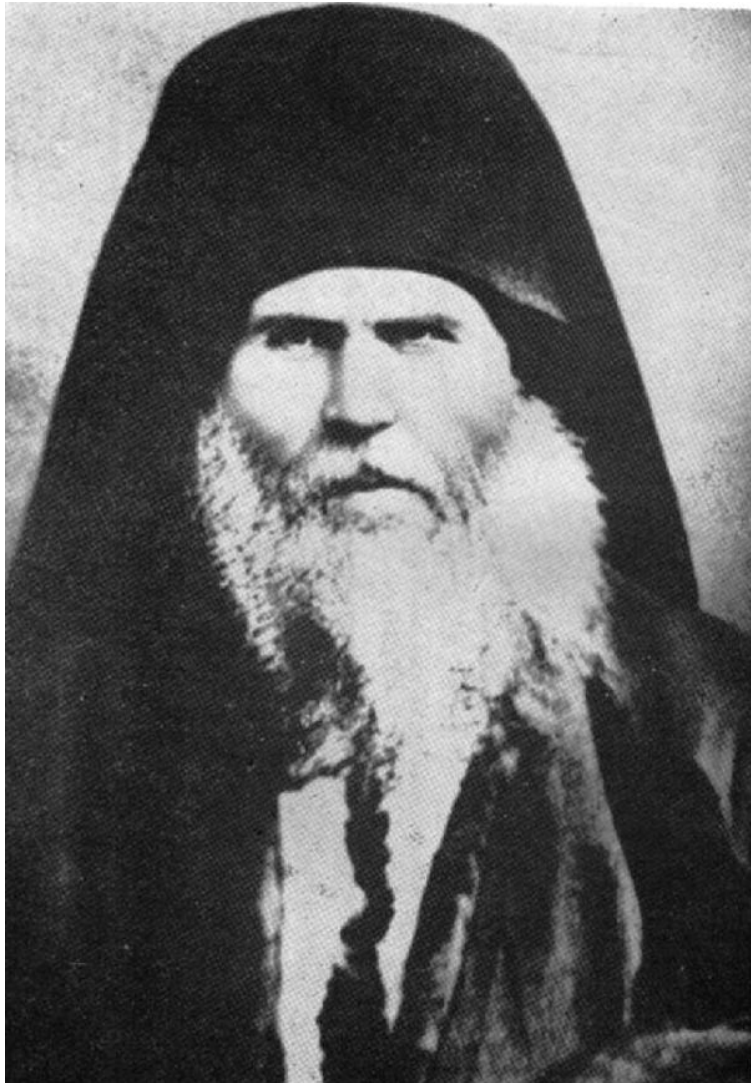
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**Parallels between Sébastien de Brossard (1655-1730) &
Neofit Rilski (1793-1881)**

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This article is a resume of the official open academic lecture „*Sébastien de Brossard (1655-1730) & Neofit Rilski (1793-1881): clerics, erudites, bookmen, educators, enlighteners, musicians, lexicographers...*” which was presented by me on the days of the special celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Southwest University Neofit Rilski in Blagoevgrad (the leading educational, scientific and art institution in Southwestern Bulgaria and one of the leaders on the Balkan Peninsula in these fields). Neofit Rilski (Neophyte Rilsky) is an exceptional person! If he had lived in another epoch – and another place, in some of the leading economically as well as culturally developed countries – along with if he had observed the necessary etiquette and had the chance, Neofit Rilski would have been an outstanding figure in the world history and culture.



After having translated from facsimile the first European Modern Dictionary of Music (written in current language – French), namely *Dictionnaire (sic, Y.K.) de Musique, contenant une explication des Termes Grecs, Latins, Italiens, & François, les plus usitez dans la Musique (Dictionary of Music...)*, Seconde édition, 1705 (R Frits Knuf, Hilversum, 1965) by the French cleric and musician Sébastien de Brossard (1655-1730), I was highly intrigued by his personality and works. I examined closely almost all of the existing literature that was related to him and I dedicated to him my large doctor's dissertation (there are two doctoral degrees in Bulgaria – Philosophy Doctor and Doctor of Sciences), named “*Lexicographic and Historiographic Legacy of Sébastien de Brossard (1655-1730) – a cleric, musician and erudite*”. Sébastien de Brossard was almost unknown in Bulgaria, even among experts.



