

OPINION

by Prof. dts Dilyan Nikolaev Nikolchev, Department of Practical Theology, Faculty of Theology, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ",

in a competition for selection of an associate professor in a professional field 2.4. Religion and theology, declared in SG № 63 of 30.07.2021,

with sole participant Ch. Assistant Dr. Lyubomir Angelov Ignatov

1. Information about the competition

The opinion is part of the procedure announced in issue 44 / 29.05.2018 of the State Gazette competition for "associate professor" in the professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology at the Department of Practical Theology at the Faculty of Theology at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ". The exhibition complies with the Law on the Development of Academic Staff, the Regulations for its implementation and the regulatory requirements of the University for the acquisition of academic positions.

2. Information about the candidate in the competition

The teaching activity of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Lyubomir Ignatov meets the requirements for teaching experience and study load at Sofia University. In 2015 he was selected through a competition for a full-time assistant in the Department of Practical Theology, and in 2019 he became a senior assistant. During the years of his teaching career he led courses in the form of seminars and lectures on Introduction to Psalter Studies, Neummology with the Theory of Osmoglasia, Mathematical Psaltics, Eorthological Psaltics with a History of Psaltic Art, Psaltic Needs, Eastern church singing and liturgical order, Psalter matins and liturgy, Introduction to church singing, Melo-recitative technique and Church singing genres in bachelor's and master's degrees. Dr. Ignatov has been teaching Eastern Church Singing and Tipik at the Sofia Theological Seminary for many years - before his admission to the Faculty of Theology as an "assistant", as well as currently part-time.

In 2018, Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Lyubomir Angelov Ignatov defended his doctoral dissertation at the Faculty of Theology on "Dynamics in the understanding of church singing in the period IV - VI century (axiology and praxiology)." The dissertation was published in 2021 with the same title, Varna, ISBN 978-619-91575-4-1.

3. Research and evaluation of scientific results and contributions

The candidate's research activity fully covers the specific recommended requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor". Attached is a "List of publications submitted for participation in the competition", which are 18 (articles, studies, monograph - defended dissertation). I will not hide that I have an objection to the list of publications presented in this way, which must be reviewed by the members of the scientific jury. On the one hand, the list does not include the main work-monograph with which Dr. Ignatov participated in the competition (entitled: Psalm - the spiritual and musical treasure of the

two Testaments. Book for the book "Psalter"¹. S., 2021, ISBN 978 -619-91934-1-9, a total of 280 pages.) I attribute the absence of this title from the "List of publications submitted for participation in the competition" to the fact that his book body was printed at the last moment of the deadline for submission of the competition documents, in other words, I accept this as a technical omission, having in mind also that the main work is still noted in two other documents of the competition - in "Scientific contributions from research in the field of Eastern Church singing of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Lyubomir Ignatov "and in the reference prepared by the candidate for the implementation of the minimum national requirements under Art. 26 of the ЗПАСРБ. On the other hand, in the mentioned "List of publications submitted for participation in the competition" there are 4 or 5 publications that cannot be reviewed - according to L. Ignatov himself with his printed dissertation (under № 1 in the list), 1 studies (under № 3 in the list) and 2 articles (under № № 6 and 7 in the list) he has already participated in procedures for holding the academic position of "Chief Assistant" and for obtaining the scientific title of "Doctor". According to the administrator of the Faculty of Theology, Dr. Tatiana Ivanova, responsible for enrollment in the „NACID“ (BG: „НАЦИД“) by the Faculty of Theology, 3 articles (under № № 6, 7 and 8 in the list) should not be reviewed, as well as the already cited protected dissertation. **This circumstance gives me a reason not to review the cited publications.**

The presented monographic study "The Psalms - a spiritual and musical treasure of the two Testaments. A book about the book "Psalter" has achieved a kind of new understanding of the art of church singing in the psalm aspect. The author has paid attention to the unexplored or insufficiently researched and unknown to the church (and not only) public church music issues. Pages 265 to 280 in the monograph are occupied by Bibliography and Additional Literature on the subject. Some of the titles are in Bulgarian, others are in foreign languages (written in Latin and Greek).

