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**CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDY SOFIA**

7B, Stefan Karadža St., Sofia 1000, Bulgaria
Phone:+359 2 9803704, Fax:+359 2 9803662
Cas@cas.bg, www.cas.bg

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KRISTINA POPOVA

“THE JOY OF SERVICE”. BIOPOLITICS AND BIOGRAPHIES BETWEEN NEW YORK, SOFIA AND GORNA DZHUMAJA IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION

This paper is focused on the biographies, careers and networks of Bulgarian and American nurses as agents of biopolitics in the process of their collaboration during the establishment of modern nursing education in Bulgaria. It is based on the intensive correspondence between leading American and Bulgarian nurses in the 1920s and 30s preserved in the Nursing School Archive (in the Central State Archive Sofia), as well as on the publications (articles, books, reports etc.) of these nurses.

Regular correspondence between nurses was a common practice in the first half of the 20th century. Writing letters was an important part of the everyday life of middle class women at that time. As education became more widespread, it also became common for women from lower classes. Nurses were among the women who very often moved from one place to another, often from one hospital to another. They also moved in times of war or travelled with different missions. For nurses, writing letters was also an important tool for communicating with each other, both to preserve personal contacts and friendships, as well as to share professional information and establish professional norms and values. Female images and models were also communicated in this way. Although the correspondence between American and Bulgarian nurses left in the Archive is not personal, it contains a lot of personal information and personal views, which makes it a very interesting source for the primary topics, experiences, relationships and power relations between nurses in the 1920s–30s.

The goal of this research is to point out the importance of the “imagined societies” of nurses and their networks. These imagined societies were important in establishing nursing as an independent profession, such as midwifery and teaching. This

1 There are more than 100 letters (in English) between the Heads of the Nursing School in Sofia (American and Bulgarian) and their Bulgarian students as well between them and the American Red Cross Activists.
2 Christa Haemmerle/Edith Saurer (Hg.), Briefkulturen und ihr Geschlecht (2003)
3 See: Sylvelyn Haehner-Rombach (Hrsg) unter Mitarbeit von Christoph Schweikardt, Quellen zur Geschichte der Krankenpflege. Mit Einführung und Komentaren, Mabuse Verlag Frankfurt am Main, 2008
struggle for the recognition of professional status and for raising the importance of this profession was an important part of the efforts of the international networks of nurses. As Celia Davis writes, "a key issue for consideration is not so much the exclusion of women from work defined as professional, but rather their routine inclusion in ill-defined support roles. This adjunct work of women, it is argued, facilitates the 'fleeting encounter' of professional practice, thereby resting on, and celebrating, a specific historical and cultural construction of masculinity and a masculinist vision of professional work".4

Another goal of the paper is to contribute to the history of biopolitics in its perspective as a history of women as social reformers and agents of biopolitics. The central terms for this history are "biopolitics" and "pastoral power," introduced by Michel Foucault. In the time of industrialization and urbanization in 19th and 20th century, when population became an object of regulation, new methods for the "administration of life" appeared. The health and welfare of individuals and populations, as well as the power strategies used to "normalize" individuals and populations, became the main concern of the policy. Michel Foucault introduced the term "biopolitics" as a term for this development5 and "biopower" for the power aspects of public health politics and institutions.

Public health and welfare observation, measures and regulation needed new kinds of social techniques and vocational training. New social techniques of social discipline, social control and "normalization," but also of social advising and education were elaborated. In contrast to the more evident power of discipline and direct social control, the organized social advising and various organized instructions and educational courses for the population were important techniques of indirect influence. This "pastoral power" – the power of advising, counseling and facilitating – appeared in different courses, lectures, exhibitions, instructions, booklets and issues. It was no less effective than coercive power in determining how people understood and lived the social world. The concern about the struggle against epidemics, tuberculosis and other contagious diseases, as well as about high infant mortality rates drew attention to social hygiene and poverty, to homes in the poor outskirts, to working class families, mothers and children. Religious, feminist, economic and other motivations and interests shaped the discourse about poverty, infant mortality and public health.

Women were both subjects and agents of biopolitical measures in the late 19th and the first half of the 20th century. Women's societies contributed to the development of new social techniques as a possibility for raising the social activities and awareness of women. In the new techniques of pastoral power, women took part as professionals as well as voluntary activists. They were the key figures in instructing

4 Celia Davies, The Health Visitor as Mother’s Friend, A Woman’s Place in Public Health 1900–1914, Social History of Medicine, 1988.
working class and rural mothers, home visiting practices, and health centers. They worked as doctors, midwives, public health nurses and instructors, social workers, journalists etc. The role of women as agents of the biopolitical measures was often constructed as “social motherhood”, as “duty”, or as a “natural” ability to serve the welfare of others. It was propagated as a “Joy of service” in the public discourse. As visiting nurses, charity and professional social workers, they were the people who came into contact with poverty and made it possible to enter people’s homes and negotiate social support. Family work, case work, home visits, mothers’ and housewives’ education courses and other practices and methods were developed in women’s charity organizations and later on by trained professionals. In women’s public spaces in 19th-century homes, such as nursing houses, sisterhoods and settlements, ideas and practices were discussed and new periodicals started. In the 1920s very important international congresses and meetings took place: international congresses of Nurses Societies, child protection activists and social workers established widespread international networks.

The place of women as agents of biopolitics can be seen not only in terms of new possibilities for vocational training, positions of power for women and participation in social reforms, but also as a part of a new patriarchal gender order as well as a gender division in which men took power positions. That’s why the mutual support of women, embodied in networks, international contacts and women’s movement organizations raised their self-confidence and motivated them to engage in such vocational trainings and careers.

After the First World War, the American Red Cross, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Near East Foundation actively supported biopolitical measures, public health institutions and training courses for public health all over Europe, especially in its Southeastern part, in order to reduce the very high infant mortality rates and the spread of social diseases like tuberculosis and malaria. In Sofia, a new Nursing School was opened, led first by the American nurses Helen Scott Hey (1869–1932) and Rachel Torrance (1886–1937) and later on by Theodora LeGros and Hazel Goff (1892–1973). Most of these American Nurses worked in the Balkans as American Red Cross activists, instructors and nurses during the War. Their Bulgarian students Nevena Sendova, Kristanka Pachedjieva, Boyana Christova, Todorina Petrova and many others continued their studies in the 1920s in the USA and England. Coming back to Bulgaria, they took over responsibility for nursing education, and opened new training courses and health centers.

During their study abroad, the young Bulgarian nurses corresponded with their American colleagues in Sofia. As the Americans left Bulgaria they kept their contacts with Bulgarians, establishing a network of professional and personal contacts. The Sofia Nursing School Directors sent their regular reports to Clara Noyes (1869–1936), Director of the Nursing Service of the American Red Cross. In the

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6 See: Know the Joy of Service: Be a Nurse, Published by the Central Council for Nursing Education, Chicago Illinois.
way of such “sisterhoods”, both Bulgarian and American women exchanged their experiences and reflections on their professional and personal everyday life.

The aim of this research is a qualitative analysis of the correspondence between American and Bulgarian nurses in order to reveal their communication, personal and professional topics and power relationships. Some biographies of women as agents of biopolitics also fall within the focus of research: the biography, activities and writings of Hazel Goff (1892–1973), a leading figure in the Nursing Education in Bulgaria, in Czechoslovakia and in the League of Nations; and the biographies of Krustanka Pachedjieva (1895 – ?), who studied in New York and was a teacher and Director of the School from 1935 to 1939; Nevena Sendova (1895–1987), Director of the Nursing School in Sofia and after that director of an orphanage, who studied in New York and practiced in the Henry Street Settlement and Presbyterian Hospital in the early 1920s; Todorina Petrova, who studied in London and was a teacher in the Nursing School and an assistant to Hazel Goff), as well as the biographical experiences of some practicing nurses in the countryside in Bulgaria. How these women built and reflected their “sisterhood” – the experience of being and working together, their contacts with the “other culture”, of traveling over the sea in foreign worlds as well as the rise of their self-confidence as professionals, as single women from the same generation – are all of interest for this research.

Postcolonial feminist theory had indicated the way western feminists present themselves as modern, educated women, in control their bodies and their sexuality, and contrast this image to that of native women, who are family-oriented, undereducated, poor, ignorant, home-centered. Eastern Europe has in this interpretation a specific place as “not civilized enough, not totally wild”. The aim of this research is to reveal the personal side of this development, stressing its gender aspects, and to present women in the process of their individual careers and important international as well as local networks.

In the last 20 years, research into biopolitics in Bulgaria has increased. The past of the American charity organizations and their importance for the public health institutions in Bulgaria has been researched by Alexander Velichkov, Miladin Apostolov, Milena Angelova, Veska Nikolova, Rositza Stojanova and other Bulgarian authors. They have researched organizational and institutional initiatives in education and public health and their development in Bulgaria using publications and other American and Bulgarian Archive sources. This is a proper base for research into the participation and biographies of women as agents of biopolitics and their networks in the 1920s and 30s in their wider social context.

The importance of American educational institutions for young Bulgarians at that time has been researched by Ivan Ilchev and other authors. Young female students

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in Samokov were encouraged to express their opinions and views. They published short texts about their experiences, ideas and activities in the College Periodical “Probljasuk” (Shine) in its issues from 1912 to 1915. The teachers also published articles in this periodical. The analyses of these issues affords a glance into their first plans and considerations as young women and the way they were educated.

Using biographical methods and discourse analyses of the letters, it will be possible to make more visible the role of women in (bio)politics, as well as the importance of exchange and correspondence for their personalities, profession and networks.

**THE BEGINNING OF THE NURSING TRAINING**

Nursing training began as result of the practical needs of hospitals, which were traditionally carried out by people without any preparation. Most often men and women engaged in this job until the 19th century were described as people who were not viable for other job, as well as corrupt, brutal, drunken and merciless. The first steps to separate caretaking as an activity specifically for women was made by the Catholic church in the 17th century, when Vincent de Pole initiated the “Ladies of Charity” group (1617). In the first half of the 19th century (1836) in Germany (Kaiserwerth by Duesseldorf), Theodor Flidner initiated in the framework of the Protestant churches’ so-called “Diakonie”, where women – Diakonesses – were instructed in caring for ill people. This kind of care was carried out by religious institutions. Therefore, the moral qualities of the women were emphasized. The preparation time for this work was relatively short. The institutions were organized in a strong disciplinary order in the so-called “Mother House”, and the work was not paid except for some money for everyday needs. This model of the instruction, work and life of nursing women started to be changed in Germany with the introduction of the Bismarck social insurance laws in the 1880s, as the number of hospitals and other health institutions rapidly grew. Their financial situation was improved and the work also started to be better paid.9 The concept of the hospital as an institution at that time also changed, as did many of the treatment procedures. Important advances in epidemiology and the etiological interpretations of social diseases were made in the second half of the 19th century, especially with the identification of the cholera bacillus as well as the tuberculosis bacillus. All of these advances made preventive health care much more possible especially by means of hygiene measures and improving living conditions parameters. Public health care

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9 About the history of care and nursing practice and Education in Prussia as well as the differences between the Prussian system, on the one hand, and the Anglo-Saxon and American system on the other, see: Christoph Schweikardt, Die Entwicklung der Krankenpflege zur staatlich anerkannten Tätigkeit im 19, und frühen 20. Jahrhundert. Das Zusammenwirken von Modernisierungsbestrebungen, ärztlicher Dominanz, konfessioneller Selbstbehauptung und Vorgaben preußischer Regierungspolitik, Martin Meidenbauer Verlagsbuchhandlung, Muenchen, 2008. According to the author, in Prussia the established system didn’t allow high qualified care to the same extent as in the USA, where the nursing profession and vocational training were standardized and also granted academic status, therefore giving more opportunities to individual caregivers.
was occupied with the task of reducing the high rates of infant mortality and the prevention of tuberculosis and other contagious diseases. All this contributed to the importance of public health and to changes in vocational training.

The changes in the concept of nursing activities were more connected to the changing place of women in society. In the middle of the 19th century, many charity and educational women’s organizations were founded in England and other countries to engage in charity activities for poor populations and the spread of knowledge regarding sanitation. This was thanks to the English Florence Nightingale, who based nursing preparation and activities on the necessity of systematic medical and hygienic preparation and connected this with moral demands. At the time of the Crimean war, she proved against every prejudice in the English army the effectiveness of nursing care for ill soldiers and its usefulness for the prevention of epidemics. She became very famous and gained publicity in England. In her “Notice of Nursing”, Florence Nightingale developed a wide program of implementation of the nursing profession in the field of public health, especially in prevention. She managed to open the way for a new kind of vocational training – visiting nursing (public health nursing). This was developed very intensively as a central biopolitical activity in the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, and was crucial for modern health and hygienic culture and for the hygienic control of the population. The foundation organized by Florance Nightingale opened a school for nurses in London (Bedford School for Nurses), which became one of the important centers of the nursing professions. The new concept of nursing gave important impulses for nursing education in the USA, where it was professionalized in a very short time. Many schools of nursing in New York, Boston and other cities were organized. Under the influence of the social reformists and women’s movement, public health nursing started to be taught as women’s activity to contribute to the progress of society. Prevention of infant mortality and contagious diseases, health promotion for poor families, mothers and children, and improvement of social living conditions for immigrants and other poor citizens in the cities were the tasks public health nurses were engaged in. The settlement movement at the end of the 19th century also provided an opportunity for public health nurses to connect to social problems and the social reformist movement. Women started their own institutions living among the poor population in the outskirts, where they could combine social research, education and social work. As Martha Vicinus writes, “Middle class women could safely colonize the slums because they brought with them the structures and beliefs of their own class, the educated upper-middle class. Neither the idealism nor the self-confidence of a new generation of educated women could be satisfied by the amateur philanthropy of their mothers. Settlements were a particularly appealing solution in both America and England, for they promised public leadership and professional yet womanly work. The loyalties of college women to their college and friends were strengthened by a sense of being different from their

peers, of being better prepared to take up public responsibilities. The fellowship of college life could be broadened to reach out to the poor...”11

Another source of impetus for the nursing profession was the Red Cross movement, which also started and was spread in the second half of the 19th century. In the 1860s, international humanitarian and medical initiatives in the case of war were initiated by Henri Dunant. Nursing activities were suitable for the needs of the Red Cross societies, which were organized in their first decades for war conditions. Since Prussia was among the first countries to support the Red Cross movement and to sign the Geneva Red Cross Agreement (8 August 1864), the Prussian model of nursing organization was spread in the Red Cross network. The Mother House model of nursing, which organized life, work and preparation, was adopted. In this way, the Red Cross contributed to the dissemination of nursing activities in the European countries. Nursing activities came out of their religious framework and were affiliated in various other frameworks, such as the Red Cross and other institutions.

In the middle of the 19th century, female nursing activities in Russia began and were very actively supported by the Russian Royal family. The nurses were organized in communities (obshtina), the form of which was similar to the Mother House in Germany. The ideology of nursing at its beginning stressed first of all the quality of mercy and love for others. The first institution, “Sveta Troizka obshtina” (1844, in other texts 1841), was dedicated to the memory of the Great Princess Alexandra Nikolaevna. In the Capital of Sankt Petersburg, in Moskau and in other big cities, such “obshtini” were started.12 Also, on the initiative and with the financial support of a member of the imperial family, the Princess Elena Pavlovna, in 1855 the “Krestovozdvizhenska obshtina” was organized. The Princess also took part in the beginning of the Red Cross movement. Special attention was paid to the preparation of staff for the Red Cross activities.13 After that, other centers for nurses were organized under the protection of prominent aristocrats. Orphanages and other social assistance institutions were affiliated with them. At the time of the Crimean war, the famous Russian Surgeon Nikolaj Pirogov prepared a group of nurses for wartime nursing needs. He stressed first of all moral qualities and dedication to mercy. Work as a nurse during wartime became in Russia in the next decades an important side of women’s identity and was a source of social prestige and recognition of women in society. As in other countries, it contributed to the public activities of women. In the Russian-Turkish war (1877–1878), hundreds of Russian women took part as nurses organized by the Red Cross or by various “obshtini. Here the model of serving without being paid was preserved, and paying for services was even seen as something upsetting for a woman.14 High recognition of a

11 Martha Vicinus, Independent Women, p.221.
13 Ibidem, p.4.
14 Sofia von Kenig /nine Chirikova/, Vossposminanija sesti miloserdija, Istoricheskij vestnik, 1916,
nursing woman was combined with the demand that this work represent an act of mercy and voluntary sacrifice.

