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**Sofia, 31.03.2023**

## **R E V I E W**

**on the submitted works  
for participation in a competition for the academic position of Professor  
in professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology  
(Introduction to the History of the Church with History of the BOChurch),  
announced by Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" (SU), Faculty of Theology  
in State Gazette, issue 100 of 16.12.2022.**

**Only candidate: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pavel Nikolov Pavlov**, Sofia University,  
Faculty of Theology.

The review was prepared in my capacity as a member of the scientific jury of the competition according to the Order № ПД 38-50 / 27.01.2023 of the Rector of the Sofia University. At the first meeting (Minutes Nr. 1 / 02.03.2023) of the scientific jury I was elected as its chairman. At the same meeting the jury considered that the documents submitted for the competition by the only candidate Assoc. Prof. Pavel Pavlov complied with the legal requirements. There were no irregularities in the procedure. The applicant fulfils the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b para. 2 and 3 of the ZRASRB. There is no evidence of plagiarism in the scientific work submitted for the competition, as required by the law, and the applicant is therefore admitted to the evaluation of the scientific work submitted in the above-mentioned competition for the academic position of professor.

Pavel Pavlov was born on 16.03.1967. In 1982–1987 he studied at the Sofia Theological Seminary "St. John of Rila". He graduated with honors. In 1989–1993 he studied Theology at the Theological Academy (DA) and at the

Theological Faculty of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". He also graduated with excellent grades. In 1992–1998 he studied History at the Faculty of History of Sofia University, graduating with a semester degree. In 1996–1998 and 2000 she specialized at the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki. He received his PhD in 2005. He speaks Russian, Greek and English. He was elected a member of the Academic Council of the Sofia University, Vice-Dean and Head of Department at the Faculty of Theology. Creator and supervisor of three Master's programs, author and editor of textbooks, editor-in-chief of the Faculty's scientific journal, supervisor of 1 international and 4 national projects. Organizer and participant in numerous international and national conferences. On the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Faculty of Theology and for ecclesiastical merits he was awarded by St. Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church with the ecclesiastical order "Saints Cyril and Methodius" 1<sup>st</sup> degree.

For participation in the competition the candidate Assoc. Prof. Pavel Pavlov has submitted a list including 1 monograph, 3 studies and 17 articles, all registered in COBISS. A list of publications since his habilitation in 2013 has also been submitted – 43 titles in total.

The attached publications attest to the necessary practical and academic achievements of Pavel Pavlov in the field of Historical Theology in general. Here is also the place to mention the publication of the collected works of protoiereus George Florovsky, of which 8 volumes have been published so far in the Orthodox Kaleidoscope series. This colossal work, in which Pavlov was compiler, translator and editor, deservedly won the respect of the educated reading public.

The scientific papers submitted for evaluation were published in the period 2014–2023. Central among them is the monograph *The Master Gancho Velev Ganchev (1921-1998) or on the Craft of the Theological Historian in the Twentieth Century*. Sofia, 2022, 286 pages. It is written mainly on the basis of Gancho Velev's archive. Its structure includes: Abbreviations, Acknowledgements, Foreword, Four chapters with bullet points and sub-points, Conclusion, Appendices and Indexes.

Chapter One is entitled *Against Time: Towards the Future through History* and includes four points. It is rather introductory and general in nature and sets the basic benchmarks of the author's starting position. Particularly important is the distinction Pavlov makes between the theologian historian and the church historian in the context of the second half of the twentieth century. The justification for this distinction is frank, courageous and evocative, for which the author receives my admiration. In order to clarify the picture, the life and creative fates of two prominent representatives of the era who worked in the field of church history are briefly traced – the academicians Patriarch Cyril and Prof. Ivan Snegarov. Overall, emotion and genuine love for the teacher are the guiding feelings permeating this chapter. At the end, general information is provided about Gancho Velev's personal archive, on which his biography is built.

