

## OPINION

about the dissertation of **Stoyan Dimitrov Stoyanov**, proposed for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of History" in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.2. History and archeology, scientific specialty "History of Bulgaria", on "Bulgarian-Polish political relations 1945-1989"

by Prof. Dr. **Iliyana Marcheua** from the Institute for Historical Research - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

The topic "Bulgarian-Polish relations in 1945-1989" has not been developed monographically in Bulgarian historiography and this makes it indisputably suitable for dissertation. Its narrowing only to the political relations between the two countries during the time when they were part of the Eastern bloc, implies an excellent insight into the details of contacts at the state and party level. Reducing these relations to "the relations between the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the People's Republic of Poland, including the relations between the first secretaries of the BCP and the PRP, the treaties of friendship and the Bulgarian response to the periodic Polish crises" (pp. 9-10) further narrows the its scientific significance. Moreover, the reaction of the authorities in Sofia to the Polish crises are have been studied in various articles and books of Prof. Iskra Baeva and Prof. Vladimir Migeu, which the the doctoral student knows and uses in his work.

The dissertation contains 333 pages of text and 8 pages of photographic appendices. It is developed on a Bulgarian source base. The non-use of the rich and already processed op. 81 of F.1b of the Central State Archives, which contains documents from the Foreign Policy and International Relations Department of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party 1967-1990, is puzzling. One can only regret that the author does not know the second bilingual volume "Documents and materials on Bulgarian-Polish relations 1944-1960", published by the Polish Academy of Sciences in 1985, made within the Bulgarian-Polish Commission of Historians, which is located in the library of our Institute. The Polish point of view is based on 19 books and articles, which should compensate for the lack of a Polish documentary basis for the

dissertation. Among them, however, I did not find the work of Adam Kosecki, about whom in the introduction on page 9 the candidate claims without quoting that “Closer to the history of Bulgarian-Polish political relations during the Cold War Adam Kosecki deals as a topic (so in the text - IM) of his research are internationalism, the socialist revolution in Poland and Bulgaria and a comparative analysis of the agricultural movement in both countries”. There are also references to 16 English-language works on Polish history and resistance within the Eastern Bloc.

The dissertation follows the classical scheme – two introductions, four chapters, conclusion, used sources, appendix.

The first introduction presents the research and the history of the Bulgarian-Polish relations, describes the source base of the research and its structure. The introduction is not well structured in view of the requirements to highlight the goals, objectives, methods and relevance of the study. Something we see done in the abstract.

The second introduction from page 11 to page 30 in my opinion is superfluous. It contained two consecutive stories about the history of Bulgaria and Poland during the war of 1939-1945, which can hardly be taken as a starting point for their bilateral relations during the Cold War, as in 1941-1944 they were interrupted. In my opinion, it would have been much more appropriate if the author had presented the history of Bulgarian-Polish diplomatic and political relations in 1918-1939.

The four chapters are chronologically separated. Each follows the scheme - briefly about the international context, very circumstantially - about the political development of Bulgaria and the political development of Poland, and finally considers the contacts between the first party and state leaders and related meetings of ministers and other officials. It is dominated by the story about the Bulgarian and Polish political development during the different periods of Cold war. In fact, only one third of the dissertation concerns Bulgarian-Polish political relations.

The conclusion presents findings, not analysis and assessment of the nature of political relations between the two countries during the different periods.

In the text I did not find an analysis and assessment of the development of Bulgarian-Polish political relations during the communist regime, or

highlighting their specifics in comparison with the previous period before the war. The significance of the relations between the secret services of the two countries and the political relations between them are not clear. The primary and secondary sources are carelessly described.

In view of the above, it is difficult for me to evaluate the scientific contributions indicated by the doctoral student. Indeed, Bulgarian-Polish political contacts at the highest level have been collected and chronologically arranged, but they are lost in the absence of analysis and a well-known story about Bulgarian and Polish political history during the communist regime. The dissertation can rather be called "Bulgarian-Polish parallels during the Cold War".

For the first time I encounter a case in which the first part of the abstract does not correspond to the text in the dissertation, as I have already mentioned. For the most part, it reflects the conclusion of the dissertation.

I am afraid that for all my desire to support the first steps in science of a young man, Bachelor of Philosophy and Master of Political Science, in his dissertation I did not find scientific results that represent an original contribution to science, as required by law. That is why I **cannot vote in favor** of awarding the educational and scientific degree **PhD in History** to Stoyan Dimitrov Stoyanov in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.2. History and archeology, scientific specialty "History of Bulgaria".

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