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REVIEW

by Professor Radoslav Zahariev Mishev, Doctor of Historical Sciences, member of the Scientific Jury in a competition for the academic position of "Associate professor", announced by the Institute for Historical Studies – BAS, professional field 2.2 history and archeology, specialty "History of Bulgaria" (The Macedonian question in the Bulgarian-Albanian relations (1878 - 1944) for the needs of the section "History of the Bulgarian National Question", "State Gazette", issue 110 of 29.12.2020, specified in Article 24, paragraph 3, items 1-11 of the Regulations.

Candidates data: Chief assistant Georgi Georgiev, PhD: Georgi Nikolov Georgiev graduated in History at the Faculty of History of VTU "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" in 1994 with a master's degree. From 1996 to 1999 he was a teacher in Dupnitsa, and from 1999 to 2009 he was a curator at the History Museum and the Art Gallery in Dupnitsa. From 2005 to 2007 he was a doctoral student of independent training at the Institute for Historical Studies at BAS. In 2008 he successfully defended his dissertation on "The Macedonian-Edirne movement in Kyustendil district (1895 1903)". Since 2009 he has held the position of research associate II degree in the Institute for Historical Studies of BAS. In 2011 he became a chief assistant at the Institute of Economics of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. In the field of research, G. Georgiev focuses on the history of the Macedonian-Edirne movement and the role of the Macedonian question in Bulgarian-Albanian relations. The colleague has participated in an International seminar on albanian language, literature and culture. **Chief assistant Voyn Bozhinov, PhD:** From 1896 to 2001 Voyn Konstantinov Bozhinov studied history at Sofia University "Kliment Ohridski" and received a master's degree in history. From 2002 to 2005 he was a full-time doctoral student in New Bulgarian History at the Department of History of Bulgaria. In 2005 he successfully defended his dissertation "Andrey Lyapchev - politician, statesman, public figure" and was awarded PhD in History. Since 2005 he has been working at Institute for Historical Studies at BAS, where in 2005 - 2006 he was research associate II degree. From 2006 to 2008 he was research associate I degree, and from 2008 he continued as a chief assistant.

Description and analysis of the deposited historical works. Georgi N. Georgiev has submitted a list of publications for participation in the competition, including 2 monographs, 1 participation in collective work since the acquisition of "PhD", 6 publications from the academic position of "Chief assistant". Of the last 3 times he is a compiler in collections of documents and 3 times participates with paragraphs in collective works. Regarding the studies and articles, he

differentiated 10 - from the award of "PhD" and 19 from holding the academic position "Chief assistant"- all 29. Total 2 monographs, 35 studies, articles, participation in collective works and documentary collections and 6 information, responses and reviews. The total number is 41. In regard to the criterion for thematic separation, Georgiev presents 14 publications on the Macedonian question in Bulgarian-Albanian relations, 19 on the Macedonian-Edirne movement and two publications with a different focus. Taking into account both monographs, we see that the research work of G. Georgiev fully covers the specific focus of the announced competition. The candidate G. Georgiev has been a scientific editor 12 times, he has participated in 39 national and international scientific forums. The colleague demonstrates active participation in scientific and applied activities such as interviews with television, presentation of books and periodicals, expert work for BAS, the Macedonian Scientific Institute, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European Parliament.

The monograph "The Macedonian-Edirne Movement in the Kyustendil District (1895 - 1903)" is a published dissertation from 2008. Since it is peer-reviewed and defended in the defense procedure, I will not dwell on it. The colleague submitted as a habilitation paper the monograph "Bulgarian-Albanian Political Relations (1908 - 1915)", pp. 468, published in Sofia in 2019. In fact, this is a solid monographic work, which marks a new stage in the serious scientific development of G. Georgiev after the defense of the dissertation from 2008. While the first monograph is dominated by interesting empirical material and analyzes, the book presented for habilitation work demonstrates a successful combination of the evidence with relevant and convincing analytical comments and conclusions. In addition, in terms of space, the habilitation thesis is a large-scale and multifaceted development, a transition from regional to national research, demonstrating the author's ability to recreate a possible reliable picture of complex Balkan and international relations, interethnic and religious clashes with emphasis on the exclusive role of the Macedonian question in Bulgarian – Albanian relations. Structurally, the monograph is very well constructed. It consists of a preface, 8 chapters, a conclusion, a summary in English and Albanian, a nominal index, an index of northern Albanian clans, a geographical index. The preface traces the historical image of the Bulgarians about the Albanians. The author shows the idea of the Bulgarians in development - from the perception of the Arnauts as ethnic and religious enemies to the opportunities for bilateral cooperation during the Balkan Wars and the First World War. A prerequisite for this is the presence of Albanian emigration in Bulgaria. The subject of the research, which presents positive

