

**R E V I E W**  
**on a Dissertation**

**for obtaining the scientific degree “Doctor of Sciences”**

**Research area:** 3. Social and economic sciences and law

**Professional field:** 3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Sciences (Sociology)

**Chair:** Sociology

**Department of Philosophy**

**Sofia University ‘St. Kliment Ohridsky’**

**Author:** Assoc. prof. Martin Ivanov Ivanov, PhD

**Title of the thesis:** TO SWIM AGAINST THE TIDE: THE BULGARIAN TEXTILE CRAFTS AND THEIR GROWTH INTO A FACTORY INDUSTRY, 1800-1912

**Referee:** Prof. Ivan Roussev, D.Sc.

University of Economics – Varna

**1. General characteristics of the dissertation and the presented materials**

The dissertation given for review is 502 pages long and consists of an introduction, three chapters (each with several subchapters), a conclusion, appendices (a total of 12, each appendix in a different volume), an inventory of tables and diagrams and a list of the used literature. The bibliography used at the end of the paper includes 1,098 items - collections of published sources, articles, books, reference books - over 150 of which in foreign languages: Russian, English, Romanian, French, German, Ottoman (year-book (salnamme) of the Balkan provinces of The Ottoman Empire in their original editions from the 70s of the 19<sup>th</sup> century are being used) and others.

Despite the extremely factual presentation, the text is fascinatingly written and easy to read. The many sources used and the quoted opinions from the literature do not confuse the reader, but on the contrary - clearly argue the author's statements and conclusions.

**2. Data and personal impressions of the candidate**

Assoc. Prof. Martin Ivanov is one of the already established researchers in Bulgaria on the problems of Bulgarian economic and social history of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He

is the author of several monographs and numerous scientific articles published in the country and abroad. This dissertation is a natural continuation (as a research method and exposition) of his monographs dedicated to the "Bulgarian Commercial Bank and its related companies in 1890-1914", the "Business Elites of Bulgaria in 1912-1947". According to the author himself, this study is a "second, analytical part" (p. 10) of his book on the gross domestic product of Bulgaria in the period 1870-1945, published by 'Ciela' in 2012.

Since the summer of 2004 for ten years M. Ivanov has been among the main organizers of the seminar 'Economic (Social) Bulgaria: the future through the culture of the past' of the Center for Liberal Strategies, which includes dozens of researchers from Bulgaria and abroad. This forum quickly and permanently established its important place among the scientific community of historians, philosophers, sociologists, culturologists in the country - I dare say this as a person who participated in the seminar and regularly followed the presentations of other speakers.

There is no doubt that the diverse professional and administrative commitments of Assoc. Prof. M. Ivanov in recent years have allowed him to establish numerous contacts with representatives of the historical, museum and archival colleges in the country, to exchange information and ideas with scientists and university professors from Bulgaria and abroad and thanks to all this to shape his research theses presented in the dissertation.

### **3. Content analysis of the scientific and scientific-applied achievements of the candidate, contained in the presented dissertation and the publications to it, included in the procedure**

The dissertation presented for review has many scientific merits, but here I will try to summarize the main ones, as I evaluate them:

A / The topic of the emergence and development of the modern Bulgarian textile industry in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century has more than once been the subject of sometimes partial and sometimes more extensive interest in literature. It is invariably present in most Bulgarian settlement histories, which appeared in the first years after the Liberation (1878) and were published everywhere at least until the 1930s and 1940s (and beyond), especially in these editions, dedicated to settlements with rapid development of the textile industry during the Renaissance - Sliven, Gabrovo, Tarnovo, Kotel, Dryanovo, Panagyurishte, Kazanlak and others. Numerous scientific publications by several generations of researchers are also devoted to this topic - starting with articles in the first post-liberation scientific periodicals (for example in the "Journal of the Bulgarian Economic Society" - articles by D. Mishaykov and other authors), continued with the survey studies of the second half of the XX century such as those of N. Todorov and L.

