

БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ	
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OPINION

By Assoc., D.Sc. Rumen V. Karaganev

In connection with a competition for the academic position of "associate professor", announced in the "State Gazette", No. 97, dated 21.11.2023, announced by the Institute for Historical Studies - BAS, in the professional direction of the scientific specialty "Documentary studies, archival studies, paleography (incl. historiography and source studies)" (Visual historical sources), for the needs of the "Ancillary historical sciences and informatics" section.

The required documents were submitted by the only candidate ch. assistant Chavdar V. Vetov. According to the prescriptions of the RSARB - a neat set of materials; the requirements for seniority as a "principal assistant" have been met; correspondences according to the required number of scientometric indicators for "associate professor". The habilitation thesis proposed by the candidate "The Bulgarian National Liberation Movement through the eyes of photography" - printed; a topic other than his doctoral dissertation; two reviews by distinguished specialists in the field.

The habilitation study impresses with the precise reproduction of the broad scope of the topic as such, as well as in the logical arrangement of its specifics in separate, meaningful in its nature and curious in the presented accompanying material parts. On the face is the in-depth tracking, based on the available photographic material, of the remarkable events in the history of the Bulgarian armed opposition against the atavistic regime of the Crescent. For the most part, these are personal images, traced in the sequence of the then characteristic life incarnations - from the free choice in youth to inclusion to the forming centers of resistance; onwards - passing through the heroics of the First Bulgarian Legion in 1862, and all the way to the Serbian-Turkish war in 1876 and shortly after. In continuation: remaining unaffected by poters, scythe, treachery, and lead; in the liberated homeland, photographed in moments of tribute to what was done in the past dramatic decades by their

loved ones, fellow villagers, classmates, relatives and friends, but still remaining so young.

It is obligatory to note the extremely careful and punctual following of the syncopations in the Bulgarian national liberation movement for the noted period of fifteen years based on the photographic material. The author reaches even such subtleties in the matter as to make it possible to distinguish in separate formats in the representation of the characters in front of the photographer - in one case, - a marked emphasis on the military robes and their accessories; in the other - the same, completely released - according to fashion, civilly predetermined. As for the inseparable connection between the specifics of the historical event and the photographic imagery, which the researcher Vetov unwaveringly follows, but in the absence of sufficient arguments in a similar sense, the author singles out a separate paragraph, determined precisely for such cases subject to clarification. The features of the habilitation research touched upon so far give reasons to outline the contributing moments of the activities with photographic material in its importance as an empathic aspect of historical knowledge, at certain times - priceless. We have witnessed how the professional examination of the photographic card from the development of the national liberation movement in the selected period: 1. is in support of already known circumstances in this order; 2. contributes information to less clarified; 3. presents new hypotheses, conjectures, statements, incl. corrections of established facts.

All of the aforementioned brings additional arguments regarding the importance of the chosen habilitation topic, as well as its impressive exposition in the 300-page format in question, suitable for the illustrative characteristics of the publication. It should be remembered that the oldest photographic portraits are undoubtedly of exceptional value, and their preservation from the traces of time is a huge problem. The reproduction of the available photographic material in the publication of ch. Ass.

The chosen topic and the extremely professionally executed internal content, text, arrangement and accompanying information fully cover the scientific criteria for a habilitation work, and by certain indicators, exceed them. In my definitions, it stands as an extremely valuable scientific catalog, accompanied by corresponding carefully selected photographic material, with revelations on

the significant Bulgarian segment of the palette of the emancipated liberation movements in the Balkans in the 19th century.

The prominent high qualities of the habilitation research "The Bulgarian National Liberation Movement through the eyes of photography", supplemented by the attached impressive number (25) of publications, with full reason allow me to appeal to the honorable participants in the Scientific Jury to vote for the awarding of ch. assistant professor Chavdar Vetov the academic position of "associate professor" in professional field 2.2. with the corresponding field for the needs of the "Ancillary historical sciences and informatics" section.

Sofia,

D.Sc. R. Karaganev

4.III.2024