

БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ	
Изходящ №	дата 201 г.
Входящ № 303	дата 22.08. 2013 г.
София 1113, бул. Шипченски проход № 52, 6п. 17 тел.: 02/ 979 29 98 ; факс: 02/ 870 21 91	

REPORT

BY PROF. DR. YORDANKA GESHEVA, INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES
AT BAS

ABOUT THE PUBLICATIONS OF ASSOC. PROF. DR. PENKA DANOVA,
PARTICIPANT IN THE COMPETITION FOR PROFESSOR OF PROFESSIONAL FIELD
2.2. HISTORY AND ARCHEOLOGY, SPECIALTY "HISTORY OF BULGARIA"
(ITALIAN SOURCES FOR BULGARIAN MEDIEVAL HISTORY) FOR THE NEEDS OF
THE "MEDIEVAL HISTORY" SECTION, PUBLISHED IN THE STATE GAZETTE, NO.
38 OF 28.04.2023

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Penka Danova is the only participant in the competition for professor, announced in no. 38 of the "State Gazette" of 28.04.2023. The candidate enters the competition with 19 selected studies and articles and with four books, one of which is co-authored with Assoc. Prof. Snezhana Rakova. In addition, the candidate presents a list of all her studies and articles published after acquiring the academic position of associate professor and after receiving a PhD; table with the scientometric indicators required for holding the academic position of professor; statement of contributions; references for participation in scientific forums, as well as in projects funded by BAS, MES or with external contractors; open citation reference; reference for conducted lecture courses, etc.

The scientific books, articles and studies proposed by Assoc. Prof. Danova for review are on interesting and unexplored problems and are of a high scientific level.

Structurally, the main habilitation work *„България и българите в италианската историопис (XIV–XVII век)“*. София: Институт за исторически изследвания, 2023, 359 стр. – ISBN 978-954-2903-63-3 (BULGARIA AND BULGARIANS IN ITALIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY (14th-17th c.)), is well thought out. It includes an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, references, a list of illustrations, and an executive summary. The aims and objectives of the research are correctly set. The division of Italian authors according to the time of writing the works is necessary and successful. Thus, the emergence and accumulation of information and knowledge about the Bulgarians and their lands, way of life, social situation, relations with neighboring countries stands out. In the first chapter, *Bulgaria and Bulgarians in 14th and 15th c. Urban, Universal and Monastic Chronicles* are examined five authors - Giovanni Villani, Giovanni Sercambi and Bartolomeo Pitti, Antonino Pierozzi, as well as

Giacomo di Filippo Foresti. The second chapter is devoted to *Bulgarians in 16th century General History Works*.

Although not easy to read due to the very remote time of creation of the works, as well as due to the specific style of the early medieval Italian authors, P. Danova's text is acknowledged with special attention. Interesting details are given on various events from the history of the Bulgarian state, the participants in them, the rulers, cities and territories. Useful clarifications were made by Danova, interpretation of the names of Bulgarian rulers, the change in the pronunciation and spelling of these names was traced - Krum, Kardam, Tervel, etc.

The parts of works by Italian authors included in Danova's monograph support or refute what is known about Bulgarian kings and rulers of separate territories (for example, Krali Marko). Assoc. Prof. Danova is not satisfied with just presenting excerpts from Italian writings, she seeks the objective truth in historical science, finds the errors of the authors, points out where these errors originate and how they affect Bulgarian medieval history. She compares facts and events presented by various Italian authors, outlines their position - whether it is pro-Bulgarian or anti-Bulgarian and for what reasons and circumstances it is so.

At several points, Danova convincingly points out that accuracy is not among the strong points of the early Italian authors - there is confusion in the years, shifting and mixing of events, indicating exaggerated figures. This is hardly surprising - the mentioned early Italian authors rather uncritically copy sources that are rarely cited, interpret events according to the current politics of their country. Regardless of these omissions and errors, the main merit of the general world histories is that they keep alive the memory of the Bulgarians, of their kings, of their militancy and battle glory; help preserve these early insights; give a different perspective.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Danova establishes an important circumstance in the authors and writings she examines - in none of them is the "ethnic identity" of either Samuilova's Bulgaria or the Asenevtsi state called into question. The other thing that Danova notes is that both the writers of the Renaissance era as well as their followers manage to capture the main moments in Bulgarian history, to emphasize the essential, and in most cases they manage to sift out and remove the controversial and unclear.

