

БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ	
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Review

on the participation of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Elena Marinova Kostova in the competition for associate professor in the Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Field 2.2, Scientific specialty 'Medieval History', announced in State Gazette Issue 66 of 20 August 2019

Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Sc. Anka Dancheva-Vassileva.

In 1998, Dr. Elena Marinova Kostova completed her higher education in History at Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski'. In 2006, she successfully defended her doctoral dissertation on the topic: 'Melnik in the XIII-XIV Centuries. Issues of Political and Socio-Economic History' at 'Professor Ivan Duychev' Center for Slavo-Byzantine Studies – Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski'. Her scientific interests are in the field of Medieval Bulgarian and Balkan history, political and socio-economic relations during the Middle Ages in the European Southeast and the history of Byzantium. Her monograph work 'Medieval Melnik from the End of the 12th to the End of the 14th Century', American Research Center in Sofia, 2013, is a valuable study on the path of her professional development.

For the purposes of the competition, Dr. Elena Kostova presented the habilitation work: 'Bulgaria, Dubrovnik and the Balkans. Political, Economic and Diplomatic Relations (End of XII - XIV Centuries)' in a volume of 285 pages; 11 scientific articles (the total number of her articles, essays and reviews is 33); two volumes of documentary collections: 1. Dubrovnik Documents on the History of Bulgaria and Bulgarians in the XIII-XV Centuries. Volume I (1230-1403), Sofia 2017 and Volume II (1407-1505), Sofia 2018. Edition, translation and commentary co-authored by with A. Nikolov, V. Guzelev, P. Danova and S. Hinkovski.

The important merits of her habilitation work are three: 1. The importance of the topic and its comprehensive study, which has not yet been achieved so far. 2. The relations between Bulgaria and Dubrovnik are studied against the background of the political and socio-economic history of the countries on the Balkan Peninsula at the end of the XII century - end of the XIV century. 3. Seven newly published documents from the State Archives of Dubrovnik are included in original and in translation into Bulgarian, which are directly related to the work. The structure of the study consists of an Introduction and Three Parts: First Part: The Documents of the Office of the Rulers – a Source for the Development of the Bulgarian-Dubrovnik Relations in the Balkan Context (End of the XII Century – 50s of the XIV Century); Second Part. Bulgarian-Dubrovnik Trade and Economic Relations in the Age of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom; Third Part. Historical Portraits; Annex and Bibliography. The first part includes a detailed commentary on the documents with information on the relationships between Bulgaria and the Republic of Dubrovnik. The topics are: 1. Byzantine-Dubrovnik Treaty of 1192; 2. Bulgaria, the Balkans and Dubrovnik during the reign of Tsar Ivan Asen II; 3. Bulgarian-Dubrovnik political, economic and diplomatic contacts during the 50s of the XIII century; 4. Development of the Bulgarian-Dubrovnik relations, reflected in two Serbian Golden Bulls (Chrysobulls) from the middle of the XIV century. The emphasis in this part is on the documents of primary importance for the Bulgarian-Dubrovnik trade and political relations: The Dubrovnik Charter (Orizmo, a Greek term meaning ‘royal decree’) of Tsar Ivan Asen II (1218-1241) of 1230 and the Treaty between Bulgaria and Dubrovnik of 1253. Both documents are studied in the greatest detail with a thorough comment on all the clauses. They are commented against the background of similar documents from other countries on the Peninsula in favour of the Commune of Dubrovnik. Two Serbian Golden Bulls, dating from 1349 and 1347, contain information on the restrictions that were

imposed on Dubrovnik merchants in relation to Bulgaria and other countries of the Peninsula.

The second part of the study examines: 1. The regulation of customs duties and 2. The role of the Dubrovnik consular services and those of judges. The information of the consular institute and judges of Dubrovnik in the 80s and 90s of the XIV century in the individual countries, regional centres and cities on the Balkan Peninsula, where the Republic had trade representatives, are commented in detail and with great skill.

In the habilitation work, a part, the so-called ‘Historical Portraits’, is included. Two historical figures are represented here – the Bulgarian Queen Anna Neda, wife of Tsar Michail Shishman III (1323-1330) and mother of Tsar Ivan Stefan (1330-1331), and Nikola the Bulgarian, both closely related to the Republic of Dubrovnik in a particular part of their life time. The annex to the habilitation work includes seven documents from the State Archives of Dubrovnik, specifically revealing the political and trade relations between Bulgaria and the Dalmatian Republic. The bibliography, sources and studies are extremely rich. The report on contributions fully corresponds to the true merits of the habilitation work. Elena Kostova participated in 23 scientific forums and 10 national and international scientific projects.

The scientific output of Dr. Elena Kostova is significant in volume and has many valuable contributions. The greatest weight lies on her habilitation work ‘Bulgaria, Dubrovnik and the Balkans. Political, Economic and Diplomatic Relations (End of the XII C – XIV C)’– a detailed and comprehensive study of this important topic in the foreign policy of Medieval Bulgaria. The summaries cover all possible aspects of the relationships between Bulgaria and Dubrovnik, both political and economic, and are examined against the background of the political and trade relations of Dubrovnik with other countries on the Balkan Peninsula. Elena Kostova

demonstrates thorough knowledge of the sources and research literature, is able to thoroughly approach the problems and to offer reasoned interpretations of the sources. The overall scientific activity – the scientific works and their contributions, as well as her participation in various scientific forums and projects, gives me full reason to convincingly propose the members of the Honourable Scientific Jury to elect Dr. Elena Marinova Kostova in the position of ‘Associate Professor’ in the competition announced in the Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

Reviewer: _____

/Prof. D.Sc. Anka Dancheva-Vassileva/

6 December 2019