Berov and came to the latest publications of recent times (for example, the monograph on 'Renaissance Plovdiv' by A. Liberatos from 2019). In the present dissertation all available Bulgarian literature on the topic is most correctly and analytically used. The merit of this text lies in the fact that here the development of the modern Bulgarian textile industry is considered in its 'long period' ('La longue durée' in the sense that the French school of 'Annals' and Fernand Braudel puts in this concept) - i.e. from the preconditions for the textile boom in our country as a result of the Pre-Tanzimat reforms in the Ottoman Empire in the 1920s to the serious decline of the industry due to the lost markets in result of the lost Balkan wars. In contrast to the vast Bulgarian literature on the subject, in M. Ivanov's dissertation the processes are considered in their development and diversity without being enslaved to the not always scientifically substantiated 'border role' in the Bulgarian history of the year 1878. For this reason, the conclusions and summaries of the author "stand" better reasoned.

There is one more thing that should be pointed out as a merit of the dissertation when we analyze the scientific approach applied in it. As the author himself pointed out in the Introduction, the answers to the research questions posed in the text are 'located not in a two-dimensional (us and the Empire), but in a three-dimensional world (us, the Empire and the West)' (p. 8). This approach is well-founded, all the more so because the period under study coincides with the "long" nineteenth century in European history – from the time of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars (the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first two decades of the nineteenth century) to the First World War (1914–1918) - when dynamic economic processes were taking place in Europe and the world: industrialization, deindustrialization (for the peripheral regions), the emergence and flourishing of liberalism, the tangible beginning of today's well-known globalization. M. Ivanov considers his topic in a critical reading of research by authoritative foreign authors dedicated to the economic development of the Bulgarian lands, the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire, Europe and the world (M. Palaret, S. Pamuk, J. Williamson, A. Gershenkron and others.). In this regard, his critique of some of Michael Palaret's productions sounds quite convincing and well-argued, for example, regarding the explanations of the British researcher about the Bulgarian textile boom during the deindustrialization of the periphery (pp. 65-72). Ivanov presents his point of view, based on a deeper knowledge of the local reality and the related empirical information.

B / The presentation of the topic for the development of the modern Bulgarian textile industry through the 'insight into the detail' makes a very good impression. The dissertation does not leave any ambiguity about the technological process, not a single controversial issue has been overlooked. I will give only some examples: the qualities of the different varieties of wool produced in the Bulgarian lands in comparison with the European ones are presented in the greatest detail; each stage in their processing, spinning, weaving, dressing and dyeing of the fabrics is traced (pp. 31–42); All available information about the appearance of the braiding chark, the beginning and the

development of braiding in “Bulgarian” is presented (pp. 49–58). This good achievement of the text has been achieved again thanks to the excellent knowledge of the literature on the topic, Bulgarian and foreign.

C / With his research so far, Assoc. Prof. Martin Ivanov has established himself as a follower of the quantitative economic history that appeared in the middle of the 20th century. This text reinforces and even builds on this impression. I find the approach very appropriate, because even when sometimes ‘the bills are rough’ (in the words of the author himself, p. 27), they can very accurately guide us in a process. The essence of the applied method turns the applications of the dissertation from a ‘simple appendix’ into a closely related part with the main presentation.

D / The sub-chapters “Textile Workers: Social Profile” and “Manufacturers: Industrial Sociology” to Chapter Three, as well as the article published on the topic of the dissertation in Volume V of the “Notices of CSII” (2020) in the largest degree enter the research in the specified professional field. A historically true social portrait of the Bulgarian textile worker and of the textile manufacturer was achieved in them at the dawn of their appearance (I find the summarized information in Table 10 “Industrial Sociology”, pp. 145–147) to be especially valuable. The research task in this part of the dissertation was not easy, given the strong ideologizing of the two types in the literature of the recent past, but M. Ivanov copes with the challenge by basing his analyzes on different, often contradictory sources of information which he uses critically without overconfidence. The differences between the Sliven and Gabrovo textile workers, the poor working conditions, but also some good initiatives for the workers such as those of the "social industrialist" Ivan Hadjiberov (pp. 137-138), the actual size of labor conflicts and the strike movement in the late nineteenth century and early nineteenth century, the lack of tendency to associate among textile industrialists during the same period are presented and well explained. Appendices № 5, 8, 9, 11 and 12 consolidate the author's analysis with rich factuality and can also serve as a reliable starting point for future research.

