

БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ	
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О P I N I O N

By Prof. Dr. Iliyana Marcheva from the Institute for Historical Studies - BAS

For the scientific production of Ch. assistant professor, Dr. Vanya Petrova Stoyanova, the only candidate in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor", announced in the "State Gazette", no. 95 of 29.11.2022 by the Institute for Historical Studies at the BAS in professional field 2.2. History and Archaeology, scientific specialty "History of Bulgaria" (The Thracian Question after 1878), for the needs of the "History of the Bulgarian National Question" section.

Dr. Vanya Stoyanova presents herself in the competition with an impressive scientific production, expressed in 1 monographs, 47 articles and studies, with participation in 5 international scientific projects and in numerous conferences and seminars at home and abroad.

This production, as well as the numerous citations (115) of her works, of which she collected 1160 points out of the required 60 points according to the national minimum requirements for the academic position "Associate Professor", testify that Dr. Stoyanova is a very recognizable scholar. Moreover, she is among the leading specialists on the Thracian question after the Liberation, undeservedly left not only in the shadow of big politics, but also of historical scholarship at the expense of the Macedonian question. It is to the comprehensive study of the fate of the Thracian Bulgarians in the maelstrom of the history of the national question that almost all of Stoyanova's articles and studies are devoted, as well as her habilitation thesis *The Bulgarians in Turkey 1913-1945*, Sofia - Institute for Historical Research - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 2022, 478 pp.

Only a few publications are on other topics: three analyze the theme of the memory of socialism in Bulgarian feature films and documentaries of the transition, one sheds light on the early history of the socialist women's movement in Bulgaria, and one other reveals the history of the Thracian Scientific Institute, of which the candidate is the scientific secretary and an ardent member.

Dr. Stoyanova's basic research has been done according to the classical academic canon - her theses have been derived from the abundant source base of numerous CDA funds, collections of documents and after a scrupulous acquaintance with and use of the available Bulgarian and foreign historical literature on the issues. Particularly good impression is made by the author's continuous endeavor to use, through English, publications of Turkish and Greek authors that deal with similar processes and problems of minority politics in Thrace.

The methods of historical inquiry that Stoyanova applies are also classical - the historical method, the biographical method, the historical-legal method, although they are not explicitly mentioned in her tests. There are no lapses into nationalistic rhetoric, even though the topic of the sad fate of the Thracian Bulgarians predisposes to them. And this shows that Stoyanova is a true professional - a researcher.

The mature result of Stoyanova's creative efforts after the defense in 1991 of her dissertation "The Belomorskiyat Region 1941-1944", which united most of her studies and articles, is undoubtedly her habilitation work - the monograph "The Bulgarians in Turkey 1913-1945". It traces the history of the Bulgarian minority community in Turkey, mainly in Eastern Thrace (Adrianople, Lozengrad, Istanbul) from the Peace of Constantinople in 1913, which ended the Second Balkan War between Bulgaria and Turkey, to the lifting of the schism in February 1945 and the termination of the existence of the only institution of the Bulgarians - the Exarch's Vicarage. And this puts the Bulgarian community in new conditions in the Turkish country, as the only thread that holds it to the Bulgarian state is breaking. The Church (the Exarchate and the Exarchian Viceroyalty) and the Bulgarian state (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomats) are the main actors in the drama of the Bulgarians who remained to live and are mainly subjects of the Turkish state. Dr. Stoyanova skilfully includes them in her account of the conditions of existence of the diminishing Bulgarians in the Ottoman Empire and Kemalist Turkey, as well as in the short-lived Greek rule of Eastern Thrace. The contradictions between the two main actors - the Bulgarian church and the state - are the basis of a number of unfavorable consequences for life and, above all, for the preservation of the ethno-religious affiliation of the Bulgarians. This conclusion, like a red thread, runs through all the years and collisions that Dr. Stoyanova researches. The other conclusion from the history of the Bulgarians in Turkey, which the research suggests, is about the important role of the state in the survival and preservation of any ethnic community that remained in the borders of another country. On its strength, international positions, allies or the lack of them, almost everything depends for the survival and preservation of the countrymen as a community with rights. The third conclusion of the monograph is that, although modest in terms of economic opportunities, not living and quite compact especially in Constantinople, but with a highly developed Christian feeling, the Bulgarians in Turkey survive as Bulgarians thanks to the maintenance of the language, cult and educational traditions. In this regard, Stoyanova paid tribute to many figures - clergymen, teachers, public figures, who contributed to the preservation of the ethno-religious affiliation of the Bulgarians in Turkey. She has outlined their biographies with an emphasis on their activities in Eastern Thrace, and she has discovered some of them for historical science, such as the example of Nicodemus of Tiveriopul.

The tables on the number of Bulgarians, their social and professional characteristics in different years and cities are extremely useful for the perception of the author's conclusions. Their compilation, on the one hand, is testimony to the great difficulties faced by Dr. Stoyanova due to the lack of accurate, permanent and regular information, as well as their collection in view of the specific administrative needs of the Exarchian Viceroyalty. On the other hand, the precise description and caution of the conclusions that Stoyanova draws in

relation to the specified features of the documents she works with speaks of her high professionalism.

Bearing in mind that Dr. Vanya Stoyanova not only meets, but also far exceeds the national and institute requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor", that her main scientific production and her habilitation work fully meet and cover the topic of the announced competition and are a real contribution to his comprehensive and multifaceted empirical and analytical study, I propose to the Scientific Jury to vote for the awarding of Ch. Ass. Prof. Dr. Stoyanova, the academic position "Associate Professor" in professional field 2.2. History and Archaeology, scientific specialty "History of Bulgaria" (The Thracian Question after 1878), for the needs of the "History of the Bulgarian National Question" section. I will definitely vote for it.

February 27, 2023

Prof. Dr. Iliyana Marcheva