

REPORT

by Prof. Mancho Vekov, Dsc

from Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Science, member of the Scientific Jury, selected by order № ПД -38-429/16.07.2024 by the Rector of Sofia university “St. Kliment Ohridski”

For the competition for academic position “Associate Professor” in professional field 2.2. History and Archeology, (Archives and Documentary Studies) announced in the State Gazette no. 55 / 28. 06. 2024.

The only candidate who appeared for the academic position of "associate professor" was Ch. Assistant Professor Ralitsa Todorova, PhD. All the necessary documents and materials have been presented, in terms of administration everything and according to the requirements.

Ralitsa Todorova participated in the competition with the monograph "Preserving the Archive of the State Security as a Source for Microhistory and the 'Bog of Communism' ", ISBN: 978-619-7582-37-6, Sofia, 2024 and 14 publications, issued in the period 2010-2024. The amount of scientific production presented by Ralitsa Todorova, included in the list of publications for participation in the contest completely meets the requirement for holding the academic position "associate professor".

The monograph contains an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and a bibliography. In the introduction, it is stated that the interest for the Bulgarian archives is determined by their importance for the study of Bulgarian history - i.e. they are a basic building block in historical research. After the transition of 1989, due to the complete change of the state structure and the social order, a new attitude towards archives appeared, conditioned by, as the author points out, "attempts to rethink and even rewrite history from the point of view of new liberal democratic values as opposed to the hitherto totalitarian paradigm. The new political realities dictate the need for a wider public debate..," But this public debate cannot take place without knowing the recent past.

R. Todorova focuses on the fate of the documents related to the former State Security, making a brief overview of some of the developments on this topic to date. She notes as a turning point in the development of the archival file after 1989 issued in 2006 Law on access to and disclosure of the documents and announcement of affiliation of Bulgarian citizens to the State Security and Intelligence services of the Bulgarian People’s Army (LADDAABCSSISBPA), as a result of which the Kommittee for disclosure the documents and announcement of affiliation of Bulgarian citizens to the State Security and Intelligence services of the Bulgarian National Army was created.

As a result, the systematic study of the archives from the NRB era began. In this regard, the author draws attention to the physical condition of the documents from the time of the totalitarian period, the material base of the archives, institutional arrangements, logistics, even financial provision. In this way, it gives a clear picture of the attitude of the authorities to the documents. An important feature of the study is that "it does not aim to assess the then regime, nor to seek in some form moral responsibility and justice".

In the first chapter - **The storage of the archive of State Security. In search of a suitable archive repository**, the history of the DS archives was examined both before and after the changes. The specifics of the storage of these documents are presented, as well as the most important legal acts on this matter; the construction of buildings for archival repositories and the conditions for their physical preservation there - air temperature, lighting, hygiene and other specifics of the building and material fund. Attention is also paid to the evolution in the organization and access to the archive of the State Security Service after November 10, 1989, as well as the destruction of the funds after the changes, the author also dwells on the subsequent creation in 2006 of the LADDAABCSSISBNA, as a result of which a Centralized Archive of the documents of the communist State Security was created.

The second chapter - **The State Against an Unwitting Dissident** - R. Todorova tries through the small cases - i.e. tracing the history of a specific person (the micro-history) to represent global trends. In this case, the biography of Georgi Hristov Georgiev is presented - from his childhood and family, through the school environment and his entry into the university - there, because of his connections with foreigners and an alleged desire to leave the country illegally, he came into the view of the DS, a case was filed against him DOP (operational verification case). Through the documents from his case from the archive of the State Security Service, the goals outlined by G. Georgiev of the services for monitoring and preventing departure from the country were examined. The intelligence reports of various agents about Georgiev himself are presented in detail, but also about the draft of the book he is writing "In the Swamp of Communism" and how the services are interested in this text. From the archival sources presented, we understand what type of information was collected about Georgiev and probably about the others observed. Through the documents, the history of the accusation, the trial and the sentence against Georgiev is traced. The documents reflecting the monitoring of Georgiev after his release from prison were also examined. Mainly are used documents from the Archive of the Committee for disclosure the documents and announcement of affiliation of Bulgarian citizens to the State Security and Intelligence services of the Bulgarian People`s Army (ACDDAABCSSISBPA).

