БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ
Институт по балканистика с Център по тракология
"Проф. А. Фол"
Вх. №

Promotion Review of a Candidate's Application for the Academic Position "Associate Professor"

by Prof. Alexandar N. Nikolov, Faculty of History, University of Sofia "St. Kliment Ohridski" on behalf of Georgi Nikolov Dimov, the only applicant for the academic position of Associate Professor in Professional Field 2.2: History and Archaeology, (Political and Economic Development of the Balkans in 11th-12th centuries), advertised in *DV* 7/ 24.01.2023, for the needs of the „Medieval Balkans" Dpt., Institute for Balkan Studies with Center of Thracology, BAS.

1. Procedure Information:

The competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" has been announced for the needs of the "Medieval Balkans" Dpt., Institute for Balkan Studies with Center of Thracology, BAS. The only candidate is Chief Asst. Professor Georgi Nikolov Dimov, PhD. The documents submitted by him meet the requirements of ZRASRB and essentially provide an opportunity to evaluate his scientific output and research activity. The information on the scientometric indicators of the applicant's production shows that they fully correspond to the minimal national requirements for all four groups of indicators. For this purpose, a detailed Reference is attached.

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2. Information for the Applicant. Educational and Professional Record:

Georgi Nikolov Dimov completed his higher education at the Faculty of History of Sofia University"St. Kliment Ohridski" with a bachelor's degree in archeology (specialization Medieval archeology) in 2007, and a master's degree in medieval history in 2010. In 2014, he defended his doctoral dissertation at professional field 2.2 "History and Archeology" (General History of the Middle Ages) at the Faculty of History of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" (Department of Ancient History, Thracology and Medieval History) on the topic: " The Cities in Southern Italy between the East and the West in the 11th-13th centuries".

In 2014, Georgi Dimov was appointed as a full-time assistant professor at the IBCT-BAS, "Medieval Balkans" Dpt., scientific field "Medieval History of the Balkans, Byzantium and Europe", and since 2016 he has held the academic position of "chief assistant professor" in the same department. From December 2022, he is also chief assistant professor (part-time) at

the University of Information Technologies and Library Science, where he teaches History of Byzantium, Bulgaria, and the Middle Ages. The candidate is fluent in English, French, Russian and Italian. He has skills in the field of organizing various scientific forums and initiatives in the field of humanitarian studies, skills in the field of editing scientific publications and collections and experience in working with non-governmental organizations.

3. Description of Applicant's Scientific Works and Achievements:

The candidate has submitted for participation in the competition an author's reference list of publications, which includes ten titles distributed as follows: one monograph, eight articles and two studies published in refereed editions.

Firstly, we will look at the monograph that came out in 2023 with the title "The Balkan World in the Age of Comneni (1081-1185)" in a volume of 600 pages. This is a large-scale study of the age of the Comneni dynasty in the geographical area of South-Eastern Europe or the so- called Byzantine West. Georgi Dimov has consistently examined the climatic changes in the region, the demographic development, the ethnic composition of the population, the economic and social history of the period and, finally, the political development of Comnenian Byzantium.

His training as a medievalist, who has in-depth knowledge in the field of archeology and the urban history, has allowed him to dwell in detail on aspects that were usually neglected or considered fragmentarily, at least in Bulgarian medieval studies. Georgi Dimov has managed to get out of some persistent paradigms and clichés in our historiography, which are still found in summarizing works on Bulgarian medieval history.

He comes to some interesting conclusions in his research, which question the theses of "feudalization", "Hellenization" or "Romanization", economic decline of South-Eastern Europe against the background of the rapidly developing Latin West in the period under consideration, etc. According to Dimov, despite the attacks of the Eurasian nomads in the given period, the Balkan Peninsula was in a relative demographic and economic boom, which is also supported by a phenomenon defined by the author as the "Comnenian economic model". There is a revival of urban life, which, although restricted by the Byzantine economic and political system, precisely shows the positive trends in the development of the region, which fitted into the general European framework, originating not least from the end of the early medieval "Little Ice Age" ". Dimov also focuses on the growing role of Italian merchants in Byzantium, who

became dynamic mediators between the empire and the rest of the world and contributed to the "liberalization" of the economic model, a term Dimov used to define the changes that occurred in economic life.

The role of the pronoiars as a military class with a heterogeneous ethnic origin, in whose midst the forces that led to the creation of the Second Bulgarian Tsardom shortly after the end of the Comnenian era, will be born. In general, Georgi Dimov's monograph, which also summarizes his earlier studies, partially presented in the author's reference, represents a serious scientific achievement that has all the necessary features of a habilitation work.

Some of the presented articles and studies are related to the subject of the habilitation work, preceding it in time. They show quite well the line along which the applicant's scientific interests and research have followed, leading him to the large-scale generalizations presented in the monograph. Among this group of articles, stand out the studies on the Latin quarters of the Balkans, the economy, trade and urban life in southern Italy under Lombard and Byzantine rule, with particular emphasis on the life of the Jewish community, relations between Byzantium and England, the Balkans as an area of contact with Eurasian steppes world. Finally, a study dedicated to the policy of Manuel I Comnenus in the Balkans should be added.

The other group of presented articles and studies, which the author has successfully summarized under the rubric Varia, covers studies that focus primarily on aspects of material culture and coinage in the Byzantine world. Included here is a study of the Byzantine influence on the urban culture of the Apennines, an attempt at the interpretation and reconstruction of the Byzantine silver plate from Svetlen, and finally an article devoted to the Byzantine silver coinage of the time of Andronicus II Palaiologus.

In these studies, Georgi Dimov also shows his skills as a researcher in the field of archeology and numismatics, which undoubtedly allows him to deal fully with the history of the Early and the High Middle Ages - time in which the remains of material culture often give us much more information. than the not quite sufficient written sources. Georgi Dimov's ability to combine information from different types of sources and put it in a harmonious general framework, which is best seen in the presented monographic work, gives grounds for a high assessment of his scientific achievements, testifies to his maturity as a researcher and makes him a perfectly suitable candidate for the academic position of "associate professor".

4. Conclusion:

The scientific, teaching and project activities of Dr. Georgi Nikolov Dimov fully correspond to the requirements for holding the academic position of "associate professor" according to the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the regulations of the BAS. Based on this circumstance, I am pleased to propose to the esteemed jury to award the academic position of associate professor to Dr. Georgi Nikolov Dimov in professional direction 2.2. History and Archeology and to wish the candidate every success in his future career.

13th of May 2023 Signature:

Sofia /Prof. Alexandar Nikolov/