**SCIENTIFIC OPINION**

regarding the competition for associate professor in a professional field

2.1. Philology (Classical Languages), published in the State Gazette, issue 21 of 15.03.2022

In the announced competition for associate professor for the needs of the Department of Classical Philology, only one candidate appeared - Dr. Tsvetan Stefanov Vassilev, currently chief assistant in the same department. He was admitted to the competition on the basis of the fact established by a special commission that he meets all the requirements for participation in the procedure provided by the Law for Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the relevant regulations for its application in Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ”.

Dr. Vassilev is a graduate of the Department of Classical Philology at Sofia University. Since his student years he has shown an attitude towards medieval Latin, Byzantine and post-Byzantine epigraphy. In this capacity and with a large part of the published results of his research work, he creates great expectations among the professional guild for good performance in the chosen field, which - it is no secret - has a wide field for practical application in our country, but this field is not well saturated with scientists and specialists of the middle and younger generation.

This is proved in particular by the case of the candidate in the current associate professor's competition, who in addition to teaching at Sofia University has recently worked (since 2021) and as an associate at the Cyril and Methodius Research Center at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS). In this regard, the participation of Dr. Vassilev in the project of the Institute for the Study of Arts at the BAS on "Roads of Balkan painters and post-Byzantine artistic heritage in Bulgaria", realized in the period 2014-2017.

At this competition Dr. Vassilev appears with five selected articles - in print and electronic editions, in Bulgarian and English, author and co-author (with a clear distinction of the contribution of Dr. Vassilev), which fully meet the theme of the competition and should be taken into account in the reviews and opinions of the scientific jury. The same should be said for both books mentioned by the candidate: the second volume of the two-volume edition with a commentary on the work of Peter Bogdan, "On the antiquity of the fatherland and on Bulgarian affairs. S. 2020” and the monograph “The Greek language in the churches with mixed inscriptions from the XVII century in Bulgaria. Sofia, 2017” (№№ 1 and 2 in the List of publications submitted for the competition for associate professor by Tsvetan Vassilev, attached to the competition documentation). The first of them, dedicated to the work of Peter Bogdan, can be considered a habilitation work of the candidate and fully corresponds in nature to this type of publication.

Therefore, and because of the narrow scope of this opinion, I will briefly dwell only on what I have defined as the habilitation work of Dr. Tsvetan Vassilev. First and foremost, this work (Petrus Deodatus / Petar Bogdan - De Antiquitate paterni soli et de rebus Bulgaricis / On the antiquity of the fatherland and for Bulgarian affairs. Tomus secundus / Volume two. The treatise "On the antiquity of the fatherland and for Bulgarian affairs": Palaeography, textology, language. Sofia, 2020, 160 pages) is an integral part of the first volume of this two-volume edition and reveals in full its qualities only if judged through the prism of what our colleague Vassilev did with the edition of the monument itself, i.e. with the first volume of the two-volume publication.

From these positions I express my firm conviction that the text-critical and annotated edition of a complete voluminous monument from a bygone era, equipped with a Bulgarian translation and detailed versatile commentary, is a par excellence activity for a classic scientist who has reached the necessary maturity in his growth. This, by default, is an important element of the profile of an associate professor at the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski”.

Returning specifically to the contribution moments in the considered habilitation work of Dr. Vassilev, I must emphasize that they can be generally divided into two - contributions to linguistics and contributions to historical sources. Without belittling the first, for which I agree with the self-assessment that Dr. Vassilev makes on his research, I would like to draw special attention to the fact that the scrupulous analysis of the sources used by Peter Bogdan in compiling his work is a good basis for deeper research of possible new sources for Bulgarian history during the era in which our notable writer lives and works. Or to rethink the data in the old ones that we have known and used for a long time. Dr. Vassilev has made a request that he will again be among the first in this research field and we can hope that his future contributions to Bulgarian science will not be late.

I will not miss the philological maturity that our colleague Vassilev shows in his specific philological studies, either with the text of Peter Bogdan or with the post-Byzantine church inscriptions in Greek. Not for a moment have I forgotten that, participating in this competition, he aspired to become an associate professor among the leading specialists and teachers of Classical Philology in our oldest university. In this sense, the example that the candidate gives to his students and his experience as a linguist researcher of texts will undoubtedly attract new young followers in this field. Something that would be of great benefit indirectly for the Bulgarian historical science, which suffers a lot from the linguistic insufficiency of its leading cadres.

Before concluding my presentation, I just want to note in passing that all other formal requirements for the competition for associate professor - teaching horarium, NACID criteria, open citations, etc. - have been implemented by our colleague Vassilev and this is evident from the relevant attached documents. Therefore, I have no choice but to express my firm conviction that Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Tsvetan Stefanov Vassilev must take the associate professor position for which the current competition has been announced. I will be happy for the Scientific Jury, in which I participate, to come up with the same proposal before the Academic Council of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski”, who will make the final decision on the associate professor's competition for the needs of the Faculty of Classical and New Philologies.

Sofia, June 16, 2022 Prof. Ilia G. Iliev

Institute for Historical Studies - BAS