

БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ И ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ	
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OPINION
of

Associate Prof. Dr. Milen Vasilev Mihov
St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo,
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Member of the Scientific Jury for the competition about occupying the academic position 'Associate Professor' at the Institute of Historical Research – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences under the professional field 2.2. History and Archaeology, major History of Bulgaria (National Liberation Movement of Macedonian and Thracian Bulgarians (1878-1919) for the needs of section 'History of the Bulgarian National Question' which was selected after unanimous vote with resolution under item 5.2 from Protocol Nr. 4/09.02.2021 of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Historical Research – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, assigned with Order Nr. 12/10.02.2021 by the Head of the Institute – Prof. Dr. Daniel Vachkov

The present competition is announced for occupying of the academic position 'Associate Professor' under the professional field 2.2. History and Archaeology, *scientific major* 'History of Bulgaria' (National Liberation Movement of Macedonian and Thracian Bulgarians (1878-1919) for the needs of section 'History of the Bulgarian National Question' in the State Gazette (issue 110, dated 29.12.2020). The conditions for participation in the competition are defined in the Regulations for the conditions and the order for acquiring scientific degrees and for occupying academic positions in the Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Two candidates are allowed to take part in the competition – Chief Assistant Dr. Voin Konstantinov Bozhinov and Chief Assistant Dr. Slavi Mitkov Slavov who have presented the documents required under the Regulations.

Chief Assistant Dr. Slavi Mitkov Slavov is a Master in History from the St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo. In 2006 he successfully defended his thesis on topic 'The Internal Macedonian-Edirne Revolutionary

Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. He has been working at the Institute of Historical Research since 2007 and since 2010 he has been occupying the academic position of Chief Assistant.

This candidate is the author of two monographs dedicated to the history of the Bulgarian National Liberation Movement in Macedonia and the Edirne region in the beginning of the XX century. He takes part as a co-author in the issue of two Collections of documents dedicated to the same topic. The titles and contents of the monographs entirely correspond to the announced competition and this is why it is necessary to mention them here – ‘The Internal Macedonian-Edirne Revolutionary Organization from Ilinden to the Balkan War (1903-1912). S., 2016, 347 pages and ‘The Internal Macedonian-Edirne Revolutionary Organization between the fanfares of the Young Turk Revolution and the rumble of the guns (1908-1912)’. Burgas, 2018, 256 pages.

The monograph called ‘The Internal Macedonian-Edirne Revolutionary Organization between the fanfares of the Young Turk Revolution and the rumble of the guns (1908-1912)’ represents the habilitation work of the candidate S. Slavov and is correctly indicated in the reference for the minimum national requirements for occupation of the academic position ‘Associate Professor’. Thus, the requirement under art. 4, para. 5, item 3 from the Regulations for the conditions and the order for acquisition of scientific degrees and for occupation of academic positions at the Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences is fulfilled. One of the fundamental questions in this study in relation to which significant achievements of contributing nature have been made is the question for the split in the revolutionary movement. In line with the popular opinion for the existence of both trends ‘left wing’ and ‘right wing’, the contradictory and ambiguous dynamics of the process of internal discrepancies and divisions is emphasised. The author’s contribution related to the financial support of the Bulgarian state for the Internal Macedonian-Edirne Revolutionary Organization in the years following the Young Turk coup d’etat in 1908 and the implemented constitutional regime is very significant from scientific and contemporary point of view. This matter has been developed on the grounds of new archive documents as well as such that were used

a little and a great part of them has been included in a scientific circulation for the first time. In his habilitation work, Chief Assistant S. Slavov reaches to the important conclusion that despite the formal legalization of the detachments of the Internal Macedonian-Edirne Revolutionary Organization, the secret organization did not cease to exist and its leading figures preserved their prime role by defining the activity of the legal political parties and organizations.

Chief Assistant S. Slavov has attached a list of 50 (fifty) scientific, 12 (twelve) popular science articles and has taken part in 28 (twenty-eight) scientific conferences and forums. The researched matters, the presented reports and messages are all dedicated to a broad range of issues related to the National Liberation struggles of Bulgarians in the end of XIX and the beginning of the XX century. A few essential contributions of the author should be mentioned among these resources. One of them is related to the studies on the so called 'Sarafov's fraction' – this is the trend in the Internal Macedonian-Edirne Revolutionary Organization the leader of which was First Lieutenant Boris Sarafov in the years following the Ilinden-Preobrazhenie Uprising. Another contribution is the matters related to wars from the period from 1912 to 1918 which were poorly researched or remained left out from the focus of native historiography such as the cholera epidemic during the First Balkan War, the actions of the Russian troops on the Thessaloniki front or the matter related to the Russian landing on the Bulgarian Black Sea Coast in 1915-1916.

