

REVIEW

OF DISSERTATION WORK FOR ACQUISITION OF THE EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEGREE "DOCTOR"

Author of the dissertation: Dimitar Antov Videnov

Topic: "Educational movement of the Bulgarians in the town of Haskovo during the Revival".

Area of higher education: 2. Humanities

Professional field: 2.2. "History and Archeology"

Doctoral programme "History of Bulgaria" (History of the Bulgarian Revival)

Applicant: Shumen University "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski";

Research supervisor Prof. Dr. Rositsa Zhechkova Angelova- Georgieva.

Reviewer: Corresponding Member Prof. D.Sc. Ivan Russev (University of Economics - Varna, Department of Management and Administration) - habilitated and "Doctor of Science" in professional field 2.2 "History and Archeology" (History of Bulgaria), appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury on the basis of order RD - 16 - 018 from 23.02.2022 of the Rector of the University of Shumen "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski"

I. Data on the doctoral student, the dissertation, the abstract and the publications

Dimitar Antov Videnov graduated in 1995 as Master of History at Veliko Tarnovo University "St. Cyril and Methodius" with the qualification "Teacher of History and Geography" and from 1995 until today he works as a "teacher" (later as a "senior teacher") in Vocational high school of light industry "Rayna Knyaginya" in Haskovo. By rector's order RD - 10 – 109 from 14.01.2019 is enrolled as a doctoral student in part-time education of the doctoral program "History of Bulgaria (History of Bulgarian Revival) " of Department "History and Archeology" Faculty of Humanities of Shumen University "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski". His research supervisor is Prof. Dr. Rositsa Zhechkova Angelova- Georgieva. On 12.01.2022, Dimitar Videnov is he was dismissed with the right to defense the educational and scientific degree (RD-10-036). On 9th February 2022, a "History and Archeology" department meeting was held at which a preliminary discussion of the dissertation was made and with 20 votes "for" (with 0 vote "against") the members of the Department unite around the decision to availability of readiness for public defense of the dissertation in front of a scientific jury. What has been said so far gives me reason to claim that the doctoral studies of Dimitar Antonov Videnov passed on time and without any violations.

The dissertation presented for defense entitled "Educational movement of Bulgarians in Haskovo during the Revival" is constructed in the following model: introduction, four chapters, conclusion, appendices, bibliography and a list of abbreviations used in a total volume of 230 pages.

Chapter One describes the economic development of Haskovo and Haskovo region until the middle of the XIX century, considered as a prerequisite for the beginning and the course that followed the modern educational movement in the region.

Chapter Two emphasis on the history of the educational work in the Haskovo region before the Crimean War (1853–1856) - the emergence of cell education and the Hellenic-Bulgarian schools; the establishment of the first mutual schools and their role in the development of local education.

Chapter Three presents the course of the educational movement in the Haskovo region in the third quarter of the XIX century - the rise of the movement during this period; the development of girls' education; special attention is paid to educators connected with the region.

Chapter Four analyzes the emergence and development of chitalishte activities in the Haskovo region in the 50s - 70s of the XIX century - the emergence of the first chitalishtes; their educational and enlightening activities; a separate paragraph is dedicated to the prominent spiritual leader of the Bulgarians in the region Hristo Zlatarov.

The topic of the dissertation is undoubtedly dissertable, as the main goal is to "... shows (and proves) Haskovo as a leading center of the educational movement, church-national struggles for an independent Bulgarian church and organized revolutionary movement in the region" during the Revival (p. 4). It seems to me that against the background of the general (albeit overview) presentation of the national processes during the epoch, this ambitious goal (especially in its first part) has achieved its results in the present dissertation.

The text of the dissertation is stylistically well presented, readable despite the voluminous historiographical and factual information included in it - a fact that should be considered as a good achievement of Dimitar Videnov.

The abstract, in a volume of 34 pages, is designed according to the requirements for this type of scientific work.

Dimitar Videnov presents three publications in connection with the topic of the dissertation, two of which have already been published in 2014 and 2020, respectively, and the third is in print. Therefore, according to this criterion, it fulfills the requirements set out in the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the regulations for its application. The articles are dedicated to topics directly related to the topic of the dissertation: the celebration of the feast of St. St. Cyril and Methodius in the Haskovo region during the Revival, the development of girls' education, the emergence of mutual schools.

II. Compliance with minimum national requirements

I believe that the presented for discussion dissertation for the acquisition of educational and scientific degree "Doctor" contains theoretical summaries and solutions to scientific problems that meet the requirements of the regulations (the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation in Shumen University) for the acquisition of educational and scientific degree "Doctor". Attached to the set of documents is the "Declaration of Authorship", signed by Dimitar Videnov dated 21.02.2022, by which he declares that the dissertation is his "author's work and in no way infringes on foreign copyright."

