

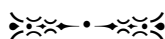
enjoyed more readerly attention than the work of any other medieval Italian writer, and it is our good fortune that they are finally available in unabridged Bulgarian translation.

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Penka Danova. *Dzhovani Kiaromani i negovoto patuvane ot Viena do Bursa prez 1659 g. / Giovanni Chiaromanni e il suo viaggio da Vienna a Bursa fatto l'anno 1659*. Paradigma Publishers, 2017. 258. ISBN: 978-954-326-329-5

Penka Danova's book, titled *Dzhovani Kiaromani i negovoto patuvane ot Viena do Bursa prez 1659 g. (Giovanni Chiaromanni and His Journey from Vienna to Bursa, Made in the Year 1695)*, comprises twenty-five letters, written by Giovanni Chiaromanni (1633-1683), special envoy of the Grand Duke of Tuscany to the Habsburg Court, and addressed to a number of "friends and patrons." Intended for a variety of correspondents, the letters were produced during Chiaromanni's journey in the late spring of 1659 when he joined the suite of the Austrian Ambassador Augustin von Mayern on its way to meet the Ottoman Sultan. The aim of von Mayern's diplomatic mission was to inform Mehmed IV (1648–1687) of Leopold I's (1658–1705) accession as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and to discuss issues related to border conflicts between the two Empires in Transylvania. Having reached present-day Edirne, the Austrian delegation headed south towards Gallipoli, crossed the Dardanelles, disembarked on the Anatolian coast and marched to meet the Sultan, who was in Bursa at the time. Having accomplished its mission, the delegation left for Mudanya and then sailed to Constantinople. This unexpected detour from the usual itinerary of European travellers enriched Chiaromanni's correspondence with numerous impressions of the Dardanelles and the old Ottoman capital of Bursa.

The letters that the traveller sent from Vienna, Belgrade, Sofia, Plovdiv, Gallipoli, Bursa, Constantinople, Edirne, or Buda subsequently underwent a no less impressive journey than his own peregrinations as Dr Danova did her utmost to locate, edit, translate and publish them. The originals of Chiaromanni's letters are now most probably kept in the City Library of Arezzo, Italy, while copies can be found in the State Archives of Florence. In the 1870s the famous historian and philologist Marin Drinov (1838–1906) ordered copies of Chiaromanni's letters from the Florence Archives. These copies are still part of Drinov's personal archive at the St Cyril and St Methodius National Library in Sofia. Unlike a number of other letters concerned with European diplomatic missions to the Ottoman Empire, Chiaromanni's correspondence was not published and remained generally unknown until Dr Svilen Stanimirov (1954–2016) revived academic interest in it. He passed the letters on to Dr Danova for translation and commentary.

Possessing the skills of an experienced translator and historian, as well as the practical knowledge of how to handle such sources, Dr Danova submitted the letters for publication both in their original Italian and her own Bulgarian translation. The text is accompanied by an introduction which presents an overview of the complex political situation in Central Europe (Transylvania, in particular) and the Ottoman Empire, discusses the reasons behind the above-mentioned diplomatic mission in 1659, provides biographical notes (presented for the first time in a systematic manner) and a thematic and stylistic analysis along with information about some

of the letters' addressees. Detailed footnotes and adequate references, such as indexes of names and geographical locations, complete this impressive academic project.

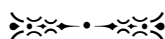
The publication is of exceptional academic value insofar as it presents Chiaromanni's epistolary travelogue both in its original Italian and in Bulgarian translation. His letters have finally been taken off the dusty shelves of archival collections and can find their way into the hands of researchers of the history of early modern European diplomacy. This edition supplements the list of sources, which shed light on the early modern period, and contributes new, valuable information on life and culture in the Ottoman Empire and its provinces, including the Bulgarian lands. It enriches scholarly research by adding yet another perspective to those provided by already published sources, such as the works of Sir Paul Rychaut (1629–1700), Giovanni Battista Donado (1627–1699) and Luigi Ferdinando Marsili (1658–1730).

Considering the undisputed merits of the book, I am convinced that the bilingual edition of Giovanni Chiaromanni's letters, compiled and edited by Penka Danova and funded by the Italian Cultural Institute in Sofia, is an exceptional contribution to both Bulgarian and international scholarship.

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Ivan Tyutyundzhiev. *Zarazhdane na nauchniya interes kam istoriyata na Osmanskata imperiya. Istoriografski etyudi.* M-Press Ltd., 2018. 155. ISBN 978-954-8455-93-0.

The Ottoman Empire was an important historical phenomenon and its history has repeatedly attracted the attention of scholars from different countries. It is amazing how the tiny *beylik* (principality), founded around 1300 in north-western Asia Minor, was transformed into a world empire which spanned three continents. In its heyday the Ottoman Empire was usually stereotyped as the “terror” of Christian Europe but it should also be borne in mind that European attitudes to it could be mixed, with fear being coupled with admiration. In the Balkan countries the period of Ottoman domination often provokes negative feelings as the Empire is traditionally regarded as an oppressor. That is why an unbiased assessment of the Ottoman period is very hard to achieve.

Titled *Zarazhdane na nauchniya interes kam istoriyata na Osmanskata imperiya. Istoriografski etyudi* (*The Origins of Scholarly Interest in the History of the Ottoman Empire. Studies in Historiography*), the last book of the late Professor Ivan Tyutyundzhiev (1956 – 2018) explores the establishment of a historiographic tradition, focused on the Ottoman Empire, and its subsequent development. The book is the first attempt in Bulgarian historiography to elucidate this problem. It will undoubtedly attract professional historians and students of history as well as members of the general public with an interest in the history of the Ottoman Empire. Needless to say, the book cannot claim to exhaust the subject in 155 pages but nevertheless constitutes a good basis for the further development of Ottoman studies in Bulgaria and abroad.

Professor Tyutyundzhiev gained both national and international recognition for his extensive work on a wide range of subjects, such as the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans and its consequences, major Bulgarian chronicles (15th-19th centuries), church organization in the Bulgarian lands under Ottoman rule, anti-Ottoman resistance in south-eastern Europe and relations between the Bulgarians and the Eastern Orthodox world during the Ottoman period.

One of the book's aims is to make up for the deficiency of studies concerning the development of historiography in the Ottoman “classical age” (1300–1600) in contrast with the following period of “decay”