

## REVIEW

by Prof. PhD Plamen Hristov Pavlov

(VTU "St. St. Cyril and Methodius")

Regarding the competition for the academic position "Professor" in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.2. History and Archeology (History of Medieval Bulgaria) for the needs of the Department of History of Bulgaria at the Faculty of History of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ", announced in the State Gazette, issue 21 / 15.03.2022 with the only candidate **Assoc. Prof. PhD Georgi Nikolov NIKOLOV**.

The procedure regarding this competition has been performed in accordance with all regulatory requirements and no violations have been committed. The candidate Assoc. Prof. Georgi N. Nikolov meets the minimum national requirements under Art. 26 of ZRASRB, moreover - decisively exceeds the relevant scientometric indicators. The submitted documentation is accurate and correct, as all deadlines are met.

Candidate details Assoc. Prof. Georgi N. Nikolov graduated the Faculty of History of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski " and almost his entire scientific and creative path is connected with this leading academic institution of ours. In 1990 he won a competition for an assistant professor of medieval Bulgarian history and was successively senior and chief assistant in the Department of History of Bulgaria. In 2001 he defended his dissertation and he received the educational and scientific degree "Doctor", and in 2011 he was elected to be associate professor at the same department. From 2015 to 2019 he was Deputy Dean for Research at the Faculty of History of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ". During his previous scientific and teaching career, his colleague G. Nikolov has carried out a number of specializations in scientific institutions and universities in Greece, Germany, Poland, etc., participating in authoritative international scientific forums. In the period 2017-2020, Assoc. Prof. Nikolov is Deputy Chairman of the Macedonian Scientific Institute in Sofia. In 2020, he was elected as chairman. Assoc. Prof. G. Nikolov has the reputation of an established Bulgarian medievalist at home and abroad, which is a fact from the list of his publications and his participation in dozens of authoritative international scientific forums.



Assoc. Prof. PhD Georgi N. Nikolov has an impressive and meaningful scientific production, especially in authoritative scientific publications at home and abroad (Germany, Greece, Poland, Russia, Northern Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary, France, Georgia). He is the author of 10 books (4 in a team), 82 studies and articles in Bulgarian and foreign editions, nearly 50 reviews and reviews, 56 bio-bibliographical references, 5 textbooks, about 80 popular science publications, nearly 600 articles in encyclopedias and reference books. editions. The work of Assoc. Prof. G. Nikolov should be highly appreciated as a referent for the publications in Bulgaria of the "Byzantinische Zeitschrift" from 2009 to the present.

From his impressive not only in quantity but also in quality production for this competition, Assoc. Prof. Georgi N. Nikolov has presented 33 scientific publications - one monographic study, one book - bibliography and 31 studies and articles. This is another evidence of the activity of Assoc. Prof. G. Nikolov as researcher of the Bulgarian and Byzantine Middle Ages. In accordance with the requirements, most of the presented publications are from the time after the habilitation of Georgi N. Nikolov and reflect his development as a scientist after 2011. The recorded citations of the author's works by other researchers at home and abroad are more than sufficient. there are certainly many more.

Last but not least, quite a few of them are in established foreign refereed publications. In the first place to the attention of the scientific jury was presented the book **"From the history of Samuel's Bulgaria"** (Sofia, **"Macedonian Scientific Institute"**, 2022, 317 pages), which performs the function of habilitation work in connection with this competition. We want to emphasize that the new study of Assoc. Prof. Georgi N. Nikolov does not repeat, but develops and builds on the views of the author and his achievements in his previous two books on this topic (Bulgarian Tsar Samuel. Sofia, "Bulgarian Association of Genera of Macedonia ", 2014, 95 pages and" Tsar Samuel ". Sofia, Zahariy Stoyanov Publishing House, 2016, 223 pages). The research work presented to our attention contains a number of new analyzes and conclusions, additional sources and historiographical material have been attracted, which gives the book a completely original character. Without going into details of the individual parts, we will still note the most important highlights and contributions. In the first part the author dwells on the question of the genealogy of the Comitopuli. G. Nikolov carefully analyzes the data of all known sources, attracting the latest interpretations of the controversial points in them. It is



interesting to assume that John of Scylla and subsequent Byzantine chroniclers listed the Comitopuli not by age, but in terms of the time of death of each of them. It has been hypothesized that the connection with the Krum dynasty, which we know about from Anna Komnena and the Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle, is maternal. Despite our reservations about such a decision, it certainly deserves attention. Our view is similar to the author's interpretation of the age sequence of the brethren based on an analysis of their biblical names. Of course, it is very possible that Samuel is not the youngest of them, as is accepted in existing research. In part two the author focuses on the issue of mass blindness of Bulgarian prisoners of war by order of Basil II after the Battle of Klyuch in 1014. Examining in detail the practice of this severe punishment in Byzantium, G. Nikolov arguably refutes the opinion of P. Schreiner, who disputes the truth of what happened and attributes it to later imperial propaganda. The argument that the nickname "Bulgarian Slayer" was given to Basil II as a result of the quarrel with the Bulgarian captives relatively soon after the Klyuch catastrophe was defended with more arguments, and is not the fruit of a later tradition, as some researchers admit.

Undoubtedly interesting is the third part of the book, in which the news of the death of the Bulgarian rulers from Boris II to Ivan Vladislav are analyzed. Analyzing the historical sources, G. Nikolov makes a number of interesting and important clarifications not only about the death but also about the lives of the rulers Boris II, Roman Simeon, Samuel, Gavril-Roman Radomir and Ivan Vladislav. There are a number of author contributions, incl. regarding the existence of a Bulgarian chronicle that has not reached us, in which there was specific information about the death of Tsar Boris II. G. Nikolov rightly defends and further develops the thesis about the actual reign of Roman, denied by some scholars. He also gave his decision on the fate of this Bulgarian ruler after the fall of Skopje into Byzantine hands in 1003. The emphasis is right on the personality of Ripsimia, the wife of Comite Nicholas and mother of the Comitopuli, called "widow prophetess" in the Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle .

As mentioned, for the purposes of this competition, Assoc. Prof. Georgi N. Nikolov has presented 32 other publications, which in turn contain a number of contributions to a wide range of scientific issues. For convenience, we will conditionally divide them into several groups, the first of which is again from publications oriented to Tsar Samuel and the sunset of the First Bulgarian Empire. We will start with the valuable and unique bibliographic reference book



"Samuel's Bulgaria in the Light of New Sources and Historical Research (1945-2022)". Sofia, Macedonian Scientific Institute, 135 pages /Nr. 2 /, prepared in co-authorship with Silvia Arizanova. As an afterword to the book is the author's article by Assoc. Prof. G. Nikolov "Tsar Samuel in the assessments of Bulgarian medieval studies." It should be noted that with this book we already have a precise and comprehensive academic guide that will help current and future researchers. Assoc. Prof. G. Nikolov has presented a series of articles on various issues on the topic, which are another testimony to his deep knowledge and research ideas / Nr. 12, 13, 15, 16, 20, 22, 23, 29, 30 /. Without dwelling on each of the listed articles, we can find a significant number of contributing moments in the study and interpretation of this period of Bulgarian history.

The second group of publications is generally related to various scientific problems in the history of the First Bulgarian Empire / Nr. 10, 11, 14, 24 /. The third group shows the scientific interests and achievements of my colleague G. Nikolov in the study of important issues in the history of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. Among them is a series of articles on the uprising of Peter and Assen and the revival of the medieval Bulgarian state /Nr. 18, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31 /. Excellent knowledge of the issues surrounding the uprising of Peter and Assen motivates us to invite G. Nikolov as one of the main authors of "Bulgarian National History", 4, which should be published by "Abagar" in the fall of the current 2022.

Also of interest are the articles "Notes on Bulgarian Princesses in Constantinople in the 14th Century", in English, and "Hungarians in the Bulgarian Kingdom, 13th-14th Centuries", in Russian / Nr. 31 and 32 /. We will note that G. Nikolov has other articles about this period of medieval history, such as the manifestations of separatism in the XIII-XIV centuries, which are not included in the list of publications in connection with this competition. In the fourth group of scientific publications we put articles on specific issues with various topics: "Military-political history of the medieval city of Borui", "Information about Georgia and the Georgians in the old Bulgarian literature", in Russian, and an interesting theoretical article on the periodization of the Bulgarian Middle Ages, in which G. Nikolov substantiates a chronological framework from the early history of the ancient Bulgarians and Slavs to the end of the XVII century / Nr. 4, 32, 33 /, "Always what is past is always better..." / Appendix 10 /, in which an analytical review of the sources for the economic development of Bulgarian lands in the XII century is made. Bulgarian



historiography. The main conclusion of G. Nikolov is that during this century economic growth began - well-argued and supported by specific data from narrative sources and archaeological research.

Assoc. Prof. PhD Georgi N. Nikolov is the holder of a major lecture course on the history of medieval Bulgaria to students of the Faculty of Economics at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ", as well as in various specialized disciplines in the bachelor's, master's and doctoral training programs. The presented reports on the academic employment of my colleague G. Nikolov reflect his high workload as a teacher, which did not prevent him from devoting time and energy to scientific work. Along with his main teaching activity at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski " Assoc. Prof. G. Nikolov is a guest lecturer at the National Academy of Arts (1998 to 2008), lectures at universities and research centers abroad (Poland, Hungary, Serbia, etc.). In any case, the broad and profound scientific interests and proven erudition inherent in Assoc. Prof. G. Nikolov are fundamental in his teaching work. In addition, my colleague Nikolov is the research supervisor of two doctoral students who successfully defended their dissertations. Publishing and promotion activities Assoc. Prof. Georgi N. Nikolov has participated in the editorial boards of dozens of collections, and for at least ten years he has most often been their compiler and editor-in-chief. Without going into "details", we will explicitly mention his personal merits for the appearance of two collections dedicated to the 1000th anniversary of the death of Tsar Samuel, the two volumes of research from the International Conference, dedicated to the 1100th anniversary of the battle at Aheloy, the collection "Krakra" from the international conference in Pernik, etc., not to mention the traditional editions of the IF of Sofia University such as "Kyustendil Readings" and others.

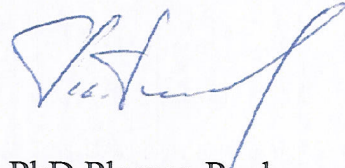
G. Nikolov also throws new ideas and a lot of energy as a leading figure in the Macedonian Scientific Institute - both in the publication of the authoritative scientific journal "Macedonian Review" and in a number of other books and thematic collections. It is necessary to note what my colleague G. Nikolov is doing for the popularization of historical knowledge among the Bulgarian public. His participation in specialized TV and radio shows is traditional, and only in my "Hour in Bulgaria" he was a guest dozens of times. The same can be said about his popular science articles in various newspapers, magazines, series (for example, a new series of "Famous Bulgarians" from 2012), websites, etc., which are distinguished by their high qualities.



All that has been said so far gives me full reason to vote "FOR" the award of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Georgi Nikolov Nikolov to the academic position of "professor" in professional field 2.2. History and Archeology (History of Medieval Bulgaria - History of Samuilova Bulgaria) for the needs of the Department of History of Bulgaria, Faculty of History, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

June 17, 2022

Veliko Tarnovo



Prof. PhD Plamen Pavlov