

REVIEW

**On the scientific works and the educational activity of Assoc. Blagovesta Ivanova Ivanova,
submitted for the participation in a competition for holding the academic position of "professor"
in Area 8. Arts, by Professional field**

**8.1. Theory of Arts, scientific specialty "Art History and Fine Arts (Fine Arts and Synthesis with
Architecture)"**

announced in SG no. 37, May 7, 2021

by Prof. PhD. Milena Georgieva, Institute for the Study of Arts – BAS

1. Brief information about the candidate.

Assoc. Prof. Blagovesta Ivanova is the only candidate for the academic position of "Professor" at USEA "Lyuben Karavelov". The materials provided by the candidate for the competition correspond to the competition and cover several times the minimum scientometric requirements.

The candidate is a graduated Art History of Moscow State University "M. V. Lomonosov", Faculty of History (1977-1983). In 1996 she obtained the degree of Doctor of Arts at the Institute of Art Studies-BAS, since 2007 she has been an associate professor, and in 2020 acquired the title of Doctor of Arts at New Bulgarian University.

Blagovesta Ivanova initially started working as a curator (1983-2013) and Chief curator (2014-2015) at the National Art Gallery, Department of Modern Bulgarian Art, where he realized many important exhibitions. To date, she has curated over 70 exhibitions and has 120 scientific publications. Since 2005 she has been a lecturer at the Department of "Urban Planning, Theory and History of Architecture", Faculty of Architecture, USEA "Lyuben Karavelov", where she lectures in bachelor's and master's programs. The candidate is a well-known expert at the Ministry of Culture under the Art. 96 of the Cultural heritage law, member of the Permanent Expert Commission on Humanities in the Research Fund (NSF) in the period 2019-2021 and other expert commissions.

The scientific interests of Assoc. Prof. Blagovesta Ivanova are multifaceted and extend over a wide time frame. In the field of art history she interested in the transition of the Middle Ages to the Modern times in the countries of Southeast and Central Europe; from the art of the Bulgarian Revival; The new Bulgarian art; museology and preservation of cultural heritage; in the field of the history of architecture - from the history of architecture from antiquity to the XIX century, from comparative studies; in the field of synthesis between architecture and painting - studies the Bulgarian architectural complex of the Golden Horn, the temples in the Sofia diocese and others.

2. Presentation of the received materials. Description and contributions of the habilitation works.

For the competition in the scientific specialty "Art History and Fine Arts (Fine Arts and Synthesis with Architecture)" are presented in total: scientific publications, of which 2 independent monographs, 1 monograph co-authored, 3 books - studies with a catalog on Bulgarian painting and graphics; 2 studios; 31 articles (4 articles, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases, 10 articles on arts in specialized editions, 8 articles on synthesis in specialized editions, 1 article on pedagogy of teaching historical disciplines such as art history and history of architecture and understanding of the synthesis - in specialized editions, 2 articles on museology, 2 articles on preservation of cultural heritage - in specialized editions, 5 articles on architecture); 3 publications for supporting creative expression or participation in a collective product in the field of arts; 2 university textbooks, 1 university handbook. She co-authored 3 articles.

All publications submitted for the competition are outside the publications for the educational and scientific degree of Doctor (1996), the academic position of Associate Professor (2007) and the scientific degree of Doctor of Science (2020).

Assoc. Prof. Blagovesta Ivanova has contributions in three main areas - arts - architecture - synthesis. They are structured in the same manner in the report on her contributions, and are the result of her many years of research activity in these fields, as well as her long-term work in a museum, as well as a lecturer at USEA 'Lyuben Karavelov', i.e. of future architects, engineer-architects and architects in the field of architectural heritage protection. Particularly impressive is the third direction, which includes the announced habilitation work, a number of articles and studies on the problems of synthesis of the church architecture with frescoes, interior and exterior design, and more recently the first Art gallery in Sofia (1910-1944). A very positive quality of the candidate is her specialization in various fields of art history and architectural sciences - in practice she is a built specialist, both an Art historian and an Architectural historian; a scientist who seeks to deepen and unite her knowledge in these disciplines and their specifics, to find unexplored fields in the contact of Architecture and Fine arts. She also deals with various problems in the field of iconography of architectural decor in iconography and murals, analyzes the problems of contemporary sculpture, murals, urban environment, street art, preservation of cultural heritage of immovable monuments after their detailed study. The erudition and analytic abilities she has acquired in such diverse activities can be seen in her habilitation work, in the proposed monographs, in the scientific catalogs for private collections, in her articles. She is one of the few art critics who work with such issues.

