

## **OPINION**

**for the scientific works and the educational activity of associate professor, DSc. of art history Blagovesta Ivanova Ivanova**

**in connection with a competition for the academic position of "professor", announced in the State Gazette, issue 37 / 07.05.2021 in the direction 8.1. Theory of Arts, scientific specialty "Art History and Fine Arts (Fine Arts and Synthesis with Architecture)"**

**Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alexandra Stefanova Ivanova, Faculty of Architecture, Higher School of Civil Engineering (USEA) "Lyuben Karavelov"**

Associate Professor, Doctor of Arts Blagovesta Ivanova Ivanova is the only candidate in the competition for "professor" announced in the State Gazette (issue 37 / 07.05.2021) for the needs of the Department of Urban Planning, Theory and History of Architecture at USEA "Lyuben Karavelov".

The autobiography of Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bl. Ivanova is a bright example of excellent professional education (Master's degree from Moscow State University "M.V. Lomonosov" and PhD of Arts at the Institute of Art History, BAS), combined with maximum professional realization in art and expertise (National Art Gallery, Registered Expert. under the Article 96 of the Law of Cultural Heritage, she is a member of expert commissions at the National Research Fund, the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, etc.), as well as a highly qualified lecturer in the field of higher education (USEA, National Academy of Art, Sofia University, etc.). As an art critic, curator, researcher and long-time lecturer of Art history and Architectural history at the Faculty of Architecture of USEA "Lyuben Karavelov", Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bl. Ivanova is used among students, doctoral students and fellow teachers with the undeniable authority of an established expert in the disciplines she teaches. Among the academic community, her name is associated with a well-founded opinion and public position on many professional and administrative issues, which are met with attention and respect by all colleagues.

The materials presented by the candidate fully meet the scientometric indicators required under Art. 1A, para. 2 of the RULES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACADEMIC STAFF IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA and according to art. 65, para. 3 of Regulations for the development of the academic staff of Higher School of Civil Engineering "L. Karavelov". A total of 2 independent monographs, 1 co-authored monograph, 3 studies in books, every one of which contain a catalogue part, were presented for the competition; 2 studies; 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 historical disciplines 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 production in the field of arts; 2 university textbooks and 1 university manual. She co-authored 3 articles. The candidate's publications do not duplicate the applied scientific works and creative achievements

for the procedures for the educational and scientific degree of PhD (1996), the academic position Associate Professor (2007), as well as for the scientific degree Doctor of Sciences (2020).

The general assessment of the scientific and scientific-applied production of the candidate can be described as very high, having in mind the extremely wide range of competent art studies, which Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bl. Ivanova has been implementing over the years. First of all, the dissertation for the educational and scientific degree "PhD" - "Portrait images in the Bulgarian ecclesiastical art in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" is topic, can be seen as "extraordinary work of art", a lesser known and discussed topic, insufficiently disclosed aspect of the Revival Christian art. In contrast, in the following years we see how the researcher focus is directed on the most significant for the Bulgarians in Constantinople and the Principality of Bulgaria in the XIX century architectural monument, which is the church "St. Stefan" at the Golden Horn. The results of this long-term research are presented in a dissertation for the award of the scientific degree "Doctor of Science", with the book "Bulgarian architectural complex of the Golden Horn", S. 2018, etc. This comparison is indicative of the candidate's ability to transfer her research interests on the micro and macro space of her scientific field, paying due attention to both the detail and the emblem.

In the following years in her monographs Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bl. Ivanova addresses an even more diverse topic (the habilitation work presented in the current competition "Monasterial and settlement temples in the Sofia Diocese". Sofia, 2018, "Trapko Vassilev and the Permanent Art Gallery. 110 years since its creation ". Paradigm, 2020 , "Thessaloniki-Sofia. A Comparative Study of Architectural Monuments from Antiquity and the Middle Ages". Sofia, 2015.). Outside of them, she examines in numerous studies the professional activities of famous Bulgarian and foreign artists, the collections of national museums in Bulgaria, aspects of the cultural heritage preservation, the synthesis between architecture, visual and plastic arts in the urban environment, and other important topics. Each of them turns into a creative and research provocation, supported by a correct reading and reference to the scientific literature in the field.

As a natural result of the scientific activity of the candidate for the competition the following citations and reviews are presented: 6 pcs. according to Indicator D-16; 29 pcs. according to Indicator 17; 22 pcs. according to Indicator D-18; 2 pcs. according to Indicator D-19. They are in the field of art of the Bulgarian Revival and the Modern arts; comparative art history; museology; the synthesis between the arts and architecture in the church "St. Stefan".

