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| БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ | |
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by Prof Shteliyan D. Shterionov, Dr of Historical Sciences

of the interview application for the academic position of *professor*

in higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.2. History and archaeology and topic “Document studies, archive studies, paleography, inclusive of history and source studies” (“Demographic aspects of migrations of the population in Bulgaria during the Third Bulgarian country”). Position announced by the Institute of Historical Studies at BAS – Sofia (Government Gazette, issue 66, 20.08.2019)

For the announced academic position of *professor* for the section of “Auxiliary historical sciences and informatics” at the Institute of Historical Studies (IHS) at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS) one application was submitted. The applicant is Assoc Prof Penka Ivanova Peykovska, Dr of Historical Sciences.

The candidate’s academic as well as her professional career development are related to the Institute of History (IH) renamed in 2010 to Institute of Historical Studies (IHS) at BAS, with her academic career starting in 1990 and her professional development starting in 1998. The candidate’s main interests are in the fields of historical source studies and historical demography (with a strong focus on migrations). Her first Habilitation thesis (2014) investigates the migrations from Bulgaria to (Austro)-Hungary and identifies the main demographic characteristics of the Bulgarian communities that formed there, including Banat gardeners and students. In November 2015 she successfully defends her dissertation on the topic of migrations from Austro-Hungary and Russia to Bulgaria and obtains the degree “Doctor of Historical Sciences in documentation studies, archive studies, paleography, including historiography and historical source studies”. Her publications (excluding the presented work for the aforementioned degrees) amount at 36: two monographs, one book, one encyclopedic handbook, and thirty one studies and articles. She is also a coauthor of one anthology. Most of them are single-authored, two are coauthored; nineteen of them are published internationally.

With respect to the candidate’s application for the academic position of *professor*, Assoc Prof Penka Peykovska has presented her Habilitation thesis with title “Demographic aspects of migrations in Bulgaria for the period from 1912 to 1944”, published in Sofia in 2019, pp. 348. This work is a natural continuation of her previous research in this field. With exception to a few other researchers who have sketched the basic image of the investigated problem and some others who study separate aspects of it there is no work on this research topic as extensive and impactful as Penka Peykovska’s. It is, in fact, the first detailed study of the demographic aspects of the migrations in Bulgaria for the period between 1912 and 1944.

Assoc Prof Penka Peykovska sets as main objective of her work the uncovering of the demographic aspects of the general and specific migration processes and events in the country during the investigated period. To achieve this objective she depicts and analyses the demographic aspects of (i) the external migration of the population related to Bulgaria; (ii) the general internal migration; and (iii) the urbanization processes in the country. For each of these three tasks she assesses the parameters of the different types of migration, the factors that affect

their dynamics, their spatial directions, the impact of the politics in the investigated area that are relevant to the investigated population, as well as the impact of these migrations to the overall development of the country.

In her work Penka Peykovska presents a thorough and extensive literature review of related Bulgarian and foreign sources on the investigated problem. By assessing this literature review in the totality of her work it becomes obvious that her own work is novel and original and presents a significant contributions to this scientific field.

In her work, Penka Peykovska investigates statistical and narrative sources. She interprets them objectively and analyses their findings critically. The objectivity of her conclusions is achieved through an optimal source coverage, including different sources that complement and correct each other.

Penka Peykovska adopts an interdisciplinary approach in her study combining both quantitative and historical methods. This approach allows her (i) to form an external view to the investigated processes and (ii) to unveil the hidden dimensions of the internal workings of these processes. Furthermore, it shows the ability of the author to optimally exploit these methods and adapt them when necessary.

Her thesis is divided into an introduction, a three-part exposition, conclusion, appendixes and bibliography. The content is presented consistently and coherently in a volume of 348 pages. The included imagery material, i.e. tables, diagrams, maps and schemes, complements the overall picture and aids in understanding the investigated processes.

The scientific apparatus is formed according to established literary norms. The bibliography is substantial.

The **contributions** of the Penka Peykovska's Habilitation thesis can be divided into three groups as follows:

1. Contributions related to the theoretical justifications of the investigated topic. The justifications of the used and defined terminology as well as the analysis of relevant regulatory acts is exemplary. They show the deep understanding and precision with which Penka Peykoska conducts her study. The introduced terminology as well as the analysis of the main national and international regulatory acts can become fundamental for any follow-up study on this topic.

2. Contributions related to the methodology. The author exploits internationally accepted best practices for migration research. She successfully adapts them to the Bulgarian conditions. As the first complete work on this topic it lays the foundations for a novel methodological model applicable to this type of research.

3. Contributions of scientific/research nature. These can subsequently be divided into: (i) the first complex study of the demographic aspects of migrations in Bulgaria during the period from 1912 to 1944; and (ii) identifying the primary problems in the specific scientific field that await to be investigated in the future.