The monograph ***Monastery and settlement temples in the Sofia diocese. Monitoring, status, analysis, accessibility 2015-2017*** . Sofia, USEA, 2018 (ISBN 978-954-331-100-2) is a habilitation thesis in this competition. This is a large-scale study of the churches in the Sofia diocese, their architecture, frescoes, masters who worked in them, in which cataloging is intertwined with the analysis of changes over time, their state of preservation and accessibility. The first section is dedicated to the monastic churches, the second - to the settlements, as described chronologically from the Middle Ages to the XXI century. The author dwells in detail on their architecture, its typology, planning schemes, preservation, additions, pays attention to the frescoes in them and focuses on their preservation from different periods and additions today. The third section is extremely interesting and deals with the topic of depicting architecture in various Christian scenes in murals and icons. The "model" is sought, the vision of architecture in images, its relation to space, its semantic logic in certain biblical and evangelical visual narratives. The approach to the material contributes to the clarification of the authorship and the method of work of the painters, the samples used by them such as Herminia, Western European engravings, etc. The changes in the architectural type after the Liberation and the first half of the XX century are studied, as well as the modern church construction with its stylistics, and the contemporary interventions - restorations and new frescoes are obligatorily noted. The church construction in the socialist period is also partially affected. Thus, the monograph combines the three principles - 1. Art analysis (history, context, style), 2. Synthesis of architecture with frescoes and 3. Observations on the condition and preservation of such monuments today. All this makes the monography valuable as a guide to these three indicators, but also as a research, in-depth into the theoretical problems of authorship, attributions, synthesis. The applications are valuable: a register of the churches, given by chronology, a register of painters and carvers, read inscriptions on the icons and frescoes. The monograph is especially useful with its applied functions for architects and restorers preserving the immovable artistic heritage.

Assoc. Prof. Ivanova is presented in this competition with the monograph ***Trapko Vassilev and the Permanent Art Gallery. 110 years since its establishment***. S., 2020. (ISBN 978-954-326-438-4). The

book is the first major study for the founder of the first private gallery in Bulgaria, Trapko Vassilev. It is the logical conclusion of two exhibitions about him, which Bl. Ivanova as their curator held in the City Garden in front of the Military Club and in the gallery "Vaska Emanouilova" (2020). Written with great enthusiasm and as if in one breath, it reveals a forgotten name, to which the capital and all Bulgarians owes the dynamics of the artistic life for many years. The author reconstructs the life of Trapko Vassilev and the life of the gallery created by him through the study of his archive in the Central State Archives and with the help of other archives, memoirs, periodicals, monographs for the period. The book **also** focuses on architectural synthesis. The interdisciplinary approach is again applied in it, as the gallery building is placed in the context of the urban planning of Sofia, it is considered successively **as a location, as architecture and as a center of artistic life**. Summarizing the fragmentary information and findings in the personal archive of the artist, the book illuminates the figure of the first gallery owner, manager and decorator of the buildings, impressing with its contextual background and his excellent knowledge of the author.

Co-authored with Assoc. V. Varbanova publishes the book ***Thessaloniki-Sofia. Comparative study of architectural monuments from Antiquity and the Middle Ages***. USEA "Lyuben Karavelov", Sofia, 2015, 117 pp. (ISBN 978-954-331-070-8), where Assoc. Prof. Ivanova is the author of the chapter: ***Historical model*** with subparts 1.1. - 1.3.1, pp. 6-34. In this chapter, the Sofia-Thessaloniki model, well studied as a historical issue, creates a richly saturated context. Synchronous, diachronic and territorial principles are used to the compared architectural objects revealed and exposed to the public, in which the common moments are sought. In addition, Assoc. Prof. Blagovesta Ivanova has proposed studies published separately and in specialized publications in the field of arts, including catalogs for the private collection of Alexander Kerezov ***Fifty Portraits. Painting, drawing, graphics from the collection of Alexander Kerezov: Exhibition in the gallery of the National Academy of Arts, August 2008***); ***The forgotten artists of Bulgaria. Works from the collection of Alexander Kerezov., Sofia, 2013, Known-unknown, known-unknown. Alexander Kerezov Collection. S., 2018***, (each of the three approx. 100 pages), in which she demonstrates the skills in attributing unknown, and little-known artists and works, placing them in the artistic life of Bulgarian art, but also the differences, and also popularizes this exceptional collection by exploring its various aspects and presenting them in three solo exhibitions. The value of these catalogs with analytical introductory studies is unquestionable in view of future exhibitions by the Association and the introduction of some of these artists and works in scientific circulation.