The educational and pedagogical activity and the scientific-applied (expert) activity of the candidate can also be described as active and beneficial. Since 2005 Assoc. Prof. PhD. Bl. Ivanova teaches at the Faculty of Architecture of USEA historical disciplines, serving the context of architectural education. Over the time learning of the students has become an increasing challenge for the teachers of the reasons of a different nature. In a report of the XI International Scientific Conference, USEA'2011, "Teaching Historical Disciplines at USEA " Lyuben Karavelov", vol. 2, pp. 1-6, regarding the difficulties of the students in mastering the historical material, she summarizes: "Experience shows that overcoming such a view is possible through argumentation, proving the importance and applicability of historical disciplines in future professional manifestations of the students and with constant control over their knowledge also."

As a colleague, my personal impressions are respectful. Here, too, she manages to share with the students her professional knowledge from past historical epochs, to connect them with the current topics such as the preservation of architectural heritage, to form an understanding of its artistic components, etc. (as an art critic, Bl. Ivanova is the second supervisor of doctoral students theses in the field of Preservation of Architectural Heritage and History of Architecture). Elective courses of Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bl. Ivanova are regularly preferred and visited by students, as the training is often presented in museum and gallery environments, which is of great benefit to future architects. As a curator of over 70 exhibitions and a registered expert, in the person of Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bl. Ivanova students receive specialized and in-depth information on many issues related to art and architecture. Examples of satisfactory pedagogical and research relationships are the success of a students majoring in Architecture (in two consecutive national student competitions in 2020 and 2021) and Construction and architecture of buildings and facilities in earlier years.

This is one of the reasons for the successful inclusion of students and doctoral students in scientific and artistic projects, which are implemented under the guidance of Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bl. Ivanova. There are many examples, but from them I intend to highlight "Settlement and monastery temples in the Sofia diocese", 2015-2018 and "Plastic arts in the urban environment", 2019-2020, as scientific projects at USEA, in which there is an active interaction between teacher and students, as well as serious publishing activity.

The scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the candidate can be considered in several aspects. These are undoubtedly the research in the field of ART SCIENCE: transition from the Middle Ages to the Modern era in the countries of Southeast and Central Europe (with a number of citations in foreign publications - Lozanova, Kornev, Popruzhna); Art of the Bulgarian Revival (with works repeatedly cited in Bulgaria); Modern Bulgarian Art (large number of exhibitions in the National Gallery and other galleries in the country); Museology and Preservation of Cultural Heritage (Articles G-9: 8.10 in foreign publications); Comparative research (cited in foreign publications - Piskizhova, Frolova). HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE: history of architecture from antiquity to the 19th century (e.g. G-9: 11,22,25). SYNTHESIS BETWEEN ARCHITECTURE AND ART: architecture and painting (e.g. G-9: 24,26) architecture and decoration plastic decoration (e.g. G-9: 5,19,20,21; preservation of cultural heritage (G-9: 9,14,27). Analysis and research of the Bulgarian architectural complex of the Golden Horn in historical-architectural-artistic aspect, description and analysis of the peculiarities of the terrain and the historical constructions (G-9,18,22). Study of the temples in the Sofia diocese (G-6).

The published university textbooks and manuals ("History of Art for Architecture Students" and "Historical Context of Architecture in the Bulgarian Lands. History, Society, Cultural Models"), as well as the long-term work of the candidate can be mentioned as scientific and applied contributions of the candidate. Assoc. Prof. Bl. Ivanova as a curator and compiler of albums and catalogue editions, with which she introduces unknown or little-known works.

The huge volume of the included materials in the competition, her precise systematization, as well as the topics proposed for scientific discussion will be of undoubted benefit for the future researchers. Based on the assessments and conclusions made so far, it can be summarized that

Assoc. Ivanova fulfils all the criteria, as well as exceeds several times the scientometric requirements for acquiring the academic position of "professor".

## CONCLUSION

I believe that the presented habilitation thesis fully meets the requirements of the Law on the Protection of the Academic staff in Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of USEA "Lyuben Karavalov" and I accept the candidate's contributions.

I propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to award the academic position of "Professor" to Associate Professor Doctor of Art Sceinces Blagovesta Ivanova Ivanova.

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