Sébastien de Brossard, par Landry
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On the other hand, Neofit Rilski is well known in Bulgaria because he is one of the most prominent figures in the enlightenment, literary and cultural movements which took place in the 1830s in the country. He was a cleric and a patriot of high intellect, spirit, morality and ethics, dutiful and responsible, a man of self respect, diligence and capacity for work having a great clerical and encyclopedic knowledge for this time period. He made sense of other people's experience and accumulated experience of his own through his position as a teacher in Gabrovo and Koprivshitsa – he was a pedagogue and an author of some books and textbooks, an educator and a preacher on clerical and state matters. Neofit Rilski played a major role in the process of reformation and expansion of the education in Bulgaria: the transition from monastery schools to new Bulgarian democratic state schools. Unfortunately, Neofit Rilski is not famous abroad.

So, I made **a parallel between these two outstanding characters**, so **different** and so **alike**, belonging to **two hardly comparable epochs and cultures**:

- **to catholic absolutist France of 18th century** (a leading European power and culture of that period) and

- **to Eastern Orthodox Pre-liberation Bulgaria within the Ottoman Empire of 19th century** (a period when the industrial revolution had already changed the world dramatically).

This period is characterised by both the historically determined separation of Bulgaria and the significant lagging behind from the evolution and modernization of Western Europe and the impressive recovery since the time of Paisii and Neofit Rilski to our recent time as a member state of the European Union.

There **used to be and still are many Bulgarian scholars, who have proved to be leading specialists in their fields and who work abroad as well as in Bulgaria and many of them are product of the Bulgarian system of education**. I am pleased to say that in the process of work on the previously mentioned *Dictionary of Music* by Sébastien de Brossard, which included translation, giving meaning to this work, comments, I made a reshuffle of the themes, which outlined and systematized 12 groups of terms (and 33 subgroups) and quantified them statistically; these presented the spheres of knowledge of this epoch and their characteristics – something which hadn't crossed the minds of the greatest experts on French Baroque in music from the Center of Baroque music in

Versailles. “We are talking about a remarkable work, the approach towards *Dictionary of Music* by Sébastien de Brossard offers a new and promising point of view concerning the study of lexicographic units in the dictionary and their rearrangement in thematic “classes”. This systematic and statistical study has an innovative approach which could be applied and arouse interest for the aggregate of theoretical tractates of 17th and 18th century. Actually Mr. Konov’s works are an integral part of the fields of study of the Research Studio of Center of Baroque music in Versailles which started the publishing of the musical works of Sébastien de Brossard within the *Monumentalia* collection a few years ago. Mr. Konov’s research and results legitimate the contemporary review of the *Dictionary of Music* by Sébastien de Brossard, which is complemented by this lexicographic study. It would be honour for us to realize this publication within the Center of Baroque music in Versailles and to entrust it to the care of Mr. Konov. Versailles, 20 March, 2006.” Please do not consider this immodesty: I would just like to “draw the circle” – I have studied and specialized in Bulgaria and have the pleasure and privilege to work in SWU Neofit Rilski. In other words I have participated actively and am still participating – within my field of study and my time – in the outstanding Bulgarian “recovery” process.

So I **studied and compared the epochs of Sébastien de Brossard and Neofit Rilski in detail** (Absolutist France and Bulgaria within the Ottoman Empire from the time of Neofit Rilski: “His monastic clothing could be seen throughout the century of reign of the sultans Selim III, Mustafa IV, Abdulite Medjjs, Azis and Hamid”, as quoted by writings of the Neurocopian Head of metropolis Pimen).

And OTLINED THE FOLLOWING PARRALELS BETWEEN Sébastien de Brossard and Neofit Rilski:

1.1. De Brossard was a French catholic cleric, a noble from absolutist France, the greatest European power at that time (18th century).

1.2. Neofit Rilski was a Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox cleric originating from a wealthy, active and public spirited family on both his father’s and mother’s side, who lived in Bulgaria just before its Liberation (19th century) from the Ottoman Empire and who witness this national Liberation.