The third chapter, *Partitioning Knowledge - Historiography, Educational and Reference Literature in the Age of Baroque* presents the fate of a number of literary genres in the 17th century, reflecting the results of the scientific revolution in the field of social science. Special emphasis is placed on the deeper profiling and differentiation of individual scientific disciplines. The wide variety of topics impresses the reader. Here is presented in a different way and from a different angle, the information about Bulgaria and the Bulgarians in the writings of

the 16th and 17th centuries. The evolution of the genres, style and language of historical writings, including elements of Bulgarian medieval history from the era of the Early Italian Renaissance to the Baroque, is traced back in time. The role of book printing is highlighted not only for the distribution of literature, but also for its creation.

I accept Assoc. Prof. Danova's method of work - first to give as complete information as possible about the corresponding Italian author (sometimes there are not many sources and they are scattered in different places, they are also contradictory, which forces Danova to search for and specify the data); and about the composition, about the time and circumstances of writing. After that, Danova gives as an appendix parts of the commented work concerning the Bulgarians, with an assessment of the author's achievements, of the mistakes made, which he points out and corrects. Terminologically, things are right.

In the book *„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*. София: Парадигма, 2017, 257 стр. — ISBN 978-954-326-329-5 Assoc. Prof. Danova presents and analyzes 25 letters (unpublished until now) that the noble G. Chiaromanni sent to his "friends and patrons" in which he described his mission, what he had seen and heard along the way, and his experiences. The letters are also interesting in that they give an immediate and unadulterated view of the life of Balkan society.

In the book *„Бенедето Рамберти и Даниело Лудовизи – двама венециански пратеници в Константинопол през 1534 година“* Пловдив: Фондация „Българско историческо наследство“, 2016, 329 стр. — ISBN 978-954-8536-19-6 written in collaboration with Assoc. Prof. Snezhana Rakova, Assoc. Prof. P. Danova participated with the second part, relating to Danielo Ludovizi, as well as with segments of the general parts of the preface, the alphabetical index and the literature. The book presents interesting and unknown information, details about official meetings and private conversations of the two Italians with representatives of the Ottoman administration and with Sultan Suleiman I, it introduces the readers to the political climate of the 16th century, the condition and some features of Bulgarian lands in the first half of 16th century, with everyday life and with the topical problems of the years in which the two Venetian travelers - the cousins B. Ramberti and D. Ludovizi - lived and worked.

Assoc. Prof. Danova presents new and unknown documents in the book *„Анонимна хроника за графовете Българи (края на XVII век)“*. София: Издателство „Парадигма“, 2014, 200 стр., ISBN 978-954-326-224-3 (**ANONYMOUS CHRONICLE ABOUT THE BULGARI COUNTS (END-17TH CENTURY)**). Introduction, translations and comments by

Penka Danova). The anonymous family chronicle definitely provokes the reader and shows Danova's ability to work with old authentic documents, to explain facts and information, to interpret; to analyze the language, the literary genre, and to establish the time of compilation of the documents, when this is absent.

I welcome the very detailed footnotes in all of Assoc. Prof. Danova's books, studies and articles, which are very necessary and useful both for clarifying the events and processes, and for raising the awareness of the readers.

What should be noted about all four books by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Penka Danova is that they have abundant source material that she presents, translates, processes and analyzes. The overall research work of Associate Professor Dr. Penka Danova shows an interesting creative pursuit, deep thinking, precise research and analysis of the sources with which she works. I accept the scientific contributions of the author shown in the self-reference, which are convincingly and well-argued. The participation of Assoc. Prof. P. Danova in scientific projects, in conferences, round tables, sessions, and cultural events confirms my opinion that the candidate for the academic position "Professor" is responsible with the tasks she undertakes.

I absolutely believe that the four books as well as the rest of the research of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Danova represents serious academic works that meet all the requirements for international scientific research, as well as for participation in a competition for awarding the academic position of Professor. Therefore, with complete conviction, I will vote for awarding the academic title of Professor to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Penka Danova.

Sofia,
20.08.2023

Assessor:
(Prof. Dr. Y. Gesheva)