

STATEMENT

by

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on the materials submitted for participation in the competition for occupying the academic position “Professor”

in professional direction 3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Science
for the needs of the Department of Ethnology, Faculty of History
Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

In relation to the competition for occupying the academic position “Professor” in professional direction 3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Science (Ethnography – Political Ethnology) – State Gazette, 65/16 August 2019, and in compliance with the decision made by the Scientific Jury (Record 1/24 October 2019), I have been asked to give the following opinion:

1. *General presentation of the procedure and the candidate*

Subject:

Within the statutory term, the only candidate to occupy the academic position, Associate Prof Veselin Ivanov Tepavicharov, Doctor of Cultural Science, has submitted a set of documents, which includes all required components and has been prepared in compliance with the provisions of Article 115, paragraph 1 and 2, including the national minimum requirements and the additional requirements of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski.

In the competition, Associate Prof Veselin Tepavicharov, Doctor of Cultural Science, has presented a total of 19 scientific publications, of which 1 monograph, published after the award of the academic degree Doctor of Science (2016), and 9 studies and 9 scientific articles, all published after his habilitation (2000). The scientific articles presented are distributed as follows: 3 were published in referenced and indexed periodicals (Web of Science), another 6 – in unreferenced journals with scientific peer review or in edited collective volumes. The nine studies were also published in various unreferenced printed issues. Two of the publications were co-authored, but no records ascertaining the share of scientific contribution between the authors were enclosed. Three of the publications are in English, and one was made abroad (Macedonia).

Documentary evidence has also been provided for the participation of the candidate in a total of 42 scientific events in the period 1994-2019, but it does not make clear what part of them has already been “used” in the recently conducted procedure for the award of the academic degree “Doctor of Science”, and there is no information about which of them were published and where. In the period 2009-2016, the candidate participated as a team member or leader in 11 scientific and scientific and applied projects, one of them – funded by EC.

He was a supervisor for 4 doctoral and 5 graduation theses in the period 2010-2018.

I have known V. Tepavicharov for almost two decades and have had the opportunity to track his growth as an academic scholar, as a tutor, and last, but not least – as a university administrator. His participation in the announced competition for occupying the academic position “Professor” is a logical stage of his personal development and most natural final of a long-standing career.

2. General characteristics of the candidate's work

The candidate's scientific production presented for review can be examined in two basic thematic groups. Firstly, this is the habilitation work (“Nostalgia for socialism in Bulgaria”, S., University Publishing House St. Kliment Ohridski, 2019) and the related articles and studies (No 2, 3, 4, 5, 2a, 3a, and 7 in the submitted list). A common trait of this group of works is their accurate relevance, occasionally placing them on the borderline between scientific analysis and opinion journalism. A series of articles on the topic and the habilitation work in particular provide convincing evidence that anthropology is not (and should not be) engaged with only studying “traditions”, the past, and the (tangible and intangible) cultural heritage. Political anthropology, in the way practiced by V. Tepavicharov, is “a science of the living person”, which is trying to capture, preserve and interpret the meaning of the event instantaneously, following the hot trails of the happening. Naturally, such a method is somewhat risky because it places the researcher in the exceptionally difficult situation to distance himself from his own political bias, to approach objectively the object under analysis. Distancing, which sometimes is impossible, and may be not always necessary (the author clearly states his public stance repeatedly). Irrespective of these reservations, I would say that the work done by V. Tepavicharov would remain in Bulgarian science as living proof of the events in the country in the last decades of XX and the beginning of XXI century – with the diversity of the collected and processed onsite material, with the variety of applied theoretical approaches and research paradigms.

The second group of studies by the candidate are thematically more varied and reflect the diversity of his scientific interests during the last two decades. Special attention must be paid here to his recently published studies in the field of educational policies (No 2, 3, 6 in the enclosed list), which evidently bespeak a new direction in his work, related to the application of ethno-pedagogical approaches at school – an approach that is relevant and unquestionably imperatively needed in modern social situation. The rest of the materials submitted for review additionally enhance the image of V. Tepavicharov as an established scholar with a recognisable researcher profile and “reserved perimeter” of scientific pursuits.

3. Assessment of the candidate’s personal contribution

The majority of the materials submitted for evaluation in this procedure constitute original author contribution of the candidate and express not only his scientific maturity, but also – which sometimes is even more important – his public stance.

This is also verified by the scientific response to his studies – the 15 citations noticed and specified in the attachments are mostly in Bulgarian scientific publications (with only one exception), but they testify the place occupied by V. Tepavicharov in Bulgarian scientific community.

4. Critical remarks and recommendations

Considering the serious scientific contributions of the candidate for occupying the academic position “Professor”, I would recommend directing his effort towards achieving even wider popularity for his studies by publishing them in periodicals that are “visible” for the international scientific community (and for the relevant data bases). In this manner, they would gain a merited scientific acknowledgement.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials submitted by Associate Prof Veselin Ivanov Tepavicharov, Doctor of Cultural Science, **meet all** requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA), the Rules on the application of DASRBA and the relevant Rules of Sofia University.

The candidate in the competition has submitted a considerable number of scientific works, published after his habilitation, as well as the required habilitation thesis. I will point out his “scientific respectability” – his contributions exceed significantly the provision of the law; the dissertation thesis, defended 3 years ago, for the award of the academic degree “Doctor of Science”

is sufficient proof of that in itself. The scientific and teaching qualification of Associate Prof Tepavicharov, Doctor of Cultural Science, **is undoubted.**

After having become acquainted with the materials and scientific works provided in the competition procedure, the analysis of their significance and the scientific contributions contained therein, I find it reasonable to give resolutely my **positive** evaluation and **to** recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report and proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of History – Sofia University for the election of Associate Prof Veselin Tepavicharov, Doctor of Cultural Science, in the academic position “Professor” in professional direction 3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Science, scientific specialty Ethnography – Political Ethnology.

10 November 2019

Made by:

Prof Maria Schnitter, Doctor of Cultural Science

(Academic position, first name, family name, scientific degree)