
Sashka Georgieva**Once again on the title of despot in Bulgaria in the thirteenth century**

(Summary)

The subject of the article arose in the process of studying the marital diplomacy between the Latin Emperor of Constantinople Henry and Alexios Slav, the independent Bulgarian ruler in the Rhodopes. The paper reopens the scientific dispute about the origin and evolution of the title of despot in Bulgaria. The author defends the hypothesis that the two men who bore this high title in the Bulgarian Tsardom in the thirteenth century - Alexios Slav and Jacob Svetoslav - received it not from foreign rulers but from Bulgarian kings: Kaloyan and Constantine Tich Asen respectively. Among the arguments in support of the claim that Alexios Slav received his title from Kaloyan, is the silence of Henri de Valenciennes, who was a direct participant and witness to the events surrounding the wedding of Alexios Slav and the Latin princess. Despite the thorough inclusion of a number of details in his account of the events Valenciennes did not mention the emperor to have conferred the title of despot to his son-in-law. Another argument, which has not been discussed explicitly so far, is the presence of Slav's and Strez's names in Boril's Synodicon. Still another argument is offered by a logical explanation of the error made by Akropolites, who claimed that the title of despot was bestowed on Alexios Slav by the Latin emperor of Constantinople. The paper also presents arguments supporting the claim that Tsar Konstantin Tih Asen conferred the title of despot to Jacob Svetoslav in the late 1250s.

To sum it up the author reaches the conclusion that the Byzantine title of despot was assimilated in Bulgaria as early as the beginning of the thirteenth century nearly immediately after the restoration of the imperial title of the Bulgarian ruler.