Most of the women who attended the nursing courses had a good education, with foreign language, music and other skills, but it was not a formal but a home education.\

**Educational background:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Female Institute</th>
<th>Female Secondary School</th>
<th>Boarding school</th>
<th>Midwife Courses</th>
<th>Pedagogical or Physician courses</th>
<th>Local or village schools</th>
<th>Home education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After finishing the course and passing the exam, they received a document that proved their qualification, but this was not a professional diploma. The right of retirement and pension was also introduced in Russia in the early 20th century.

An important precondition for the spread of these concepts of nursing in Russia at that time was the presence of a significant number of women from the higher classes who were able to work without being paid. As we can see from the social background of women who attended the preparation courses in the capital before the Russian-Turkish war, a large part of the women came from the high social classes.

**Family background:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social status of the father</th>
<th>Aristocrats/clerks</th>
<th>Priests</th>
<th>Merchants</th>
<th>Crafts</th>
<th>Peasants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this way, the social structure of Russian society as well as social views and the image of a "Russian woman" as a model of mercy, made for the slow process of professionalization of nursing activities until the time of World War I. Even experienced nurses who had spent many months and even years in military hospitals had to find other jobs after the end of the war if they had no financial support. For example, the nurse Sofia Alexandrovna fon Kenig, who worked during the whole time of the Russian-Turkish war (1877–1878) and gained a lot of awards and high recognition for her activities, after the war tried to find a job as a classroom teacher in a female secondary school, but didn't got this position and finally served as a housekeeper for relatives. Her experience as a nurse was the central event in her life and a source of high social recognition, but not a profession and not a job. The

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15 Ibidem., p.11.
16 The table was prepared after the numbers given in Ilinskij, the cited book, p.11.
Red Cross society tried to find jobs for experienced nurses. Red Cross societies continued their activities not only in wartime but also in cases of disasters and epidemics, and also started charity institutions. Nurses were appointed for these different initiatives and especially for epidemics, but only for a certain time and had to change jobs often.

In the first decades of separate nursing activities, the need for nursing preparation courses for female persons was generally recognized as a common issue in most European powers and the USA. It was supported by the concept of female mercy and social motherhood, by the female interest in social recognition and by interest in more knowledge in the natural and social sciences, as well as by female organizations for social reforms. Significant differences appeared between the concepts of nursing education and practice in the different countries. These were due to different discourses as well as different social situations. The Prussian model which was spread in Continental Europe with the Red Cross societies was based on an organizational principle of the “Mother House”. By this principle, nurses lived under a strong order and discipline, with high moral standards and devotion to the moral aspects of the care. The time required for the preparation was relatively short. Payment for the work was low and retirement possibilities were introduced later. In Russia, the idea of mercy and self-sacrifice was of paramount importance. In their visits to hospitals in Germany and France, Russian nurses were impressed by the organization of labor, as well as by the order and standards of hygiene, but it seemed to them that the personal warmth toward the patients was not sufficient.

In contrast to German and Russian practice, the concept of nursing education established in the UK and the USA was based on longer courses, which included wider curricula including not only practical but also theoretical knowledge and encouraged further education. Reforms in public health organization allowed nurses to be hired and to be paid not only in hospitals but also in various local institutions, especially as public health nurses. They established societies and organizations. The American Nurses Association in the USA started at the beginning of the 20th century to publish a professional periodical, the American Journal of Nursing. The American Red Cross organized its Nurses Section, which had its own administration and also contributed to the spread of nursing practices and education. The settlement work gave the opportunity for nurses to observe living conditions and to participate in social reforms.

The different systems of nursing education and work were not isolated from each other. Nurses traveled a great deal, especially in the framework of Red Cross activities. In the early 20th century, the Rockefeller Foundation also started many international institutions, in which many nurses took part. During World War I, American Nurses from the American Red Cross worked in Russia together with Russian nurses.

The ideas and organization of the Red Cross/Red Crescent also reached the Balkan region. In 1867 the Red Crescent Organization started in the Ottoman Empire, and
in 1877 it was officially recognized. Nursing as a female activity was not practiced in the beginning, although according to the memoirs of the English surgeon Charles S. Ryan, who served in the Red Crescent unities during the Russian-Turkish war (1877/1878), there were also women who helped to care for the wounded soldiers. He wrote: "Although we had no female nurses, still I found that Turkish women, whenever they had an opportunity, attended to the wounded with the devotion of a Florence Nightingale." The need of female sanitary staff was discussed first in 1897, during the Turkish-Greek war, and further on during the Balkan war (1912–1913). The President of the Red Crescent Organization, Dr. Besim Omer Pasha, insisted in 1913 that such preparation courses be opened. He invited European artists to present the image of a nurse and to make it visible in the Ottoman society through illustrated postcards, in order to attract women to these activities. In 1914–1915 the first courses were opened on his initiative. Some high-class young women attended the first courses, and after that women started to serve as voluntary nurses during the war. After the First World War, women who had served as voluntary sanitary staff were accepted with priority into the nurses courses. In 1920 the first school for nurses was opened in Istanbul, affiliated with the American Hospital in the town. It was the single such school until 1925. Lessons were given in English. In the first classes, Turkish women studied together with a great number of Armenian, Greek and Bulgarian women. Some of the Bulgarian graduates of the School for Nurses at the American Hospital in Istanbul played a significant role in the reorganization of nursing education in Bulgaria in the 1920s.

**THE BEGINNING OF NURSING EDUCATION IN BULGARIA**

In Bulgaria, nursing education was also initiated by the Red Cross. People were first confronted with the practice of female nurses in the Russian military hospitals and English Mission Hospitals during the Russian-Turkish War (1877–1878). During the brief Serbian-Bulgarian war in November 1885, the just-organized Bulgarian Red Cross Society tried to attract nuns from female monasteries to serve as sanitary staff. After the enthronement of Prince Ferdinand in 1887, his mother, Princess Clementine, organized a hospital in which Catholic nurses served. The Bulgarian Red Cross Society tried to open a first preparation course for nurses in the 1890s. At the same time, in 1895 a midwife course was opened in Sofia. Finally, in 1898–1900 nursing education was established. It began in a time when the political relations between Russia and Bulgaria were improving after a long time of interruption (1887–1894). The Bulgarian Red Cross Society invited some nurses

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from the “Svetotroizka obshtina” (Holy Trinity), led by the Russian nurse Sister Efrosina. This way a “Svetotroizka obshtina” in Sofia was organized, affiliated to the Red Cross society, following the Russian model. A small hospital with eight beds was opened for the practice of nursing. Students learned and lived together in the “Obshtina”, and also worked in the Red Cross hospital. The preparation course was one year long, followed by one year of practice in a hospital in the country, where nurses’ skills, qualities and abilities were again evaluated by the Doctor who led the hospital and were put down in an attestation (evaluation) form. After receiving positive notes in the attestation form, the nurse received the document for finishing the course and had the right to practice. In the time until the Balkan wars (1912–1913), about 120 nurses graduated from the school.

The Red Cross set some preconditions for entering the school for nurses. Women had to be unmarried and over 18 years old (in some cases widows without children were also accepted), to have completed at least the seven years of obligatory school education (in Bulgaria III Secondary School Class) as well as to have a good reputation in the society and good behavior, which had to be confirmed by the local priest or by the Municipality. They were obliged to work at least the three years following graduation. One of the parents had to sign agreeing to this obligation. This obligation reflected the fear that a nurse could leave her job for marriage or for another reason, which could create a shortage of qualified nurses for hospitals. In fact, in the next decades the number of qualified nurses was very insufficient. The vocation of nursing was not established and also it was not possible to combine work with a family life. That’s way the Red Cross society tried to force the graduates to work at least a certain number of years. Candidates for the school had also to write their “Life description” with their own hand. These “Life descriptions” of the first candidates for the School for Nurses in Sofia are a significant source for the reconstruction of the family background and motivation of the young girls for this new profession.

“LIFE DESCRIPTIONS” AND BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CANDIDATES FOR THE RED CROSS SOCIETY SCHOOL FOR NURSES IN SOFIA

As “Ego Documents”, those “Life descriptions” from the beginning of the 20th century are a very important source for the history of women in Bulgaria. The female “Ego documents” as well as female autobiographies and memoirs were still not very common at that time. There were only few female autobiographies published until the end of the 19th century. There were no models for women as they wrote their life descriptions.

Nevertheless, writing letters, diaries and other personal forms of expressing “the self” became a more popular practice. Young women in secondary schools often
had their “memory books”. The “life descriptions” of the candidates for the School for Nursing are a very interesting source for the reconstruction of circumstances and life constellations in which young women were moved to choose a professional education in a time when most women had no professional life plans but only plans to be housewives and mothers.

Students in the first years of the school came from the generations born in the 1880s-1890s. There were some exceptions: The oldest student was born in 1867, and some other students were born in the 1870s. To analyze their biographies, we need to know the common norms and life perspectives for women in their generation and class, as well as the gender discourses in the society.\(^\text{21}\)

Most of the women who attended the preparation courses came from families of the low middle class: craftsmen, small merchants and petty clerks. Very important was the fact that these were families from the social class that often experienced strong financial difficulties. Many young women were forced to join vocational training because they were orphans.

Having no patterns or models for their life descriptions, girls began with the most significant event in their childhood. Orphans often started their life descriptions with the death of one of the parents.

“…I describe briefly my life, which is the following: After my mother Pena died, we left two children – I was 7 years old, my sister Rayna – 3 years old. My father enrolled me in the first class in the school. After that my father married again for another woman – Vurba, because there were no person to look after us. But she was a very bad woman, she hated us so strongly that she didn’t want to see us at home: me and my sister, whom my father was forced to give as a foster child to an aunt where she is living at present….”\(^\text{22}\)

Children from such families depended for their survival on relatives and other people. Most girls from such lower-middle-class families attended local schools in order to have a basic education. Having the idea to become more qualified housewives for their families, after that many girls attended household schools, which were opened by women’s societies at that time. It was also thought that having some knowledge in sewing, knitting, embroidering etc., they could contribute to the family budget in case of financial difficulties. The alternatives to nursing they mention in their life descriptions include sewer, knitter, in some cases teacher, booking-clerk or other petty clerk. The nursing profession, as well as the other preparation courses, were seen as similar to female family roles and better preparation for household and mothering activities. These were girls who were strongly connected to their families, which remained their most important social milieu, and they respected family care as a primary obligation. Only in certain of the life

\(^{21}\) Sidonie Smith, Julia Watson, Women, Autobiography, Theory; A Reader, 1998.

\(^{22}\) CSA, F. 156к, op.1, a.e.59, p. 3–4. Life description of Elenka Bakurzdzieva from the town of Orjahovo.
descriptions is more information given about their native towns. They didn’t have
definite professional plans for their life, but they decided to work outside the home
if it was necessary for their families.

Education in a female household school was often mentioned in the life descrip-
tions. It was also included in the application forms for the school. Such household
schools were opened in many towns the 1890s after the first female household
school in Sofia, called the Maria Louisa School, was opened in 1893. In the next
two decades, more than 100 household schools were started. They became one
of the mass forms of education for women. According to the analysis of Georgeta
Nazariska, they not only contributed to the modernization of household standards
but also encouraged qualities like compassion to the poor, charity and mercy.

Many graduates of the Maria Louisa School in Sofia sewed clothing for poor chil-
dren or attended the courses for sanitary staff (“Samarjanka” courses) during war-
time (1912–1913 and 1915–1918). Georgeta Nazarska also argues that the orga-
nization of the household schools in the end of the 19th century was connected to
the discourse about the destiny of the girls from poor families and the concern to
protect them from the danger of becoming prostitutes. Through learning a craft in
a household school, they could find a decent job. The transition from school to
home obligations, and after that to a household school to become skilled, became
a routine. The school for nurses found an easy place in this routine of a female life,
without carrying the burden of seeming a final decision for the future:

“I, the signed Traska Georgieva from the town of Trun, inform the honored Red
Cross Society that I wasn’t separated in any way from my parents until today. As a
pupil I studied in my native town and I finished the third secondary school class,
and as there were not a higher class in the town, and as it was impossible to go to
another place, after leaving the school I entered the household school, which was
opened in my native town and it was for four months, and since that time I do the
household work at home.”

The decision to apply to the School for Nurses is explained through the desperate
situation of the family and the lack of subsistence. It is not motivated by the ex-
ample of leading woman, teachers etc. The personalities of teachers are not men-
tioned in the texts. In some motivations there are mentioned motives for becoming
a nurse like “to help others”, “to help suffering people like me” or “to care for suf-
fering people”.

23 Georgeta Nasurska, Mladezhta, socialniat pol i socialnata promjana v Bulgaria /nachaloto na
dvadeseti vek/: dva opita za portret, in: Al. Kostov, Dobrinka Parusheva, R. Preslenova /Eds./, I
nastupi vreme za promjana. Obrazovanie I vuzpitanie v Bulgaria ХIХ – XX century, Sofia, 2008,
p. 87–104.
24 Ibidem.
26 Ibidem.
27 Trun is a small town near Sofia.
28 Life description of Traska Georgieva CSA, F. 156к, op 1, a.e. 65, p. 6.
CONTROL AND PUNCTUALITY: THE ATTESTATION FORMS

The attestation forms preserved in the personal dossiers of the Red Cross nurses contain information about the expectations and demands of nurses in the first decades of this profession. They present the qualities that were targeted as well as the skills that were most appreciated and could earn them the right to practice. They point out qualities like punctuality and obedience as highly appreciated. As an instrument of control, the attestation forms reflect the dependent position of the young nurses not only during the course but also in their first year as nurses, as their qualities and their eagerness for the work were evaluated. According to the Red Cross rules, the attestation forms had to present “the qualities and the vices demonstrated by the applicant woman”.

They included the following traits in the different form rows:

- Honesty and behavior
- Character qualities
- Ability for professional activity
- Tactfulness, Attitude to the ill people and staff
- Eagerness
- Health condition

At the end the final question, “Does the student finally deserve to be accepted as a nurse or not”, had to be answered.

Not only in the formal structure of the attestation form but also in the way they were filled in, qualities like willingness to fulfill orders and obedience were highly valued. For example: “ability is at poor level but very eager and punctual”. The attestation form could be accompanied by an additional remark for stronger supervision: “I am sending you, Mr. Hospital Chief, the attestation form of Pandora Poptodorova with the recommendation for more attention to her behavior.”

Sometimes the notes and evaluation of the nurse given in the school were totally different from those given after the practical work in the hospitals. Maria Grigorova was issued in the School for Nurses the attestation that “she has a weak sense of duty in her work, very irresponsible”, and after that from the hospital: “communicative and cheerful, very kind to the ill persons.” It could also happen that evaluations in two different hospitals for the same nurse were absolutely opposite to each other.

29 CSA, F. 156к, op.1, а.e.67, p. 67.
30 See for example the Attestation form of Kr. Mihajlova from Pazadjik, born 1890 г., CSA, F. 156к, op.1, а.e.67, p.70.
31 Attestation form of K. Bulgurkova from Novoselzi, CSA, F. 156к, op. 1 а.e.59, p.142.
32 CSA, F. 156к, op.1, а.e.71, p. 240.
33 CSA, F. 156к, op.1, а.e.67.
34 This is the case of Miliza Milosheva, CSA, F. 156к, op.1, а.e.66, later on she served long time as a nurse.
In most cases the remarks from the hospital on the attestation forms were similar to the school evaluations: “careful, silent and hardworking” (from the school) and “very kind and calm character” (from the hospital).35

The strong order in the School for Nurses and in the hospitals, as well as the demand for obedience shaped the life of the students in the school as well as their life in hospitals, where they didn’t have the right to go out of the hospital without permission from the chief doctor even in their free time. They were educated in a disciplined, paternalistic system that continued the traditions of their family education. They were not introduced to other models of female behavior during their education and work as nurses. Christine Auer, who researches the history of care and nursing in Germany at this time, argues that in spite of the restrictions and closeness of the nurses’ life, women in such “mother houses” were saved from unwilling marriages, a possibility at this time, as well as from other problems and difficulties.36

THE NEW BEGINNING AND THE AMERICANS:
THE QUEEN ELEONORA SCHOOL, HELEN SCOTT HEY AND RACHEL TORRANCE

At the initiative of the Queen Eleonora (Bulgarian Queen 1908–1917), nursing education in Bulgaria began to be reorganized. She wanted to introduce the American nursing education model and after meeting Mabel Boardman (the National Director of the American Red Cross and Nursing Service since 1905) in 1913, she invited experienced American nurses to the country for this purpose. In parallel with this, Queen Eleonora wanted four native Bulgarian girls to be sent at the Queen’s expense to the Presbyterian Hospital in New York to receive the best nursing education possible, with a view to carrying on the Queen’s School, as it was to be called, upon their return to Sofia.37 In 1914, Helen Scott Hay, who was until 1912 Director of the nursing school in Illinois, was sent by the American Red Cross to Europe and worked in Russia, Rumania and other countries. She led a group of nurses to Russia and on her way back she was asked by Queen Eleonora to stay in Bulgaria. Coming to Bulgaria, Helen Scott Hay visited the American Secondary School in the small town of Samokov (near Sofia) and stayed there for some weeks in order to study the Bulgarian language and to recruit young women for the planned new Queen Eleonora School of Nursing in Sofia. In the Samokov American School’s periodical “Probljasuk” (“Shine”), Helen Scott Hay published an article about public health and public health nursing in the USA, as well as about the necessity for young women in Bulgaria to be trained for this purposes (Helen Scott Hay, 1915).