moments in the Bulgarian-Albanian relations, stands out very well. **The first chapter** “Ideas for a Bulgarian-Albanian agreement from Hurriyet to the Balkan Wars (1908 - 1912)” analyzes the pros and cons of the Bulgarian-Albanian union in 1909. Georgiev is an excellent expert on the situation in the Balkans, the Young Turk Revolution and its consequences for the Bulgarians and the Albanians, the existence of negative preconditions for Bulgarian-Albanian rapprochement. These include strong religious components, the "economic" and other privileges of the Albanians in the Ottoman Empire. It is the latter that prevent the Albanians from accepting the innovations of the Young Turks and the Bulgarian proposals. Moreover, the tribal, generic, power and religious diversity of the Albanians creates chaos, which ultimately leads to a practically insurmountable obstacle to the creation of the future unified Albanian statehood. **The second chapter** “Bulgarian-Albanian reciprocity during the Balkan Wars (1912 - 1913)” focuses on the Bulgarian-Albanian activity and cooperation during the Balkan Wars, which cannot compensate for diplomatic and military mistakes in Bulgaria. The author very well presents and announces the factors that influence the Albanians. This is the Greek and Serbian intentions, the internal Albanian contradictions and the policy of Austria-Hungary and Italy. The Austro-Hungarian policy of establishing a protectorate over the Catholics in Albania has a special role. Georgi Georgiev makes his findings on the basis of a variety of evidence, such as documents and literature in Cyrillic and Latin, including Albanian sources. **Chapter Three**, “The Third Balkan War, or the Bulgarian-Albanian Uprising against the Kingdom of Serbia, 1913”, reveals the desperate efforts of the Bulgarians in Macedonia to oppose Serbian and Greek assimilation. After the defeat and isolation of Bulgaria, the Bulgarian national liberation movement in Macedonia used various means - from the uprising, together with the Albanians, against the Serbian occupation to the renewed attempts to gain the protection of Austria-Hungary even by accepting the union from the Vatican. The author aptly notes that the launch of the idea of autonomy is not accurate and due to objective circumstances there is no prospect of success. Chapter four focuses on the humanitarian and ethno-demographic consequences of the uprising. The contacts of the Internal Macedonian-Edirne revolutionary organization with the Albanians and the Turks after the Balkan Wars, the beginning of the Bulgarian diplomatic mission in Albania and the Bulgarian national cause in the Principality of Albania and the Albanian policy of the Kingdom of Bulgaria in 1913-1914 are consistently and accurately described. **(Chapters IV, V, VI, VII) Chapter Eight** “From the Disintegration of the Albanian State to the Bulgarian Intervention in the First World War (1914-1915)” reveals the collapse of Bulgarian hopes for the

Albanian alliance, because the disintegration and division of Albania took place. Curiously, unlike other Balkan nations, Albania is the only place where an uprising is being waged to restore Turkish rule. During the First World War, the Turks and the Arnauts tried to exploit the idea of Macedonian autonomy in accordance with their interests. In the conclusion, G. Georgiev rightly claims that the Bulgarian-Albanian agreement remains in the sphere of unrealized ideas. Bulgaria's rapprochement with Turkey is in the context of their different interests and ultimately promises future trouble for Sofia. The author describes in detail the beginning of the official relations between Bulgaria and the new state entity Albania. Finally, he convincingly concludes that Bulgarian-Albanian relations take place under the sign of the Macedonian and Albanian issues.

Scientific contributions: The monograph “Bulgarian-Albanian Political Relations (1908 - 1915)”, pp. 468, proposed as a habilitation thesis, is the first independent and complex study on the topic. The very writing of a monograph on such a complex issue, combining interethnic, national liberation and religious contradictions with the highly complicated nature of Balkan relations and the policy of the great powers in the region, is a scientific contribution. The author clearly shows the process of the objective supremacy of the military solution of the Macedonian question over the previous ideas of revolution. At the same time, the new option for an ally of Bulgarian diplomacy, Internal Macedonian-Edirne revolutionary organization, and the army in the face of the Albanian factor is shown, but in Sofia they prefer the alliance with Serbia, Greece and Montenegro. The differences between the Albanian and Bulgarian sides and especially the internal chaos in the Albanian lands as a serious obstacle to possible Bulgarian-Albanian cooperation have been highlighted and thoroughly analyzed. The joint Bulgarian-Albanian uprising of 1913 is traced, which is quite late and cannot give the expected effect. The author's contribution is also a clear demonstration of the role of Serbian and Greek initiatives, as well as the great powers Austria-Hungary and Italy in the Albanian lands and mixed areas. The initiative of the Macedonian Bulgarians before Austria-Hungary for a religious and political protectorate, which also failed, is also interesting. Special attention is paid to the negotiations with the Young Turks and the Bulgarian activity in Albania. It is a matter of following the process of establishing Bulgarian-Albanian political and diplomatic relations, Tsar Ferdinand's hopes for a Bulgarian protectorate over Albania and the ultimate failure due to the disintegration and chaos in Albania. The publications complement the research lines of the monographs. G. Georgiev's research is directly focused on the Macedonian-Edirne movement and Bulgarian-Albanian relations during this period. The works

of G. Georgiev have been cited 146 times by Bulgarian and foreign historians and have an original character. He has 2 individual and 8 joint participations in research projects. The report on the scientific-metric indicators shows that he exceeds the minimum requirements for title “Associate professor”, having 1881 points collected.

