On the eve of the thirteen-hundredth anniversary of the Bulgarian state, it is natural that we turn our eyes to that innovative movement which, in the course of several centuries (tenth-fourteenth) in the Middle Ages, linked a large part of the restless masses of the Bulgarian people with the agitated peoples of Europe and bore the name of Bogomilism in Bulgaria and “the Bulgarian heresy” in the West. This link was the more essential because it was not a question of official state bodies, but of contacts and relations between social, popular movements against the feudal system. This circumstance also determined the peculiar historical role of Bogomilism which, “in the form of a struggle of a religious idea” (the Bogomilist idea) “against another religious idea”¹ (the predominant dogmatism), was the first to formulate basic principles of early democracy in the Middle Ages which stood against the official feudal dogmatic ideology and the social structure of vassalage, as well as principles of respect for the human person and of equality between woman and man, and to give rise to a mutter of discontent and a feeling of responsibility in the working man in connection with the conditions prevailing in society.

There is no doubt about the important place which the popular and innovative doctrine of the “Bogomilist heresy,” or Bogomilism occupied in all of medieval Europe, “disturbed by religious and social controversial questions, which were a reflection of the class struggle of those days” (Engels).

The significance of Bogomilism stands out as a result of the investigations carried out after the Second World War, when the interest in the popular movements in history was intensified, as seen in the works of both Bulgarian historical research workers and those of a considerable number of West European students researching the Middle Ages.

After the well-known work Bogomil Books and Legends, published by the Academician Iordan Ivanov (1925), there followed studies in the last two or three decades by Corresponding Member Dimitur Angelov, by Senior Research Associate Borislav Primov, and (in the beginning of the 1970s) in the book Two Ember Fires—One Flame,² first published in Paris and called “a book for rehabilitating the Bulgarian heresy” or the bourgres by the French press. (Of

1. Lenin, letter to Maksim Gor’kii, Dec. 1913.
(Further quotes from the Bulgarian edition.)
course, it was not a question of a historical rehabilitation of Bogomilism, nor of its ideological resurrection, which would have been an antihistoric paradox, but of determining its exact place in the European historical world of the Middle Ages.)

Chronological specifications in the West came after the French translation of the *Lecture against the Bogomils* of Presbyter Kozma (1944). The translation was done by Henri-Charles Puech and by the (perhaps best) authority on medieval Slav-Bulgarian literature, Professor André Vaillant. After the translation of the *Lecture against the Bogomils*, a veritable turning point passed in the attitude of many Western historians towards Bogomilism—towards its place among the popular religious movements between the tenth and fourteenth centuries in Europe which, even when they have different names in different countries (Catharism, Albigensism, Pataranism, Contouguerism) reveal a vivid influence of Bogomilism.

The well-known student of West European heresies, French historian A. Dondaine, in the course of decades defended the Manichaean origin and character of Catharism and agreed with many others (S. Runciman, D. Obolenski, and N. Solov'ev) that in the best case it was a question of "Neomanichaeanism" or of "medieval Manichaeanism," simply of a "rebirth" of Manichaeanism (a heresy belonging to the prefeudal epoch). Dondaine wrote: "It now seems doubtless that the analogies which may be established between the Bogomil doctrine expounded in the *Lecture* of Presbyter Kozma and Catharism of the twelfth century inevitably lead to one conclusion, namely, that Latin Catharism derived from Bulgarian Bogomilism."³

Thus, Dondaine recognized both the original character and the primacy of Bogomilism in the development of the popular movements in medieval Europe.

In his studies of the Cathars in Languedoc, the French professor E. Grieff pointed out: "There exists no difficulty in establishing that the roots of all heretic doctrines of the Mediterranean region are connected with the great Bogomil heresy, which in the tenth century penetrated and became established in the Balkan Peninsula (especially in Bulgaria) and then in Constantinople." Professor Grieff adds: "It has been established that the Cathar heresy in France was connected with the heretic Bogomils from the Balkans."

The well-known French historian René Nelly writes "It seems doubtless that the link between the Bogomils and the French heretics—the Cathars, especially with the moderate Bulgarian Bogomils, cannot be denied." And Professor Marcel Dando has introduced the synthetic term "Bogomil-Cathar" or "Bogomilism-Catharism" to designate the ideological unity of the heretic movement in the basin of the Mediterranean in the Middle Ages. According