

OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Rumen Hristov Yankov -
member of the scientific jury, by order of the Rector of Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen, in connection with the defense of the dissertation work of PhD student Ivanka Genova Deleva on "The Refugee Question in Bulgarian-Turkish Relations and the Settlement of East Thracian Refugees in Bulgaria in the Period 1913-1925"

Professional field: 2.2. History and archaeology
Scientific supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stefan Minkov

1. Data about the PhD student and the procedure

Ivanka Genova Deleva holds a Master's degree in History and Geography, obtained at the Faculty of History of the University of Veliko Tarnovo in 1999. Since then he has worked in RHM-Burgas. In 2020 she was enrolled as a PhD student (part-time) at the University of Shumen in the PhD program "New and Recent General History (History of the Balkan Peoples)". She was discharged early with eligibility in November, 2023. The dissertation was reviewed at an extended meeting of the Department of History and Archaeology with a positive decision on the readiness for public defense.

The dissertation and the abstract are presented in a completed form. Attached are the Reference on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements and the declaration of authorship. The accompanying documentation is complete. On the topic of the dissertation, the candidate presents four independent scientific publications, one of which is in print. According to the procedure, I do not find any violations.

2. Dissertation and abstract data

Ivanka Deleva's dissertation research intertwines issues falling within the subject areas of political history, interstate relations and historical geography. The short chronological scope is sufficient and justified given the specificity of the topic. It allows for an in-depth study of events and processes that are of utmost importance for the understanding of the social and ethno-demographic picture in the country and in the Balkans in the first decades of the 20th century. The development requires an adequate interdisciplinary approach with links to data and facts from demographic statistics, settlement structure, economic history, law, etc.

The presented work has all the implied attributes of a dissertation - an extensive exposition (202 pages of fine line spacing) - arranged in an introduction, four chapters (separated in two parts) and a conclusion, followed by a list of sources and literature, an index of settlement names related to the work, and a list of abbreviations. The author has not cited appendices, and the maps, tables, photographs and diagrams are included in the main text.

The bibliographic list includes 174 titles of scientific literature - monographs, articles, collections, etc. Research sources include unpublished archival documents and published materials - collections of documents, stenographic diaries, periodicals, statistical volumes, memoirs.

The statement follows a clear and logical sequence. In the introduction the relevance of the topic and the elements of the research methodology - object, tasks, information sources, etc. In the formulation of the objective it is specified that the development covers the

settlement of refugees in Burgas region. The first part examines the repercussions of the refugee wave in international relations and in particular in Bulgarian-Turkish relations during the period. The bilateral agreements on this issue are analysed (Chapter One). The second chapter focuses on the domestic political aspects of the refugee issue and the legislative initiatives regulating the refugee settlement process.

In the second part of the dissertation, Ivanka Deleva makes a detailed review of the number and territorial distribution of Eastern Thracian refugees in Burgas region ("First" in the author's numbering, actually third). This is followed by an analysis of the settlement forms that appeared during the settlement (new neighborhoods, temporary and permanent settlements) and, in a broader sense, of the emerging socio-geographical structure.

The conclusion is brief but informative enough in terms of the findings and overall results of the study.

The autoreferate (34 pages) summarizes the main points by section and truthfully reflects the achievements of the doctoral student.

3. Scientific contributions of the dissertation work

The author's statement of the dissertation contributions is presented in the abstract. Detailed acquaintance with the content of the dissertation gives me grounds to accept the contributions as valid, but with some clarifications of the wording, of their scientific-methodological and applied value. Ivanka Deleva's work complements the empirical knowledge on the refugee issue, the normative documents and the practical settlement of refugees in the country. This refers especially to the movement of the East Thracian Bulgarian population to the Burgas region. Significant features in the formation of the demographic composition and settlement network of the region are revealed.

The author expands the knowledge of the problem by making sense of and systematizing abundant source material and the literature base. The detail in the development has enabled the argumentation of original theses in an otherwise familiar scientific matter. To the methodological contribution of the dissertation I refer the applied complex approach to migration movements, without questioning its guiding historical principle. In this sense, the work of PhD student Ivanka Deleva can indeed serve as a model for other regional historical studies of the modern period on issues with pan-Balkan analogies and connections.

I believe that the dissertation can gain applied value in history, local studies, geography education, as well as in finding appropriate topics and forms of cultural cooperation in the border areas of the two countries.

4. Remarks and recommendations

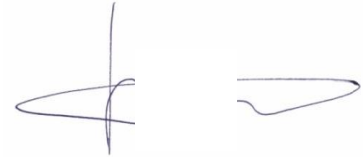
Along with the general positive impression of the content and achievements of the thesis, I can also make remarks about the sparing content of the abstract, the quality of some of the figures and the necessity of some of them, imprecise wording, etc. I am convinced that after minor corrections the dissertation should receive wider publicity as an interesting and valuable scientific monograph.

5. Conclusion

The dissertation submitted for the opinion is an original and complete scientific research, carried out under competent scientific supervision. Scientific results have been achieved that satisfy the requirements for the degree of PhD.

Ivanka Genova Deleva's dissertation meets the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act and the regulations derived from it. I express a positive opinion and will vote in favour of the award of the degree of PhD, and I call on the distinguished members of the scientific jury to also vote in favour.

05.02.2024

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a vertical line on the left, a horizontal line crossing it, and a large loop on the right.

Prof. Dr. Rumén Yankov