Notes and recommendations: Regarding the statement of p. 10 that the term “Slavic exarchists” is used in the Austro-Hungarian and Russian statistics, it can be added that there are numerous references of the Austro-Hungarian diplomats in Macedonia to Bulgarian exarchists, Bulgarian patriarchists and etc. It could be added that the attempt to seek Austro-Hungarian support, including through the adoption of the union, is not sporadic.

Chief assistant Voyn Konstantinov Bozhinov, PhD: V. Bozhinov participated in the competition with the habilitation thesis “Management of the “devetnadesetomaitse¹” May 19, 1934 - January 22, 1935”, pp. 247. He applied the monographs “Republic of Macedonia in contemporary geopolitics”, pp. 314, having invested it in a synthesized form in the book “The Republic of Macedonia in Contemporary Politics and the Place of the Bulgarian Interest There”, Sofia, 2018, co-authored with J. Stoyanova-Toneva., “Socialist Yugoslavia in Agony 1980 - 1989”, 314 pp., “National Powerful and United Bulgaria. The Formation of the Radical Right and the National Question”, Sofia, 2014, 273 pp. Is co-authored with a participation of 96 pp. Followed by “Socialist Yugoslavia in Disintegration 1989 – 1992”, Sofia, 2021, 280 pp., And two monographs based on the already defended dissertation “The Earth the orb does not stop spinning even if we sleep. A Tale of the Life of A. Lyapchev”, pp. 242 and “Andrey Lyapchev”, pp. 126. Since the last monographs are on the already defended dissertation, I will not dwell on them. The monographs on Macedonia and Yugoslavia are devoted to interesting issues in the contemporary history of these Balkan countries, which are within the scope of contemporary Balkan history. Parts of the latter have a political and prognostic character. In addition, V. Bozhinov has submitted 41 publications, of which 1 article in a referenced edition, 37 in non-referenced editions, 1 study and 2 chapters from collective monographs. 12 articles have been published abroad. Thematically, the publications are differentiated into 3 on General History, 15 on History of the Balkan Peoples (which is part of the General History) and 23 on History of Bulgaria. The thematic range of publications is extremely diverse, from the coup

¹ Devetnadesetomaitse – established Bulgarian term, used to denominate participants in the coup from May 19, 1934 to January 22, 1935.

of the devetnadesetomait site through Yugoslavia to the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. **The habilitation work “Management of the “devetnadesetomait site” May 19, 1934 - January 22, 1935”, 247 pp.** is in the field of political history of Bulgaria and consists of introductory words, three chapters and an afterword. In his introductory words, V. Bozhinov distances himself from the traditional academic “extended” exposition of historiography on the topic by offering acquaintance with the sources and literature in the course of the exposition. At the same time, he puts forward his thesis that the coup burying the so-called bourgeois democracy and paves the way for authoritarianism. According to V. Bozhinov, in order to better explain the coup of 1934, the authorities in Bulgaria after 1879 to 1934 must first be traced and analyzed. To this end, in the **first chapter** “Institutions, the political system and some phenomena forming the image of the Bulgarian statehood” he gives findings and conclusions about the Constitution of Tarnovo, the monarchical institute, the National Assembly, the Council of Ministers and the parties. It is pertinently noted that after the murder of Al. Stamboliyski and other radical farmers Bulgarian Agrarian National Union disintegrates into different factions and wings. Practically the liquidation of the agricultural leader Al. Stamboliyski deprives the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union of an integrative figure. **Chapter Two** “The Road to May 19 - Who Initiated Radical Change? The coup and the reasons for its success” reveals the origin and essence of the Military Union and the political circle “Zveno”, the road to the uprising and the previous coup on June 9, 1923. The cooperation of the coup preparators with other opposition parties and organizations. **Chapter Three** “The Administration of the “devetnadesetomait site”. The Bulgarian version of the rehabilitation” examines the main content of the activity of the coup executors. Voyn Bozhinov presents all aspects of their rule, such as political events, changes in the administration, social processes, financial and economic initiatives, the ideology of the regime and the attitude of Tsar Boris III towards it. According to the author, the “devetnadesetomaitstvo²” is the successor of the “devetojunstvoto³” (pp. 158 - 159). Special attention is paid to the Directorate for Public Affairs as the most important propaganda institution of the regime (pp. 161 - 162) and the imposition of organizations by classes is followed, which should replace the already banned parties. The ideology of the coup plotters is

² Devetnadesetomaitstvo – established Bulgarian term, related to the ideology of the coup of the devetnadesetomait site (May 19, 1934 to January 22, 1935). However this ideology is pro-king/pro-monarchy related unlike the devetnadesetomait site.

