

Article

UDC

<https://doi.org/10.31489/2026PHI2/228-230>

Received: 05.01.2026

Accepted: 09.03.2026

D. Veselinov\*

*Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia, Bulgaria*  
[dvdimitrov@uni-sofia.bg](mailto:dvdimitrov@uni-sofia.bg)

### **The image of the Ibero-Romance rulers as a linguocultural challenge for cognomological research**

Kirkova, Vera. Rulers and cognomens: linguocultural depictions of the Ibero-Romance world (Mythologems, archetypes, kenotypes, prototypical situations, standards, stereotypes, symbols: theoretical and applied foundations for the linguocultural reading of the cognomens of emblematic Iberian monarchical rulers, Portuguese and Castilian rulers). Monograph. First edition. Sofia: Prof. Marin Drinov Publishing House of Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 2025, 152 p., ISBN 978-619-245-550-7

The monograph by Vera Kirkova, a specialist in Ibero-Romance languages and cultures, is devoted to a hitherto unexplored but highly significant historical and philological issue concerning the formation, establishment, transfer, and dissemination of royal nicknames as linguoculturems, “in which the content and scope can be changed by placing certain features of the cultural aspect before parentheses” (Kirkova 2025: 31). To date, there is no such publication in the specialized cognomological literature, the result of a targeted philological study devoted to the epithets of rulers from this linguocultural perspective (according to the author’s original systematized parameters) and with a particular focus on the Ibero-Romance monarchical and aristocratic space.

The study examines representative Portuguese and Castilian monarchical cognomens of key rulers (kings and emperors) from the High and Late Middle Ages, namely in the period beginning with the advance of the Reconquista and continuing until the Age of Discovery. This was a complex historical period marked by the reconquest of territories previously occupied by the Moors and by the emergence and consolidation of independent Christian kingdoms on the Iberian Peninsula. Through the analysis of representative monarchs of the era and their distinctive epithets, the very designations under which they have endured in historical memory and by which they remain most recognizable to subsequent generations, the study concretizes and clearly demonstrates the applicability of Vera Kirkova’s cognomological practical projection of her theoretical research model to specific verbal material in an innovative and comprehensive manner.

The work is multifaceted and multi-layered in its conception, methodology, and depth of analysis. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the diverse cognomological subject matter of the study is a real challenge for anyone who has undertaken such a complex analysis in the vast field of linguocultural science. Vera Kirkova has succeeded in following the outline of her work plan, managing to select and bind into an indivisible whole the leading theoretical postulates with the applied aspects of serious cognomological research.

---

\* Corresponding author’s e-mail: [dvdimitrov@uni-sofia.bg](mailto:dvdimitrov@uni-sofia.bg)

The monograph is organized according to the established structure for academic research: preliminary notes, theoretical introduction, two chapters, analytically structured conclusion in a separate chapter, two annexes, sources used, and an academic index of objects and locations illustrating the contemporary significance of the royal titles studied. The work is presented in a total volume of 152 pages.

This structured work and detailed cognomological methodology allow the author to choose the most suitable interdisciplinary approach for the implementation of her ideas, which involves combining diverse linguistic-anthropological, cultural, linguistic-didactic and empruntological methods, and help to delve deeply into the internal dimensions of the processes under study.

The corpus of the study combines objectively and critically analyzed and interpreted rich cognomological material, which demonstrates the author's striving for maximum representativeness of the researched issues. Vera Kirkova's inclusion of diverse sources that complement each other ensures the necessary objectivity of the author's original interpretations, comments, and analyses.

In her preliminary remarks, Vera Kirkova introduces readers to the emergence and maturation of the idea of studying Ibero-Romance royal cognomens, with the decision and the motivated stages in conducting scientific cognomological research necessary to fill a linguocultural and empruntological lacuna in contemporary philological scientific and educational literature.

In the introductory part, the author presents the problems of linguocultural issues of a theoretical and applied nature on a selected theoretical model, whose general diachronic and synchronic parameters, according to Vera Kirkova, should be derived and illustrated for theoretical and applied purposes, as well as dispersed and superficial cognomological aspects in current research.

In the first chapter, the author provides a historical overview of linguocultural research, points out the peculiarities in defining and outlining the subject of contemporary linguocultural studies, presents general theoretical issues, positions anthropological onomastics diachronically among the directions of modern linguoculturology, and concretizes the practical application of basic aspects of the subject of cognomological research: mythologems (and myths), archetypes, kenotypes, prototypical situations, standards, stereotypes, symbols, applied to the Ibero-Romance medieval monarchical reality. The choice of the period from which the royal nicknames subjected to analysis are excerpted, is justified.

