

## “ANGEL POPOV” – FOUNDATION

Benefactors are ANGEL and MARIA POPOVI.

A.IVANOV POPOV (1835-24<sup>th</sup> Jan 1920) –an industrialist, a social figure. He was born in Tarnovo in a family of a parish priest. He studied in the local schools. He started as a tailor in 1855, but soon gave up the craftsmanship. In 1861 he and his brother-in-law Nikola Dimitrov Smilov (Garibaldi) started to trade in silkworm eggs and follicles for Italy and lived in Verona for five years. He earned enough means to set up a factory for producing writing paper, wrapping paper and cardboard on the land of the village Kilifarevo, Tarnovo (today's town Kilifarevo) in 1865. Because of the lack of a market their initiative failed. In 1868 the factory work was ceased, some of the finished production was sold at a knock-out price and A. Popov was completely ruined. Later he took up producing white flour, bought machines from Budapest and after rebuilding the premises opened a new factory. After the Liberation (1878) in co-operation with other local industrialists A. Popov set up a flour factory with more modern machines in the area Derventa near Tarnovo. After getting privileges from the National Assambly (1892-1894) he started producing macaroni and spaghetti in the old factory premises. The establishment's production was high-qualitative; it found market not only in the Bulgarian lands, but also in Romania; it won prizes from international presentations. A. Popov actively took part in the fights for National Liberty, and after 1878- in the sociopolitical life of the town. In 1892 he was chosen to be a deputy to the National Assembly. He died in Tarnovo.

M.A. POPOVA (20 March 1843-25 August 1908)- social figure. She was born in Tarnovo. She comes from the popular Smilovi family. In 1859 she married A. Popov and during their whole life together she supported and encouraged his innovatory ideas and helped him in tough times. She actively took part in the leading of the establishments. Emancipated and educated, she used her authority and influence over her fellow-citizens in favor of high-minded ideas and goals. In 1878 she entered the renewed feminine charity association “Radost”, in which outstanding women from Tarnovo assisted. Having experienced the ups and downs of life not only once, M. Popova reached the conviction that the most important benefaction is to give poor an ability to earn their living on their own. In 1898 a school, named “Trudolyubie” was opened thanks to her active participation and money from the association “Radost”. It provided its alumnus with knowledge and capability with swing and pattern. M. Popova took care of its progress during the next years until her dead. She died in Tarnovo.

Born and spent a big part of their life in Tarnovo, the married couple was deeply connected to the town and its citizens. During their life they made numerous donations for schools and churches. Because of the lack of inheritors, they became the biggest benefactors to their town of birth. In his testament from 26 June 1908, A. Popov defined the motives for his donations: “... my only will, my fortune is to be used mainly for the most urgent social needs of my favorite Tarnovo, and especially to be in favor of those, who want, but do not have the possibility of preparing to earn their living by work”.

The property that they ruled together was spread into several pieces. The first donation was for the feminine charity association “Radost”. As its spokesperson M. Popova became a witness of the pecuniary difficulties with the maintenance of the Professional school for girls. She gradually made an inference, that by collecting money from independent contributions, entertainments, membership dues and etc. the school cannot have an assured income. That is why, in her testament from 26 June 1908, she left a house with stores in the town's center, a part of her personal property, including a valuable library, and the sum of 14 thousand leva in heritage. A. Popov also gave support when in 1908 bequeathed the association a house in the

town's center with the stores in it. The possessions were meant for the school's assistance. According to the will of the two benefactors it had to be in the presented houses and the income and funds had to be used for its maintenance. The means were supposed to be used for the establishment of a foundation, whose income had to cover the school's expenses.

In the testament each one of the married couple has the other in mind for a user of the property until they are alive. That is the reason why the association "Radost" received the donation after A. Popov's death. In March 1920 the executors gave the association's board the testament, which it had the right to. The movable property and the real estate were included in the property of the association "Radost", and a foundation was formed with the capitals, which was named after the two benefactors.

The Popovi generosity ensured the school's existence. In actual fact, more than a half of means of maintenance were raised from the testament and the funds. The house given as a gift housed the school, and the stores were given for rent. In the 20s and the 30s of the 20th century the properties brought around 120 thousand leva per year, if the spent amount of money for its maintenance came up to around 200 thousand leva. To show its gratitude towards the generous benefactors, the school took the name of M. Popova after her death. The school fast achieved big progress. Starting the lessons with only two teachers and a few students, it gradually gained trust. The lessons were held annually, if the years in war (1912-1919) are not included. In the school year from 1932 to 1933 102 young girls studied there, and in the school year from 1938 to 1939-201. In 1927 the school got a status as middle-specialized with a decision of the Ministry of trade, industry and work. The poor students got free from paying taxes for their education. In 1932 the association "Radost" arranged a soup-kitchen, where from 5 to 37 children could eat. The building gradually became cramped for the grown needs of the school and in 1939 the association took a decision for building a new, more spacious structure. A special fund for gaining money for the building was instituted (16 February 1939), which reached the sum of 311 500 leva only in a year. During a sitting, held on 25 December 1940, the board decided to look for a loan. It relied on the support of the country, the municipality, and private benefactors. The plan for the new building was made gratuitous by the famous architect Viktoria Angelova-Vinarova( also from Tarnovo). The following events discomfited the initiative, but the school continued existing. In 1946 the property and funds of association "Radost" were taken because of the Law for giving the ex-association girls' school's property to the country. A while after that date the school continued using them and carrying the name of the benefactor.