35 Maria Encheva, CSA, F. 156k, op.1, a.e.67.
37 Miss Clara D. Noyes, R.N., National Director of the American Red Cross Nursing Service, The School of Nursing at Sofia, Bulgaria, State Archive Sofia, F. 360, op.2, a.e.46, p.6.
Some years before, in 1912, the student Nevena Sendova wrote in “Probljasuk” a paper in which she described her personal feelings and the discussions she had had with her classmates about what a young woman should do in war time. This was the time young girls in the school developed the idea of becoming nurses. During her stay, Helen Scott Hay recruited some of these young Bulgarians. They graduated from the new course for nurses opened in 1915 by Helen Scott Hay and her assistant Rachel Torrance in Alexander Hospital in Sofia (Boyana Christova, 1933; Grace Hay Schryver, 1930). Twenty-four women graduated the two-year course of the Queen Eleonora School. “Here with unexampled patience and courage they carried on as best they could through the dark days of the war and reconstruction.”38 Between these students were Nevena Sendova (later she studied in the American School of Nursing in Istanbul), Krustanka Pachedjieva (both studied later also in New York) and Boyana Christova, who graduated in the early 1920s from the first International course for Public Health in Bedford School in London (Susan McGann, 2008). She became the first public health nurse in Bulgaria. (In 1928, Boyana Christova was one of the Bulgarian representatives who took part in the Social Work Congress in Paris, and Nevena Sendova took part in the International Congress of Nurses, held in Helsingfors in 1925 and in Montreal in 1929.

The American Red Cross, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Near East Foundation and other international organizations actively contributed to introducing public health nursing as an important biopolitical agency in Europe, especially in the struggle against tuberculosis and other contagious diseases. This notion of nursing was in opposition to the old interpretation of it as a service restricted to hospitals. The American Elisabeth Crowell (1874–1950) also contributed to the development of public health nursing and its spread in Western (France) and Eastern Europe, serving in the Rockefeller Foundation Institutions in Europe. As a public health nurse and social worker she was invited by Alice Masarykova to Czechoslovakia to help in the establishment of professional social work (Elizabeth Dwyer Vickers, 1996). The intensive discussions about high infant mortality rates and high tuberculosis morbidity and their social etiology established the necessity of professional training of specialists prepared to combine hygiene, educational and social work.

“MANY YEARS OF HARD AND FAITHFUL WORK ON THE PART OF THE NATIVES, ASSISTED AND GUIDED BY EXPERTS IN THE MODERN NURSING SYSTEM AND METHODS”: IDEAS ABOUT THE REORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL FOR NURSES IN SOFIA

During the war, Queen Eleonora continued to work for the organization of the new school for Nurses. She discussed with the Americans new orders, uniforms of the School, etc. After her death in November 1917, the organization of the new School

38 Ibidem, p.7
for Nurses in Sofia was interrupted, but not for a long time. In 1919, Helen Scott Hay, then Chief Nurse of the American Commission in Europe, visited Bulgaria unofficially during a vacation. She met Ivan Evstratiev Geshov, then president of the Bulgarian Red Cross, and Dr. Kirkovitch, Chief of Staff of the Alexander Hospital and president of the League Against Tuberculosis. Both the Bulgarian Red Cross and the government had plans for the reorganization of the Queen's School. In August 1920, the National Director of the American Red Cross Nursing Service, Clara D. Noyes, visited Bulgaria together with Helen Scott Hay. She was received by the young King Boris and had other meetings in which the project of the School was discussed. Coming back to Washington, Clara Noyes discussed it with the Bulgarian Minister and with Judge Payne, Head of the American Red Cross, and “the agreement was eventually reached.” The American Red Cross expressed its interest in the Sofia project because of its early participation in the Queen's School in 1914, but also because “…Throughout its relief work overseas the various American Red Cross Commissions had been seriously handicapped by the lack of a native nursing personnel adequately trained to assist the American nurses. They had proved intelligent and willing, it is true, but lacked technical skill and the ethical understanding of nursing standards so necessary in building a permanent program of health and welfare service....” The financial participation of the American Red Cross consisted of providing full maintainance for all American personnel, furnishing comfortable living quarters and good food. In October 1922, Rachel Torrance, who assisted Helen Scott Hay in 1914–1916 as Director of the School for Nurses in Sofia, arrived in Sofia with Theodora LeGros as her assistant. In 1924, Theodora LeGros was replaced by a new assistant Director, Hazel Avis Goff.

Now Bulgarian students at the School were exposed for a longer time to their new teachers from America, who introduced new models and standards. Americans had to find support among the students and among the local authorities of Red Cross health services for collaboration. This collaboration would be a challenge for the different participants in this collaboration in the next years.

Some years later, Clara Noyes wrote a paper for the American Red Cross in which she described how the school in Sofia was reorganized. This paper, which was based on her memories and on the letters and reports of the American nurses in Bulgaria who led the school in the next years, Rachel Torrance, Theodora LeGros and Hazel Avis Goff, gives information about the steps, intentions and ideas which were laid down at the new beginning of the School. The Americans had, according to her report, the necessary qualifications for running the School in Sofia: “Speaking Russian, Serbian and Bulgarian, Miss Torrance was soon at home with her assistant, Miss Theodora C. LeGros, a graduate of the General Hospital in Minneapolis, Minnesota, U.S.A….Miss LeGros had served as an Army Nurse with the American
Expeditionary Forces, had done medical social service work in Bellevue and from 1919 to 1922 had been assigned to nursing duty under the Red Cross in Romania and Poland.42 About Hazel A. Goff, who came in 1924 as an assistant to Rachel Torrance, she wrote: “...a nurse of superior professional attainments and a specialist in school administration.”43

The paper of Clara Noyes reveals the attitude toward the native people as well as toward the school conditions. She recognized the contribution of the Bulgarian Red Cross and the Russian nurses from “Svetotroizka obshchina,” which had initiated the School and the first courses. “The past history of nursing in Bulgaria is rich in inspiration and stories of noble ideals and great personal sacrifices,” she wrote.44 She described briefly the organization of the School: “…Under Sister Efrosina the school was modeled after the German Mother House, i.e. the same Board manages the school, both students and graduates, and the same roof houses them all. The graduates never lose direct connection with the Mother House. The head of the school is always the head of the graduates. In time of vacation the graduates may stay at the Home, also in case of invalidism. In the first days of the Obshchina there were eight beds for patients in the same building and wider experience was obtained in Alexander Hospital. The length of the course was 1 year…”45

But despite these achievements, “At that time,” she wrote, “the status of the school was the same as (less than) that of institutions teaching dressmaking, cooking, etc. Whereas it was the aim of the American Red Cross to place it on a par with schools of medicine, law, engineering and similar professional schools.”46

The task of the reorganization of the School was to introduce American standards of education and work. This meant introducing not only a new kind of organization but also a new conviction among nurses that the American standards in this profession were the highest in the world.47 The profession was defined in a universalist way. Special attention was paid to the educational level and qualities of the individuals who entered the school. The educational qualification of the applicants had to “connot sufficient maturity of years and mind to safeguard the school against the extremely youthful person of unformed character and unstable ambitions. Nursing,” Clara Noyes wrote, “is one of the noblest of vocations and as such not be entered into lightly or as a stopgap between school and marriage.”48

To raise the authority of the profession, the School had to be an institution with separate building, laboratories, libraries and constant access to clinical material, but also a place for the development of individuals and for collective activities. The nurses’ home should include separate sleeping rooms for each nurse wherever pos-
sible, as well as a cozy salon where the students could gather for wholesome recreation. Head Nurses in the hospital should be subordinated to the director of the school. In her letters to Bulgarian nurses, it was also mentioned that the School had to be led by a qualified nurse and not by a doctor. Underlining the differences of this system from the strong, disciplining Prussian system of underpaid work, Clara Noyes argued that nurses had to have the possibility of freedom to shape their own future, as in the American experience.

To introduce those new concepts in Bulgaria, American nurses required the collaboration of their Bulgarian colleagues. Clara Noyes viewed this as a process of “many years of hard and faithful work on the part of the natives, assisted and guided by experts in the modern nursing system and methods, to change public opinion sufficiently to guarantee a dignified position in the social life of the community for the nurses in these pioneer fields.” The supervision had to last about five years in order to set a stable basis for the school.

Clara Noyes believed that Bulgaria was ready to develop “a real nursing profession”. She suggested relying on well-known local people. A committee had to be chosen which would include representatives from the ministries of hygiene, education, and philanthropy, as well as from the welfare movement. Special attention had to be paid to the preparation of public health nurses in at least a four-month course after graduation from the School for Nurses. “The more public health nurses there are in a country, the fewer the patients in hospitals and the less frequent are epidemics. For it is the special province of the public health nurse to improve standards of health and hygiene, teach the proper care of children as well as sick persons, and to check the spread of disease.”

The English language was seen as a practical need for the students because of the textbooks and other literature, as well as to enable international communication between nurses and the requirements for selection of students for English-speaking countries. The curricula included 100 hours of English language instruction. For the purposes of education the assistant Director Hazel Goff standardized all nursing procedures in 1924–1925. Lectures were translated and typed. The curricula contained 575 hours of class work, and 100 hours of practical nursing work.

“For We Want the Graduates of Our School to Be Splendid Pioneers in the Nursing Profession in Bulgaria, and Worthy Members of the Nursing Profession of the World”:

In her report to the American Red Cross Board on December 1922, the new Director of the Red Cross School for Nurses in Sofia, Rachel Torrance, described her

49 Ibidem, p.4.
50 Ibidem.
51 Ibidem, p.6
52 Clara Noyes, p. 17.
impressions of the students and her intentions for future work. She appreciated their education and stressed the virtues the students needed: perseverance, loyalty to their work and associates, absolute honesty, vision and leadership, as well as the refined moral qualities:

“I am particularly pleased with the type of young women who are applying,” she wrote. “From personal talks with some and from the letters of others, I am impressed with their good qualifications. They have good educations, some have been teachers. They seem very sincere. They much appreciate the need for nurses in the country and their wish to develop the profession of nursing in Bulgaria is strong.”

“We must not fail to give them an education which they seek. We must preserve and strengthen their love for the work which awaits them. We must find and develop in them qualities which they perhaps do not know that they possess, and emphasize the virtues of perseverance, loyalty to their work and associates, absolute truthfulness, vision, leadership as well as the refined qualities of mercy, humanity and altruism.” “For we want the graduates of our school to be splendid pioneers in the nursing profession in Bulgaria, and worthy members of the nursing profession of the world. I believe that only by first fulfilling their wishes and making them good nurses and then by preparing them to be responsible members of a profession whose greatest aim is service can we of the Committee carry out our duty to the students of our school. If we accomplish this, nursing care for those in need will follow.”

Bulgarian nurses who assisted in running the school were described also from the point of view of the nurses’ virtues Rachel Torrance had pointed out. Krustanka Pachedjieva seemed to possess those qualities: “She is endowed with unusual qualities of adherence to principles[...]And is possessed of poise and perseverance. Again and again already she has shown her devotion to the interests of the school. One of her greatest virtues is her faculty of finding good things and encouraging elements in every situation. She has faith in all the students and works over them with much patience and success. She has that indispensable adjunct of the nurse, emotional control and is cheerful at all times.”

About Nevena Sendova: “… a Bulgarian nurse of exceptional talent, who has had one year and a half of special training for her important mission at Teachers College, New York, the Presbyterian Hospital (New York) School of Nursing, and the Henry Street Settlement, also in New York. This training was given at the expense of a wealthy, philanthropic lady who had been a patient at the American Hospital in Constantinople when Miss Sendova was in training there. It was given with the express object of fitting Miss Sendova to carry on in the school of nursing in Bulgaria after the eventual withdrawal of the American nurses….Miss Sendova has been established here now for a month [Dated May, 1925], and is a great prop, re-

53 Cited after Clara Noyes: Ibidem, p.14
54 Cited after Clara Noyes: Ibidem, p.14
55 Ibidem, p.11.
ally a remarkable help. We have another nurse instructor, Miss Tsanka Dobreva, a graduate of the American School in Lovetch and later of the Queen’s School, who has developed wonderfully these last months and is of the same caliber as Miss Sendova and Miss Pachedjieva.  

Rachel Torrance first of all emphasized nursing as a profession and as a career opportunity that suited the needs of a modern young woman. She wrote that Bulgarian women also were seeking professional careers. She defined “profession” as “the means by which intelligent, organized service in a certain line is given to the public. Its members are especially prepared in their line by careful scientific study of all the material accumulated by their predecessors. Their efforts are organized and their work developed by themselves according to the needs of the public and the opportunities offered. Many times, however, the opportunities must be created by them. Bulgarian young women today are eager to take advantage of the offer of a good education leading to professional work. This is proved by the large numbers of them now finding self-expression as teachers and in other forms of public life.”  

Coming to Bulgaria, American nurses tried not only to educate the students and to administrate the School, but also to create relationships of sustained personal trust between them and their Bulgarian assistants and students. American nurses appreciated demonstrations of politeness and respect. Clara Noyes stressed that Rachel Torrance was deeply touched by her reception in Sofia, which was organized as a traditional Bulgarian ritual. According to the description of this moment in Clara Noyes’ report, the ritual was interpreted as similar to a wedding custom. The ethnicity of the native women was emphasized by the description of this old “wedding custom” in the reception of Rachel Torrance “A beautiful bouquet was presented with an address expressing the heartfelt gratitude of the donors to the American Cross. A feature of the occasion was the picturesque old Bulgarian custom observed for centuries when a bride is welcomed into her new home; a loaf of bread and dish of salt were given to the American directress with instructions to carry them later into her dwelling place, – in this case her room. Later a delegation of Russian and Bulgarian nurses from Alexander Hospital called upon her.”  

In Clara Noyes’ paper, only the Bulgarian Red Cross Board was criticized, as it continued to support the old practice that nurses were required to serve a period of years after graduation. In this first confrontation, Rachel Torrance managed to convince the Board of the advantages of the American system that students have to be independent and free from obligatory service. She proved that the old system wasn’t effective: a lot of women graduated from the school, but there were only 105 serving nurses, in spite of the old obligation. Under the “obshtina system” nursing work didn’t appeal to young women in Bulgaria as an attractive vocation. “For the American method of treating this vocation in every way as a profession of the very
highest dignity, and with a brilliant future, has proved always a success to the individual nurse and to the public which she serves,” she wrote. Her opinion was accepted and the Board recommended the changes suggested by the new directress. An alumnae association had to replace the “obshtina” system. In 1924, a society of Bulgarian Nurses was founded with the motto “Serve with Self-denial for the greatest human blessing – health.” The society started a periodical, “Sestra” (Nurse).

At the end of her paper, Clara Noyes repeated her optimistic vision for the School and her hope to visit Bulgaria again. “In that case,” she wrote, “I shall again have the pleasure of beholding its rugged mountains, fertile plains and picturesque cities, to renew acquaintance with its beautiful and historic cities, and meet once more its charming and hospitable people. But above all else I am looking forward to seeing with my own eyes the accomplishments and advancement of the past few years. During the interval since my last visit to Sofia, I have kept close to the school through the reports of its directress and by means of contact with its two students in this country, preparing to carry on what the American nurses have begun. So that in spirit I have been often with the school and its devoted young pupils. ”

Clara Noyes wrote her paper for publication in America. It had an official character in order to present first of all the work of the American Red Cross nurses and their achievements. Bulgaria was presented by means the most common stereotypes: “picturesque cities,” “rugged mountains,” “fertile plains.” Bulgaria was also generally seen as a “fertile plain” for future work and modernization. Young Bulgarian women were presented as eager to study and to become modern women.

