

## REPORT

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For the competition for academic position “Associate Professor” (half time employment) in professional field 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 in the competition for the academic position “Associate Professor” is a Ch. Assistant Chavdar Vetov. All the necessary documents and materials have been presented to the commission, in administrative terms they are in accordance with the requirements.

The Candidate Chavdar Vetov entered the competition with the monograph "The Bulgarian National Liberation Movement through the Eyes of Photography", S. 2023; 1 studia; 17 publications (three in co-authorship); two of the materials are in English; 25 citations are presented.

The amount of the scientific production presented by Ch. Vetov, included in the list of publications for participation in the competition, fully meets the requirements for holding the academic position "associate professor".

The scientific activity of Ch. Vetov is well known to me. His work on photographs as a source for Bulgarian history began with his doctoral dissertation on the topic: "Photographic documents (XIX - mid-XX centuries) as historical sources and their preservation in archival institutions".

In the period 2015 – 2023, Ch. Vetov continued with new studies, mainly on the issue of photographs, as a source of information about the Bulgarian national liberation movement in the Bulgarian National Revival era. As a result of his research, in 2023, the monograph "The Bulgarian National Liberation Movement through the Eyes of Photography" was published. With this work of his, Ch. assistant Ch. Vetov participated in the competition for "associate professor". The reviewed work has several main contributions - historical events and revolutionaries from the national liberation movement of the Bulgarians are presented in depth not only through text, but also with

many images - about 500. The information presented in this way gives an original insight into our liberation movement. This type of research has never been created before.

The structure of the monograph consists of a preface, five chapters, a conclusion, and a bibliography. The first chapter is devoted to the appearance of photography and its spread in Europe and the Ottoman Empire, respectively in the Bulgarian lands. The participation of some of our photographers in the revolutionary movement is examined.

The second chapter presents the Bulgarian revolutionary activists in military and chetnik uniforms, the participation of those photographed in the two legions, the detachments (cheti) of the 1960s, the Serbian-Turkish war of 1876 .

In order to achieve a more complete picture of our revolutionary movement, the author has dedicated another (third) chapter to the revolutionary activists, photographed in civilian clothes, through the text the lives of the fighters have been revealed, not only their participation in the revolutionary actions.

The fourth chapter tells about the Bulgarian opalchenci (volunteers) - the photos reflect moments of their stay and training in the camp in Ploiesti, as well as personal and group photos of the opalchenci in uniforms, in studios from the time of the war. Through the photographs, the place of the opalchenci in post-liberation Bulgaria and the attitude towards them by the state, institutions and society - their participation in celebrations, celebrations, etc. is presented.

The fifth chapter examines how photographs become guardians of the memory of the revolutionary movement, i.e. how images can preserve the memory of our past. After the Liberation, historical places and buildings, memorial places and commemorations, reconstructions, mortal remains of fallen revolutionaries were photographed. The activity of the commissions searching for where Botev was assassinated is presented through photographs.

The memory of many revolutionaries has been preserved thanks to their photographs taken after the Liberation. Through photographs, the author shows the worship of the then society towards our history - celebrations, ceremonies, commemoration of historical events in front of monuments, etc. Thus, the photographs not only participate, but also reflect the process of building the national identity of the Bulgarians.

Despite the serious scientific apparatus, the book is written in a readable and fascinating way. The review of the used literature shows that the author used quite rare editions, diverse in type - articles, memoirs, monographs, journalism, published documents. It was worked with archival sources from the Institute of Historical Studies - BAS; Bulgarian Historical Archive - "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" National Library and many regional archives. More than 500 images have been

published, which, combined with the analytical text, makes the monograph a contribution to the study of Bulgarian history.

The entire work of Ch. Vetov is aimed at researching the photographic heritage in the Bulgarian archives, providing information about our revolutionary movement. The author worked for over seven years on this issue, he used portrait and group photographs representing the revolutionaries in military clothing, members of committees, as ordinary citizens, participants in the Revolutionary movement. The image of our revolutionaries is complemented by photos with their families and loved ones, thus the fighters are presented in many ways as complete individuals. The images go together with information about the life and work of those photographed, with interesting moments of their revolutionary activity. This type of research and presentation of our revolutionary past is innovative in our historiography, which is why I consider Ch. Vetov's work to be a contribution.

In conclusion: Ch. Vetov's scientific research meets the necessary requirements for the selection of the academic position of "associate professor". He works on topics relevant to society, uses diverse and numerous documents, his research is serious. As a member of the Scientific Jury, I will definitely vote for the election of Ch. assistant professor Dr. Ch. Vetov in the academic position of "associate professor".

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