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Photography and Its Role in the Bulgarian Society (Winning Recognition and Spreading – Late 19th Century – 1930s)

(Abstract)

The article examines the place of photography in the modernizing Bulgarian society. The issues related to the development of the photographic craft after the Liberation are outlined, with emphasis on the emergence and evolution of legal regulations for the practice of the photographic profession. Attention is paid to the creation of professional organizations of photographers, and their statutes are also considered. A logic consequence of the long-standing efforts of many prominent photographers was the 1928 Royal Decree, with which photography was recognized as a craft - photographers thus received the protection that was guaranteed by the state to other crafts as well as the corresponding obligations to it. The next step of professional photographers was connected with the effort to reduce the possibility for people without the necessary qualifications to receive masterful testimonials. The picture assumed the role of a correct reflector of the preserved monuments of cultural and historical heritage scattered around the Bulgarian lands – photography becomes an assistant of archeology. An overview and list of the development and distribution of photographic workshops on the Bulgarian lands from the Liberation to the end of the 1930s are presented. In conclusion, it is argued that from the Liberation until the 1930s photography succeeded in establishing itself as a common means of reflecting the reality – a fact which is explained by the rapid modernization of the Bulgarian state.