The foundation "Angel Popov" was formed to take control of the property, left by testament by the two benefactors of Tarnovo. The donation consisted of: a factory for paste products in the lands of the village Kilifarevo along with the buildings attached to it, a mill and yards, a 3-floor building in the town, money and securities. The amount of the donation was 1,3million leva according to an estimate from the beginning of 1920. The Popovs wish was the building and opening of a middle industrial school in Tarnovo for the children of the town with the help of the country. The school had to be named after Angel Popov, and also equipped and maintained from the income from the real estates and the capital. A board, chosen from the town's council was put in charge for the execution of the benefactor's will.

The testaments came into effect after the death of the benefactor. The executors of his last will gave the movable properties and the real estates and the capitals to the Municipality in Tarnovo. On 20 March 1920 the first board was established by those members: Krastio Stanchev-the head of the town, Gancho Peev-secretary, Vasil Angelov, Sava Sabev, Todor Amiorkov. The foundation was formed the same month and was named after Angel Popov. It was run according to a statute, which was elaborated and accepted by the town council and approved by a King's edict from 11 July 1925. The consisting of the board was periodically renewed.

In the beginning of the 20s the market for paste products was bigger and the factory worked to capacity. The establishment brought less and less income, because of the outdated equipment, the big competition in the face of the new-formed and modern companies and the changes in the legislation. The board was forced to reduce the production sharply. In 1930 the suspension of the production was temporarily postponed due to the joining to the cartel of the big factories-producers of paste products and flour. This gave the opportunity for many of the past takings to be gained. Due to dissensions the cartel fell apart in the same year and the board was faced with the dilemma – either the establishment to continue working in conditions of big competition and compression in the market, or to be closed. The second decision, which was approved by the town council in Tarnovo was taken in the late 1930. Some consultations regarding the opportunities for modernization of the machines and the facilities were held with specialists from foreign countries, prospecting for renting the factory was made. The idea for its transformation into a canning factory or textile mill was boosted. Stick to the benefactor's will, the board refused such offers. The mill that was given for rent brought some income. There was handsome sum of money from the invested capitals in the banks and from the rent of the building in the town, in which the people's library was situated.

The real estate and the capital, managed by the board, raised their amount and came up to: 3 548 698 leva in 1925, 5 594 629 leva in 1933, 6 791 872 leva in 1937. Besides the numbers did not notify the real market price of the real estates, which is considerably higher.

For objective and subjective considerations the benefactors' will was postponed for many years. Initially the money was not enough. In 1928-1929 around 20 decares of land in the borders of the town near Marino's field were bought for 117 thousand leva. The ground was meant to be for the school. In 1930 right after the stopping of the factory, the board sent presentation to the Ministry of trade, industrial and work, with which it insisted on doing the needed researches and the profile of the school to be defined. Without making inroads upon the capital, it accomplished another charity activity. From the summer of 1932 it lent a helping hand to poor children's summer vacation, by giving the school's board the factory premises for a summer student colony. It also provided some of the money, needed for its maintenance, gave vegetables from the gardens around the factory, ensured beds for the children. As a result from the combined efforts of the board, the schools board, the town council, the country and the citizens it became possible for the poor students from V.Tarnovo and the villages to pass the summer for one month. In the first year the colony took in 23 children. Subsequently (1933-1935) their number grew to 80-100, and they were organized into 2 shifts.

The actions for the school's opening and the negotiations with the Ministry of trade, industrial and work about its profile did not stop. Not until 1943 the Council of ministers took the decision for the opening of a public middle technical school with 2 parts-building and surveying. 182 students were accepted, and the lessons were held in the building of The first junior high school. The beginning was hard. In the first school year the students studied only for 40 days, there was a lack of premises, the school appliances were not enough, just as were the teachers. In that case the board offered and on 22 August 1944 The Ordinary National Assembly passed a bill, with which its donation was accepted. According to it with the donated 7 million leva would be built a building for the school on the bought-in-the-town land, which would be named after its benefactor A.Popov. The stormy political events in the country held the building over for several years. The school continued existing and from 1945 was announced a competition for a project of the building, whose foundation stone was laid on 25 May 1947. The first stage of the building was finished in 1954. Meanwhile in 1950 the school was renamed into Building technical school "Georgi Dimitrov". In 1990 the school restored its old name. Today its alumni keep up the graves of the two benefactors.

Along with these two big donations A.Popov left other financial resources for aims of public utility. 10 thousand leva were intended for the payment of the community center "Hope" 's loan on mortgage and for buying books for the library. The association "Yunak" from Tarnovo got 3 thousand leva in favor of the constituent fund for building a gym hall. Smaller amounts of money were committed to the municipality for the poor in the town, and to the churches in the villages Kilifarevo and Plakovo.