The American nurses engaged with the running of the School for Nurses in Sofia tried to establish a relationship of trust with their Bulgarian students. For this purpose, Americans learned the Bulgarian language in order to communicate with more students and with institutions. They created personal contacts also with some of the family members of the students. They wrote letters to the Bulgarian students in New York and London and Bulgarian students were also supposed to write regularly and to describe their life and their experiences abroad.

“In the summer of 1923, Nevena Sendova arrived in New York. In 1915, she had been one of the first students of Rachel Torrance in the Queen Eleonora School for Nurses. She was born in Asenovgrad (Stanimaka) near Plovdiv in 1895 in a

60 Ibidem, p. 21
protestant family. She graduated from the Female American School in Samokov. After the course in Sofia, she graduated from the nursing school in Istanbul. At the American Hospital in Istanbul, she looked after a female patient who was a philanthropist and supported her study at the Teachers College in New York for one and half years. Some months later, another former student of Rachel Torrance, Krustanka Pachedjieva, also came to New York with a grant from the American Red Cross. She was also born in Sofia in 1895 in a protestant family. At the same time, another student graduated from the new classes in Sofia, Todorina Petrova, and was sent to London to study at the Bedford School for Nurses.

Rachel Torrance had regular correspondence with the three students and also with other Bulgarian students who studied abroad: Anka Lambreva, Vessela Angelova, and Violet Lambreva in Istanbul and others. The letters were written in English, though some of them were partly in Bulgarian, as Rachel Torrance knew the language quite well. Most of the Bulgarians who were abroad were fluent in English, having studied at the American School in Samokov or Lovech. Only Todorina Petrova was mentioned as having problems with the English language, but Rachel Torrance and Theodora LeGros encouraged her to overcome the difficulties in London.

The correspondence from the years 1923–1925 left in the School for Nurses’ Archive in Sofia was not of a personal kind. Many of the letters written by Rachel Torrance were typed and were probably dictated to the School secretary. Nevertheless, the letters contain a lot of personal information: about family members, about personal plans, about emotions and feelings. As former assistants of Rachel Torrance, Nevena Sendova and Krustanka Pachedjieva included more personal information in their letters than Todorina Petrova, but they also always kept the distance between former students and their teacher. Both Nevena Sendova and Krustanka Pachedjieva in New York were also in correspondence with Helen Scott Hey. They also met Clara Noyes and other people from the American Red Cross, as well as Bulgarian diplomats or other Bulgarians who came for different occasions to the USA. They mentioned these meetings in their letters. For example, Julia Malinova, at that time President of the Bulgarian Women’s Union, took part in a Suffragist Congress and met Clara Noyes. Bulgarian students also got to know some relatives of Rachel Torrance. In this way various networks – professional, women’s, national – were constructed and intersected. In these networks, young Bulgarian nurses could enjoy their time in New York and their opportunities for education and career, and parallel to this they were under the observation of many of their teachers and other prominent people from Bulgaria and the USA.

At that time, the Teacher’s College in New York was the best educational center for nurses that offered academic courses. Here the first Professor of Nursing, Prof. Isabel Stewart gave lectures. Students also had the opportunity to practice in the Presbyterian Hospital and to practice Public Health Nursing in the Henry Street Settlement. They had a very intensive program, but they could arrange and choose their subjects. For their future practice as teachers in a nursing school they were
also invited to have classes in different subjects. Students lived in the International House at the Teachers College, where they were confronted with the life of students from different countries in the world. Young nurses like Nevena Sendova and Krustanka Pachedjieva in crossing the Atlantic Ocean were exposed to a totally different educational system and new subjects, as well as to the life in a megapolis like New York.

In her letters to Rachel Torrance, Nevena Sendova described in an amusing way her journey from Europe to New York. She saw the journey through the eyes of a medical person: She described sicknesses, diagnoses and other medical cases on the ship:

“It will be not of much interest to you, if I start to write all about my journey. I will tell you just very little about it. The first 10 days I was a very good sailor, the other 14 days I gave up all. Enough sea-sick to make you feel like dying and that is all. We had a rather exiting time. Four babies were born, two adults died, epidemic of Measles and Diarrhea with almost all babies and children. The last two are enough exiting, aren’t they. When I did not know yet what sea-sickness was, I was having a pretty good time. I was in the company of 5 sister and 1 brother going with father and mother to Brooklyn. By the way they were Greeks and I could talk to the youngest who spoke English very well. They were really very nice to me. There was an old Russian general bachelor who ask me to help him with his English and in return he would teach me fortune telling. I helped him and he taught me ’fortune telling’ not for very long there, I gave it up pretty soon on account of the sea-sickness. Anyway I know something about telling fortune now – Well – well –well.”

Both Nevena Sendova and Krustanka Pachedjieva wrote a great deal about their study. They described in detail their subjects, the grades they had to have, the difficulties they had to overcome, the teachers and the conversations they had with them. Most of the emotions they described were connected with the challenges at the university as well as their achievements. Nevena Sendova wrote:

“…I will very probably take a course in public health which I think will help me a great deal as I have had the field work at H.S.S [Henry Street Settlement – K.P.]. Did I tell you that I taught a class in teaching of nursery methods. It was quite exiting but I liked it very much…”

Krustanka Pachedjieva also reported how she tried to fulfill the academic demands of her professors and about some misunderstandings in the beginning because of her eagerness:

“…I like my subjects. I know I did not know the method of studying so the first days

61 Letter from Nevena Sendova to Rachel Torrance 17. 8. 1923, State Archive София, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p.60
62 Letter from Nevena Sendova to Rachel Torrance 10. 4. 1924, State Archive София (SAS), F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p.54–59.
I had a very hard time for I tried to read all the references. When I saw that this is impossible I went to Professor Stewart to tell her that I can not read all the material she gives us then she begun to laugh and said: "Did you try to read that all in one day?" I said, Yes, then she said: "Poor child, I should have told you that you must try to read if possible two of them." So I was very much discourage the first days but now I enjoy my subjects.  

And again about the everyday academic life and her enthusiasm some months later: "...This week is a very busy time for us in the college. Exams, midterm papers and so on, but I like my work very much. I think that Miss Stewart and Miss Burgess are wonderful teachers. I am visiting quite many hospitals for I have to observe lectures. I go to the main office and ask them if they will be good enough to spend some time for me and show me the hospital. Everybody has been very nice to me. Oh, I wish we could have the equipment of some of the kitchen here..."  

Krustanka Pachedjieva also wrote about her personal scientific interests in new subjects she studied in New York. Here her special interest in Psychology started, which would be developed in the next decades. She wrote to Rachel Torrance: "...In my Psychology class we are making experiments and intelligent tests on children. If I come I mean if I am living and come again back to Bulgaria I would like to make some intelligent tests on our new students. It is very interesting thing to try and see the ability of people. Oh! I am so thankful that I had the chance to come and learn so much. We are sleeping down there..."  

Rachel Torrance shared in her letters to Bulgarians news from the school in Sofia and always mentioned the nurses she worked with at the school. She described the skills and qualities of the new students at the school. She never shared personal information about the other nurses or students. In a didactical way, she encouraged the students abroad, especially Todorina Petrova, who had troubles with her English in London. Torrance emphasized her individuality:  

"...Are you remembering all the advice we gave you before you left us? Perhaps not, but I know that with experience you will be able to give yourself very good advice in the ways of life. Just keep a level head – that means always remember that you are Todorina Petrova and be yourself. We want you to come back to us surely with all the knowledge and experience that a year in London and the International Course can give you, but we will value most the qualities you have [...]Miss Nightingale said, “Let all of us seek to be good rather than clever nurses.”  

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63 Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Rachel Torrance, 2. 10. 1924. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p.1–6.  
64 Isabel Maitland Stewart (1878–1963), professor at Teachers College was a leading expert in nursing education and nursing history.  
65 Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Rachel Torrance, 2.4. 1925, SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p.11–12.  
66 Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Rachel Torrance, 2. 10 1924, SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p. 1–6.  
67 Letter from Rachel Torrance to Todorina Petrova, September 24 1924., SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p. 45–46.
To stress the individuality of Bulgarian students was important for Rachel Torrance for their better achievements. Todorina Petrova accepted these demands. She stopped describing her troubles in her letters to Rachel Torrance but stressed her achievements and her satisfaction with the work. “...I do firmly believe in myself. The work here I can say is very hard. I get only 1 or 2 hours of duty, time only to study. At present I am on night duty, having a pretty busy time, however I feel so well fresh and energetic.”

Bulgarian Nurses took part in social events: holidays, evenings, parties where they started international contacts or met their colleagues and friends. Todorina Petrova was very glad to meet Theodora LeGros at a fancy dress party at Bedford house. Krustanka Pachedjieva was singing in the nurses’ choir at Teachers College in New York. (Later on, as Nevena Sendova and Krustanka Pachedjieva became heads of the School for Nurses in Sofia a nurses’ choir was organized at the School that was so good it gave concerts on Radio Sofia).

Bulgarians were encouraged in the International Houses both in New York and in London to present Bulgarian ethnic traditions. They took these opportunities for public appearances as Bulgarians. Krustanka Pachedjieva was in charge of the Bulgarian part of an exhibition of national hand embroideries at the international house.

Another event was organized by the Nurses Alumni Organization, which gave a prize for best dress or costume. Krustanka Pachedjieva was very proud that she received this award and that Prof. Isabel Stewart praised her: “There were Chinese, Filipino, Yugoslav, Indian and many others students dressed in their national costumes. Do you know who got the prize? I got it. I was dressed in a Bulgarian costume with my hair down and a very nice rose on the side. They liked me so much that Miss Stewart said it was not hard to say who deserves the prize for all agree on my costume. We have a nurses choir – I am singing in it too. It is nice to be a student again.”

In their letters to Rachel Torrance, the Bulgarian students were always positive and never criticized anything in the USA. Everybody was “very nice” toward them: teachers, Red Cross activists and others. Everything impressed them in a positive way, and the living conditions and food were so good in America that they looked better than ever. America remained an ideal country for them. The critical remarks which the letters afford were only toward the Bulgarian Red Cross doctors or toward some of the Bulgarian nurses. They were discussed with Rachel Torrance in the context of the aspiration toward more equality in the relationships with doctors. Rachel Torrance never answered the comments about other nurses but supported the discussions about power relationships and equality. Writing

68 Letter from Todorina Petrova to Rachel Torrance, 10. Juni 1925, SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p.30–33.
69 She described this evening party in a letter to Miss Torrance from 1.12. 1924, SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p.38–40.
70 Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Rachel Torrance, 20.4.1925. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p. 8–10.
71 Ibidem.
72 “I am getting fat. Sendova said that for many years I have not been so well”, Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Rachel Torrance, 2. 10. 1924. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p. 1–6.
about those kinds of troubles, Nevena Sendova and Krustanka Pachedjieva emphasized their solidarity as nurses with Rachel Torrance and other nurses. Nevena Sendova wrote: “It is so nice to hear that the doctors are beginning to understand our language and getting also into the spirit of the program.”73 Krustanka Pachedjieva also mentioned the difficulties Rachel Torrance had to overcome in Bulgaria. She wrote in October 1924: “On the 30 September at the Teachers College a nurse spoke who has opened a modern school in Brazil. As she told about the difficulties she had finding good nurses and as she told how she struggled against the notions of the doctors etc., I imagined that you were speaking and telling about your struggles. The interesting thing is that it was exactly the same.”74

1925 brought some changes in the content of the correspondence. Although politics was not discussed in the correspondence except for Red Cross affairs, the April assault in Sofia Cathedral, which caused more than 150 deaths and left many wounded, was described as a big national tragedy. Rachel Torrance, Krustanka Pachedjieva, and Todorina Petrova didn’t discuss the political dimensions but the people's tragedy. For them, the life of the people as well as the political order were the most important thing that the Bulgarian Government had to preserve. Krustanka Pachedjieva, who knew about the assault from the newspapers, also spoke about “peace” in her letter: “…But what about all those disturbances in Sofia! The press here writes terrible things. I am very anxious.

“How is everybody? I am sure you are very busy with the many wounded. Oh, will there be peace in my dear country! Do you think that our eyes will ever see real peace?”75

Rachel Torrance described the assault in Sofia as an eyewitness who took also part in the care for the wounded people. The restoration of the political “order” seemed to be important for her at that time:

“…I suppose someone has written you about the dreadfully upset times that kept Sofia stirred up for a while. Now all is quiet and peaceful – the Voenen Chas is half past ten – it was for a while seven o’clock and things go on as usual. Two days ago three of those responsible for the explosion were publicly hanged, and some more will be soon. The hanging was done in the field opposite Red Cross down toward Iuch Bunar. Many wounded from the explosion were brought here to the Red Cross hospital, so we saw some of the awful results. But it was wonderful to me how quickly the situation was brought under control by the Government – the quickest possible work was done both in removing the wounded from the place, and in establishing order in the town. You probably know that Sister Koeva was wounded. She is enough better now that she is again in duty, but she is in a very much weakened state and must have a long rest. Our very great loss is Mrs. Kalcheva. She was

73 Letter from Nevena Sendova to Rachel Torrance, 29. October 1924. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p. 52.
74 Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Rachel Torrance, 2.10.1924. The text in italics is in Bulgarian. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p.1–6.
75 The same letter.
so interested in the progress of this school and in the betterment of the care of the sick and the conditions for nurses and was such a very fine woman that it seems all too unfair that she was taken…”

Todorina Petrova answered this information in the same way: for her the assault was a very “painful surprise,” she regretted for Mrs. Kalcheva, but she was “very glad to read in the newspaper it has subsided now.”

In 1925, Rachel Torrance prepared to leave the school in Sofia in the late summer. In her letters to the students abroad, she reminded them of their future responsibilities for the School for Nurses as it continued its progress: “And I know that my going will not have bad effects on the progress, if the Bulgarian women do their part. If everyone stands around and says that nursing will go back to where it was, naturally it will, but the Bulgarian nurses, and the other people responsible are capable if only they would think so!”

Her assistant, Hazel Avis Goff, was to become the new Director. She knew some of the Bulgarians from Turkey, where she had worked for a certain time, and from New York. Rachel Torrance and the Bulgarian students exchanged their positive impressions of Hazel Goff. Nevena Sendova wrote about her to Rachel Torrance “…I like her very much. She seems to be the person who will best assist you. She told me she liked pioneer work. There she will have all she wants…”

The most discussed topic in the correspondence in 1925 was the future work of the students in the context of the future of the school in Sofia. Now the competition between them, which can be seen in the letters in 1924 at the beginning of their study abroad, becomes more visible, as well as some tensions between Rachel Torrance and Krustanka Pachedjieva regarding their positions in the future. The Bulgarian students wrote more about their future jobs and careers, trying to convince Rachel Torrance to support them after they returned to Bulgaria. Nevena Sendova came back earlier from New York and was appointed to be an assistant to the new Director, Hazel Goff.

In New York, Krustanka Pachedjieva felt insecure about her work in Sofia. She didn’t agree to Rachel Torrance’s plan for her be an operating nurse after coming back to Sofia. She was not sure that she would be approved for that by Bulgarian Red Cross Society. “…Are we guarantied for our future? I doubt,” she wrote. She insisted that she and Nevena Sendova would run the School or that Nevena Sendova and Todorina Petrova would become operating nurses. She also insisted that nursing graduates from the old school would not be a good staff: “…None of the old nurses. No exception. For people, schools states are suffering just for exceptions but that is a hard task. It is much easier to do it now than later for us…”

76 Letter from Rachel Torrance to Todorina Petrova, May 29, 1925., SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p. 34.
77 Letter from Todorina Petrova to Rachel Torrance, June 10 1925., SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p. 30–31.
78 Letter from Rachel Torrance to Krustanka Pachedjieva, June 29, 1925., SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p.
79 Letter from Nevena Sendova to Rachel Torrance, October 5, 1924. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p. 51–52.
80 Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Rachel Torrance, 20.4.1925. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.60, p. 8–10.
81 The same letter.
In this discussion about the future work in Sofia, the power relationships became most visible. Rachel Torrance didn’t accept most of the arguments of Krustanka Pachedjieva for the arrangement of the School. More than this, she was frustrated that Krustanka Pachedjieva didn’t trust her decisions and wanted to make her own plans for the school. She described in detail the future division of work between the nurses and their collaboration, insisting on her own decisions. “...I am sorry that you have not confidence in my judgment in the matter, but that you must make so many other suggestions about what would be better. It is true that the plan for the final arrangement is for you and Miss Sendova to run the school – Miss Sendova as director and you as assistant – But as far as I see, there is nothing to hinder you informing yourself as you have opportunity on operating room work – the procedures, the ethics, the technique, etc.”

