

БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ	
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## Opinion

to Prof. Dr. Boriana Buzhashka from the University of Library Science and Information Technologies, member of the scientific jury, regarding the announced competition for the academic position of "associate professor" in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, by professional direction 2.2. History and Archeology (The Thracian Question after 1878), announced in the "State Gazette" (No. 95 of 29.11.2022) of the scientific works of Dr. Vanya Stoyanova, presented in the competition for the academic position of "associate professor" for the needs of the "History of the Bulgarian National Question" section of the Institute for historical studies

Only one candidate participated in the announced competition for "docent" - Dr. Vanya Stoyanova. The candidate has submitted all the required documents, including references for compliance with the national scientometric indicators, testifying that his academic results cover the necessary minimum requirements for holding the position of associate professor. Dr. Vanya Stoyanova is the author of a published monographic work and numerous studies and articles.

### 1. General characteristics of works

The main monographic work presented for the competition is the book "Bulgarians in Turkey 1913-1945. The book is a logical continuation of Vanya Stoyanova's enduring research interests over the years. There is no more sensitive component of the Bulgarian diaspora in our national memory than the dramatic development and tragic fate of the Bulgarian community in Turkey. The liquidation of the Bulgarian ethno-demographic presence in Turkey and the destruction of the achievements of the Bulgarian Exarchate in the field of education and church building makes the topic particularly relevant and puts it at the top of the research on the Bulgarian diaspora around the world. The topic implies the clarification of a wide range of issues that have been illuminated over the years. And right here is the great contribution of V. Stoyanova's research - to find this specific and significant look at the problems of the Bulgarians in Turkey and in a convincing way to present and trace their history from the end of the Balkan Wars to the end of the Second World War, with their educational, religious, charitable, etc. institutions. A dramatic story, tragic in its essence, as at the same time an example of preserving one's national identity and connection with Bulgaria.

The study demonstrates the rich historiographical awareness of its author, who paid tribute to the achievements of Bulgarian, Greek and Turkish scientists. Extremely scrupulously, the author refers to and evaluates the works of his colleagues on the subject. But there are whole problematic fields that were first

studied by Vanya Stoyanova and became known to the scientific community, and all other authors (including myself) refer to these studies.

Particularly valuable, embedded in the basis of this work, is the wealth of documents from Bulgarian archives. Along with well-known documents, Vanya Stoyanova used a wide range of authentic documents from the Central State Archive and the Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - diplomatic reports, letters, references, expert opinions and others, which reveal the life of the Bulgarians in a hitherto unknown completeness. Turkey. These unknown authentic documentary testimonies shed new light on various aspects of the life of the Bulgarian community in Turkey, correct some hitherto dominant assessments in the scientific literature, and reveal unexplored whole periods and problems of the history of the Bulgarians in Turkey. The information about the Bulgarians from Odrin and Lozengrad and the activities of the Metropolitan of Odrin and the Lozengrad episcopal vicarage are completely unknown and useful. The information about their life and the structures created by them and the Bulgarian state outline a full-blooded picture of the life of the Bulgarians in Odrin and Lozengrad, which over the years, for various reasons, has been forgotten or belittled. Through the numerous archival and other materials, the irreversible demographic changes are shown, as well as the efforts of the Bulgarian governments to stop the emigration and ensure the return of the Bulgarian refugees. It is precisely this picture that is shown through the prism of the policy of the Turkish authorities and confirms the impression of hopelessness of the official Bulgarian decisions.

Other scientific contributions realized in the work deserve mention. The institution of the Bulgarian Exarchate - Exarchate Deputy is shown very thoroughly. Here we must bear in mind that this transformation of the Bulgarian Exarchate after 1913 is little known to most readers of the literature of that period, and the contributions of V. Stoyanova for researching and presenting the complex steps taken by Exarch Yosif and St. Synod to preserve the heritage of the Bulgarian Exarchy in a time of pogrom and efforts to preserve the little remaining Bulgarian presence. The comprehensive material on the legacy of the Bulgarian Exarchy is a study of the actions and inactions of the Bulgarian state, the Holy Synod and its individual representatives to preserve the established Bulgarian structures.

Giving importance to what was published by I. Galchev about the Bulgarian schools, the reading of the documents about the Bulgarian schools is particularly interesting. The data collected by V. Stoyanova presents a not very comforting but objective picture of the development of Bulgarian school work in Turkey. Similar to the Bulgarian Exarchy, it is an example of the efforts of the Bulgarian governments and individual Bulgarians to preserve the remaining evidence of the Bulgarian presence in Turkey. The concerns and hopes of ordinary people for the preservation of Bulgarian structures have not been left out.

Among the main merits of V. Stoyanova's methodological approach to the study of this complex issue is its development in the widest possible context of the dynamically developing international situation, the development of Bulgarian-Turkish relations, Turkey's policy towards minority communities, Bulgaria's efforts to preserve the Bulgarian ethno-religious presence in Turkey at significant international forums - Lausanne and Angora and the complex relations of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church with the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Based on the above, I would like to make the following recommendations:

1. After getting acquainted with the work of V. Stoyanova, I accept the title "The State, the Church and the Bulgarians in Turkey 1913-1945" as more accurate.
2. In the text about the schools, the Greek government in Thrace 1920-1922 and especially the "var lak" tax, the text is a bit chatty. The data is the fruit of a serious research effort and should not be lost. I would recommend that a part of them be formatted in tables and exported in appendices.
3. There is no definite assessment of the author of the Treaty of Angora, regardless of the many, polar opinions on the matter.
4. The presentation lacks a more categorical assessment of the mistakes made by Bulgarian diplomacy and especially by the BOC - its relations with the executive power and its overall policy towards the Bulgarians in Turkey.

## 1.2 Articles and studies in periodicals and reports from scientific forums

From the works submitted for review, it is clear that the author's research range is much wider and is not limited to the stated issues of the competition. The articles and studies attached to the competition documents are distinguished by a wide range of topics. The Thracian question has been studied in all its aspects - territorial, diplomatic, ethno-demographic, enlightened, etc. The materials about the organized Thracian movement and its activities for the protection of the Thracian Bulgarians and the promotion of their cause, as well as the information about prominent figures who connected their lives with the activities in Thrace and the Thracian Bulgarians, are of a contributing nature. Unexplored up to now are a number of aspects of the question of Vardar Macedonia as part of the diocese of the Bulgarian Exarchy 1941-1944 and the relationship of church-nation-state in modern Bulgaria, the position of the BOC towards the Bulgarian national question for the period 1941-1944. Other studies outside the theme of the competition are also very interesting and contributing - the women's social democratic movement and especially the cinema after 1989 as a collective image of socialism, interpreted through the means of visual art.

The cited works are an indisputable contribution to the subject. To this day, this issue has not lost its political and historical sensitivity. The articles in the presented scientific publications are an achievement for native historiography. Here, there is no episodic interest, but long-term accumulations

that build Vanya Stoyanova as an indisputable scientific capacity and expert, whose experience can be shared not only in the scientific sphere.

### **III. Conclusion**

Based on the scientific contributions highlighted so far, I believe that the research activity of Dr. Vanya Stoyanova fully corresponds to the specific requirements of the announced competition and is covered by the legal requirements for occupying the academic position of "docent".

Therefore, with conviction, I give my positive assessment and suggest to the members of the respected Scientific Jury to vote positively for awarding Dr. Vanya Stoyanova the educational and scientific degree "docent" in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.2 . History and archeology (the Thracian question after 1878), for the needs of the Institute for Historical Studies.

Prof. B. Buzhashka