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**Chavdar Vetov****PHOTOGRAPHIC SOURCES – HEURISTICS AND ARCHIVING**

(Summary)

The article addresses the issue of photographic materials as sources of information about the past and draws attention to their storage in the Bulgarian archives. During the Renaissance written records were considered key evidence for the Bulgarian past. In this era national emancipation processes developing in Bulgarian society found expression not only in texts, but also in images. Fine art also became a means of preserving historical memory, and later this trait was transferred to photography too. Photography correctly and accurately reflects reality; photos can be reproduced, printed and distributed. Therefore, photographs became valuable bearers of information about the most prominent Bulgarian revolutionaries, participants in Church – national struggle, writers and enlighteners. After the liberation the range of documents that were considered valuable evidence of the past expanded. Interest in photography appeared. Photos can be found not only in personal funds, but also in institutional archives. Photographing valuable archaeological sites to preserve them for the next generations became common practice. The article looks at some of the specifics of preservation of photographic materials in institutions such as the Scientific Archives of BAS, Bulgarian historical archive at the National Library „St. Cyril and Methodius”, and Central State Archives. Searching, collecting and keeping photographic materials in the biggest Bulgarian repositories is a testament to the fact that society perceives them as a valuable means of preserving historical memory. They, along with the works of historical painting, present our past in

images. But unlike the artistic images, photographs due to their accuracy have significantly greater documentary value.