2.1. The personal, cultural and socio-professional development of De Brossard is determined and limited to a great extent by the limitations of a society, both dynamic and established, whose social groups and classes control their boundaries strictly. His petty noble status and his insignificant financial resources together with the lack of relations to any high-ranking members from the Church and Court determined the limitations in his professional growth in the Church hierarchy out of the Court spectrum.

2.2. The family environment of Neofit Rilski probably played a role in his choice of profession in the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church (his father was a priest), it also determined his cultural interests and self discipline, and moulded his self-respecting character (due to his wealthy family origin?). The influence of his social environment in the Eastern Orthodox Bulgarian village of Bansko, a center of culture and trade probably formed his duteousness and patriotism. It is difficult to determine the extent of each influence.

3.1. The intellectual and creative gifts of de Brossard as well as his education in the catholic Jesuitical schools in combination with his active mind, hard work and capacity for this work are the basis for his strong positions as a musician-both practician and theorist, with encyclopedic interests but with marked affinity to music. De Brossard remains famous as a musician and lexicographer.

De Brossard gathered a huge in content and value personal library and systemized it methodically and with care into a Catalogue which he later gave as a donation to the Royal Library: this is currently the most significant “data base” on the theory and practice of music from that time and region.

The catholic French cleric de Brossard was greatly influenced by the Italian culture and especially by the music but he searched for and found the right balance between the Italian and French style and preferences in his work as a musician, pedagogue, composer, theoretic and lexicographer.

3.2. The Orthodox Bulgarian cleric Neofit Rilski was under the strong influence of the ancient Greek and modern Greek culture but he was a Bulgarian, taught Bulgarian language and became the patron and father of the new Bulgarian state education in his work as a bookman, enlightener and teacher (although he worked under the clerical power of the Greek Patriarchate!). He laid the due weigh on the ancient and modern

Greek culture and on the Russian culture as well but this did not deflect him from his original position of a Bulgarian bookman and teacher.

3.3. Both were ardent bibliophiles!

4.1. Unfortunately “The Italianist” De Brossard never realized his dream to visit Italy! As a matter of fact he never left France, and he did not travel much within its borders either, especially after he settled down in Meaux where he spent the last 32 years of his life!

4.2. “The Hellenist” Neofit Rilski managed to visit Mount Athos (although it was a 10- day- trip only) and he worked on the island of Halki in the High Clerical Greek School (he was the first Bulgarian university professor) and taught Church-Slavonic language and literature there, which was a mark of great recognition!

5.1. The *Dictionary of Music* by Sébastien de Brossard, which was printed in few editions, was only the first step towards the works of his lifetime – the *Dictionnaire des auteurs (Dictionary of Authors)*, the *Dictionnaire dogmatique (Systematic Dictionary)* and the *Traité général de la musique (General Treatise on Music)*, which remained unprinted or disappeared (only the draft manuscripts on them have been preserved and there is still a lot of work to be done on them by researchers in the field of history and theory of music).

Many scholars in France and all over the world (including me) have devoted their hearts, minds, time and efforts to this research activity. The leading French (and world) institution – The Research Studio within the Center of Baroque music in Versailles – dedicated many years of research to de Brossard ‘s work, it organized conferences, symposiums etc. and published all of his printed and unprinted musical works, as well as the Catalogue of his personal library.

5.2. The work of Neofit Rilski’s lifetime – his *Lexicon* – to which he devoted 6 decades and revised completely from Greek-Bulgarian to Bulgarian-Greek remains unpublished. His enormous Psaltikia also remains unpublished. ***I am wondering: Don’t we, not only our colleagues in the field of musicology from the Study of Art Institute within the Bulgarian Academy of Science, but also the colleagues from the Southwest University Neofit Rilski, all have a bounden duty to Neofit Rilski and his deed?***

6. In conclusion I would like to state that:

The deed of the Frenchman Sébastien de Brossard – a lexicographer and collector – is of international significance but to a certain field of culture.

The deed of the Bulgarian Neofit Rilski is of great and fundamental significance to our educational system, our national self-awareness and culture.

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