EVALUATION STATEMENT

Regarding Svetozar Simeonov Anguelov's application for the academic position of Assistant Professor in Professional Field 2.2: History and Archaeology, Research Area:, (History and Culture on the Balkans XV – XVIIc .), advertised in DV № 5 from 17.01. 2025 г. by Prof. Vasya Nikolova Velinova, DSc (CSVP "Ivan Duychev, Sofia University)

The competition with a single candidate Dr. Svetozar Anguelov has been announced for the needs of CSVP "Ivan Duychev" at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ". Compliance with the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff of Republic of Bulgaria and the Rules of the Sofia University has been proven. The applicant has submitted the required set of documents, publications and administrative records necessary for him to be eligible to participate in the competition.

Senior Assistant Professor Svetozar Angelov participated in the competition with one monograph (198 pages), one book chapter, two studies in refereed scientific publications in international databases and 18 articles in specialized scientific publications in our country and abroad. The candidate's habilitation work KYUSTENDIL AS A SPIRITUAL CHRISTIAN CENTER THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES. THE METROPOLITAN TEMPLE "ASSUMPTION OF THE MOTHER OF THE MOTHER", Sofia, 2025, ISBN 978-619-93223-1-4 fully corresponds to his overall research activity to date, namely - studying the cultural history of the Western Bulgarian lands during the late Middle Ages, the post-Byzantine period and the early Renaissance with an emphasis on church architecture and painting and the epigraphic material preserved in them. In addition to the monograph, the candidate has presented a chapter of the book dedicated to the church in the village of Goranovtsi (*Ангелов, С., Я. Митов. Църквата „Св. Архангел Михаил" край село Горановци, Кюстендилско*. София, 2023. ISBN:978-954-07-5791-9), с. 43-106: *Стенописите на църквата „Св. Архангел Михаил" край с. Горановци, Кюстендилско.*

It is also a reflection of the scientific research of the senior assistant professor St. Angelov in the field of the history of church architecture and painting. But these studies are not an end in themselves, they are always placed in a broad historical, philological

and liturgical context, in order to extract from them the maximum amount of information about their place and their influence in the spiritual life of the region. The same applies to the publications presented in the competition – studies and articles, which can be systematized in three directions – research of epigraphic material from medieval frescoes, work with archival documents and photo archives, analytical description and complex study of churches from the post-Byzantine period, individual iconographic scenes or icon collections.

The attached citations attest to the interest in the candidate's scientific production and its qualities. The attached references for academic workload, participation in scientific and project activities, citations in indexed publications, etc. fully meet the requirements of the Law.

The monographic work of Senior Assistant Professor Svetozar Angelov is dedicated to the history of the town of Kyustendil as a cultural and spiritual center over a long chronological period and to one specific monument in this thousand-year history – the church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in the town. At first glance, the expectation is for a classical positivist reading of the sources about the past of Kyustendil, but behind the precise presentation of the facts and the review of the sources (both of which were subjected to purposeful selection) the main idea and, accordingly, the scientific task of the author very quickly becomes apparent: to outline the profile of the spiritual center, to work to create a model for similar studies that reveal the continuity between the individual historical eras. As a result, a true historical palimpsest unfolds before the reader, the creation of which begins in the 4th century BC and continues, so to speak, until the Liberation of Bulgaria from Ottoman rule. In this fact-rich scientific narrative, the author purposefully introduces us to the main aspects of the spiritual life of the city, its monumental architecture and changing cultural layers. As a result, he specifies the dating of the church's foundation, construction, consecration, and provides new information about church figures in one of the most tense decades of the Bulgarian people's struggle for national affirmation - the years of asserting church independence.

Special attention is paid to the description of the icon collection, where detailed information about some of the icons is published for the first time - the icon of St.

Catherine made on arched boards, the Greek icons from 1818. Some of them are published here for the first time (after preliminary announcements made by St. Angelov at various scientific forums). Descriptions of the icons are very detailed, a number of parallels are cited, where possible, the literary sources (lives, stories of miracles, hymnographic texts) that inspired a certain image are often analyzed (e.g. the icon of the Archangel Cathedral of 1814 or the icon of John the Baptist as the Angel of the Desert, etc.). At some points, the author gets carried away in a verbose retelling of well-known evangelical events, but this information makes the book accessible to a wider inquisitive readership outside the narrowly specialized circle of medieval studies. The frescoes in the church are also described in detail and competently, with excellent bibliographical awareness, its features are indicated, and parallels with other monuments are indicated. From the exposition it becomes clear that this temple was painted by qualified and well-trained master icon painters such as Hristo Dimitrov, Ivan Dospevski, etc., who also created some more complex compositions in terms of their theological content.

However, I cannot fail to note the contribution of the identification of some of the newly discovered frescoes in the conch of the apse – the so-called Fons Pietatis, which the author admits may have penetrated through printed publications. This topic is not foreign to his scientific interests and I believe that it also has great potential for the researcher and it should also be deepened, enriched and further developed in his further scientific research.

The next part of the monograph is devoted to the collection of old printed books in the church and their significance as a possible source for the history of the temple. We can only welcome the candidate's desire to expand the scope of his analysis and turn to these often neglected, but very important sources. This part presents 11 of the oldest books containing information about the history of the metropolitan temple - 1 book is from the 17th century, 7 are from the 18th century and three are from the 19th century, among which there is a copy of the Weekly of Sophrony of Vrachanski (1806). There is no information about two of the books containing annotations and they can safely be omitted from this short illustrative list. As for the others, the principles of publishing the annotations should be specified: how the spelling features are transmitted, the type of letter, how the different chronological layers in them are

distinguished. Considering the precise approach to the inscriptions from icons and frescoes on the previous pages, I believe that the omissions in the old printed editions are the result of a mechanical transfer of older versions of this inventory, which will probably be avoided in the printed version.

The articles are of value not only with their specific results, but also with the complex methodology applied in them, revealing the dynamic relationship between word and image in the medieval temple.

In a number of studies, Senior Assistant Professor Svetozar Angelov presents unpublished archival materials, mainly related to the photo archive of Asen Vasiliev, in whose processing, preliminary systematization and digitalization he actively participated. A large part of the articles trace individual iconographic compositions and their liturgical context. These articles impress with their rich bibliographical awareness, with the complex cultural-historical, theological and liturgical analysis applied in them. The results of the author's observations are of value and open a field for new scientific research.

Senior Asst. Svetozar Angelov has also participated in a number of scientific research projects of the Ivan Duychev Center for Visual Arts. There are a series of publications related to the work on the project topics. They most often introduce little-known visual material into scientific circulation, especially in the articles dedicated to the photo archive of A. Vasiliev.

Finally, but not least in importance, I would like to highlight the excellent preparation and very good work of the candidate in teaching and learning activities. He leads several freely elective courses, mandatory seminars and courses in master's programs, which are very well received by students. Since the competition is for the academic position of "associate professor", I would like to note the excellent pedagogical skills of the candidate, the high scientific level of the lectures he leads, as well as the choice of topical and useful for students topics in freely elective disciplines - all this is an important condition for the future scientific and teaching career development of Senior Asst. Svetozar Angelov.

Considering what has been said so far about the candidate's scientific achievements and contributions, his publications, citations and reviews of his scientific work, I propose to the other members of the Scientific Jury to vote positively for the election of Senior Assistant Professor Svetozar Angelov for the academic position of "Associate Professor", for which I myself will personally vote "in favor" with full conviction.

28.04.2025 Prof. Vasya Velinova