

CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT

by Assoc. Prof. Nevena Asparuhova Panova, Ph.D., Department of Classical Studies,
Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia,
member of the academic jury in the competition for the position of Associate Professor in the
professional field 2.1. Philology (Classical Languages),
announced in State Gazette, issue 21/15.03.2022

The only candidate in the competition announced for the needs of the Department of Classical Studies for Associate professor of classical languages is Chief Assistant Tsvetan Stefanov Vassilev, PhD, who participates in the competition with two monographs and five smaller publications (articles), four of which – in periodicals, two of them – in series referenced in Scopus and / or Web of Science, and the other two in English; one has been published in a collection (it is co-authored). In view of the presented publications, as well as on basis of the other groups of criteria, Dr Tsvetan Vassilev fulfills the requirements of the relevant Bulgarian legislation in the academic sphere, as shown by the complete competition documentation.

The habilitation monograph „Petrus Deodatus – De Antiquitate paterni soli et de rebus Bulgaricis. Tomus secundus / Петър Богдан – За древността на бащината земя и за българските дела. Том втори. Трактатът „За древността на бащината земя и за българските дела“: палеография, текстология, език“ / “Petrus Deodatus – De Antiquitate paterni soli et de rebus Bulgaricis. Tomus secundus: Palaeography, Textology, Language”. Sofia: “St. Kliment Ohridski” UP, 2020, 159 p., as the title suggests, is the second volume (“an integral part” in the words of the author) to the critical edition with translation and commentary on the historical treatise written in Latin by the Catholic Archbishop Petar Bogdan Baksič (first volume, 619 p.). The two-volume edition has an undoubted contributory character with the presentation for the first time in original, translation and commentary of the work of Petar Bogdan on the *codex unicus* discovered in 2017 in Modena, which in the second volume is convincingly proved to be a transcript, and the original remains unknown. In addition to this palaeographic analysis, the study also contains a textual section, where are identified the sources used by Petar Bogdan by over 70 authors, described chronologically and classified by genre and topic. Mention should also be made of the linguistic analysis, which establishes adherence to the norms of Classical Latin, but also comments the characteristics of the author's

style with the documented, mainly syntactic, deviations from Classical Latin; the linguistic influences from the used and cited sources are also highlighted. Tsvetan Vassilev points out as a contribution to the investigation, and as a result of his work on the manuscript of Petar Bogdan, the discovery of a copy of the breve for the establishment of the Custody of Bulgaria and Walachia in 1624, which is dedicated to his next publication in English (in press).

The edition, with both volumes, aroused serious interest both among specialists and among a wider audience, and this became an occasion the treatise of Petar Bogdan to be discussed not only in historiographical perspective, but also to be remarked the philological work, needed for such a work, which is a challenge in itself and can be accomplished exclusively by a classical philologist with excellent knowledge of Latin, text criticism and palaeography, but with interdisciplinary scholarly interests in the development of Latin far beyond its classical period too. Also, the style of Dr Vassilev, which, without abandoning the specialized discourse, is accessible to a more open circle of readers with interests in the issue as well, contributes for the published edition, translation, and the complex study on it to become an event in our cultural environment.

Two of the articles presented by the candidate for participation in the competition are also related to the research of Petar Bogdan's manuscript (firstly, the preliminary study „Зад древността на бащината земя и за българските дела“ на Петър Богдан Бакшич – структура, съдържание, основни исторически източници“ / “On the Antiquity of the Fatherland and Bulgarian affairs” by Petar Bogdan Baksič – Structure, Content, Main Historical Sources”, 2017; and secondly, more generally, in connection with the sources of Petar Bogdan and the activities of the Bulgarian Catholic community in the XVII century: „Апостолическо писмо за назначението на Илия Маринов за Софийски епископ от 29 юли 1624 г.“ / “Apostolic Letter on the appointment of Iliya Marinov as Bishop of Sofia on July 29, 1624”, 2020). These investigations impress again with the precise approach to the sources.

The other presented monograph by Tsvetan Vassilev, „Гръцкият език в църквите със смесени надписи от XVII век в България“ / “The Greek language in the churches with mixed inscriptions from the XVII century in Bulgaria”. Sofia: “St. Kliment Ohridski” UP, 2017, which is based on the candidate's dissertation, is again dedicated to the study of the development of classical languages (in this case – the post-Byzantine period of Greek) based on written monuments related to the history and culture of Bulgarian lands. The subject of the research are over 220 inscriptions in Greek from churches in Bulgaria, and the study is again focused on their linguistic features in the relevant context. Here I would like to point out the observations

on the cases of bilingualism and dialphabeticism, as well as a number of other iconographic, culturological and other further interdisciplinary conclusions. Also, this edition is equipped with a rich apparatus criticus and several indexes.

Related to this topic are the other three articles presented by the candidate, namely: “A Byzantine Epigram in the Pictorial Cycle of Akathistos Hymn for the Virgin from the Narthex of Kremikovtsi Monastery St. George (1493)”, 2017; “Bilingualism in post-Byzantine Mural Inscriptions in Balkan Art: Historical Background and Functions”, 2017; „Образите на св. Теодор Студит в България и техният балкански контекст“ / “The Images of St. Theodore the Studite in Bulgaria and Their Balkan Context”, co-authored with Prof. E. Bakalova, 2015. In this field, too, Tsvetan Vassilev shows excellent linguistic knowledge and skills, as well as a clear research interest in such detailed studies.

I would like to add that I have known Tsvetan Vassilev’s successful studies in classical languages since his admission as a student of Classical Philology in 1996 (and even as a student at the Classical High School), and I remember the defence of his theses, both from the High School and for the completion of his university education, one dedicated to classical Roman literature (Cicero) and the other to classical ancient Greek culture. I mention this because even in these early works there is the same attention in working with ancient sources, which is found in the already mature scientific contributions of the candidate, which reveals upgrading, specialization and fruitful effort to work with interdisciplinary methodology to – without exaggeration – discovering monuments and offering their first publications.

I also follow the teaching activity of Dr Vassilev, which so far consists of courses in Latin (mostly) and Ancient Greek, not only in the Department of Classical Studies, but also to students from at least two other faculties, and for its successful implementation – by presenting the broad significance of the ancient, not only linguistic heritage – the interdisciplinary attitude of the candidate undoubtedly contributes.

In conclusion, given the high research and teaching qualities and achievements of Chief Assistant. Tsvetan Vassilev, PhD, I strongly vote for him to be awarded the academic position of Associate Professor in the professional field 2.1. Philology (Classical Languages).

Sofia, June 19, 2022

Assoc. Prof. Nevena Panova, PhD