Chief Assistant S. Slavov has attached a correct reference about the scientometric indicators that cover the minimum requirements for the occupation of the academic position 'Associate Professor' in the documents for the competition. It mentions that there are 50 p. for group 'A' (Indicator 1) and 100 p. for group 'C' (Indicator 3) which correspond to the requirements, while for the indicators from group 'D' (4-12) there are 320 p. with required 220, for the indicators from group 'E' (13-15) there are 70 p. with required 60 p. The titles mentioned in the reference completely reflect the subject of the competition.

Chief Assistant Dr. Voin Konstantinov Bozhinov has graduated the Faculty of History in Sofia University where he defended his Doctoral thesis in 2005. The topic of the dissertation is 'Andrey Lyapchev – a politician, a statesman, a public

figure'. In 2005, he started work in the Institute of Historical Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and he has been occupying the position of a research worker of Ist degree since 2006 which corresponds to the academic position 'Chief Assistant'. It is evident from the attached reference that the candidate is taking part in the current competition with a habilitation work, 2 monographs, 2 books based on his Doctoral thesis, 38 articles, one of which is included in a cited magazine, 2 chapters from a collective work and 1 study.

As a habilitation work, Bozhinov has presented the monograph called 'The Government of the organizers of the Bulgarian coup d'etat from 19th May 1934 to 22nd January 1935', S., 2017, 247 pages long. In this work, there is a review of a short but important moment from the political history of Bulgaria. This study goes beyond the chronological limits of the topic by searching for the 'overall characteristics of the components of the political system in Bulgaria from the Liberation to the coup d'etat that took place on the 19th May 1934'. This research is distinguished for its 'innovative pattern of work with the historical documents in which they play a 'real' role for the description and analysis of the events.' Despite the indubitable merits of the reviewed text, I must note that there is a discrepancy between the text and the conditions of the competition both in the subject of study and the chronological definiteness.

The candidate has presented two books with similar titles – 'Republic of Macedonia in Contemporary Geopolitics', S. 2017 and 'Republic of Macedonia in Contemporary Geopolitics and the place of the Bulgarian national interest there', S. 2018. Both studies examine current issues related to the international relations, the changes in Europe and on the Balkans following the end of the Cold War and there is a quest for an answer of the important questions related to the Bulgarian politics in regards to the Macedonian matter today. Another book of the candidate is similar to the examined matters and its title is 'Socialist Yugoslavia in agony 1980-1989'.

Chief Assistant V. Bozhinov is a co-author of the book 'Nationally powerful and united Bulgaria. Formations of the radical right wing and the national question' which was issued in 2014. The text provides an examination of the views and programmes of political organizations from the right wing during the period between

the two World wars which is inextricably related to the means, ways and factors for the settlement of the Bulgarian national question.

The attached list of articles and studies shows that the predominant part of them are dedicated to matters concerning Andrey Lyapchev's biography, the political processes in Bulgaria between the two World wars, the contemporary processes on the Balkans and in Europe, etc.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasise that the scientific work of Chief Assistant V. Bozhinov inspires due to its volume, the quality of the scientific product and the diversity of the topic range. It is undoubtedly the result of wide scientific interests but it contradicts the specific topic of the present competition. The other candidate – Chief Assistant S. Slavov has presented a scientific work that completely corresponds to the topic of the competition and has a volume that meets the minimum scientific requirements for the occupation of the academic position 'Associate Professor'.

The abovementioned provides me with the good reason to conclude that Chief Assistant Slavi Mitkov Slavov meets all requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the existing regulations and the conditions of the competition for the occupation of the academic position 'ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR' under professional field 2.2. History and Archaeology, *scientific major* History of Bulgaria (National Liberation Movement of Macedonian and Thracian Bulgarians (1878-1919) and it gives me the grounds to vote 'YES' on the meeting of the Scientific Jury, assigned with Order Nr. 12/10.02.2021 by the Head of the Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

5th April 2021

Town of Veliko Tarnovo

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Associate Prof. Dr. Milen Vasilev Mihov