Rachel Torrance reminded her of the most important reason she was sent to New York: “…to learn how to be useful to the development of nursing in your country.”

“Please remember that it was my judgment that sent you there,” she wrote, “and that I would appreciate more confidence on your part in my judgment as to what you will best do on your return.”

Finally, Krustanka Pachedjieva became an instructor in the School after her return to Sofia. She was also commended for her achievements by the new School Director, Hazel Avis Goff.

All Bulgarian students successfully finished their study and came back. Very positive reactions came from London about Todorina Petrova: “…she has done exceedingly well in London and she certainly worked very hard…”

In one of her last letters from Sofia, Rachel Torrance recommended that the next Bulgarian student after Todorina Petrova go to the Bedford School in London. For this scholarship Margarita Tsakova was selected. Rachel Torrance commended her knowledge of English as “first rate.” “She rather lacks initiative,” Rachel Torrance wrote, “but I hope that this side of her equipment may be developed there with you.”

Todorina Petrova came back to Bulgaria in the end of December 1925. Later on she became an instructor at the School.

The correspondence with Rachel Torrance was not interrupted after she left Sofia in the autumn of 1925. It lasted until her death in 1936. Torrance sent postcards and letters for different occasions, some of them in Bulgarian. She donated
money for the school and for the library.\textsuperscript{88} There are some letters from her former students and assistants, Nevena Sendova and Krustanka Pachedjieva, left in the School Archive. In January 1932, Nevena Sendova, at that time Director of the School for Nurses in Sofia, described for her the life and the news in the School: Todorina Petrova was preparing notes to teach a class in “Practical Nursing”; she will become head nurse; the student chorus is working hard; most of the new students have physical education. There was a Christmas party at the School and the Red Cross Hospital where a Christmas tree for the children was set up. “A group of girls represented the Bulgarian custom for the celebration of the evening in the villages. They were dressed in peasant costumes and talked and acted as such. You know our salon and you can imagine how crowded we were. We had arranged the salon like a rich peasant’s home with a fire place, icons, etc.”\textsuperscript{89} From this description, we can see that the Bulgarian directors implemented in running the School what they had experienced in their study in America.

The last letter to Rachel Torrance is written in September 1936 by Krustanka Pachedjieva, who became Director after Nevena Sendova. Rachel Torrance was very ill at that time. Krustanka Pachedjieva hopes that her health will improve so that she can visit Bulgaria and see the changes in Sofia: “many big stores, nice gardens, not so much mud in the streets.”\textsuperscript{90} She also sent best regards and much love from many former students.

After the death of Rachel Torrance in the summer 1937, a memorial service in her honor was organized by the School for Nurses in Sofia. Krustanka Pachedjieva, Director of the School at that time, described this service in a letter to her former professor in New York, Miss Isabel M. Stewart. A Fund in the name of “Helen Scott Hay and Rachel Torrance” was established to send a student to the Teachers College in New York. The money collected from the School chorus concerts was to go to this fund.\textsuperscript{91} The loss of Rachel Torrance was also discussed in other letters between Bulgarian and American nurses.\textsuperscript{92}

In her work in Bulgaria, Rachel Torrance was successful in creating relationships of confidence with the young Bulgarians and in maintaining them during the time they studied abroad. The figure of the American teacher became an important symbol of continuity for the Bulgarian School for Nurses.

\textsuperscript{88} State Archive Sofia, F. 360k, SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p. 67
\textsuperscript{89} Letter from Nevena Sendova to Rachel Torrance January 22, 1932. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p.19.
\textsuperscript{90} Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Rachel Torrance, September 1, 1936. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e 57, p.13.
\textsuperscript{91} Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Isabel M. Stewart, November 25, 1937, SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e 57, p.44–45. Krustanka Pachedjieva wrote: “...On the 14th of this month we had a very touching memorial service in honor of our dear Miss Torrance. The service was held in the school and the hall was crowded with many of her Bulgarian friends. Her enlarged portrait with a wreath of laurel hung on the wall. When our school chorus sang the last song “Good Night and Sleep in Peace” all the nurses knelt down. Many outstanding people were present. We all feel that we owe a great deal to the American nurses...”
\textsuperscript{92} Letter from Florence M. Johnson from the American Red Cross to Krustanka Pachedjieva, November 5 1937, SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e p. 59.
“...I TELL YOU THESE THINGS FRANKLY
BECAUSE I AM AN AMERICAN...”:
THE SCHOOL FOR NURSES IN THE TIME OF HAZEL GOFF (1925–1927)

In 1925 Hazel Goff, the former Vice Director of the School for Nurses in Sofia, the woman “who liked pioneer work,” took the position of director, as had been arranged. Nevena Sendova was her assistant and Krustanka Pachedjieva was an instructor. The new Director was a young women of 33 years. Hazel Goff was only three years older than her Bulgarian assistants. They all belonged to the same generation of young women after World War I. For women of this generation, having a professional career was no longer an exception but was still not a common part of a woman’s biography.

Hazel Goff left Sofia in 1927, when she went to Paris as an assistant of Francis Elizabeth Crowell in the European Bureau of the Rockefeller Foundation. In 1930–1931 she was in the USA in order to finish her studies for a Master’s degree at the Teachers College in New York. As Assistant of the American Elisabeth Crowell (1874–1950) in her work in Europe, she served in the Rockefeller Foundation Institutions in Europe.93

In 1926 Hazel Goff wrote a paper for Bulgarian nurses, “What can a nurse contribute to Bulgaria,” which was translated into Bulgarian and published as a brochure. She presented her views concerning the high social mission a nurse had in society. She stressed the importance of public health as a crucial field for Bulgarian society:

“1. Every person should be interested in the progress of his/her people.
2. Remember that progress depends on public health
3. Public health depends on the promotion of health.
4. This is up to the nurses. But the preparation of nurses depends on society”94

She was critical of the old notion of nursing as an activity concentrated in hospitals and isolated from the social life of the country. She stressed the necessity of collaboration between doctors and nurses, criticizing doctors who were not able to collaborate but only demanded obedience. She insisted that nurses had to be strong individuals and have their own opinion and didn’t approve of nurses who only wanted to marry a doctor.95 She was radically against the patriarchal order

94 Hazel A. Goff, Director of the School of Nursing by Bulgarian Red Cross Society, Kakvo mozhe da stori milosurdnata sestra za Bulgaria (What a nurse can contribute for Bulgaria), Sestra, 1926, N 7 and 8, p. 235–238. (Edited also as a booklet).
95 Ibidem.
that prevailed in the Red Cross structures as well in the Public Health authorities, where women still constituted a small group of servants.

It was also important that her stay in Bulgaria coincided with the growing political attention to public health and especially to the measures to reduce the high rates of infant mortality, tuberculosis and other social diseases. In 1924, the first Children’s Health station was opened by the Red Cross Society, where the first public health nurse in Bulgaria, Boyana Christova, was appointed. In the next years, children’s health stations were opened in every town in order to observe child rearing and to educate and support poor mothers. In 1928, the Rockefeller Foundation supported the opening of a Health Center with various public health services in Sofia. A few public health nurses were also appointed in this health center. The new Public Health Law in 1929 gave priority to the prevention of illnesses rather than to treating them. Hazel Goff contributed to the preparation of the first program for a training course for visiting nurses (public health nurses).

In the first months of her stay as assistant to Rachel Torrance, Hazel Goff had studied the Bulgarian language, and in the next years she always argued that American nurses working in Europe should know the language of the country they were serving in.96

A letter from Hazel Goff to Miss Spashott in England about a Bulgarian student also reveals her positive views and expectations, which she tried to convince her English colleague to share:

“...As you see from her letter and application she does not know English well but from experience I have found that these young people pick up languages remarkably well and rapidly. It would be a bit difficult at first but I am sure she would soon know the language well. She is a very quiet, nice mannered young woman with a goodly amount of determination which will be of great help to her. She may be a risk, most foreign students are but from the little I have seen of her I think you will find her a good risk, if you decide to accept her.”97

Hazel Goff distanced herself from a “colonialist” attitude toward Bulgarians, but she always saw them as “others,” as a “good risk.”

Hazel Goff was sincere in her efforts to also help Bulgarian students in later years, even a long time after she had left Bulgaria. Returning to the USA, she helped to arrange the studies of a Bulgarian student: “...My Heavens, it is hard enough for any one who knows the language to follow through, not to mention starting in the middle of a term,” she wrote to Nevena Sendova. “I suggested that she see and work in a hospital dietary department until fall and then enter at that time and get her theory. Hence they have sent her to Yale for two months where she was put in

96 See Elizabeth Dwyer Vickers, Frances Elisabeth Crowell...
97 Letter from Hazel Goff to Miss Spashott, Lady Superintendant of Nurses, The Royal Infirmary, Manchester, England, May 6, 1927. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 60, p. 38.
the formula room first and then is going into the diet kitchens. She will be sent on to Boston after that I understand. She seems very happy and apparently is getting much from her stay...”

Serving in Europe, she always emphasized that she was an American in a rather positive way. She explained this in her letter to the English Miss Spashott:

“...I tell you these things frankly because I am an American and have been working with these people for nearly three years so I judge them as a foreigner but at the same time can appreciate their good qualities, which are many...”

Emphasizing that she is American, her stay in Europe also made her think of America as something “other.” She had difficulties adapting herself again to life in her country. She represented a generation of young nurses who travelled a lot and worked in different countries and experienced the challenges of dealing with different cultures. She wrote to Nevena Sendova in June 1931: “…In the fall I found it very difficult to get adjusted to American life and school routine...”

In Bulgaria, Hazel Goff had invested much effort in the further reorganization of the School, working on the standardization of work and the preparation of curricula and organization of the first course for public health nurses. In her efforts to raise the status and the authority of the nursing profession, she was confronted with the Red Cross institutions as well as the Supreme Direction of Public Health to the Ministry of Inner Affairs. She was frustrated by some of the doctors in the Direction, especially because of the conflicts with the Rockefeller Foundation, and warned Nevena Sendova that Bulgarian nurses are too patient: “…I understand that recent moves of the Bulgarian Health Department have disturbed the R.F. to such an extent that they will not do anything further probably and the money which was budgeted will doubtless go to Romania where they are really doing some good work. It just makes me ill. Someday Guntchef will march you all up to the gallows and put your necks in the noose and you will let him hang you and not say a word. I have no connection with it now however and probably no one would listen to my suggestions if I made them.”

In the spring of 1931 in New York, Hazel Goff gave lectures at the Teachers College. She spoke about the international aspects of nursing and included Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Poland, which she had visited in the same year. “I fear I made things too idealistic in Bulgaria,” she wrote to Nevena Sendova, “but it was not because I wished to exaggerate but rather wishful thinking I guess.” Hazel Goff didn’t find the sources of her difficulties in Bulgaria only in Bulgarian institutions. She thought that she was too demanding of people and this challenged a lot of people

98 Letter from Hazel Goff to Nevena Sendova, June 1, 1931, CSA, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57 p. 87–89
100 Letter from Hazel Goff to Nevena Sendova, June 1, 1931, CSA, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57 p. 87–89
101 The same letter.
102 The same letter.
in the health institutions. After leaving Bulgaria, she received anonymous letters from Bulgaria discussing her behavior in the country. Despite these conflicts she preserved her emotional attitude to Bulgaria:

“...The hardest thing I have done since I left Bulgaria to try and forget it. I really loved it too much and in my efforts to have them do things well often forced them beyond their capacity. Result that I made myself unpopular and turned into cranky, grey headed old hen...”

Hazel Goff was the person who tried to radically change the place of nurses in the society in Bulgaria and to make the institutions respect them. Although she thought that she failed in her efforts to do this, the progress was significant. Courses for public health nurses became regular. In the beginning of the 1930s the Bulgarian State recognized the necessity for children’s health centers and visiting nurses to be available to all children in Bulgaria. Children’s health centers had to be opened in every village. The status of nurses in the country was also raised as a nurse was appointed as a representative in the Supreme Direction for Public Health.

In 1931, Hazel Goff was appointed to the Health Section of the League of Nations in Geneva. This was a high recognition for her work in Bulgaria and especially at the Rockefeller Foundation. For this position, the Health Section of the League of Nations needed an expert who knew the situation in Europe and who believed in the necessity of public health nurses.

The concept of this new international institution was based on the notion that the struggle against epidemics and infant mortality could unify the efforts of different countries in the world in a useful collaboration. Hazel Goff shared the understanding of the Head Dr. Richard Cabot: “I believe that the health work of the League will continue to be one of the subjects on which the nations of the world can most effectively work together. The basic fact is that their interests are here substantially identical and inseparable – because of the indifference of rats, lice, mosquitoes and bacteria to national boundaries, and the easy spread of these pests by ships, trains and every known means of travel. These facts will, I think, make the nations both in and out of the League wise enough to cooperate for mutual aid. And once accustomed to helping each other in this matter, it will be easier to agree and harder to quarrel about the other problems which have hitherto led to war.”

She also believed that the Health Section of the League of Nations needed a nurse-advisor for the programs for prevention of illnesses and epidemics, especially for the countries where these activities are still not developed. She was appointed for two years in Geneva as a single nurse among the other male members of the Health Section. During the two years she was to research public health nursing in European countries and elaborate a survey about it.

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103 The same letter.
105 Ibidem.
In that time in the early 30s, Hazel Goff still didn’t know that she would return to Bulgaria very soon in order to work for a new period of three years. New achievements as well as new disappointments were waiting for her and her Bulgarian collaborators.

“...I WAS THINKING WHEN DOING THIS SCRUBBING OF MISS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE’S BARRACKS…”: THE CORRESPONDENCE OF NEVENASENDOVA AND KRUSTANKAPACHEDJIEVA WITH CLARA NOYES (1931–1936)

The correspondence between the Sofia Nursing School Directors and the leading nurses of the American Red Cross Clara Noyes (National Director Nursing Service), Florence Johnson (New York Chapter) and others continued after the Bulgarians Nevena Sendova and Krustanka Pachedjieva took over the responsibility of the School.

Bulgarians stressed in their letters that the school was a “grandchild” of the American Red Cross. Using the same kind of family metaphor, Clara Noyes regarded the Bulgarian School as “a daughter” of the American Red Cross. She was proud “that the work that was done there by our American nurses has borne such good fruit.” Krustanka Pachedjieva confirmed the same “American Red Cross’s daughter” metaphor as she became the School Director:

This paternalistic discourse in the communication was supported by the both sides and remained in the years of Directorship of Nevena Sendova, which ended 1934, and after her in those of Krustanka Pschedjieva. They periodically sent reports about the running of the School. As Krustanka Pachedjieva took the responsibility of the School in Sofia, Clara Noyes confirmed these kinds of connections based on official but also emotional relationships:

“I am anxious to maintain the connection between your school and the American Red Cross on a warm and cordial basis,” Clara Noyes wrote. “For that reason I have been glad to receive the reports and also glad to send you copies of the American Journal of Nursing…”

In order not to lose the communication and its “warm and cordial basis,” both sides held onto a common pattern of letters. They shared information about the new graduates of the School and about student activities (student chorus concerts, Radio presentations), about the progress of nursing in Bulgaria as well its place in the society (health centers, child welfare stations) and regulations, about the cur-

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106 Letter from Nevena Sendova to Clara Noyes, October 13, 1931, SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e p. 76.
107 Letter from Clara Noyes to Krustanka Pachedjieva, January 18, 1935. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e.57, p.108
110 Letter from Clara Noyes to Krustanka Pachedjieva, February 8, 1935. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p. 117.
rent international congresses and conferences, about scholarships and new opportu-
nities for students. It was important to mention what other leading nurses were
doing and their achievements: “...Miss Petrova – our practical instructor – has
followed the work of the students in our hospital and the Maternity Clinic. Miss
Nikolova, you may remember her, she was Miss Torrance’s secretary and had one
year training at Bedford College, has had the follow up work in the hospital in con-
nection with the subjects of Medical and Surgical Nursing. Now we are expecting
Miss Christova from London, who took a year at Bedford College. For next year
Miss Nikodimova our assistant instructor is going to England[…].] Miss Goff wrote
but once this year. She has had a lot of trouble with her family but now that all of
them had successful operations, I hope she will feel better and ready to fly from
America...”\textsuperscript{111}

This kind of information had a remarkable place in the letters and was an important
tool for maintaining the nurses’ network and for its future development. Past (“you
may remember”, “Miss Torrance’s secretary”) and future (“...is going to England”)
were connected to current information and to information shared in other letters
(from Hazel Goff). It was important that this information stream about the same
people was continued in the next letters and enlarged with new acquaintances.
Personal and business information went hand by hand:

“This year I go to the American College, three times weekly, for a course in Hy-
giene. I enjoy it very much […][…] I hear that Miss Goff is in Geneva at present and
may soon decide to visit us. I hear from Mrs. Van Beuren from time to time. She
was near to Bulgaria this summer but was not able to come to see us. She was in
Athens and Italy some time. She is now back home and rejoicing over the beautiful
healthy baby boy of her only son.”\textsuperscript{112}

Through such letters, a large space for the nurses’ communication network and its
persistence was opened. It didn’t radically separate personal life information from
official activities and work. Personal information was allowed to a certain extent.
The letters were supported also by pictures from the everyday life of the school
School sent regularly to the American Red Cross.

