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December 2, 2021, Sofia

OPINION

on

COMPETITION FOR PROFESSOR IN THE PROFESSIONAL FIELD

2.4. RELIGION AND THEOLOGY (HISTORY OF RELIGIONS),

SG № 63/30.07.2021, for the needs of the

Faculty of Theology, Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski“

Only candidate: Assoc. Prof. Klara Assenova Toneva, PhD

By order № RD 38-450/17.09.2021 of the Rector of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” I have been appointed a member of the scientific jury for this procedure. At its first meeting (Minutes № 1/07.10.2021) the scientific jury concluded that the only candidate Assoc. Prof. Klara Toneva meets the conditions and admitted to the evaluation procedure the scientific production presented by her in the competition for the academic position „Professor“, in the professional field: 2.4. Religion and Theology (History of religions).

Assoc. Prof. Toneva participates in the competition with two monographs, four studies, sixteen articles, and two school aids that deal with problems related to the topic of the competition. The entire research activity of the candidate is focused on the disciplines related to the History of religions, where for the last years she is the leading figure.

The main work with which Assoc. Prof. Toneva participates in the competition is the monograph „Sekulariziranata religioznost“ (The Secularized Religiosity), Sofia, St. Kliment Ohridski University Press, 2018, 208 pages. It consists of: Preface, Introduction, four Chapters, Conclusion and Bibliography.

In the **Preface** the author details the motivation for choosing this topic.

In the **Introduction** the subject, aim, objectives and methodology of the research are indicated.

Chapter One, titled **The Godlessness of the Secular World**, is split into 3 sections. Here the author defines secularized religiosity. This is the dominance of individual religious freedom over the authority of the church community. The secularized religiosity is revealed in contemporary culture.

Chapter Two, titled **Secularism as a New Kind of Religiosity**, is split into 6 sections. Some examples of a secularized religiosity are indicated in it: the modern secularized state, secularized nationalism, absolutization of science, psychoanalysis and Christian psychotherapy, Marxism etc.

Chapter Three, titled **Secularization – a Door to Religious Radicalization**, is split into 3 sections. Fundamentalism – Islamic and Christian – is the focus of this chapter. Their common enemy is secularism. Religious terrorism is an abuse of religion.

Chapter Four, titled **The Answer of the Church – Ministry and Education**, is split into 4 sections. Here the question of Orthodox identity and the significance of liturgical life as well as the teaching mission of the Church are examined.

In the **Conclusion** the author summarizes the results of the objectives set in her study.

The **Bibliography** contains a total of 322 sources and contemporary studies on the different aspects of the issue at hand in a few languages. The critical apparatus contains 631 footnotes.

The text is well written, the language flows well and is of a good style. The monograph is original and definitely contributing.

The rest of the scientific production of the candidate presented for participation in the competition includes studies and articles on various current issues in the field of the history of religion, which the candidate examines in depth and with a great deal of skill.

In view with the mentioned above Assoc. Prof. Toneva can be characterized as a knowledgeable specialist (an erudite) in her research field. Her many years of teaching experience also contribute to this. The successful tutorship of two doctoral students, the participation in research projects and the accumulated administrative experience also contribute to her high qualification.

I do not have joint publications, projects or any other type of conflict of interest with the candidate.

In view of the above and in conjunction with Article 111 para. (2) of PURPNSZADSU, I express my positive assessment and allow myself to recommend to the respected members of the Scientific Jury to allow Assoc. Prof. Dr. Klara Assenova Toneva to be elected by the Faculty Council for the academic position „Professor“ in professional field 2.4. Religion and theology (History of religions).

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(Prof. Aleksandar Omarchevski, PhD)