

REVIEW

**In a competition for the academic position of "professor"
announced in State newspaper, no. 37 / 07.05.2021**

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

Reviewer: Corresponding Member of Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,
Professor, Mila Santova, DSc.

A scientific jury, approved by Order № 372 / 02.07.2021 of the Rector of USEA "Lyuben Karavelov", has decided to assign me this review. The decision was approved by Order of the Rector of USEA № 439 / 21.07.2021.

Within the term provided by the Law, documents for participation in the competition have been submitted by one candidate: Associate professor, DSc. Blagovesta Ivanova, who has been admitted to participate in the competition.

Associate Professor, DSc. Blagovesta Ivanova has been working in the field of Art history for years and is a well-known name in art history circles. She graduated from Moscow State University with a degree of Master in Art history - majoring in art critic and art history. In the following years, Assoc. Prof. Ivanova grew in the scientific hierarchy, successively acquiring scientific degrees: "PhD of Art" (1996, Institute of Art Studies - BAS) and "D.Sc. of Art" (2020, New Bulgarian University).

Her first dissertation is titled "Portrait images in the Bulgarian church art in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries", and the second - "The Bulgarian architectural complex of the Golden Horn." Even only the topics of the author's two dissertations show the variety of interests in her research and already outline a sufficiently wide horizon of researches,

analyzes and interpretations. Both dissertations are logically accompanied by a series of studies and publications (specified in the documentation accompanying the procedure). In general, the works submitted for the competition impress both with the variety of the specific issues developed in them and with their quantity, which speaks about Ivanova's constant active work. They correspond the scientometric requirements for acquiring the academic position of "professor" and even exceed them.

In parallel with her active scientific/ publishing activity, in the years after graduating higher education, the candidate works for an institution with a field of activity in the field of Art and Art history –The National Art Gallery (various departments). Since 2005 she has been a lecturer at the Department of Urban Planning, Theory and History of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture at USEA "Lyuben Karavelov", where she leads a series of courses on Art and Architecture. She also teaches separate courses at other universities such as the National Academy of Arts and Sofia University.

Thus, the individual moments from the creative biography of Assoc. Prof. Bl. Ivanova points to something very important in terms of the characteristics of a lecturer: the presence of a professional culture based not only on a broad basis, but also on in-depth researches (such as her dissertations, etc.). In the teaching process, the factual and interpretive capacities of the lecturer are of particular importance in terms of teaching. **The broad professional culture is an important characteristic of a (future) professor.**

The statement about the broad professional culture of the candidate can be condensed if her overall professional activity is looked at in terms of content.

On one hand, it is about the issues analyzed in her active publishing activity, but no less about her work as a curator or part of the team of (in most cases) prestigious national exhibitions. On the other hand - her work as a lecturer, for the courses she leads with students.

The publications of Assoc. Prof. Bl. Ivanova - the result of scientific projects and independent work, are thematically located in two main directions, in which the author notes her main contributions: **fine arts** and museology; **architecture** - historical aspects. In the first direction, the object of her specific interests are related to the artifacts mainly, but not only, from the Revival (oil works - portrait, composition, mural painting), as well as the treatment of some problems of museology (e.g. attribution, but also collecting, etc.). In the second - analyzes of building solutions and their protection, systematization, typology, development.

It is important to note that the two main formulated directions of interests, apart from the classical tools of the art historians/architects, Assoc. Prof. Bl. Ivanova approaches from another extremely important position: that of the **normative base for heritage protection**, which I would define as the third important direction in the work of the candidate. I see its essential place in the aspect of the especially actual today problematics for the preservation of the inherited culture, the bearer of memory. Even more significant is that all of this information is shared with young people in the field, as it is the case of the course of lecturing. I will point for example one of the publications which is intended as a textbook, presented in relation with the procedure: Bl. Ivanova. "Historical context of architecture in the Bulgarian lands. History, society, cultural models", Sofia, 2018, USEA "Lyuben Karavelov", 161 pp., (ISBN 078-954-331-082-1), published in order to help the learning process and introduced students

more closely to the issues of cultural monuments and the context in which they are created/ operated.

The problematics of the synthesis of the fine arts and architecture have permanently marked the interests and researches of the author, especially clearly read in her publications, realized after her habilitation as an associate professor. Undoubtedly, these problems are of particular importance in the two voluminous works: the habilitation work presented in this competition: "Ivanova, Bl. Monasterial and Settlement temples of the Diocese of Sofia. Observation, condition, analysis, accessibility 2015 - 2017 S., 2018, Ed. USEA "Lyuben Karavelov", 207 pp., (ISBN 978-954-331-100-2), and presented thesis for the degree of Doctor of science: Ivanova, Bl. "The Bulgarian architectural complex at the Golden Horn." S., 2018, Ed. Paradigm, 476 pp., (ISBN: 978-954-326-354-7).

The investigation included in the habilitation work is located in the parameters of the Diocese of Sofia, studying the architecture, painting and the conditions of the monasterial and settlement temples from the Late Middle Ages to the beginning of XXI century. It is based on a material from 64 monasterial and settlement churches from XVI to XXI c. as in the exposure the typology, the changes in the time and the connections between the architecture and the painting are considered. A more significant change in the architectural type of the temples from the Nova days is recorded in the monography. The connection with the changes of the socio-cultural context in Modernity is outlined.

As a monograph, which is not presented as the main habilitation work, the candidate also presents the research: Ivanova, Bl. "Trapko Vassilev and the Permanent Art Gallery. 110 years since its establishment". rewers Prof. D.Sc. Chavdar Popov, Prof. Dr. Arch. Todor Bulev. Ed. Paradigma, 2020. (ISBN 978-954-326-438-4), in which the first

private art gallery in Sofia is considered in the context of the modern times - as a spiritual atmosphere and the urban integrity of the capital city.

The problems of heritage protection are presented in these works (as well as a number of other, strictly specified in the accompanying documents).

The reference to the citations and reviews of the candidate's works indicates the presence of professional interest in her publications (indicators D 16, 17, 18, 19).

The over 10 courses that the candidate leads at USEA, regardless of whether their names connect them with the history of the discipline (art/ art history, architecture and their study) or suggest an analytical discourse on the researched problems, basically treat the problems of the relations of **fine arts and their synthesis with architecture** - which is not only directly related to the professional specifics of the Higher School, but also shows the value of a teacher like Bl. Ivanova in it.

In general: the research work and the contributions of Assoc. Prof. Bl. Ivanova are related to "Complex of the historical study of the architecture and art, study the art from the point of view of the synthesis with the architecture; research of the art in the urban environment and in connection with the preservation of cultural heritage; study of buildings and some facilities in historical urban planning, verbal architectural and spatial reconstructions. "The problems of the **synthesis** of fine arts and architecture are derived on the basis of a broad investigations of the factology. With this focus, the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Ivanova falls completely into the thematic conditions of the announced competition. The fact that most of the candidate's publications contain contributions related to the knowledge, the collection and systematization of a significant amount of (not always known) facts, its analysis and interpretation, makes

Associate Professor Blagovesta Ivanova into a valuable lecturer in the range of disciplines, related to the synthesis of the arts and the architectural environment, in a future professor, which USEA “Lyuben Karavelov” undoubtedly needs.

Regarding the overall image of the candidate, I think it is important to add the rich facts of her public engagement, her public inclusion in the various national and international professional structures in which she actively participates. Such a professional and public position can only serve as a good example for young people.

Based on all the above, I propose that Associate Professor, DSc. Blagovesta Ivanova be given **a positive vote to hold the academic position of "professor"**.

Corresponding Member of BAS,
Professor, Mila Santova, DSc.