The American Red Cross, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Near East Founda-
tion which invested a great amount of effort to improve public health institution and
politics in Bulgaria, were interested in maintaining good communication with the
School for nurses. The school Directors had also their reasons for continuing this
communication. They applied for scholarships for students to be sent abroad, and
got important literature and magazines in the field of nursing as well as technical
equipment from the USA. They could discuss current tasks and plans about the ad-
ministration of the school and also got involved in the international communication
of conferences, congresses and other meetings. The support of those international

\textsuperscript{111} Letter from Nevena Sendova to Clara Noyes, July 4, 1931. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p. 71.
\textsuperscript{112} Letter from Nevena Sendova to Clara Noyes, October 13, 1931, SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e 57, p.76.
contacts, the Rockefeller Foundation and American Red Cross was also important in the efforts to establish nursing as a professional field as well as the new field of public health nursing. One of the tasks of the Journal for Nurses in Bulgaria, “Sestra,” was to strengthen the professional status of nurses, which required the international network as a precondition. In this way personal and professional interests shaped the communication between American and Bulgarian nurses in the 1930s. Nevena Sendova and Krustanka Pachedjieva regularly reported about the meetings of the Bulgarian Nurses Association and its activities. The Association worked close to the School. Nurses who had graduated in New York and London were elected to the Board of the Association as well as the Editing Board of “Sestra”: Boyana Christova (Bedford College in London), Zafira Majdrakova (USA), Maria Nikolova (Bedford College), Margarita Tsakova (Bedford College) and others. Nevena Sendova also informed Clara Noyes in 1932 that the public health nurses had organized a public health section in the framework of the Association, which was a result of the nurses’ progress.  

The School Director, Nevena Sendova, didn’t miss the chance to present the growing importance of nurses in Bulgaria. In September 1932, a typhoid epidemic broke out in the south regions of the country. According to the information of Nevena Sendova, in the small town of Brazigovo near Plovdiv, about 400 people were ill from a population of 3200.

The Red Cross Society in Bulgaria decided to send four third-year students, together with Todorina Petrova (at that time head nurse at the Red Cross hospital), to help the patients in Brazigovo, where they worked for 40 days.

Nevena Sendova also came to take part in the nurses’ work in Brazigovo, together with her colleague Maria Nikolova. They came a bit later and stayed for eight days. Maria Nikolova visited 40 homes of ill persons. Home visits was not only needed to help the patients, but also an important method used in public health nursing at that time to study the living conditions and the social situation of the people from the point of view of scientific hygienic norms. Visiting the homes in the town, the nurses were confronted not only with the health situation but also the poverty and living conditions of the population, as well as with the hygiene habits and superstitions of the local people. Nevena Sendova described the situation in Brazigovo for Clara Noyes:

“... The two school buildings in Bratzigovo were the only suitable places for hospitals. Patients were brought in with their own beds and bedding. You can imagine the sight of a hospital with beds and bedding of all sizes and colors. The people of the town, 3200 in number (in 1800 houses) are extremely poor and so the bedding they possess consists in almost all cases, with very few exceptions, of a rung-red, green or brown, very few white sheets or pillow cases. Many of them lay in bed in

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113 Letter from Nevena Sendova to Clara Noyes, June 10, 1932, SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e 57, p.50–51.
114 Letter from Nevena Sendova to Clara Noyes, December 6, 1932. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e 57, p. 60.
115 The same letter.
116 The same letter.
their everyday clothes. They were all asked to bring a chair from home (some had to borrow one, because they had none) to serve as a bedside table and until we got out our own enamel bedpans and dishes, they had dozens of jugs and pottery around their beds. There is a big hole in the school yard today where we have buried hundreds of those infected jugs and pots which cannot be disinfected by any other way.

“When Miss Petrova and I helped to scrub the floor in the hospital, people looked upon us with great curiosity. They said that what they learned from us in this short time they shall remember for many, many years. They were criticizing their teachers and doctors for not having taught them to live more hygienically. I was thinking when doing this scrubbing of Miss Florence Nightingale’s barracks and how she helped to reduce mortality of the soldiers by cleanliness and I thought also of Miss Hey, who taught me how to do it....”

In her description Nevena Sendova kept a radical distance from the population of Brazigovo. People were presented only in their unhygienic conditions and their ignorance about the etiology of the typhoid epidemic. The nurses were presented as the opposite of the population in explaining the real reasons for the illness. Nurses were enlightened and rational, in contrast to the irrational views of the population about the epidemic:

“...Miss Nikolova took charge of the patients in their homes. She visited 40 homes, in which she helped 56 patients. The people were very pleased to have her at their homes, where she helped to fulfill the doctors’ orders and taught the people the cause of the epidemic, for which they had some very erroneous ideas: that their doctor was to be blamed for it and God too for he had sent the epidemic to them in order to get repaid for the rich crops He had given them this year...”

It is remarkable that even doing the most banal physical work women usually do, scrubbing the floor in the hospital, Nevena Sendova relied in her thoughts on the authority of two symbolic figures of nursing: Florence Nightingale, as an symbolic figure for all nurses, and Helen Scott Hey as her personal teacher. Helen Scott Hey had recently died: "A friend, a good teacher and a hero nurse, the organizer of modern nursing in Bulgaria," wrote Nevena Sendova about her.

In this “Brazigovo case” presentation, Bulgarian nurses belonged to a symbolic community of nurses with its symbolic figures from the past, distancing them from the native people in their exotic “rung-red, green or brown” sheets. Encouraged by their symbolic foreign teachers, nurses managed “to normalize” the situation in the town as the result of their efforts: Death rates were minimized and Nevena Sendova hoped that “the people will appreciate better the laws of personal

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117 The same letter.
118 The same letter.
119 The same letter.
hygiene." These examples helped the Director of the Nursing School to do the work of cleaning without experiencing it as humiliating. The Bulgarian Nurses Association wanted also to use this achievements and "the psychological moment" of the struggle against the epidemic for public demonstrations about the care of typhoid patients and for a meeting with the Bulgarian Women's Council to enlighten them about the profession.

In this way, Nevena Sendova proved to Clara Noyes that Bulgarian nurses were ready to fulfill their duty and serve the society. They were active in the time in disaster and managed to take the right decisions. Nurses had internalized the professional norms they were instructed in by their study. Doctors, nurses and midwives often described local hygienic habits as something strange, irrational and "dark". This "othering" of their native people was a tool to strengthen their professional status. Nevena Sendova also needed this distance in her letter. She didn't support the image of "the picturesque Bulgarian towns" Clara Noyes had presented some years ago and didn't skip the presentation of Brazigovo as an unhygienic place of citizens who believed in strange superstitions.

"TOGETHER WITH NURSE T. PETROVA WE CREATED IN THE VILLAGE NOT ONLY A MODEL HOME …"

THE BIOPOLITICAL VISIONARY

OF THE GOLEMO KONARE HEALTH CENTER 1933–1936

In 1934, the Supreme Direction for Public Health in Bulgaria issued an order for organizing Children's Health centres in all villages in the country. The goal was that "no mother should leave without receiving free advice on how to rear her child." The Direction also decided to research the reasons for the high infant mortality rates. A special form for this purpose was introduced for researching 15,000 cases. The Chief of the Department of children's health elaborated a program of 14 points for successful work in children's hygiene, which included preparation courses for public health nurses, advising midwives and other specialists as well as a fund for posterity protection and other eugenics measures.

In the next months, many children's health centers in the villages were opened, but in the rural area there was no public health nurse to do home visits or research, or to help the mothers raise their children according to the norms of modern child rearing. The children's health centers opened in these months didn't possess even basic equipment necessary for measuring the weight of the babies. In 1936 there were about 260 children health centers in the country, but only in 43 of them (all in

120 The same letter.
121 The same letter.
122 SAS, F. 360 к, op.2 a.e. 11, p. 7
123 SAS, F. 360 к, op.2 a.e. 11, p. 11
124 The last point of the program is "more attention to be paid to eugenics," without any details what is meant. Ibidem, p.13.
the towns) were there public health nurses.\textsuperscript{125} According to the statistics of infant mortality rates, they begun slowly to fall in the cities after 1929 but remained the same in the villages.

During the session of the International Congress of Nurses in Brussels in July 1932, public health nursing was one of the most important topics. A separate Congress section was devoted to public health nursing in the villages. Bulgaria was presented by Margarita Tsakova from the Red Cross Children’s Health center in Sofia. The State Inspector in Nursing in Finland Veni Snelmann, who was a student with Boyana Christova in the early 20s, spoke about the inclusion of the public health course in the basic curriculum of nursing education. Hazel Goff, who was in that time in the Health Section of the League of Nations, spoke about “Public Health as a Field of International Collaboration.”\textsuperscript{126}

In the course of the international efforts to strengthen public health nursing and especially to encourage its extension into the European rural areas in the early 30s there appeared an idea for organizing such a center in a village as a model institution. In such a model center, public health nurses were to be prepared to serve in specific rural conditions. The Rockefeller Foundation was especially interested in opening such a center in an European country. The Foundation decided to choose Bulgaria for this model center under the influence of Hazel Avis Goff, who had just done research on public health nursing in Europe for a detailed report for the League of Nations’ Health Section in Geneva. For this purpose, a village had to be chosen that had relatively proper communication (rail way station), a rather “conservative” population and “cultural homogeneity.”\textsuperscript{127} The village Golemo Konare, not far from the city of Plovdiv in southern Bulgaria, was chosen for this experiment.

In 1933, Hazel Goff, together with representatives of the Supreme Direction of Public Health, visited the village in order to observe the houses and to choose some suitable for the Health Center’s purposes. To this extent, the concept of this rural center was similar to the concept of the American settlements: female social workers or public health nurses living together among the community of the clients, combining educational work, social and public health work and research – although settlements were situated in the main in city outskirts, not in the villages. Nurse-teachers and their students had to arrange and organize their everyday life and their household as a model for the peasant citizens, especially for the peasant housewives. They had to show how a housewife should take care of home hygiene, coziness, and the health of the family. The idea was that the house, the yard and

\textsuperscript{125} In the annual report for 1935, the health stations are categorized in four groups: fully developed, semi-developed and underdeveloped (with midwife or without midwife, graduate of the health visiting courses). In the group of the fully developed health stations were included services that had “a separate room, a doctor specialized for this station, public health nurse and equipped with the basic equipment”. Only the fully developed stations had a public health nurse. CSA, F. 372, op.1, a.e.1323., p.1–14.

\textsuperscript{126} The British Journal of Nursing, February 1933, p.53.

\textsuperscript{127} Dr. Vladimir Rumenov, Luchi v tumnoto zarstvo (Shines in the dark Kingdom) Slovo Newspaper, 5 December 1934.
the garden of the Health Center in Golemo Konare was to be used as a model of a hygienic modern family home.

The Head of the Center in the period from its founding until 1936 was Hazel Goff, and her assistant was Todorina Petrova, a former instructor in the School for Nurses and Head Nurse in the Red Cross Hospital.

Both nurses spent part of their time working in the district ambulatory in the village helping the district doctor. For the observation of the population in Golemo Konare, health cards and card indexes were introduced: health cards for the babies, for elder children, for pregnant women, for ill patients etc., which public health nurses had to fill in. For the rest of their time, the nurses did home visits in the village, gave talks in health promotion and organized courses and practical work for the students.

In an interview for the Bulgarian Newspaper “Slovo”, Hazel Goff revealed in the end of the first year of the center that the health promotions tasks of the model institution in Golemo Konare: “...to educate the individuals and the families how to protect themselves from diseases, to contribute to the improvement of the social conditions, to instruct the society as well as people in the government about the improvement of public health.”

She described how both she and Todorina Petrova started their own household as a model for the village, especially for the peasant women: "I am working together with the nurse Todorina Petrova. We rented an old house in the village with a small yard in very bad condition. Our first task was to adapt this house to hygienic standards so that it becomes a model peasant home but with the minimum of expense. We both started work at all the things a woman had or could do – washing, cleaning, house painting – all these things we did by ourselves, although the renovation was at the expense of the state. We also cleaned the yard and after that we furnished it with modest but decent hygienic furniture, starting with the most necessary things and we again did all that a housewife had and could do. Parallel to the starting of our home we did the necessary things for making the ambulatory of the district doctor in the village friendlier and easier for cleaning. For example, we painted all wooden things. But before telling you what we are doing in the ambulatory as well as about the peasant homes, let me say that we made a model lavatory in the yard: we dug a drain-well with a pump and we rented two decares for a vegetable garden in the neighborhood, from which we got almost all the vegetables an average family needs. We also planted flowers in the house yard and of course we worked there as well as in the garden in our free time: planting, digging, weeding, etc. There are not any vegetable gardens in the village. That’s why it was necessary to show that this work is not something difficult or impossible even for two women like us....In our country, in America, a public health nurse has to know and do and to be skilled not only..."
in healing or looking after ill people, but also in the whole household, including washing, ironing, patching and cleaning everything and everywhere in the home. All we are doing in our home and in our household is managed in a way to be used as a model and as an example to be followed. Together with Nurse T. Petrova, we have created in the village not only a model home but we have tried to run also a model household.\textsuperscript{129}

The “model” of the health center in Golemo Konare harmonized with other concepts planning the economic, cultural and health progress of the rural space at that time. Those concepts were especially promoted and experimented with in the 30s, culminating in programs for “Model villages” in different European countries and in the “Model village” program in Bulgaria in the second half of the 30s.\textsuperscript{130} Some years later than the Health center in Golemo Konare, the American Near East Foundation initiated a program in which a small village was to be chosen as a model village. This was the village Divlja (near Pernik). The health service in the village was seen there too as one of the constructive elements for the modernization of peasant everyday life.\textsuperscript{131}

At the end of 1934, the official statute of the Health Center in Golemo Konare was already prepared. In the proposal, the obligations of the public health nurses for the village population were also fixed:

“The public health nurse at the local health service has the tasks:

1. To educate the individual as well as the family to protect themselves from diseases.
2. To act for the improvement of the family and social conditions relevant to health.
3. To support society in establishing the proper conditions for the improvement of public health.

Taking into consideration the local conditions, the preparation center had to adapt its activity according to the proper solution of the following questions and goals:

1. How long will the education of the public health nurses for the villages take and which skills do they need?
2. Which are the best methods for the probationary public health nurses to be familiarized with their work?
3. Which is the best way to harmonize the work of the health visitor with the work of the district doctor, midwife, feldsher (doctor’s assistant), etc. in the area of the village health service?
4. Which is the best way to establish contact with the peasant man, to gain his

\textsuperscript{129} Ibidem.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibidem.
5. To research peasant nutrition
6. To attract teachers, priests and other public figures for running the public health affairs.
7. To fix the preconditions and average maintenance necessary for a livable life for a visitor in a village.
8. To systematize statistical data concerning health.132

The health visitor (public health nurse) had to be recognizable by her outfit. This had to be different from the clothes of the local women, but also satisfy the dress code of other women in the health services – hospital nurses, midwives and doctors. Public health nurses should not be dressed in white overalls but in another uniform. To their uniform they were also to add black berets, suitable low heel shoes, stockings suitable for the shoes and black coats. The uniform had to be worn for the whole time the visitors were at their work.133

A biopolitical vision shaped the program as well the training courses of the Health Center in Golemo Konare. Its goal was to change and to reorganize the rural space and the everyday behavior of people by the presence of a new model of home and a new model of everyday household work parallel to the observation of the homes and health promotion talks. Education, supervision and illustrative examples were to be the tools of the work with the local population. The few female experts in their uniforms, using only their “pastoral power” had to be the agents of this program.

