OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Daniela Stefanova Angelova, PhD

On the dissertation by

Assoc. Prof. Ventsislav Evtimov Muchinov, PhD

"Urbanization in the Bulgarian lands under Ottoman rule in the 19th century (until 1878)"

Submitted for the acquisition of the scientific degree Doctor of Science, specializing in "2.2 History and Archaeology", within the field of higher education "2.2 Humanities".

1. General impression of the dissertation

The dissertation of Assoc. Prof. Ventsislav Muchinov, PhD on the topic "Urbanization in the Bulgarian lands under Ottoman rule in the 19th century (until 1878)" examines an extremely interesting and topical issue. Although a number of materials on this topic have been published in Bulgarian historiography, the dissertation of Assoc. Prof. V. Muchinov is the first comprehensive and detailed independent study of urbanization in the Bulgarian lands in the 19th century. It contributes to the clarification of a number of aspects of the demographic, socio-economic and the cultural development of the population inhabiting the Bulgarian lands during the Revival. In the paper, urbanization is considered as one of the main prerequisites for the observed modernization processes in Bulgarian society.

This idea defines the main goal of the research, namely revealing the essence, features and trends in the development of urbanization in the Bulgarian lands under Ottoman rule in the 19th century (until the Liberation of Bulgaria in 1878). For its implementation, Assoc. Prof. V. Muchinov sets himself several main tasks: 1. Tracking the development of urbanization in the Bulgarian lands under Ottoman rule at the end of the 18th and in the first decades of the 19th century; 2. Clarifying the influence of the Tanzimat reforms on urbanization in the Bulgarian-populated provinces of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century; 3. Study of the policies of the Ottoman rulers in the field of urbanization during the Tanzimat era.

The overall structure of the exhibition - foreword, introduction, two parts with four and three chapters each, conclusion, bibliography and list of abbreviations with a total volume of 285 pages, helps to track the implementation of the set tasks and achieve the intended goal.

2. Significance and cogency of the obtained results, nature of the scholarly contributions

The dissertation of Assoc. Prof. Ventsislav Muchinov stands out on the one hand with the rich and varied source material, part of which is unpublished and has not yet entered scientific circulation. On the other hand, he shows an extremely good awareness of the available scientific literature on the studied issue.

The dissertation contains a number of important and indisputable scientific contributions. Among them, I would point out the theoretical justification of key concepts such as "city" and "urban population" in relation to the era under consideration. An in-depth analysis of the influence of the Tanzimat reforms on the urbanization process is made, outlining the main impact factors. For the first time, the Ottoman urbanization policy in the Bulgarian lands in the 19th century (until 1878) is studied. The thesis imposed in Bulgarian science that urbanization in Bulgaria is a process characteristic of the post-liberation era and especially of the period after the Second World War is being corrected. The dissertation uses a variety of interdisciplinary methods, which helps to create a model for the development of this type of research.

3. The quality of the scientific works on the dissertation topic

Assoc. Prof. Ventsislav Muchinov, PhD presents 11 publications on the subject of the dissertation (ten independent and one co-authored). The presented studies and articles have been published in peer-reviewed journals, and some of them are in the world databases Scopus and Web of Science. Some research results have been presented with papers at eight scientific conferences and related forums. Six of the works on the topic of the dissertation have been cited 14 times in scientific publications by other authors. From the presented reference, it can be seen that the author meets the minimum requirements outlined in Article 26, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the "Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria" and the "Rules for the Work of the Scientific Juries in the Institute for Population and Human Studies – BAS on Procedures for the Defense of Dissertations".

4. Conclusion

The dissertation presented by Assoc. Prof. Ventsislav Evtimov Muchinov, PhD is a fully completed author's research, which brings a number of contributions to the delineation of the demographic picture of the Bulgarian lands in the 19th century. That is why I am convinced to vote

“YES” in the procedure for awarding Assoc. Prof. Ventsislav Evtimov Muchinov, PhD the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences".

София,
12.11.2023 г. Assoc. Prof. Daniela Angelova, PhD