Chapter Two, entitled *The Man Gancho Velev*, consists of two paragraphs with sub-points. It is devoted to biographical data about Gancho Velev. Here the author, along with the specific life data, weaves in information about other prominent contemporaries of his, which makes the picture more vivid and rich in colour.

Chapter Three is entitled *The Charisma*. It includes two sub-points. This is the shortest chapter in the monograph, and it highlights Gancho Velev's high erudition and his teaching method.

Chapter Four – *Gancho Velev and Historical Theology* – includes five sub-points. It is devoted to the theologian historian Gancho Velev and the wide range of his competence not only in the field of history but also in a number of other scientific fields.

In the *Conclusion* the author traces the unhappy end of Gancho Velev's life path. He concludes with reflections on history, the recent past and memory.

In the Appendices there are 18 documents of different types which shed additional light on particular points of the exposition. It should also be noted here the difficult and time-consuming work with Gancho Velev's unprocessed and voluminous archive, which Pavlov brought into a form acceptable for work.

The proposed scientific production for review includes 3 studies. The first one is dedicated to the Bulgarian saint and patron saint St. John of Rila and Rila Monastery founded by him; the second – on Exarch Antim I and the essence of the Bulgarian Exarchate; the third – on the blessed memory of the martyred Metropolitan Boris of Nevrokop.

There are also 17 articles in which various problems and aspects of the rich history of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church are discussed. They can be grouped into 4 thematic areas, as indicated by Pavlov in the Reference for Original Scientific Contributions: 1. Theology, history, Christianity, Church; 2. Bulgaria and Christianity – history, holiness, Church, culture; 3. History of Orthodox Theology in Bulgaria (20<sup>th</sup> century); 4. Contemporary theological issues.

I can confidently say that all of Pavlov's scholarly output presents him as a theologian historian in the sense of his monograph on Gancho Veleev.

A list of citations of his publications is attached – 63 in total.

Overall, the texts are readable, written in good, fluent, scientifically sound and understandable Bulgarian.

The proposed scientific output fully meets the national minimum requirements for the position of Professor. There is no evidence of plagiarism. I have no general publications or other conflict of interest within the meaning of the law.

Pavlov teaches a number of courses in the field of historical theology at the Theological and Historical Faculties of the Sofia University in the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs, and his annual workload regularly exceeds 3-4 times the required syllabus.

He is the holder of the two disciplines mentioned in the competition, but that is far from everything. In the various specialties he lectures on many more compulsory and elective subjects. He has successfully defended three PhD students and 38 Master's students.

It is evident from the evidence presented that the candidate's teaching activity is at the level expected for the academic position held.

Pavlov is a sweet-tongued storyteller with a wide knowledge, which makes him a welcome and often invited interlocutor in the media on a wide range of church issues. He combines his good knowledge of geography with the enormous effort he puts into the development of Christian pilgrimage, both in theory with the Master's program he created in Christian Pilgrimage and in practice with the Pilgrimage and Education Centre "St. John of Rila" at the Sofia Holy Metropolis, as well as the Pilgrimage Way "The Miracle Worker of Rila". He spares no time, energy and money to travel, especially in the Orthodox world, and to draw new routes for pilgrims.

Administratively, he has held the position of Head of Department and is currently the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Theology. He is a member of two committees at St. Synod.

He enjoys an impeccable reputation and the respect of the academic community and students. Family man, father of five children.

Having read the materials and scientific works submitted in the competition and on the basis of the analysis of their significance and scientific and applied contributions contained therein, I confirm that the scientific achievements meet the requirements of the ZRASRB for the candidate to hold the academic position of Professor. The candidate satisfies the minimum national requirements in the professional field and no plagiarism has been found in the scientific works submitted to the competition.

I give my **positive** assessment of the application.

In view of all of the above, I confidently vote **in favor** and urge the Honorable Scientific Jury to propose to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Theology of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" to elect **Pavel Nikolov Pavlov** to the academic position of Professor in the scientific field Humanities, professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology (Introduction to the History of the Church with History of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church).

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(проф. д-р Ал. Омарчевски)