

БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ	
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## OPINION

on the competition for the academic post of Associate Professor in professional field 2.2. History and Archaeology, scientific specialty “Modern and Contemporary General History”, (“Ukrainians and Ukraine in the History of Europe”), announced for the needs of the section “History of the World and International Relations in Modern and Contemporary Times” at the  
Institute for Historical Studies - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Petya Borisova Dimitrova,  
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One candidate, Dr. Inna Viktorova Manasieva, has applied for the academic post of Associate Professor in professional field 2.2. History and Archaeology, scientific specialty “Modern and Contemporary General History” (Ukrainians and Ukraine in the History of Europe)” for the needs of the section “History of the World and International Relations in Modern and Contemporary Times” of the Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (State Gazette No. 55 of 26 June 2023).

Inna Manasieva is a graduate of the Faculty of Bulgarian Philology, History and Theology of the Konstantin Preslavsky Shumen University, where she received a master's degree in history. Immediately afterwards she entered a full-time doctoral program at the Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and in 2004 she obtained the degree of Doctor after successfully defending her thesis on *The Ukrainian People's Republic and Bulgaria, 1918–1920*. Since 2005 she has been employed at the Institute, first as a research associate II degree (assistant), and since 2010 as a senior assistant.

For participation in the competition, the candidate submitted a single monograph as a habilitation work – *The Ukrainian Question in Bulgaria during World War I* (Sofia: BAS Publishing House “Prof. Marin Drinov”, 2023, 203 p.); a single collective monograph written jointly with colleagues from Ukraine and published in Ukrainian (Matiash Iryna, Tertychna Anna, Manasieva Inna. *Relations between Ukraine and Bulgaria: Official and Cultural Diplomacy (1918–1944)*. Kiev - Sofia, 2021, 372 p.); two studies and 22 articles. With this production, as well as with the citations stated in the attached list, she fully meets the requirements of NACID for the academic position of Associate Professor.

As it is evident from the scientific works mentioned so far, as well as from the presented list of publications, the main subject of I. Manasyeva's work is Ukraine with its attempts at emancipation from the Russian Empire in the first decades of the last century – a subject not only interesting and fully within the research framework of the section “History of the World and International Relations in Modern and Contemporary Times”, but also with a

continuing relevance after the collapse of the USSR in the 1990s and especially in the light of the outbreak of hostilities on Ukraine's territory in 2022. The value of these studies is enhanced by the fact that they are refracted through the Bulgarian point of view, through the Bulgarian stance on the Ukrainian question, through the development of the Bulgarian-Ukrainian diplomatic relations, but also of the public diplomacy in the bilateral relations. The focus on a relatively short chronological span has enabled I. Manasieva to show the issues under consideration in their depth and multifacetedness.

The monograph *The Ukrainian Question in Bulgaria during World War I* meets all the requirements for a habilitation thesis. It is devoted to a new and unexplored issue in Bulgarian historiography, presents a wide range of documentary sources - both Bulgarian and Ukrainian, some of which are used for the first time, as well as periodicals, diaries and memoirs of participants in the events, and last but not least is the available scientific literature. The use of the classical historical method of scientific inquiry skillfully combined with the problem-chronological approach enables I. Manasieva to cope successfully with the tasks she set herself - to trace the transformation of the Ukrainian national idea formed in the late XIX - early XX century into a political problem in the years of World War I and to reveal the attitude to it of Europeans in general and Eastern Europeans in particular, with an emphasis on the Bulgarian society. It also manages to show both what is happening in Ukraine and the perception of the Ukrainian question by European societies and especially by Bulgarians in its dynamics and development. I would like to particularly stress that this is done by remaining at all times within the framework of academicism, adhering to a purely scientific approach and offering a balanced study that remains alien to unhealthy emotions and political bias.

The successful presentation of these issues in the monograph has its background. In general, the topic of the Ukrainian question and the aspiration of people with Ukrainian consciousness to bring it into the European agenda, developing activities on the territory in Bulgaria in particular, before, during and after the end of World War I is a central theme in Manasieva's scientific work. The attached list of publications makes it possible to visually trace the path she followed to achieve completeness and thoroughness in her study.