The second chapter is dedicated to the Iberian monarchical rulers. In it, Vera Kirkova traces the legitimization of monarchical rule, beginning with the Iberian (pre)historical contextualization of the Christian kingdoms from the High and Late Middle Ages, introduces the diachrony of life, culture, and language in Iberia until the Reconquista, moves on to the topics of the personality as a religious subject, the ruler and the image of the ruler, which determines the "titling" with certain epithets, highlights the importance of the personality of the Portuguese and Castilian Iberian monarchical rulers and their nicknames in the creation, establishment, and destruction of stereotypes, prototypes, kenotypes, archetypes, mythologems, symbols, and standards. In the analytical part, the focus is aimed directly at the cognomological analysis and interpretation of selected Portuguese and Castilian Iberian monarchs and their nicknames, divided into two groups: Portuguese monarchs and Castilian monarchs. The ways for their empruntological adaptation in the context of the Bulgarian language and prospects for their integration into the process of academic education, are indicated.

In the concluding part of the study, Vera Kirkova summarizes the results of the tasks performed in this complex interdisciplinary linguocultural approach, "through which the role of each linguistic system, in the management of certain cultural models that guide the corresponding behavior of users in the community, is set" (Kirkova 2025: 101).

The two annexes to the monograph and the impressive bibliography enrich the work and guarantee the scientific weight of the research: the work is valuable and innovative, opens horizons for new research in several directions, and contains a number of contributions that can be grouped according to the theoretical justification of the issues addressed. Throughout all of them, the author reveals profound knowledge and precision in working with the terminology, lays the foundations for the construction of a methodological cognomological model for this type of research, and convincingly points the way to solving yet undeveloped problems in this particular scientific field.

The monograph "Rulers and cognomens: linguocultural depictions of the Ibero-Romance world (Mythologems, archetypes, kenotypes, prototypical situations, standards, stereotypes, symbols: theoretical and applied foundations for the linguocultural reading of the cognomens of emblematic Iberian monarchical rulers, Portuguese and Castilian rulers)" by Vera Kirkova is a significant contribution to the field of contemporary Ibero-Romance cognomology and comparative linguocultural studies. The study is of interest not only to specialists in Ibero-Romance studies, but also to linguoculturalists, empruntologists, linguists with a

broad profile, anthropologists, culturalists, historians, as well as non-specialists intrigued by the research areas covered.

#### Information about the author

**Vesselinov, Dimitar** — Doctor of Philology, Professor, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Sofia, Bulgaria. E-mail: [dvdimitrov@uni-sofia.bg](mailto:dvdimitrov@uni-sofia.bg); ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3771-2031>

#### *Благодарности*

Профессор, д.ф.н. Димитър Веселинов преподава в Софийском университете им. св. Климента Охридского с 1992 г. после окончания отделения французской филологии и болгарской филологии в этом же университете.

Его основные научные интересы сосредоточены в области лингводидактологии, эмпрунтологии (науки о языковых трансферах), истории образования в Болгарии и учебной лексикографии. Автор шеститомного «Словаря французских слов в болгарском языке» / «Речник на френските думи на български език» / (2015–2017), академического «Французско-болгарского словаря» / «Френско-български речник» / (2002, 2008, 2016), «Учебного французско-болгарского тематического словаря» (1995), «Летописной книги Факультета классических и новых филологий» (Том 1, 2008; Том 2, 2011), а также монографий «Болгарские студенты Фердинанда де Соссюра» (2008), «Французская лексика в романе «Табак» Димитра Димова» (2009), «История обучения французскому языку в Болгарии» (2003), «Возрожденческий урок французского языка: лингводидактическая реконструкция» (2005), «Portfolio des langues à l'usage des apprenants bulgares» (2001) и др.

Кавалер Ордена академических пальм Французской республики (2003) за достижения в исследовании истории обучения французскому языку.

Профессор Димитър Веселинов является редактором периодических изданий «Годишник Софийского университета» и «Чуждоезиково обучение».

В 2019 году профессор Димитър Веселинов и профессор Ш. Мажитаева заключили меморандум и соглашение о совместном руководстве научной работой докторантов по направлению «8D02301 — Филология». В рамках этого сотрудничества профессор Димитър Веселинов организовал стажировки докторантов для обучения и проведения исследований в Софийском университете им. св. Климента Охридского: троих докторантов в 2020 году и двоих — в 2025 году.

В 2023 году М. Балабекова успешно защитила докторскую диссертацию (PhD) под научным руководством профессора Димитъра Веселинова, профессора Ш. Мажитаевой и ассоциированного профессора Н.К. Хан.

Профессор Димитър Веселинов также является членом редколлегии журнала «Вестник Карагандинского университета» (серия «Филология»).