III. Relevance and scientific contributions

In my opinion, the main contributions of the dissertation are as follows:

1/ The dissertation contains a research based on many original historical sources. Archival documents from the era, stored today in the St. St. Cyril and Methodius National Library – the Bulgarian Historical Archives; "Ivan Vazov" Public Library- Plovdiv, Regional Museum of History-Haskovo, TD DA –Plovdiv, published documents from the archives of Naiden Gerov and Ivan Vazov, much of the Revival periodicals (publications in "Bulgaria". "Time", "Eastern Time", "Constantinople Gazette" and many others) are used. The use of primary sources of information is a priority for any scientific historical research and in this respect the dissertation of Dimitar Videnov fully meets this criterion. It is especially valuable to attract information from local archives and museum collections, which generally remain less known to researchers. The doctoral student also has correctly approached the voluminous scientific and local lore literature dedicated to Bulgarian history and in particular the history of Haskovo and Haskovo region during the Revival.

2/ The applied methodology of the research, the skillful combination of the problem and the chronological method in the course of the main exposition leave a good impression (p. 11). In clarifying the main problems for the dissertation, Videnov "looks for the intersection point" in the information contained in historical sources (documents, memoirs, articles in the Revival press) and in local history literature from the post-liberation period. This is the approach in shedding light on the beginning of school education in Harmanli (pp. 53–55: a letter from Haskovo teachers to Naiden Gerov from 1852, a letter in the Constantinople Gazette of the same year and information from a book published in 1935 and dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the church "St. Athanasius" in Harmanli), in Mustafa Pasha (now Svilengrad) (pp. 55-58), in Uzundzhovo, Yabalkovo and other villages in the region.

3/ The dissertation presents in detail the activities of educators in Haskovo and Haskovo region during the Revival era: Todor Zapryanov (head teacher in Haskovo in the 60s of the XIX century - pp. 63-65), Nestor Markov (pp. 66-67, 79), Dimitar T. Dushanov, Hristo and Stoyan pop Markovi, Ivan Vazov (teacher in Svilengrad, pp. 96–98), Hristo Zlatarov (Paragraph 4.4, pp. 197–201) and many others. Initially, the activities of these activists were included in the chronological account of the course of educational work in the region, and subsequently again presented in a separate paragraph 3.3. And although most of the information used is already known in science, documentary and literary, such an approach clarifies the contacts and influences between prominent (and not so well known) names of the era within a particular Bulgarian region - Haskovo .

4/ The dissertation presents the overall role and significance of the Haskovo Chitalishte "Zarya", one of the firsts in the Bulgarian lands and established as an educational center, the course of the Revival processes in the region. The activity of the so-called "Slavic Home" in the village of Yabalkovo, which includes foreigners attracted to the railway construction and maintenance of railways line Constantinople – Belovo and who became involved in the preparation of the Bulgarian revolution is also well exposed. The contributors to the Bulgarian Revival literature and periodicals from Haskovo are presented - an extremely valuable source material, which outlines through such research what was the regional distribution of Bulgarian Revival literature and related to it knowledge.

material, which outlines through such research what was the regional distribution of Bulgarian Revival literature and related to it knowledge.

IV. Critical remarks

In summary of what has been said so far, I want to emphasize that the study of Dimitar Videnov achieves its goals as a dissertation. But I would like to make some remarks and recommendations if in the future the doctoral student decides to further develop the topic.

1/ I recommend a clearer and more precise wording of the main title as well as the titles of the chapters. The title mentions only Haskovo as a settlement whose educational work during the Revival is the subject of research of this dissertation, and in fact the territorial scope includes the region: "... the towns of Harmanli, Simeonovgrad, Svilengrad, as well as the villages of Lyubimets, Merichleri, the neighbourhoods that formed today's Dimitrograd, Yabalkovo, Krivo pole, Slavyanovo, etc." – read more on page 4.

2/ A more concise exposition of the text needs to be achieved. For example, all the explanations about the teaching staff during the Revival can be dropped from the Introduction and fall into a separate subchapter to Chapter Two. In some places, an elevated emotional style and detailed explanations are used, which are not suitable for a dissertation.

3/ There are some technical inaccuracies that need to be repaired. For example, on page 37, in the first sentence in the third paragraph it is written about the village of Yabalkovo, and in the second it continues the same story, but about "Almali", without explaining that Almali is actually the old name of the village of Yabalkovo, i.e. that it is the same settlement.

4/ And perhaps most importantly - the reader is left with the impression that not all of the sources cited in the bibliography, documentary and literary, are correctly cited in the main text, and if so - is a serious omission.

However, these remarks and recommendations do not change the good overall impression of the dissertation, which has achieved the research goals set in it.

V. Conclusion

In conclusion, I believe that the doctoral student has met all the requirements and conditions laid down in the regulations and based on the above I propose to the Honored Scientific Jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in Science field: 2. Humanities, Professional field 2.2. History and Archeology, Scientific specialty: History of Bulgaria (History of the Bulgarian Revival) to Dimitar Antov Videnov.

8.04.2022 г.

Varna

Signature: (illegible)

Corresponding Member Prof. D.Sc. Ivan Russev