In the second half of the 20s and beginning of the 30s, other organizations also tried to educate young girls and mothers about hygiene and modern child rearing and to eliminate the authority of the traditional uneducated midwives. The Child Protection Union, organized in 1925, started in 1927 training courses for female teachers in the villages: the so-called “teacher-advisors”, in order to prepare them to research the living situation of rural children, to organize soup kitchens for schools and to instruct young mothers and housewives. In a short time, one hundred teachers from the villages were trained as teacher-advisors. Their tasks were reduced to basic health promotion and the organization of soup kitchens. The preparation courses didn’t give them the right to provide medical treatment or to give advice in the case of illness.

The “Golemo Konare” model was a health center and, working in parallel with it, a teaching center for probationers who were supposed to become familiar with the rural situation and the living conditions of peasants in order to be prepared to work among them. It was to be a model institution not only for Bulgaria but for many European countries where such institutions and staff were still not prepared and developed in the rural spaces, and where infant mortality rates and morbidity rates

132 Pravilnik za dejnostta na Podgotvitelnija centar za selska posetitelska slushba v selo Goljamo Konare (Statute of the activity of the Education center for public health service in Golemo Konare), Central State Archive, F. 372, op.1, a.e.1136, p.89–95 (A project).
133 Ibidem.
were high. That’s why “Golemo Konare” was important as an experiment in a Balkan country village. Hazel Goff was appointed as the expert who knew the public health situation in the European countries, for she had visited them and prepared a report about public health nursing for the Health Section of the League of Nations. Coming from Geneva to Golemo Konare she was very eager to establish a new kind of health and educational institution, which was to be recognized as a model not only in Bulgaria but visited also by foreign public health delegations, thereby “…helping Bulgaria to take her place among other European countries in the field of public health nursing…”\(^\text{134}\).

Such social experiments, which used the establishment of model public health institutions, were not especially new in Bulgaria. In the early 30s, the American Near East Foundation organized in a poor district of Sofia a model children’s playground, with a health station for mothers and babies, a workshop, a library, etc.\(^\text{135}\) In various towns all over Europe, architects, physicians, pedagogues and politicians worked together in order to create buildings and whole districts according to the modern norms of hygiene and healthy living conditions. The Red Vienna building activities in the 1920s and early 30s were marked by such visions. The ideas of “the Garden town” shaped new architecture trends and city planning at that time.

In comparison to other social experiments that also included public health elements (model villages, model towns and districts etc.), the Golemo Konare model was constructed as a “public health nurses’ utopia”. Nurses were the central figures in this biopolitical experiment. A group of women – the public health nurses – had to live their everyday life together in their model home, working in the model garden in their spare time, visiting in their uniforms people’s homes and advising them about a healthy life. Every member of a family had to be observed and advised for his/her health, and the observation had to be regularly reflected in the health cards of the population. To fill in these cards was part of the common service of a public health nurse. The new element was that people could also observe the living standards of the nurses and the probationers, and in this way adapt to them.

In the second year of the center, Hazel Goff was fairly proud of the center’s achievements in systematic observation of the population’s health and assistance in the village ambulatory:

“…You cannot appreciate what we are attempting here for you have not seen our work. However a few figures from our morning work alone may indicate to you that we have not been idle. From April 1\(^\text{st}\) to December 31\(^\text{st}\) we have made contact with 730 families in this village and 420 from other villages. These represent 1 757

\(^\text{134}\) Letter from Hazel Goff to the Director of the State Director of Public health, Golemo Konare, December 9, 1934. . CSA, F. 372, op.1, a.e.1136, p.33.

\(^\text{135}\) CSA, F. 372, op. 1, a.e. 1085, p. 115–121 …
cases distributed among the various services. Since July 1st we have assisted with the examination of 2,149 cases. I doubt if you have elsewhere in the country such an active and carefully maintained service as here and yet the Direction pays absolutely no attention to it.

While I am willing to do everything possible to help create a proper preparatory center for nurses, of which you may be justly proud, Dr. Ivanoff, there are material limitations to what I can do. If on the other hand you do not consider my time of any value to you here in Bulgaria, I have no desire to force it on you, for it is appreciated and considered valuable in other places.”

“...SHE WAS FLYING TOO MUCH BUT NOW AS HER WINGS WERE CUT”...

THE NEGOTIATED “GLASS ROOF” AND THE DISINTEGRATION OF GOLEMO KONARE HEALTH CENTER IN COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

The everyday work of the nurses in Golemo Konare Health Center was accompanied by a serial of financial and organizational troubles: a lack of good communication with the Health Direction in Sofia, which seemed to underestimate the center’s activity; a shortage of money for running the center; overwork of the leading nurses and various kinds of tension. Most important were the tensions between the Center’s leading nurses and the district doctor, as well as the tensions between the Center and the Head Direction of Health in Sofia. But there were also misunderstandings between the visions of Hazel Goff and the student probationers about the Health Center. Some of them didn’t respect the rules of cohabitation of teachers and students in the same household.

All of these misunderstandings, troubles and tensions led to the final disintegration of the center and the resignation of Hazel Goff in the early 1936.

In her letters to the State Director of Public Health in Sofia, Hazel Goff generalized the relationships with the local health service as “an awful struggle”.

Contrary to her visions of partnership between doctors and nurses, they didn’t manage to create such collaboration. She accused the local doctor of not understanding the tasks of public health nursing:

“...The chief hindrances seem to be:

– that the doctor is not interested in the preventive aspects of the work so all efforts along that line are automatically checked.

136 Letter from Hazel Goff to Dr. Ivanov, State Department of Health Sofia, Gol. Konare, January 12, 1935. CSA, F. 372, op.1, a.e.1136, p.68.
137 Letter from Hazel Goff to Dr. Rousse Radkoff, Gol. Konare, October 23, 1934. CSA, F. 372, op.1, a.e.1136, p.37–39
that out assistance is not desired in the ambulatory although this seems essential for us not only to make good contacts with the patients but also to learn the doctor’s methods and treatments that we may better advise the patients of his wishes.

that although orders to care for the patients in the homes have not been actually refused, they are constantly evaded and considered unnecessary so a home nursing program cannot be developed.

that the actual surgical technique used is so crude that it is undesirable for young nurses to witness same in a so called Health Center conducted by the State Department of Health as they may readily adapt themselves to careless methods of working thinking this meets with the approval of the Direction.\textsuperscript{138}

In contrast to her attitude toward the local doctor, Hazel Goff praised the qualities and the work of her nurse colleague in the center, Todorina Petrova. Nevertheless, according to the letters, nurses were not satisfied and happy with their life among the peasants. Hazel Goff was concerned about their welfare and their feelings and living conditions in the village. She wrote:

“…One other point, which is extremely important. I have said very often that rural nurses cannot be buried and isolated indefinitely and do their best work. You have no idea of the solitude and loneliness which they have to endure. Furthermore they work alone for the most part, can have no intimate friends and constantly have to see misery, poverty and suffering. For a sensitive individual (and those are the type you want to be keen and alive to the needs of the community) this is very wearing and nerve wrecking. I cannot stand it and I do not expect other nurses to. Miss Petrova has put in a very difficult year. She has done the work of any other three nurses you have on your service and has a keen interest in building up the work here. I should like very much for her to spend some time in Sofia at the Health Center and other social institutions to become acquainted with the new services given the students since she was there and to get a change of air and company. This should not be given as a vacation but part of her duty. Tell me how it can be arranged please…”\textsuperscript{139}

The salaries of Hazel Goff and Todorina Petrova were not sent regularly by the Health Direction in Sofia. Hazel Goff wrote several letters regarding these troubles to Dr. Ivan Balkanski, the head of the State Department of Health.\textsuperscript{140} Salaries were a sensitive topic in the relationship between nurses and health authorities. Salary payments were very important for nurses, not only for practical reasons but also as a symbol of their financial and professional independence. Nursing was in many countries an underpaid job and nurses had to struggle to be paid for a decent life.

\textsuperscript{138} Letter from Hazel Goff to Dr. Shopoff, County Health Officer in Plovdiv, Golemo Konare, August 10, 1934 CSA, F. 372, op.1, a.e.1136, p.38.

\textsuperscript{139} Letter from Hazel Goff to Dr. Roussi Radkoff, Gol. Konare, October 23, 1934. CSA, F. 372, op.1, a.e.1136, p. 74.

\textsuperscript{140} Letter from Hazel Goff to Dr. Ivan Balkanski, Golemo Konare, February 24, 1934. CSA, F. 372, op.1, a.e.1136 p. 24.
After one year working, Hazel Goff sent her application to resign as public health instructor at the public health center in Golemo Konare to the State Direction. She explained that she was not able to continue her work in such conditions:

“... My reasons for leaving this service, for which I had hoped to create a model public health nursing organization as well as a center where public health nurses could be prepared for rural work, are mainly two as follows:

That it is quite impossible to develop the work properly in the time at my command with the present lack of understanding and cooperation as well as evident indifference shown by the State Health Department in this project.

That my personal finances no longer permit me to carry the entire expense for maintenance and satisfactory development of the work in the Center.”

Although Hazel Goff didn’t resign at this time, the same troubles continued in the beginning of the next year, 1935, as the students who came in Golemo Konare for the course had to be integrated in the household life in the center’s home. The students Kirkilanova, Prestepa, Lazarova and Marinova started the course. In her correspondence with Vesela Angelova, who was in charge in Sofia of the selection and preparation of the students for the center, Hazel Goff wrote:

“...When Mrs. Marinova came here she was horrified to think she had to eat with us and live like a normal person. She came with a supply of salt pork and soap and the idea that she could munch a crust of bread in her room along with it when she was hungry. She insisted that you told her 500 leva was all the money she needed for living expenses during the three months here. That sum, of course, would provide her with a kilo of bread daily but she would only have 50 leva left for more salt pork when her present supply gave out. You know perfectly well, Miss Angelova, that we do not live like that and one of the aims of this center is to teach these girls to live modestly and simply but to work together and to learn something about nutrition and proper feeding...”

Hazel Goff expected “full cooperation” from Vesela Angelova but was not satisfied with this relationship. The probationers’ unwillingness to engage in “modest and simple” living and working together also disappointed her. Instead of collaboration, Hazel Goff was confronted with a lack of understanding of the biopolitical importance of the center as an example of a healthy way of life, even among the students.

It was very difficult in all of these conditions and with such a failure of understanding for the nurses to fulfill the visions of the rural health center and to maintain the small community in Golemo Konare. Nevertheless, it continued to function even

141 Application from Hazel Goff to State Direction November 5, 1934. CSA, F. 372, op.1, a.e.1136, p.33.
142 Serafima Prestepa was appointed at Sofia Municipality Social Service in the late 1930s. She was among the first professional social advisors.
143 Letter from Hazel Goff to Vesela Angelova, January 12, 1935. CSA, F. 372, op.1, a.e.1136,p. 65.
144 The same letter.
some months after the resignation of Hazel Goff in March 1936 and was in a good enough condition to be presented to foreign delegations.145

The Golemo Konare health center received attention in the nurses’ communication with each other. Its development and disintegration were also discussed in the correspondence between the School Director, Krustanka Pachedjieva, and Clara Noyes from the American Red Cross. In January 1935, Clara Noyes wrote to the Director of the School for Nurses in Sofia Krustanka Pachedjieva:

“...I hear occasionally from Miss Goff, who is making an attempt to organize a school for the training of public health nurses for rural communities. She is very much interested in the work, and I hope that she will succeed.” 146

And a month later:

“...We do hear frequently from Miss Goff. She sends us copies of her reports in which we find much that is interesting. I am sorry to hear, however, that she is not very well. She has worked very, very hard and has met with difficulties which had not been expected. She speaks very highly of the work of Miss Petrova and as she was your guest at the time you were writing, I am sure you received a very complete and interesting picture of the work that they are hoping to accomplish.”147

At the end of the year, Clara Noyes suggested to Krustanka Pachedjieva that she write a “story” of nursing in Bulgaria. According to her the Health Center in Golemo Konare should be mentioned in this paper. 148

Krustanka Pachedjieva tried to present the situation of the Health Center in an optimistic way, but also regretted the resignation of Hazel Goff. She was sure that the work of the center would be continued:

“...It is true that Miss Goff left Bulgaria in March and as I understand she has been asked to start a Training School for Nurses in Istanbul, so she will remain there. I am sorry to say she really left Bulgaria so disappointed. After she left I went to see the work in Golemo Konare where she worked and I found it continuing. We are going to continue the work there by all means. Dr. Radkoff, the present Director of Public Health, as well as the Bulgarian Nurses Association are very interested in the work of the Center and we are going to continue with it. A few days before leaving Bulgaria, Miss Goff had a two-hour audience with the Queen. Miss Goff told me she was very surprised to hear from her Majesty how much she knew about nursing and especially about her work in Golemo Konary. His Majesty the King sent her a medal, which very few women in Bulgaria have...”149

145 The center was presented to the Delegation of Yugoslavian Nurses by their visit in Bulgaria in April 1936, Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Clara Noyes, May 4, 1936. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 49, p. 27.
146 Letter from Clara Noyes to Krustanka Pachedjieva, January 18, 1935. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 49, p.61.
147 Letter from Clara Noyes to Krustanka Pachedjieva, February 8, 1935. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 49, p. 54.
148 Letter from Clara Noyes to Krustanka Pachedjieva, November 14, 1935. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 49, p. 43.
149 Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Clara Noyes, May 4, 1936. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 49, p. 39.
Clara Noyes was glad that the Health Center was continuing. She emphasized that Hazel Goff was “very devoted and very anxious to develop a teaching center that would be a credit to herself, as well as to the country she was serving.”

Despite the attention of the Royal family in Bulgaria and the high recognition of Hazel Goff as well as the promises of Krustanka Pachedjieva to continue the work of the Health Center in Golemo Konare, it didn’t function for long after Hazel Goff left. Nevertheless, the idea for such model rural health centers remained. In the next years, similar rural health centers for nurses’ preparation courses were planned for villages near Sofia.

The Health Center in Golemo Konare as an attempt to raise the importance of the nurses’ work, status and public importance was recognized by different institutions, but finally this attempt failed to be realized as a sustainable educational form which could be useful for Bulgarian nurses and international communication. Various institutional and personal reasons caused that failure. But there were also other reasons. Clara Noyes was convinced of the personal “devotion” of Hazel Goff. In the wider communication networks, the center was interpreted in another way. For some people it was an intolerable attempt of Hazel Goff to reach her personal goals in her career.

A private correspondence between the secretary of the School for Nurses, Ester Tsakova and the former manciple of the school, Slavka Proevska, hints at that.

In 1932 Slavka Proevska married a Doctor in the small town of Gorna Djumaja (Blagoevgrad) in southwestern Bulgaria near Sofia and moved to this place. She was a friend of the Director, Nevena Sendova, and especially of the secretary, Ester Tsakova. On the occasion of her marriage, Nevena Sendova organized a party for the School’s students, teachers and staff. Slavka Proevska was deeply touched to be considered in this way in the School.