The developing and collection of material on Bulgaria's relations with various Ukrainian state formations (*The Ukrainian People's Republic and Bulgaria (diplomatic aspects). 1918–1920*; Ivan Shishmanov - Minister Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Bulgaria in the Ukrainian People's Republic and the Ukrainian State (1918–1919); *Bulgaria and the Ukrainian People's Republic at the Brest-Litovsk Peace Conference: Defending National Interests* etc) grew into an in-depth study of the activities of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine in Bulgaria (*Anti-Russian propaganda of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine in Bulgaria and the Balkan countries at the beginning of the World War I*; *The image of Poland in the pro-war propaganda of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine in Bulgaria on the eve of Bulgaria's entry into World War I*; *The image of Serbia in the anti-Russian propaganda of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine in Bulgaria at the beginning of the First World War*, *The Macedonian Issue in the Publications of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine during the First World War*, *Bulgarian topics in the publications of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine during the First World War*), to reach its logical conclusion and summary in the aforementioned monograph.

Here I would also like to draw attention to the candidate's participation in the writing of the collective monograph *Relations between Ukraine and Bulgaria: Official and Cultural Diplomacy (1918-1944)*. The aforementioned is interesting in that it clarifies for the first time the formation of the instruments of cultural diplomacy in Bulgarian-Ukrainian relations and outlines our country's position on the Ukrainian question during World War I and in the post-war period, as well as it is contributory with the 20 annexes published - treaties, speeches, reports, excerpts from diplomats' diaries, etc., most of which are being brought into the scientific world for the first time.

Another range of problems to which I. Manasieva brings attention is related to the analysis of different views on the place and role of Ukraine in the world civilization process - by Mikhailo Dragomanov and Mikhailo Hrushevsky, by Vyacheslav Lipinski and Dmitry Tabachnik (*Intellectuals or Politicians: Historians and Ukrainian Statehood in the XIX and XX Centuries*), as well as on various conceptions of Ukrainian history, refracted through the prism of Hegel's theory, which emerged and became widely known in the first half of the XIX century and had a profound influence on the Ukrainian national movement in the late XIX and the following XX centuries (*The Influence of Hegel's Theory of 'Historical' and 'Non-Historical' Peoples on the Ukrainian National Movement in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*).

The Ukrainian-Bulgarian analysis in the research of I. Manasieva is not exhausted with this. A special place in her scientific studies is occupied by the topic of the Bulgarians who found themselves in the lands of the Russian Empire (today mainly on the territory of Ukraine) and connected their future lives and activities with it. In some of her studies she examines this population from the point of view of historical demography, tracing migration flows in the last quarter of the XIII century and the entire XIX century, as well as the formation of the Bulgarian diaspora in the southern part of Russia, as well as the demographic development of Bulgarians in the USSR, comparing the census data conducted in the Russian Empire at the end of the XIX century with that carried out by the Soviet authorities in 1926 in the newly created Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In others, she uses the methods of microhistory to trace the impact of educational reforms in the Russian Empire in the XIX century on education and literacy among the Bulgarian community and to tell the story of the daily life of the Bulgarian colonists and their spiritual, moral, and mental qualities.

With all her scientific production I. Manasieva has demonstrated profound professional interests in diverse problems related to the history of Ukrainian lands and Bulgarian-Ukrainian relations - from the areas of political history, history of ideas, microhistory, etc. They characterize the candidate as an already established mature scholar, who in purely academic terms meets all the requirements for the position of Associate professor.

To what has been said so far should be added the active participation of Inna Manasieva in the scientific life of the section and the institute. Ever since 2010, i.e. since she has held the position of "Senior Assistant", although in the competition documents she has indicated 7, in reality she has participated in 11 scientific projects - international, national with international participation, national (under the Bulgarian National Science Fund), institute ones. Two of them are still active as of now.

Here I would like to especially mention her participation in the scientific project of the Institute for Historical Research, implemented jointly with the Sofia-City Regional Department of Education “Student Conference *100 Years Since the Signing of the Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine*”, which took place in the period 2019–2020 - an innovative project whose aim was to attract the curiosity of young people and students, to the history of our country in the context of European and world history. Although this project also did not find a place in the applicant's documents, as the project leader I can confirm that I. Manasieva not only took an active part in it, but also that she was the main initiator and driver for its realization. This is another testimony to her professional and organizational skills.

In view of all the above, I consider that Inna Viktorova Manasyeva fully meets the requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor. I will therefore vote for her appointment with conviction.

10.11.2023

Sofia

Signature: .....

(P. Dimitrova)