The competition documents also include an articles published in the scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information, including two articles related to the Bulgarian Church in Istanbul (outside the competition for Doctor of Science) and an article related to the German illustrations of the drama "Genoveva" and their transformations in the illustrations of "Raina Princess of Bulgaria" by Nikolai Pavlovich. Assoc. Prof. Ivanova also presents numerous articles published in specialized publications in the field of arts with various topics and wide-ranging chronology - among them are reports and articles from international conferences held in Istanbul, Van, Varna, Sofia, Chelyabinsk, dedicated to various aspects of the Bulgarian churches and architectural complex at the Golden Horn (outside the competition for Doctor of Sciences), for the building of the Bulgarian Exarchate, for the Basilica St. Sofia and its exposure, preservation and synthesis, study of synthesis in the decoration of mosques, etc. I would also like to highlight the articles "An Intervention in the Urban Environment. 110 years since the establishment of the Trapkov Gallery ", "Sculpture in the central areas of three capitals - Sofia, Skopje and Ashgabat", "The universal and specific in the plastic search in equestrian monuments", "Theme, image and message of style in the facade monumental painting by The 1970s to the 1920s." and

others. This is a well-known and cited production among the scientific community, as can be seen from the citation reference. I would especially like to mention the review text and its selection of works from Bulgarian galleries in the large and authoritative Munich edition, on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the Munich Academy of Arts (Nikolai Pavlovich. - In: 200 Jahre Akademie der Bildenden Künste München, 2008, pp. 174 - 178 (ISBN-10: 3777442054; ISBN-13: 978-3777442051), as one of our few participations in such international retrospective publications.

As it has already become clear from the follow-up of the works of Assoc. Prof. Blagovesta Ivanova, in addition to the historical study of architecture and art, art in synthesis with architecture, the candidate naturally deals with the study of art in the urban environment in which the architecture develops, as well as with the protection of cultural heritage. Her original approach is "Combining the fine arts and architecture together with the preservation of movable and immovable cultural heritage", focusing on their complexity, requiring its own research methods. The interdisciplinarity with an emphasis on architecture is obvious – and it is not so popular approach in our country among art critics, especially with regard to the Modern époque, which can be seen in almost all of the works submitted for the competition, except for some specific art history topics related to N. Pavlovich's Revival lithographs in the National Library "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" and others. The scientific and scientific-applied production of the candidate overflows, as many of her fundamental scientific developments have been used and developed in retrospective exhibitions, textbooks, expertise for state institutions, private galleries and collections, i.e. they have gained wide publicity. And this is a very important feature for a scientist.

3. Citations.

The candidate applies the following citations for the competition:

According to Indicator D-16. Citations or reviews in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes - 6 issues.

According to Indicator D-17. Cited in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review - 29 issues.

According to Indicator E- 18. Citation or review in unrefereed journals with scientific review - 22 issues.

By Indicator 19. Reviews for realized author's products or creative performances in specialized editions in the field of arts - 2 pieces.

Total citations and reviews: 57, which meets the minimum requirements.

4. Characteristics and assessment of the educational and pedagogical activity and the scientific-applied (expert) activity of the candidate.

