

БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ	
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INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH – BAS

REVIEW

Of the submitted works for participation in the competition for the academic position PROFESSOR, announced by the Institute for Historical Research - BAS in PN 2.2 History and Archeology, in the scientific field "History of Bulgaria" (The Monarchical Institution and the Third Bulgarian State), for the section "New Bulgarian History" published in the State Gazette, issue 10 of 4 February 2022

Reviewer: Professor, Doctor of Historical Sciences Milko St. Palangurski

Candidate Assoc. Prof. DSc Petar Ivanov Stoyanovich

According to the requirements of the Higher Education Act, the candidate has a defended thesis for the academic position of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor". The published monograph The Road to Sofia. Origin, education and motivation of Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha and the mission in Bulgaria. Veliko Tarnovo, Faber: 2021. 254 pp. ISBN 978-619-00-1341-9 is presented as main habilitation thesis. The monograph explores the decades long historical destiny of the Bulgarian head of state - Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. The biography analyzes the period before the aristocrat's role as the new Bulgarian ruler. This is the third time that Petar Stoyanovich uses purely scientific approaches to a topic in which Ferdinand I is the main protagonist.

The author analyzes the matrix of origin - source, environment, upbringing, education, abilities and prospects for personal career. It turns out that, as incredible as it may seem, we know little about his early years.

The completion of the set task is exceptional. I cannot but emphasize that the historiographical awareness reaches details that are difficult to find without research and purposeful enthusiasm. The book is based on documentary sources stored in the archives of the Austrian, Slovakian, German, Russian, as well as the Bulgarian archival collections. It is also based on family chronicles, genealogical almanacs, encyclopedic reference books, periodicals and web sites. This is accompanied by a huge amount of literature - the volume and variety are remarkable, including many memoirs, journals and diaries dedicated to the family and personal history of Prince Ferdinand I.

The main drive and mission of the candidate is to present a detailed family history including the genealogical line of both of Ferdinand's parents. This is a prerequisite to understand his upbringing, his personal motivation for missionary work and development of character, against the background of the deep processes of political, cultural and spiritual change in Europe in the XIX century. This "European picture" in which Ferdinand I grew up is compared to Bulgaria and

the Bulgarians, following the fate of the state and the people, showing the everyday, cultural and mental difference between the "aristocratic European" and the "Balkan Europeans" and the expected results from their unexpected meeting in 1887.

The author's style is captivating, fascinating and presented with a solid look at details, nuance, critic and logic. Consequently, we get a well presented image of Ferdinand in the period before becoming a statesman. It is a significantly more vivid and nuanced image, than the one that society has, which makes the future prince more identifiable, while also rebutting existing myths and misconceptions. This also changes the outlook to some historical processes and events in the Bulgarian history. Some of the most important moments are within the pages describing the preparation of the prince before coming to Bulgaria and the refutation of the thesis that he has been preparing for years for such a role. Studies like this, in which the protagonist is a figure like Ferdinand I, cannot leave the professional guild indifferent. A new field of discussions and interpretations is being formed, fulfilling the book's main task - the historiographical process has moved forward, giving space for new discussions.

Petar Stoyanovich offers another published monograph - **Zar Ferdinand I. (geb. Prinz von Sachsen-Coburg und Gotha): Seine Herkunft, Bildung, Motivation und der Aufbau des modernen Bulgariens 1861 - 1887 – 1912. Wien, LIT Verlag: 2021. 400 Seiten. ISBN: 978-3-643-91215-2.** It is in German and aims to show the modernization of the country in several areas, focusing on the role of Ferdinand I, his intimate life and those royal residences that are the symbol of his presence in the cultural and social life of the country. The aim is to see to what extent the monarch has a contribution in the creation of the European picture in areas other than politics and diplomacy. That is why P. Stoyanovich describes the role and place of Ferdinand in several areas: army and officers, church, education, science and art, architecture, construction, infrastructure and transport, charity - all areas that at first glance are not in the scope of the monarch. The author devotes plenty of effort to show key development of the institutions that contribute to the evolution of the medieval picture in the country - post offices, telegraphs, telephones, infrastructure - railway, road and sea, etc. The throughoutly researched areas are devoted to the architectural Europeanization of the cities, the works of Bulgarian and foreign architects, as well as key areas of education and spirit: education, science, art and artists in the spiritual life of Europe. Hence, we get a solid image of Ferdinand as a statesman based on his personal mentality and we get a clearer, more identifiable and grounded head of state. Modernization has completed one of its phases, and as it turns out, it is by no means the worst.

The author has a published book based on his thesis - "Between the Danube and the Neva. Prince Ferdinand I of Bulgaria in the Eyes of Austro-Hungarian Diplomacy (1894-1898)". It traces the processes and problems surrounding the recognition of the Bulgarian ruler after the resignation of St. Stambolov and the complex fluctuations of the Austro-Russian cooperation and the clash on Bulgarian soil. The period in which the prince was at in his position due to the

mercy of the government transforms to the moment in which "no Bulgarian politician would take a single serious step without the blessing" of the palace.

The candidate for professor has the obligatory by law studies, articles and reports published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information, as well as studies, articles and reports published in non-peer-reviewed journals with scientific peer- review or published in edited collective volumes in Bulgarian and German language.

The studies and articles presented for review cover several main areas. Parts of them are dedicated to the diplomatic efforts of the country to get out of the First World War, others are devoted to the main character in the research of Assoc. Prof. Petar Stoyanovich - Prince Ferdinand. The fragments dedicated to the participation of the royal family in the film "Boris Stamov" are also interesting and prolific. The assumptions about the relation between the palace and the high command, the property of the monarch, etc. are very intriguing. A good knowledge of the Austro-Hungarian Empire is set out in the article "Torpedo Empire" and its development as a naval force.

The presented citations for review cover the whole vector of possibilities. The candidate has defended his dissertation for the degree of "Doctor of Science", has been a scientific supervisor of a PhD student, has participated in educational and research projects and has published several textbooks.

CONCLUSION

The peer-reviewed thesis show Assoc. Prof. Petar Stoyanovich as an established expert who has his own scientific style, with specific areas of research, very good methodological training and an accurate attitude to the sources and achievements of historiography. The conclusions and analyzes are his personal creativity with no suspicion in regards to plagiarism. The new analyzes and thesis have their deserved place in the scientific space. I must emphasize that the presented research gives me reason to say that after the defense of his dissertation and habilitation, the participant has continued his research activities. They fully meet the requirements of Article 2b of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, in the professional field 2.2. History and Archeology.

All this gives me full confidence to vote positively for the academic position of "Professor" of Assoc. Prof. Petar Ivanov Stoyanovichh in the competition of the Institute for Historical Research - BAS in the field 2.2 History and Archeology, specialty "History of Bulgaria" (The Monarchical institution and the Third Bulgarian State), section "New Bulgarian History" published in the State Gazette, issue 10 of 4 February 2022