

## REVIEW

by **Dr. Stoyan Iliev Chilikov, Associate Professor of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv**

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition  
for the academic position of '**Associate Professor**'  
**at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"**

in the field of higher education 2. Humanities  
professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology

(Christian art)

In the competition for 'associate professor', announced in the State Gazette, issue 99 of 20. 11. 2020 and in the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of Theology at the Faculty of Philosophy and History, as a candidate participates Adriana Hristoslavova Lyubenova from the Department of Theology of FPH at the University of Plovdiv.

### **1. General presentation of the received materials**

#### **Subject:**

By order № P33- 610 of 18.02.2021 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU) I have been appointed a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of 'associate professor' in PU in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field: 2. 4. Religion and Theology (Christian Art), **announced for the needs of** the Department of Theology at the Faculty of Philosophy and History.

Documents for participation in the announced competition have been submitted by the only candidate

Assistant-professor Dr. Adriana Hristoslavova Lyubenova from FPH of Plovdiv University  
"Paisii Hilendarski".

Presented by Assistant-professor Dr. Adriana Lyubenova set of paper materials is in accordance with the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of PU, and includes the following documents:

- Application for admission to the competition;
- Autobiography
- Diploma for Master's degree;
- Diploma for PhD degree;
- List of scientific works;
- Information on compliance with the minimum national requirements;

- Annotations of the materials;
- Declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents;
- Certificate of work experience;
- Documents for educational work;
- Documents for scientific-research work.

The candidate Adriana Lyubenova has submitted a total of 17 scientific papers, of which 3 studies, 3 monographs and 11 articles. 10 scientific papers are not reviewed: "Mosaic art in late-ancient Philippopolis 4-6th Century ", which is a published book of her doctorate thesis; the article "Symbolism of bread in the mosaic art of Philippopolis 4-6th Century", which is part of the same book, and the two attached studies, which are also part of the published doctorate: "The Liturgy and Symbolism of the Images in the Early Christian Floor Mosaics of Philippopolis 4-6th Century" and "Christianity and Peculiarities of Religious Life in Philippopolis in the 4th-6th Century". The article „Особенности религиозной жизни в Филиппополе (4-6в.)“ is, as the translator of the text pointed out, again part of the dissertation, which was later published as a book. The article „Для мозаичистов“ is again part of the dissertation and does not appear to have been published in a collection, as it has no characteristic features. The article "Towards the symbolism of the mosaic decoration of the so-called Small Basilica in Plovdiv" essentially conveys the results of the text in the doctoral thesis. The articles „Символы духовного единства православных народов России и Болгарии“, „Религиозный фактор русско–болгарского научно-образовательного сотрудничества“, „Научно–образовательный центр Болгарской культуры церковны живописи и дизайна“ and „Условия еффективности антинаркотической рекламной кампании“ are not relevant with the theme of the competition.

Adriana Lyubenova holds a bachelor's degree in fine arts from George Mason University in Virginia, a master's degree in ecclesiastical painting from the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Plovdiv, a degree in Practical Theology from the University of Plovdiv and a degree in archeology - conservation and restoration from the University of Shumen. In 2014 she received a PhD degree from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences with doctoral thesis "The Mosaic Art of Philippopolis 4-6th Century".

The candidate for the position in the announced competition has solid teaching experience. She has taught as an assistant and assistant-professor at George Mason University in Virginia (2000-2004) and as a part-time professor of icon painting at AMDFA - Plovdiv (2007 – 2010). Since 2014 until now she is an assistant-professor at the Department of Theology of FPH of Plovdiv University. In addition, she has extensive practical experience in connection with her teaching work at the moment, as well as in the field of the announced competition: 2010 - 2013 she worked in the "Iconography" Studio at the Eparchy of Plovdiv.

## **2. General characteristics of the candidate's activity**

### **Assessment of educational and pedagogical activity**

The candidate in the competition has a full workload and hours composed of lectures and exercises in the following disciplines: Christian Art, Non-Christian Religious Teachings, Introduction to Theology, Christian Temple, Summer Practice and Preservation of the Monuments of Christian Cultural Heritage. She possesses good communication skills, which she applies when working with students and in extracurricular activities. She actively participates in the life of the Department of Theology, excellently organizing the work of the students, for which has been awarded honors and diplomas. Documents (in the form of official notes) for participation in projects in Student Internships, conferences organized by the Department of Theology and for implemented developments, which demonstrate the successful teaching work of the colleague, are also presented.

### **Evaluation of scientific activity**

The distribution of scientific works by relevant sections in the country and abroad is as follows:

A. In the country:

Two monographs, 1 study, 1 article.

B. Abroad:

3 articles

The greatest contribution for the competition has the presence of two independent monographs, one of which is proposed as a dissertation in connection with this competition.

The topic of the monograph "Floor mosaics from Philippopolis" is in connection with the published doctoral thesis of Adriana Lyubenova. The topic is interesting and definitely related to the new archaeological discoveries in Plovdiv in the last ten years. A catalog of the mosaics of late ancient Philippopolis is presented, which, although incomplete, manages to collect the most important samples of them for the period under study. As a weak side of the dissertation work I would point out the lack of theological commentary and analysis by the author.

The second monograph submitted for review is "Word and Image (visible and invisible in Orthodox iconography)". The work has a clearly defined structure of a monograph, and the topic corresponds to the content of the text. The research is interdisciplinary, with the first part highlighting the theological analysis of the author. The combination of theory with practice, of theological analysis with the technique of icon-painting conveys a specific character of the research. Although there are no new scientific discoveries in it, it could help the work of students in Christian art and art history.

The study "Orthodox Iconography through the Image of St. Rayko of Shumen" is an independent study in which the interdisciplinary approach is used again.

Of the three attached articles, the Neue Überlegung zum hexa-konchalen Martirium von Philippopolis is of interest, examining the date of the founding of the six-conchal martyrium found near the East Gate of Philippopolis. The text is more in the field of archaeological research and it is not clear which part of it should be reviewed, as there are two authors.

#### **4. Critical remarks and recommendations**

The principal remarks and recommendations are noted above in the review, in the evaluation of the scientific activity. Here I will point out only one more basic recommendation: the presented scientific publications for participation in the competition for associate professor should be separated from the ones already used in the PhD procedure.

#### **CONCLUSION**

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and having in mind the staff development of the Department of Theology, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment to the candidate in the competition. Therefore, I would like to recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philosophy and History for election of assistant-professor Dr. Adriana Lyubanova at the academic position of 'Associate Professor' at the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski" by professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology (Christian art).

5.04.2021r.

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Associate Professor Dr. Stoyan Chilikov