³ Devetojunstvo – established Bulgarian term, related to the political views of the coup plotters, participated in the coup from June 9, 1923.

thoroughly analyzed (p. 221), where the author differentiates the goals of coup plotters and their ideology (p. 232). The coup plotters were reserved for the king, while the “devetnadesetomaistvoto” then promoted the idea of a king-nation-state. Ultimately, Tsar Boris III successfully removed their radical representatives and exploited the changes in their government to establish his authoritarian regime. In this sense, perhaps involuntarily, but objectively, the coup executors served his secret intentions.

Scientific contributions: The habilitation work “Management of the devetnadesetomaistsite May 19, 1934 - January 22, 1935” is the only independent monograph on this issue. The author chooses as an approach an analytical review of the authorities in Bulgaria after 1879 to 1934. For the first time he differentiated the “devetnadesetomaistvoto” as an ideology and after the fall of the regime. A reconstruction of the activities of the “Zveno” was made in comparison with the dictatorship of King Alexander in Serbia, the rehabilitation in Poland and others. Attention is paid to the new power structures of the coup participants and their ideology is thoroughly characterized. The book “National Powerful and United Bulgaria. The Formation of the Radical Right and the National Question”, Sofia, 2014, 273 pp. Is co-authored with a participation of 96 pp. For the first time the National Question is considered in the programs and actions of the far right forces after the First World War the territorial plunder of Bulgaria. Voyn Bozhinov makes a brief description of the Bulgarian national question between the two world wars (pp. 31 - 46). A critical attitude towards Iv. Mihailov’s policy is launched in the Pirin region. There is a more objective understanding of right-wing political formations. Some of the articles address aspects of the Bulgarian national question after the First World War. The monograph “The Republic of Macedonia in Contemporary Geopolitics” is devoted to the creation, development and role of the new state in the geopolitical situation in the Balkans, as well as to the Bulgarian interest in it. According to the attached reference, the candidate collects a total of 1685 points from the scientific-metric indicators, which exceeds the minimum requirements for title “Associate professor”. Voyn Bozhinov has participated in 2 scientific projects - 1 national and 1 international. The works have an original character.

Notes and recommendations: The habilitation paper could include more information about author's attitude towards the Tarnovo Constitution and the functions of the monarch in Bulgarian political life than on the role of monarchs in other Balkan countries. Also his attitude during the events of June 9, 1923.

Candidates have submitted interesting and significant achievements in their research work. Chief assistant G. N. Georgiev has focused on the

Macedonian-Edirne movement and the role of the Macedonian question in Bulgarian-Albanian relations, which directly corresponds to the announced competition for “Associate professor” in the scientific specialty “History of Bulgaria”, specified in the contract of the Scientific unit such as “The Macedonian Question in Bulgarian-Albanian Relations (1878 - 1944)” for the needs of the section “History of the Bulgarian National Question” with a chronological framework. Chief assistant V. Bozhinov, PhD presents works on various topics in Political History of Bulgaria and Contemporary History of the Balkan Peoples with a wide perimeter of study. The habilitation work for the government of the “devetnadesetomaitsite” is focused on the political history of Bulgaria, including the history of the Bulgarian state institutions until then.

Conclusion: Based on the scientific contributions of the two candidates highlighted so far, I believe that the research activities of Chief assistant Georgi Nikolov Georgiev fully complies with the specified requirements of the announced competition and it covers the legal requirements for holding the academic position of “Associate professor”. I rank the candidates in the following order:

- 1. Chief assistant Georgi Nikolov Georgiev, PhD**
- 2. Chief assistant Voyn Konstantinov Bozhinov, PhD**

Therefore, I give a positive review and propose to the esteemed Scientific Jury to vote positively on the candidacy of Chief assistant Georgi N. Georgiev, PhD for holding the academic position of “Associate professor” in direction 2.2. History and archeology, scientific specialty “History of Bulgaria” (The Macedonian question in the Bulgarian-Albanian relations 1878 - 1944) for the needs of the section “History of the Bulgarian national question”, as well as to make a proposal to the Scientific Council of the Institute for Historical Studies – BAS.

7.04.2021 Professor Radoslav Mishev, Doctor of Historical Sciences: