

OPINION

from Prof. DrSc Mancho Vekov
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for the dissertation work of

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on topic

Kirila Vazvozova-Karateodorova - creative path, archival resources

for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree doctor
Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"
Faculty of History
Department of Archival Studies and Methodology of History
Education Research supervisor, Professor Dr. Ani Kochankova
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Evaluations of results

The text of the proposed dissertation (236 pages) is divided into an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, an appendix, references (list of the used literature), and a list of abbreviations.

The topic for the dissertation is well chosen. Relatively rarely appear such studies, and even more so dissertations, dedicated to the scientific work of prominent researchers in the field of history. Kirila Vazvozova-Karateodorova (1917-2005) is inextricably linked with the Bulgarian archival and documentary studies. She made a fundamental contribution to the archival activity of the National Library "St. St. Cyril and Methodius", for the development of the Bulgarian archival studies, as well as for the search and publication of documentary material related to Bulgarian history from the late Revival era and especially to the activity of Vasil Levski.

It should be noted that the content is also well structured. The three chapters differentiate important highlights covering the chosen topic in its entirety. The work was developed on a first-class source base: sources of a personal and public nature, stored in the CSA, SA Sofia, Ruse, Burgas, BHA at the National Library, the Scientific Archive of BAS, the Archive of Sofia University.

The first chapter "Biographical data and main directions in the professional development of Kirila Vazvozova-Karateodorova" reconstructs Karateodorova's life in a professional sense. The text is divided into three paragraphs. The first traces family background and career path. The upward development and long-term presence of the archivist at the National Library, where she spent her entire professional career, is revealed.

In the second, the scientific and organizational activity of Karateodorova as a member of the Scientific and Directors's Board of the National Library is followed. The stages through which her career as an archivist passes are shown.

Emphasis in the third paragraph is placed on searching for documents about Bulgarian history in foreign archives and on publishing the foreign documents. This is one of the main directions of the archivist's activities, which has led to the enrichment not only of the Bulgarian archives, but also to the expansion of the documentary basis for historical research.

Chapter two "The place of Kirila Vazvozova-Karateodorova in Bulgarian archival studies and archaeography" is also structured in three paragraphs. It could reasonably be argued that this is the essence of the dissertation. Here, the main contributions of Vazvozova-Karateodorova, her efforts for the consolidation of the Bulgarian archival science and practice are highlighted. The first paragraph analyzes her involvement in the archival debates of the 1950s and 1960s and on the profiling of archives within the state archival fund.

The participation of Vazvozova-Karateodorova, as a leading expert in the library in building the national archival work, contributes to balancing the different, often conflicting interests of the institutions.

The second paragraph presents the participation of the archivist in the development of methodological rules for scientific and technical processing and publication of documents. The practical application of the developed rules in the immediate activity of the National Library and in the publication of documents is shown.

The third paragraph is dedicated to her contributions in the preparation and realization of documentary and reference publications. This is one of the spheres in which the archivist most fully appears as an organizer and expert documentarian. It is shown he work on publishing documents about the April Uprising, the large-scale publication "Family Archive of Hadzhitoshevi", the documentation related to Vasil Levski. The paragraph reflects organizational and editorial work for the creation of archival guides - the publication "Overview of archival funds, collections and partial receipts stored in the Bulgarian Historical Archive". The archivist took part in the development and publication of the first five volumes (1963-1981), which is a model for an archival guidebook.

The third chapter presents the archival and bibliographic resources for the life and work of Kirila Vazvozova-Karateodorova. This is the archival emphasis of the dissertation. The exposition is divided into four paragraphs. The first two examine the documents related to the archivist's family background, career development, and professional activity.

The third paragraph (p. 158-207) is an archival inventory of the documents of and about Vazvozova-Karateodorova divided into several sections - biographical information, creative activity, official and personal correspondence. This paragraph is one of the main highlights of the work and presents the PhD student as a diligent researcher.

In a separate, fourth paragraph, memories collected by the PhD student about Vazvozova-Karateodorova are distinguished, which complement the idea of her work and of some moments in the history of the archival work. As an appendix, a diagram of her professional path in the National Library is given.

Recommendations and remarks

First of all, it should be noted the missed opportunity in Chapter One to expand the biographical part with a more detailed genealogical study, including the derivation of family trees. Vazvozova-Karateodorova comes from remarkable families - on the paternal line with a lasting place in the history of Aytos, and on the maternal line with Macedonian roots (from Shtip). The genealogical aspect in such studies is important with the possibilities of enriching the regional history.

It would also be possible to present in more detail the interaction between the archivist and other researchers - archivists, historians, paleographers.

The notes given as a paragraph to the third chapter would more appropriately find a place in the section "Appendix", and the table now placed in this section should be included in an appropriate place in the text of the first chapter.

My main criticism is the way the bibliography is constructed. The used literature is not well structured. The publications of Kirila Vazvozova-Karateodorova are not listed separately. The text could be successfully supplemented with a separate list of Vazvozova-Karateodorova's publications- those of which she is the author and also of independent research texts.

Overall assessment

The dissertation submitted for defense meets the basic requirements. The submitted abstract adequately reflects the content of the dissertation, the goals and the tasks, the made contributions.

The presentation of the professional path and contributions of Kirila Vazvozova-Karateodorova is considered by the PhD student as inseparable from the development of the Bulgarian Historical Archive and the Manuscript and Documentary Sector of the National Library. Her contributions to the establishment of principles for document description and publication are highlighted. Vazvozova-Karateodorova is shown in her role as an administrator, archivist and archaeograph, activities that are closely intertwined in her professional development. Emphasis is placed on her appearance as an energetic expert, an excellent organizer, a demanding manager, a specialist, precise in details, but also with a broad view on the problems.

The PhD student has achieved the goals set for the dissertation and has completed the tasks. There is a contribution that meets the requirements for a dissertation and fills a gap in the field of historiographical research while making significant contributions to the history of archival studies.

All this gives me a reason to declare my decision to vote FOR granting the PhD student the educational and scientific degree "doctor".

Sofia

April 27th 2023

Jury member: Professor DrSc Mancho Vekov

