SOFIA UNIVERSITY "ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI"

REVIEW

**of the submitted works for participation in a competition for the academic position of ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, announced by Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski” in the field 2.2 History and Archeology (New Bulgarian History (1878-1944) – Electoral regulations and elections in Bulgaria (the first half of the 20th century), on the scientific specialty New Bulgarian History (1878-1944), for the needs of Faculty of History published in the "State Gazette", issue 48 of June 28, 2022.**

Reviewer: Professor, Doctor of Historical Sciences Milko St. Palangurski

Candidate: Chief assistant Dr. **SVETOSLAV MIKHAILOV ZHIVKOV**

In accordance with the requirements of the Higher Education Institution, the candidate has the necessary scientometric indicators;

1. Brief biography of the candidate

The candidate, chief assistant Dr. Svetoslav Zhivkov holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science and has completed his master's degree in 2003 at the University of Sofia "St. Kliment Ohridski". In 2010, he defended a dissertation on the following topic: "The Progressive Liberal Party in Bulgaria 1899-1915". Since 2010, he has been a lecturer of History of Bulgaria at University of Sofia "St. Kliment Ohridski". In accordance with the requirements of the Higher Education Institution, the candidate has the necessary scientometric indicators:

**The habilitation thesis is the monograph** - Proportional representation. Elections and electoral legislation in Bulgaria on the eve of the First World War. Sofia: "St. Kliment Ohridski", 2022 ISBN: 978-954-07-5495-6

The monograph is an attempt to study all aspects of the proportional system, which was imposed in the country in 1911. The transition from majoritarian to proportional system is studied in all its aspects - legislative, first attempts by looking for analogies, practice and experience of low political levels. The object of the study is the period 1908-1914, but it practically covers the entire period of the democratic tradition from the end of the XIX to the beginning of the XX century. The author convincingly defends the proposed chronological framework as part of the European and global history of electoral systems. The other task at hand is to show how the Bulgarian political elite applies world experience, which is very often still in its embryonic and theoretical level.

The resolution of the set tasks is adequate and corresponds to modern research approaches. The author's historiographical awareness is superb. The analysis of scientific literature, archival funds, parliamentary diaries, newspapers and all kinds of sources is deeply professional. It is argued that the politicians are making the changes as part of the aspiration "towards accelerated modernization and westernization of the Bulgarian society", and that the Bulgarian experience and practice is part of the international and world processes. The monograph presents information about the various ideas that have arisen and been implemented worldwide. This shows that the proportional idea is rapidly gaining speed, and logically reaches the Bulgarian public space. How this idea has infiltrated the society, be it politically, scientifically or publicly is very well described, with a clear division of the sources, the influence of the authors and the distributors. The infiltration starts from different public circles and political organizations with gradual inclusion in the process of all players of the political system.

The analysis of the reform time and the transformation of electoral systems is discussed in the third, fourth and fifth chapters. The detailed narrative shows the lean system of change, which is a contributing point in the study. The author's achievements are also thanks to the combined approach between the methods of history, statistics and political science. This approach is also applied to the analysis of the election results through quantitative methods - index of disproportionality; the coefficients "Effective number of parties in elections" and "Effective number of parties in parliament", calculation of standard deviation and coefficient of variation in terms of turnout and party vote. The pre-election campaigns, the participation of the parties and the results on a national and regional level, the influence of the administration in the electoral process, the presence of violence and other violations are also monitored. An undoubted contribution can be found in the pages regarding the electoral process in the annexed to the country lands during the wars. The monograph which has practically encyclopedic character shows how the introduction of the proportional system affects the political system.

The candidate has a published book based on the defended dissertation work, in which the creation, development, apogee and sunset of the Progressive Liberal Party are studied. The activities of the party organization, its program views, and organizational structure are described in detail. An essential scientific contribution is the analysis of all aspects of the real political activity of the progressive liberals.

The author has enough articles and studies. They are dedicated to the main topics of the author's research. Some of them are also used in the author's monographs, but another part has an independent scientific life. All of them bear the marks of purposeful research work. It should be emphasized that the range of research is diverse.

The presented citations for review cover the entire vector of legally permissible possibilities – 10. All citations and reviews are in serious scientific journals, collections and monographs.

**CONCLUSION**

The peer-reviewed works show that Chief Assistant. Dr. Svetoslav Mihailov Zhivkov is a scientist with his own approach. He owns and moves in precisely defined areas of research that are consistent with his professional specialization and good methodological training. As an author, he is very correct to the source material and the achievements of historiography. The conclusions, analyzes and source material used are the personal creation and contribution of the author, and there are no doubts of plagiarism. His new interpretations and those on the topics he studies deserve their place in the scientific space.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the presented research and the research work carried out give me reason to state that after the defense of his dissertation, the participant in the competition continued his research activities, concentrating on a new field of study. The presented scientific works fully meet the requirements of the Higher Education Institution, as the points in the attached scientometric table are completely factual and meet the legal requirements for individual groups

All this gives me full confidence to vote positively for the appointment of the academic position of "Associate Professor" of **Assistant Professor. Dr. Svetoslav Mihailov Zhivkov** on the announced competition of the Faculty of History of University of Sofia "St. Kliment Ohridski".

Professor, Doctor of Historical Sciences Milko St. Palangurski