Additionally, Penka Peykovska presents her work on the demographic aspects of the migrations in Bulgaria for the period between 1912 and 1944 in some of her articles and studies, i.e. 5 to 11, 13, 15, 17 and 24 from the attached list of publications. They discuss methodological

problems related to the study of the investigated process, the impact of different factors on the dynamics of this process, the means to realize the migration process, its national, European and global dimensions and others. This work is published or accepted for publication in national and international editions.

The second research direction in Penka Peykovska's academic career is about the Bulgarian-Hungarian relations. Her main work on this topic is presented in the monograph "Bulgarian-Hungarian scientific relations (between the 19th and the middle of the 20th century)", Sofia, 2005, pp 288. A major part of her publications is also devoted to this research direction. In particular these are 2, 11, 16, 18 to 23, 25 and 27 to 35 from the attached list of publications. These studies investigate the demographic development (ethnic, economic, educational and family structures), economic reserve and political activities of both Bulgarians who live in Hungary, and Hungarians who live in Bulgaria. The empirical, analytical and methodological results obtained through her studies contribute significantly to the research in a field that had not received enough attention in Bulgarian historiography, i.e. the field of Hungarian studies. This establishes Assoc Prof Penka Peykovska as the leading scientist on this topic.

In article 12, from the attached list of publications, Assoc Prof Penka Peykovska raises the question about the judicial regulations that impact Bulgarian citizens in foreign countries for the period from 1989 to 2004. In this work, the author outlines ideas about the Bulgarian judicial system and the double citizenship, aiming to regulate the different and often contradictory interpretations that exist among the public.

After reviewing Penka Peykovska's publications I can state that the quality and quantity of the monographs, studies and articles that she has published fulfill the requirements for application for the academic position "professor" set by the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. This opinion is strengthened by her achievements in the scientific and research activities discussed below.

Since 2015, Penka Peykovska has participated in four national, one national with international participation and nine international conferences. These conferences are on topics related to migration and Hungarian studies. They facilitate the dissemination of her findings, knowledge and experience to national and international research communities.

Penka Peykovska leads one international research project; she collaborates in nine other international and seven national research projects. They are related to (i) the study of migration processes in Bulgaria and their demographic, social and ethnic-cultural aspects; (ii) source studies and methodology of History studies; (iii) Bulgarian-Hungarian relations during the centuries; (iv) genealogical and local history problems; and others. The results produced through these projects are indicative for the responsibility, perseverance and time management with which Penka Peykovska handles the tasks at hand.

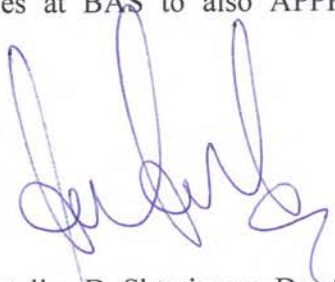
Penka Peykovska's publications have been cited in one article from a peer reviewed journal, in forty four monographs and collaborative works and in twenty six papers published in non-peer reviewed journals. These facts signify once again the academic and practical value of her work.

Subsequently, I can conclude that Assoc Prof Penka Peykovska has established herself as one of the primary researchers in the aforementioned scientific fields in which she contributes continuously.

Assoc Prof Penka Peykovska has also a solid lecturing background. Since 2001 she lectures in the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ochridski" major in "Hungarian philology". In 2016 she also teaches in the University of Library Studies and Information Technologies (UniBIT) major "Archive and documental studies". Currently she conducts lectures, seminars and specialization courses in the bachelor (3 courses) and in the masters (1 course) programmes in "Hungarian philology" of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ochridski. She actively contributes to preparing new study programmes and to updating existing ones as well as to expanding the academic staff and the training and research facilities of the Department of "Hungarian Studies" at the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philologies, (FCMP) at Sofia University. She has supervised four master students who have graduated FCMP at Sofia University. Based on her lecturing and supervisory activities I believe she is becoming a national academic leader in the field of Hungarian studies.

The amount of scientific contributions, the quality and quantity of publications, the lecturing and supervisory activities and the professional skills of Assoc Prof Penka Peykovska fulfill the requirements set by the law as well as the criteria established by the scientific community for the academic position "professor". As a member of the scientific committee for this application I state that I will vote "YES" for awarding Assoc Prof Penka Peykovska with the title "professor" in higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.2. History and archaeology and topic "Document studies, archive studies, paleography, inclusive of history and source studies" ("Demographic aspects of migrations of the population in Bulgaria during the Third Bulgarian country") . Position announced by the Institute of Historical Studies at BAS – Sofia (Government Gazette, issue 66, 20.08.2019). I also recommend the members of the Scientific committee of the Institute of Historical Studies at BAS to also APPROVE her application for the announced position.

02.12.2019
Sofia



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