

БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ	
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## REPORT

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Antoaneta Zaprianova,  
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for the habilitation thesis of Chavdar Venelinov Vetov proposed for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education in 2.2. History and archaeology, scientific specialty „Documentation Studies, Archival Studies, Paleography (incl. Historiography and Source Studies)" (Visual Historical Sources) for the needs of the "Auxiliary historical sciences and informatics" section of the Institute of Historical Studies, announced in the State Gazette no. 97 of 21. 11. 2023

The only candidate who applied for the academic position of "associate professor" under the current competition is Chief Assistant Dr. Chavdar Vetov.

Ch. Vetov works in the "Auxiliary historical sciences and informatics" section. The work activity of the section is aimed at research and work on problems related to Historiography and source studies, paleography, diplomacy, genealogy, chronology, metrology, epigraphy, archeography, informatics, etc. Since 2012, he has been dealing with photographs as a historical source and their place and specifics of storage in Bulgarian archives. His PhD dissertation "Photographic documents (XIX - mid-XX centuries) as historical sources and their preservation in archive institutions" is also dedicated to this problem.

The submitted documents (scientometric data, summaries of articles and the monograph, list of citations, list of contributions) meet the requirements for appearing in a competition for the academic position of "associate professor".

After the defense of his doctoral dissertation in 2015, Ch. Vetov focused his attention on photographs as evidence of the revolutionary movement of Bulgarians during the Bulgarian National Revival. In the period 2015 - 2023, his publications appeared related to photographs of Vratsa revolutionary activists, the detachment (cheta) of Hristo Botev, the

role of photographs of revolutionaries in shaping the national consciousness of Bulgarians, etc.

As a result of all these efforts in the last seven years, in 2023 his monograph "The Bulgarian National Liberation Movement through the eyes of photography" was published. The monograph is a kind of new academic reading of the national liberation movement during the Bulgarian National Revival. The new reading does not revise, but only adds to the microclimate of the past historical events.

The research achieves the scientific goal of revealing through images some remarkable moments of the revolutionary struggle of the Bulgarians and how the post-liberation society and state preserve and popularize the memory of these events. The photographs are combined with in-depth and descriptive texts about the revolutionary movement and its participants, thereby creating a clearer image of our champions and revolutionary movement.

The first chapter of the book "Bulgarians and Photography" presents the path of photography from Europe to the Ottoman Empire, and its spread among Bulgarians. Brief biographical data are given for photographers of foreign and Bulgarian origin who worked in Belgrade, Bucharest and our lands. Their photographic legacy is also an object of attention. One of the photographers is Carol Szathmari - author of remarkable photos related to our revolutionary movement. The participation of Bulgarian photographers in the revolutionary struggle is also examined.

The second chapter is dedicated to the photographs representing the Bulgarians - revolutionaries in military or insurgent uniforms. It is clearly and interestingly told about the revolutionary actions of the Bulgarian people - the Haidouk troops (cheta), the First and Second Bulgarian Legions, the April Uprising and Hristo Botev's detachment, the Bulgarian participation in the Serbian-Turkish war of 1876, etc. The author presents a fascinating and lively narrative, the specifics of the photographs and data on the revolutionary events are analyzed. In this way, together with the published photographs, a new interesting image of the struggle for liberation is created.

In the third chapter in a row, photographs of revolutionary activists in civilian clothes - before and after the Liberation - are examined. They are in urban or traditional rural clothing, not armed chetniks, legionnaires and insurgents. Since a large part of our revolutionaries

live in emigration, the photographs were taken in Romanian or Serbian studios, but there are also those from Bulgarian lands. Group photos of committee members are also included. In this case, the committee organizations are detailed.

Some of the revolutionaries after the Liberation continue to actively participate in the construction of modern Bulgaria, others have very modest occupations - this period is also examined through text and photographs. The Bulgarians who dedicated themselves to the revolutionary cause also had a family life. Images featuring the fighters with their families, friends or personal civilian portraits were published. In this way, the personality of our freedom fighters and their place in the society of that time is presented in their complexity - they are revolutionaries, public figures, heads of families.

The fourth chapter examines photos of the volunteers of the Bulgarian "opalchenie" (detachment) - personal portraits from the period of operation of the Opalchenie, i.e. 1877 - 1878 and panoramic photographs of volunteer's training. The fate of these fighters for freedom in the post-liberation years is also revealed - their participation in celebrations and ceremonies related to the April Uprising, the Russo-Turkish war and other events of our revolutionary past.

The emergence and activity of "poborniko – opachenski" (fighters - volunteers) societies whose purpose is to protect the interests of former combatants and work to preserve the memory of their work is presented not only through photographs, but also with an interesting analysis based on the statutes of the pobornik` societies and other documents. The final fifth chapter reveals how photographs can create and maintain national memory about the revolutionary struggle; how the photographs reflect the public desire to preserve the memory of the national liberation movement. Photographs from the post-liberation era of historically significant buildings, memorial places and monuments related to our revolutionary struggle were examined. The creation and distribution of these photographs promoted the liberation movement to the public, i.e. photographs also play a role in building our national identity

In conclusion, I state that the entire work of Ch. Vetov is serious and contributing, therefore I recommend to the scientific jury to awards the academic position "Associate Professor" in professional field, direction 2.2. History and archeology, scientific specialty "Documentary studies, archival studies and paleography (incl. historiography and source

studies)" (Visual historical sources) for the needs of the section "Auxillary Historical Sciences and Informatics".

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Sofia

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