Assoc. Prof. Blagovesta Ivanova lectures on the History of Art, hours 1-2, 60 hours, History of the Architecture of Antiquity and Antiquity, 30 hours History of Medieval Architecture, 45 hours. She also teaches disciplines in the master's program in architectural heritage protection - 1. Historical context of architecture in the Bulgarian lands, 30 hours, 2. Artistic components of architectural heritage, 30 hours, in the master's program in design - History of Design, 7 , 5 h., Elective courses – 1. Buildings for culture and education, 30 h., 2. The museum - return from the future, 30 h., 3. Artistic elements of the immovable cultural heritage, 30 h., 4. Bulgarian art in the context of European art, 30 hours. She has been lecturing at the National Academy of Arts (2012) and at the Faculty of Theology at Sofia University (2020). Extremely informative and useful for students of architecture and civil engineering are her textbooks: *Art History for students of architecture and construction and architecture of buildings and facilities*. T. - 2, S., 2015, 2017, in which her experience as a teacher is summarized as the emphasis is on architectural masterpieces and their synthesis with other arts. Here I will add the textbook *Historical context of architecture in the*

Bulgarian lands. History, society, cultural models. USEA, Sofia, 2018, 161 pp., (ISBN 978-954-331-082-1), which once again shows the wide range of her interests and opportunities for concise presentation of extensive material to student architects.

5. Scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the candidate.

As a curator of over 70 exhibitions, mainly with retrospective character in the National Gallery, Sofia City Art Gallery and others. Assoc. Prof. Bl. Ivanova successfully implements her scientific ideas in the field of application, as the exhibitions perform her aesthetic-educational and cognitive functions in front of a wide audience. The candidate is a well-known expert in the field of attribution of old masters, sought after by public and private galleries, as well as by private individuals for the identification of works of art. She has gained prestige with her honest attitude to her work and her undoubted knowledge in this rather slippery field. Her public media participations in connection with the presentation of the projects and publications can also be referred to her scientific and applied activity. She is also a member of the editorial board of the journal "Science", a issue of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria and the magazine "Diversity in Unity", a issue of the section "History" of USB.

There are two scientific awards - Diploma of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria for high scientific achievements (2006) and Diploma for high scientific achievements in the humanities for the book "Bulgarian architectural complex at the Golden Horn", S. 2018 (2019). I also mention her presidency in the "History" section at the USB, as well as her presidency in the International Association of Art Critics - AICA.

7. Participation in projects.

The projects of which she is a leader or member are related to the synthesis between the fine arts and architecture. Among them are: "Settlement and monastery temples in the Sofia diocese", 2015-2018, USEA "Lyuben Karavelov"; "Plastic Arts in the Urban Spatial Environment", 2019-2020 USEA "Lyuben Karavelov" - manager; "Thessaloniki - Sofia. Comparative study of architectural monuments in Antiquity and the Middle Ages ", USEA "Lyuben Karavelov ", 2012-2014, member. These projects speak of her opportunities for successful leadership and teamwork.

8. Fulfillment of the criteria for holding the academic position.

In particular, I would like to note that the stated in Indicator G-8 "Articles and reports published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information" are 3 x 30 points = 90 points - individual studies and 1 x 10 points = 10 points - co-authored. The publication "Art Studies Readings", in which the article about the plastic decoration of the church "St. Stefan" in Istanbul (G-8:2), is listed in the National center of Information and Documentation as referenced by the Web of Science (2017-), and this publication is from 2014. It should be referred to the G-9 indicator "Articles and reports published in specialized publications in the field of arts", where the points are 15 per article per author. The total number of the points on this indicator should be reduced by 15. Thus, out of the required in this group a total of 150 points, the candidate collects 933 points.

Notwithstanding the above note, I accept the contributions I see that Assoc. Prof. Blagovesta Ivanova fully meets the criteria for all indicators, according to the requirements of Article 1a, paragraph 2 of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and Art. 63 of the Regulations of USEA "Lyuben Karavelov". The total number of the points exceeds many times the required 500 for a professor. She collects a total of 2073 points - the sum of the scientometric indicators A (50 points), B (310 points), D (948 points (- 15)), D (510 points), E (270 points).

9. Personal impressions of the professional qualities of the candidate.

I have known the candidate since the beginning of her scientific career and from the earliest years I have been respected for her tirelessness, precision, perfectionism in her research work. Also from her

remarkable scientific diligence, perseverance, the breadth of her interests, her ability to work in a team and in the field, and to give to himself to the students. All of the above makes her at the same time a Balkan scholar who has authority outside the national professional community.

CONCLUSION

I am convinced to offer to the esteemed jury of Assoc. Blagovesta Ivanova Ivanova to be awarded the academic position of "professor".

Sofia, August 10, 2021.

Reviewer:

Prof. PhD. Milena Georgieva