In the third chapter - **Stasi against the object "Pisar". A look through the distorted mirror of socialist reality** examines the function and organizational structure of the

East German secret service - the Stasi. the departments and sub-divisions are examined. the number of Stasi collaborators was analyzed. As an example of the action of the secret police, the Radulović case is presented, and this study builds on documents from a publication that aims to present and popularize the archival legacy of the totalitarian period.

In these two chapters, through the documents of the fate of two people (that is, by the method of microhistory), the operation of secret services in totalitarian regimes is presented. This proves that the archives of the secret police in the PRB and the GDR are an important and primary source of information about the secret services before 1989.

In the conclusion, R. Todorova concludes that for understanding the importance of the secret services in totalitarian societies, archives are of great importance. Therefore, in the present their preservation and popularization is facilitated by the creation of the Kommittee for disclosure the documents and announcement of affiliation of Bulgarian citizens to the State Security and Intelligence services of the Bulgarian National Army (KDDAABCSSISBPA)., scientific developments on the subject, legal changes giving the right of access, etc. The author concludes that the information available in the archives is of very high value for researching the history of the PRB. This valuable archival resource must be preserved and made publicly available.

The last part of the monograph (Bibliography) presents the documents used by the author from AKDDAABCSSISBPA (Archive of the Kommittee for Disclosure of Documents and announcement the Affiliation of Bulgarian Citizens to the State Security and Intelligence Services of the Bulgarian People's Army) and Central State Archive.

The author mainly worked with the following laws and regulations: Law on the National Archives Fund; Law on access to and disclosure of the documents and announcement of affiliation of Bulgarian citizens to the State Security and Intelligence services of the Bulgarian People's Army (LADDAABCSSISBPA) and others. a serious amount of scientific research related to problems of archives, political, social and cultural development of Bulgaria in the period 1944 - 1989 was also used.

The monograph is a consequence of the long-term work of Ralitsa Todorova on problems related to the archives from the time of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. This is also the theme prevailing in her developments over the years, which naturally leads to the publication of the monograph. In its scientific output, the following directions are observed, presented in articles and studies: **1.** the archives as a source of information about the dissidents - The State Against an Unwitting Dissident (1970s-1980s); In the Bog of Communism – The Dark Past of the Bright Future ; The Influence of "Western Music" on Bulgarian Youth in the 1970s and 1980s in the Archives of the State Security ; The Documentation Branch in the Work of Bulgarian Foreign Intelligence (1962 - 1989) ; **2.** another topic is the specificity of the archival

documents for the polar expeditions during the years of the PRB; **3.** – the next direction - documents for the preservation of our cultural and historical heritage and the institutions related to it (NBKM and archival department at SU). Articles on this matter are: On the Shumen Branch of the National Library in Sofia and Turkish Antiquities in Bulgaria (1947-1950) ; Documents on the History of Troyan Preserved in the Bulgarian Historical Archive at the SS. Cyril and Methodius National Library ; The Contributions of Prof. Todor Borov to the Development of Archival Studies at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski and others.


From a reference to the original scientific contributions, it is understood that the author in her monograph introduces into scientific circulation a number of hitherto unknown documents from the official archive of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, stored in the Archive of the the Kommittee for Disclosure of Documents and announcement the Affiliation of Bulgarian Citizens to the State Security and Intelligence Services of the Bulgarian People's Army. Another contribution made is that through documents the activities of an unknown Bulgarian youth in his encounter with the secret services and a similar case in the GDR are illuminated in detail.

For many years, R. Todorova worked on the problem of physical and remote access to historical archives, and also considered the very practical aspects of access to archives.

Ralitsa Todorova is a leader and member of scientific projects related to archival problems and studies; she is also engaged as a consultant to the team for the preparation and implementation of a Strategy for the digitization of the Institutional Archive of the SU; work as an archivist in the Scientific archive of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences; Bulgarian Historical Archive, National Library "St. St. Cyril and Methodius"; Department of Archival Studies and Auxiliary Historical Disciplines, Faculty of History, University of St. Kliment Ohridski" certainly helped Ralitsa Todorova acquire competences not only in the theoretical issues of archival studies, but also practical knowledge in this field.

In conclusion: R. Todorova's scientific work is informative and thorough. Society needs this type of research – ie. the developments are topical. The scientific output of R. Todorova meets the necessary requirements for the selection of the academic position "associate professor". For this reason, as a member of the Scientific Jury, I will categorically vote for the election of R. Todorova, assistant professor, in the academic position of "associate professor".

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