The monograph consists of two parts - the first has two chapters, the second - three chapters. It is not clear why Dr. Ignatov did not correctly note this structure of his research in the document "Scientific contributions from research in the field of Eastern Church singing of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Lyubomir Ignatov ", who provides for his participation in the competition. I quote: "The monograph consists of **four chapters**, preceded by a propaedeutic introduction. Each of the four chapters has its own contributions to theological science. **The structure of the work indicated in the contribution document obviously does not correspond to the structure of the candidate's printed monograph.** Furthermore, the lack of systematic title is striking: Part I is entitled "Psalms - Poetry and Music of the Spirit", but **the chapters themselves are not titled** and the reader must judge whether the first chapter is "From the Experience of Old Testament Musicology" and the second chapter is "Musicological exegesis of the psalm inscriptions"; Part II is entitled "Psalms in Modern Orthodox Worship", the first and second chapters are untitled, but the third chapter has a title. All this confuses the reader before the reading itself and during the reading of the study.

The introduction to the monograph contains general information about the Psalter, and the issue of the poetic work of King David and other psalmists is discussed, specifying

¹ I wrote the title according to the punctuation rules, not the way the author wrote it when the monograph was printed: since "spiritual-musical treasure" refers to the Psalm, the hyphen after it is obligatory. In addition, the Covenant is accepted in theology. language to be written with a capital letter. The book of Psalms is enclosed in quotation marks.

the authorship of each of them. Dr. Ignatov also paid attention to the topic of the meaning and mission of the psalms in the Old Testament and New Testament times.

In the first chapter of the first part the author paid attention to the Old Testament singing and instrumental liturgical tradition, emphasizing the issues of vocal musical tradition in the Orthodox Church and the importance of psalm singing in the worship of the new Israel. I agree with the author that "the contribution of this chapter consists in the information sought and presented from ancient writings, as well as research on the subject today."

The second chapter of the first part presents a complete description and interpretations of the psalm inscriptions, paying special attention to the pre-Psalm term "selah". Such a musicological study of the psalm inscriptions and the psalm terms in Bulgarian theological science is made for the first time and this is the contribution of the second chapter of this part of the study.

The theme of Part II is "Psalm chants in modern Orthodox worship." In the first and second chapters of this part the object of study are the psalm chants or the individual psalm verses, which are in the liturgical order of the central public worship services "Esperinos" (Evening) and "Orthros" (Matins). Such a musicological study and a complete description of the psalter participations in these sequences is made for the first time.

The third chapter of Part II has as its object the study of the psalter participations in the liturgy and the other sequences from the round-the-clock liturgical circle, as the author has made a complete inventory of the psalter participations in these sequences. The scientific contribution of this chapter is indisputable.

In my opinion, the contribution of the research is mostly in Part II of the work - it is dedicated to musicology in the psalms, "i.e. of the musicological data in them and everything related to the experience and traditions of the Old Testament musicology and respectively to its reflection in the New Testament liturgical practice". The author himself is aware of the contribution of this part of the work (p. 261).

The articles and studies with which Ch. Assistant Dr. Lyubomir Angelov Ignatov participated in the competition for "Associate Professor", show his consistent scientific interest in church singing - as a theory and practice. This sequence in scientific activities is a prerequisite for a truly in-depth knowledge of the subject and building research skills.

In summary, I dare say that **Ch. Assistant Dr. Ignatov has built and established himself over the years as a scientist, but at the same time he is a researcher with gaps of a technical nature in his research.** This objection of mine is conceptual and I hope that in the future Dr. Ignatov will not allow such "annoying" moments in his research.

The conclusions presented so far, despite my critical remarks, give me reason to convincingly call on the esteemed scientific jury to award Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Lyubomir Angelov Ignatov the academic position of "Associate Professor", and I myself will vote for this without hesitation.

Prof. dts Dilyan Nikolchev

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