#### **4. Approbation of the results**

Some of the research results of the dissertation submitted for review have already been promoted through 34 publications of the author, including a monograph and 33 articles. Some of the publications are in Bulgarian, and others - in English, published (or presented for publication) in authoritative foreign publications. The scientific works meet the minimum national requirements (under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of ZRASRB) and respectively the additional requirements of the Rules of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” for obtaining the scientific degree ‘Doctor of Sciences’ in the scientific field and the professional direction of the procedure. In my opinion, there is no plagiarism in the presented dissertation and in the scientific papers on this procedure.

## **5. Qualities of the summary**

The abstract, in a volume of 48 printed pages, meets the requirements for the preparation of this type of scientific exhibition. He adequately and correctly presents the results and content of the dissertation.

## **6. Critical remarks and recommendations**

I don't have exactly critical remarks about the dissertation submitted for review, I have recommendations for its future publication as a scientific monograph - something I highly recommend and expect. In fact, obviously the author already has a similar idea, because in the first sentence of the Introduction the work is defined precisely as a 'book' (p. 6). And in this regard, probably also in the Introduction, is the place of a more specific and comprehensive overview of the information sources used in the study: the original sources published by Nikola Mihov (mainly consular reports of the era), the information from memoirs and travelogues, the data contained in the settlement histories and in the scientific works - which of them are reliable and which of them are not so and why. I consider such clarifications to be very important, because that many of the calculations made in this dissertation are based on such heterogeneous material, especially for the initial part of the studied time period - the time until the 80s of the XIX century, when only with the creation of modern Bulgarian state, new, official sources of the information necessary for the research are also appearing. Such explanations are partially found in the Appendices (mainly in Appendix 1, but also in the others), but in my opinion they should be present (albeit in a concise form) in the Introduction.

The text needs one last editorial reading to avoid some small but annoying mistakes and inaccuracies, such as the involuntary attribution of 'Nativity' instead of the end of December in mid-April (p. 44), and others similar to it.

Again, in connection with the forthcoming publication of the text, I would like to make the following small but important clarification. To the author's question what exactly is the name of the French entrepreneur, who opened in 1858 in Stara Zagora a factory for sharpening silk - fillet (p. 81, note 422), the answer is Jean-Baptiste Bonnal (Jean-Baptiste Bonnal) - this is the merchant from Smyrna (Izmir), who arrived under the protection of the French Vice-Consulate in Varna and arrived in Constantinople in April 1854 (In more detail in: Roussev, I. When Europe 'came' to Burgas. The first steps of the European trade presence and modernity in the Black Sea city in the XIX century - History. T. IV. Shumen, 2011, pp. 343–353).

## **7. Conclusion**

After getting acquainted with the dissertation presented in the procedure and the accompanying scientific papers and based on the analysis of their significance and the scientific and applied contributions contained in them, I confirm that the presented dissertation and scientific publications to it, as well as the quality and originality of the results and achievements presented in them, meet the requirements of ZRASRB, The Regulations for its application and the respective Regulations of Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski' for acquisition by the candidate of the scientific degree 'Doctor of Sciences' in the scientific field 3. Social, economic and legal sciences and professional field 3.1. Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences (Sociology). In particular, the candidate satisfies the minimum national requirements in the professional field and no plagiarism has been established in the scientific papers submitted at the competition.

Based on the above, I recommend the scientific jury to award Assoc. Prof. Martin Ivanov Ivanov, PhD the scientific degree 'Doctor of Science' in scientific field 3. Social and economic sciences and law, professional field 3.1. Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences (Sociology).

1.06.2021 г.

**Reviewer:** .....

**(Prof. Ivan ROUSSEV, D.Sc.)**