

БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ	
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София 1113, бул. Шипченски проход № 52, бл. 17 тел.: 02/ 979 29 98 ; факс: 02/ 870 21 91	

## OPINION

of Academician Vassil Gjuzelev

concerning

the competition for the academic position of professor in professional field 2.2. History and archaeology, History of Bulgaria specialty (Italian sources on medieval Bulgarian history), for the needs of the Medieval History Section, with a term of 2 (two) months from the promulgation of the notice in the *State Gazette*, No 38 of April 28, 2023 and subsequent Order No 26/28.06.23 of the Director of the Institute for Historical Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

One candidate has responded to the announced competition: Assoc. Prof. PhD. Penka Stilianova Danova from the same Institute. The attached Reference shows that she has every reason to participate in this competition. 1) one monograph and three published academic books; 2) a large number of studies and articles on various topics of medieval Bulgarian history with meaningful contributions; 3) sources on the history of the Bulgarians and Bulgaria in the Middle Ages published in various editions.

1. First and foremost among the works presented one should mention the monographic study „България и българите в италианската историопис (XIV–XVII век)“ [*Bulgaria and Bulgarians in Italian Historiography (14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c.)*], which is distinguished by its chronological scope, precision in interpretation and search for original information about our medieval past. The study is not only novel but also provides data for a new understanding of events in Bulgarian history. Of particular importance are the Italian

chronicles of the 14th century (especially those of Giovanni Villani and Giovanni Sercambi). As a whole, this monograph represents an extremely important contribution with significance for Bulgarian medieval studies, both from the historiographical and from the source and factual point of view. It constitutes a nodal point in Penka Danova's scientific research.

2. The numerous studies and articles published in various Bulgarian and foreign journals do not have an isolated character, but aim to answer a number of important questions related to the characteristics of everyday life in the Middle Ages, ethno-political relations and the beginning of the use of firearms in the events of Bulgarian history since the end of the 14th century, the place of trade and the merchant in the Bulgarian and Balkan space. These studies and articles characterize the versatility of Penka Danova's research interests and her high erudition as a highly qualified medievalist.
3. Penka Danova prepared two books with Italian sources: „Анонимна хроника за графовете Булгари (края на XVII век)“ [*Anonymous Chronicle about the Bulgari Counts (End-17<sup>th</sup> Century)*]. Introduction, translation and comments by Penka Danova] and „Джовани Киаромани и неговото пътуване от Виена до Бурса през 1659 г./ Giovanni Chiaromanni e il suo viaggio da Vienna a Bursa fatto l'anno 1659“ [*Giovanni Chiaromanni and his Travels from Vienna to Bursa in 1659*]. In co-authorship with Snezhana Rakova, she published in Italian and in Bulgarian translation a travelogue and a final report of a Venetian mission to Constantinople in 1534. She also published other Italian documents and narrative sources in a number of compendia. Through her competent work on the Italian documents,

many of which she independently researched, read, translated and commented on by herself, she has contributed to enriching our understanding of the Bulgarian past during the period.

All of the above and convincingly established by me gives me reason to believe that Assoc. Prof. PhD. Penka Stilianova Danova fully deserves the academic position of Professor in the field 2.2. History and Archaeology, History of Bulgaria specialty.

The above opinion has been prepared by:

August 18, 2023

Sofia

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Academician Vassil Gjuzelev