After the marriage of Slavka Proevska, she exchanged letters with her old friends but only with Ester Tsakova did the correspondence last a longer time. They continued to exchange in their letters news from the school’s everyday life, as well as from families and friends, and also wrote about current fashion, thoughts about work, marriage, home, men etc. It was a correspondence between two young women who had worked together in their past and remained friends some years after one of them was married. In a letter from Ester Tsakova in 1934, among the other news like weddings and new babies came also Todorina Petrova, Hazel Goff and the Center of Golemo Konare:

“Miss Dervenska from the Youth Red Cross was married some months ago. She was a very beautiful bride and organized an official wedding party. Her husband

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150 Letter from Clara Noyes to Krustanka Pachedjieva, May 23, 1936. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 49, p. 35.
151 The correspondence between Ester Tsakova and Slavka Proevska in the time 1933–1936 is preserved in the State Archive Blagoevgrad, F. 1122 (Slavka and Boris Proevski), op. 1, a.e.70.
is very kind. Zafira Majdrakova will have a baby soon. Vera Dimitrova (the former student who was expelled for a certain time) will also have a baby. Now she is here staying with Miss Sendova. Zafira Christova and Sister Lazarova are in the town of Haskovo for the typhoid epidemic. Dermendzhieva finished the course and now is a senior nurse here. Todorina Petrova went to work together with Miss Goff in the village of Golemo Konare – they will arrange something like a Health Center. Miss Goff saw for herself that after all Bulgaria was the best place for shelter for her. She was flying too much but now her wings have been cut and she is working in the village like a common nurse.

This is politics of course in order to undermine somebody’s place on some day in the future and to stay again at the head of the nurses. Mary and Krustanka are well. We quarreled with Mary a bit because of using the bathroom for I had to wait for her one or two times....

This personal opinion reflected in a private letter is also an important source for understanding how in the wider nurses’ communication circles the behavior of Hazel Goff was discussed beyond official statements and comments. Obviously this was not the first time Hazel Goff had been commented upon. Her ambitions were interpreted as “flying too much” and her career as having the ability to “undermine” the places of others.

This opinion, shared in the letter, could contribute to understanding some of the reasons for the failure of the Health Center in Golemo Konare. The nurses’ communication networks in the 1930s beyond the small nurses’ elite negotiated a “Glass Roof” above a woman’s career. The attempts of women to have a career over this “roof” and to fulfill their visionary aspirations were seen in this female social surroundings as “flying too much”. Its interruption from outside – “cutting wings” – was seen as a deserved punishment for such attempts. In contrast with this, all weddings, pregnancies, as well as the common work of the nurses were commented upon in a positive way. The Health Center in Golemo Konare failed to exist for a longer time not only because of the lack of money or because of troubles with the local doctor and with the State direction of health. Its goals and its importance didn’t receive enough support and understanding among the nurses.

Nevertheless, the Health Educational Centre in Golemo Konare was an important institution in the mid-30s. It managed to exist for more than two years as a continuity of the collaboration between Bulgarian and American nurses. Hazel Goff and Todorina Petrova managed to prepare the first public health nurses for rural conditions.

The center also left its traces in the biography of Hazel Goff. In her biography it was mentioned together with her service in the League of Nations. In 1947, Ha-

152 Letter from Ester Tsakova to Slavka Proevska, February 14, 1934, State Archive Blagoevgrad, F. 1122, a.e.70. p.34.
zel Goff became Secretary to the Committee of Administration of the Accrediting Program. In the information about her, it was written that most recently she had been Director of Nurses and of the School of Nursing at James Walker Memorial Hospital in Wilmington, N.C.: “She served with the ANC during World War I. From 1924 to 1927 she was assistant director of the Bulgarian Red Cross School of Nursing in Sofia, and from 1927 to 1930 she was field director of nursing for the Rockefeller Foundation in Europe. In 1931 she made surveys of public health nursing in European countries for the Health Section of the League of Nations. In 1933 she returned to Bulgaria to establish a rural public health nursing training center there, and from 1936 to 1939 she was director of the Red Crescent school of Nursing in Istanbul, Turkey. On her return to the US, she became director of nursing service and of the school of nursing at Saint Luke's, Cleveland, Ohio. Leaving that position in 1945, she went to Lisbon, Portugal to direct the Technical School for Nursing there.”

“I AM REALLY MUCH MORE APPRECIATIVE THAN I APPEAR …”
LETTERS BETWEEN KRUSTANKA PACHEDJIEVA
AND HAZEL GOFF (ISTANBUL – SOFIA; 1936–1938)

Hazel Goff became Director of the Red Crescent School for Nurses in Istanbul in the spring 1936. There are some letters between her and the Director of the Sofia School for Nurses, Krustanka Pachedjieva, left in the School archive from the period 1936–1938. This is also not a personal correspondence but contains personal elements.

In contrast to the correspondence between American and Bulgarian nurses in the previous time, there are no formal power relationship between Hazel Goff and Krustanka Pachedjieva. This is a correspondence between two School directors in two neighbor countries – two powerful women in equal positions of almost equal age. Of course some of the power positions remained informal, but nevertheless this correspondence represents the greatest equality of stature between American and Bulgarian nurses from the School since its beginning in the early 1920s. Both wrote about their students, about running the schools, about international events, and about colleagues and friends.

Hazel Goff asked Krustanka Pachedjieva to loan a book, “Psychology for Nurses”, for a certain time. It was necessary for the preparation of a course for the students in Istanbul and after some months she returned the book to Sofia. Those small exchanges helped to preserve the contacts between the two School Directors.

Although Hazel Goff left Bulgaria disappointed in her efforts to create the center in Golemo Konare, she preserved in the next months and years her good attitude to her colleagues from the School for Nurses and appreciated their work. She compared it to other Schools in Southeastern Europe:

“...I had not heard of your visit to Belgrade. Too bad you could not have visited Zagreb. They have more to offer and they think more as you do about nursing. There are some fine women there.”

Hazel Goff also wanted Turkish nurses from Istanbul’s school to visit and see the School in Sofia in July 1937 on the way back from the International Council of Nurses. She supported their good attitude to the school in Sofia with a donation.

In Istanbul, Hazel Goff undertook as usual “too much at a time,” but she was satisfied with her work with her Turkish students in the School:

“We have twenty four new students which makes our group number 102 in all. They are very nice girls but have limited education because of the lack of schools formerly. Our minimum requirement is secondary school which is only eight years of schooling. They are alive and keen though and anxious to learn.”

Some months later, Hazel Goff wrote more detailed information about the School in Istanbul and enclosed a copy of her letter to Krustanka Pachedjieva. She praised again her Istanbul students: “I like the students very much indeed, they are very sweet girls, clever and most anxious to learn. There was plenty of the latter for them to do for they have been brought up on the Germanic system of much window washing...”

Krustanka Pachedjieva also reported briefly about her students in Sofia as well as about the school in her letter: “I have 138 students now. On the 21st of this month our probation class is going to have their practical examination. You may have heard that we have a nice big practical class-room and ordered for it a bed with floating spring through the American Red Cross. The bed arrived two weeks ago. When you come you will find many changes here. It is very cold these days and we have lots of snow. It is real Christmas time”

Hazel Goff shared also news about friends and people both women knew. She commented on some of the news about marriages of nurses in Bulgaria, joking with Krustanka Pachedjieva, “I hear there have been many marriages among the nurses of late. You are not joining the ranks are you? Please give greetings to any friends who remain. Let me repeat my thanks to you for your loan. I am really much more appreciative than I appear.”

The correspondence doesn’t present a close friendship between Hazel Goff and Krustanka Pachedjieva, but these passages about private things in the letters show

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154 Letter from Hazel Goff to Krustanka Pachedjieva, October 26, 1936. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p. 108.
155 Letter from Hazel Goff to Krustanka Pachedjieva, December 5, 1936. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p. 97.
156 Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Hazel Goff, December 20, 1938. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p. 95.
158 Letter from Hazel Goff to Krustanka Pachedjieva, December 5, 1936. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p. 97.
159 Letter from Hazel Goff to Krustanka Pachedjieva, December 5, 1936. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p.97
160 Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Hazel Goff, December 20, 1938. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p. 95.
161 Letter from Hazel Goff to Krustanka Pachedjieva, December 5, 1936. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p. 97.
that after 15 years of communication they could allow jokes like “joining the ranks” of marriages (or at least Hazel Goff could allow them).

"... IF I HAVE SHOWN PERSISTENT INDEPENDENCE IN SOME CASES IT WAS ONLY FOR THE GOOD OF THE NURSING FOR ITS RAISING I SACRIFICED MY BEST YEARS …”

KRUSTANKA PACHEDJIEVA IN HER LAST YEARS AS SCHOOL DIRECTOR 1938–1940

In the late 30s the School for Nurses in Sofia became a stable institution with many students, although the number of nurses in the country remained insufficient. There were plans to open new schools in Varna and Plovdiv. Hospital and especially public health nurses were needed for the variety of new institutions which were opened in that time: district children health centers in the towns and villages, health stations for disabled children or for elderly people, the new Institute for Medical-Pedagogical research in Sofia, courses for young mothers for child rearing etc.

Nurses were also needed for the army. The restrictions of the Neuilly Treaty, which didn’t allow a regular army, fell off. The School for Nurses participated in organizing a field hospital for military exercises in the autumn of 1937. The war was drawing nearer. Krustanka Pachedjieva was glad to participate in the military exercises. In a letter to thank her professor in the Teachers College in New York, Isabel Stewart, for sending her the Curriculum Guide for nurses, she also wrote about this military experience:

“...In September I was sent to take part in organizing a field hospital for one hundred beds and also eight food and first-aid stations for our Royal military exercises. It was a very good experience. I was appointed as a head of the nursing service. For twenty days we lived in a camp out in the field. The King and Queen visited the hospital. For the first time in Bulgaria nurses wore military uniforms which were very interesting and very convenient, too. I got a medal from the palace for the occasion.”

Although Krustanka Pachedjieva was awarded in 1937, the Red Cross Society leaders were not very satisfied with her work, blaming her first of all for her disobedience. Her behavior was discussed in the Red Cross Committee. She was very often criticized in 1938 on different occasions: for having snapped at the Chief Prof. Orahovaz, not having informed him of the visit of Princess Eudoxia in the School etc.

In the autumn of 1938, the students insisted that the food in the boarding-house be improved. They wrote several letters of petition to the Red Cross Committee. They wanted to have salads, desserts, cheese etc. Krustanka Pachedjieva supported

162 Letter from Krustanka Pachedjieva to Isabel Stewart, November 25, 1937. SAS, F. 360k, op.1, a.e. 57, p. 44–45.
163 Central State Archive, F. 156k, op.1, a.e. 71 (Personal Acts of Krustanka Pachedjieva) p. 134.
Finally, in the summer of 1940 Krustanka Pachedjieva was fired from her position as School Director. Obviously she became too independent for the Red Cross Committee and they needed somebody new to be a Director. It was also possible that as an American graduate who had many connections to American institutions, she was no longer very suitable to be Director at the time of the rapprochement between Bulgaria and the Third Reich in 1940, although the next director Zafira Christova was also an American graduate and Rockefeller fellow.

Krustanka Pachedjieva tried to contest this decision and pointed to her achievements as School Director in a letter to the Red Cross Committee from August 23, 1940:

“....You are informed that by my appointment as a Director I took on the school with only 62 students. Today, although the teaching staff is almost the same, the number of students is about 150. I think that the credit for this goes to me. The program was improved in order to enlarge the theoretical as well as the practical preparation of the student-nurses according to the new needs of the hospital work and the public health tasks of the nursing and other obligations which nurses will have in a time of war etc. The practical implementation of this program was also among the important questions which I was considering all the time and which I managed to solve in collaboration with my assistants. Thus some positive results can be pointed out: the establishment of a model order in the practical classes of the students in the Red Cross society hospital; the improvement of the work in the Children's Clinic; the assignment to the School administration to manage all functions around mothers and newborns in the Maternity ward in the Hospital; the improvement of the arrangement of the School boarding house and organization of the students’ life in such a way that none of the conditions will be missed that are necessary for their good education and preparation for the vocation they are devoted to etc.”

Krustanka Pachedjieva insisted on continuing her work in the Director’s position. She also added that it was not just to be fired 3 years before she would have the years needed for retirement. Despite these efforts, Krustanka Pachedjieva didn’t manage to remain School director. Her application to the Red Cross Committee from 1941 for three months’ salary to be paid to her was also rejected.

According to the last document in her personnel dossier in the Red Cross society in April 1948, she was a senior nurse in the Alexander Hospital.

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164 Central State Archive, F. 156k, op.1, a.e. 71 (Personal Acts of Krustanka Pachedjieva) p. 140, 152.
165 Central State Archive, F. 156k, op.1, a.e. 71 (Personal Acts of Krustanka Pachedjieva) p. 158–159.
166 Central State Archive, F. 156k, op.1, a.e. 71 (Personal Acts of Krustanka Pachedjieva) p. 173–175.
167 The same letter.
168 Central State Archive, F. 156k, op.1, a.e. 71 (Personal Acts of Krustanka Pachedjieva) p.185.
169 Central State Archive, F. 156k, op.1, a.e. 71 (Personal Acts of Krustanka Pachedjieva) p. 190.
CONCLUSIONS

In December 1936, the Bulgarian Red Cross society edited a Calendar for 1937 with a picture of a nurse on the cover. The President of the Society, Dr. Stojan Danev, sent a circular-letter to local societies, hospitals, shops and other institutions for the dissemination of the new Calendar. In this letter about the calendar dissemination, the qualities of the ideal nurse were also described in the presentation of the calendar cover:

“On the right side, almost in the full part of the calendar the true image of compassion is presented: the fine image of a nurse in white with a red cross on her breast and with eyes looking forward to enter the troubles of the suffering people in order to reduce them through her cordial participation as well as through the tools the science has created.”

This description is representative of the views of the Red Cross authorities regarding the social place of nurses. They tried to spread in the late 1930s the traditional image of nurses as a symbolic figure of compassion and charity work and to make it more and more popular. This corresponded to the traditionalistic and neo-patriarchalist tendencies in Bulgaria and re-domestication of women in that time, although women won suffrage in 1937/1938.

But the public image of nurses was changed. The interwar period was a crucial time for the establishment of biopolitical measures in Bulgaria. Systematical observations of the population were introduced and public health became an area of active politic intervention. Women experts and especially nurses were very important figures for this politics. International health organizations, the American Red Cross, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Near East Foundation actively supported the biopolitical measures and initiated a lot of new institutions: children health centers, playgrounds, sport places, hospitals. The American support in running the Red Cross School for nurses in Sofia in the period 1923–1938 was also part of these efforts.

The communication between American and Bulgarian nurses created a field of communication that contributed to the establishing and internalization of new standards for the profession, as well as creating female models and images.

To study in the USA and UK was an important opportunity for young Bulgarian nurses in the 1920s to get familiar and accept those standards. Power relationships were more obvious because Bulgarians were still students and because the Americans also arranged future positions in the School for Nurses.

170 Circular letter N 5664 from December 5, 1936, Central State Archive, F. 156k, op.1, a.e. 71, p. 127
Writing letters to their American teachers in this first period, they get used to the standards and to learn to evaluate new situations according to them. Letter after letter they shared in a regular way their experience and confirmed or corrected their views. They were accepted in the International nursing networks and took part in various International events.

The second period in the 1930s, as Bulgarians were running the School for Nurses in Sofia, was also marked by the communication with the American nurses in the American Red Cross, in the Teachers College, in the Rockefeller Foundation. The “Brazigovo case” in 1932, with the struggle over the typhoid epidemic and its description in the correspondence between Nevena Sendova and Clara Noyes was representative of the internalization of such professional values.

The organization of the Health Educational Center in Golemo Konare 1933–1936 was an attempt to organize a model institution for public health led by nurses. It was to educate local people in the village as well as young nurses about rural conditions and also be a center available for international demonstration. This was a challenge for the relationship with local doctors and with the State Department of Public Health. The correspondence between the people in the different institutions pointed out the importance of this attempt. The private correspondence that shows the ambitions of Hazel Goff to establish this center was interpreted as benefiting her personal career and was not approved in wider communication nets. “The glass roof” above women’s careers in the 1930s must be recognized as a factor in the failure of this experiment.

Finally, the School Director, Krustanka Pachedjieva, was also punished for her disobedience and independence in 1940 by the Bulgarian Red Cross Authorities.

The correspondence between American and Bulgarian nurses in the 1920s-30s presents an interesting female cultural interaction for almost two decades. This offers a unique chance to enter these women’s worlds of international contacts in which they became part of the imagined societies of nurses.

This was not an easy communication for either side. Both Americans and Bulgarians tried to find the right forms to keep a balance in those contacts and had goodwill for collaboration. Both sides were ready for compromises.

In the dynamic of communication Bulgarians raised their self-confidence and the old patterns of obedience of nurses were challenged. Career opportunities were added to the work of service. Americans didn’t lose their views that Bulgarians were “others” and “a good risk”, but expanded their experience and the need to study other cultures and to communicate with them.