

REVIEWER'S OPINION

by Prof. Velka Alexandrova Popova, PhD

from Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition for

the academic position of **professor**

at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional area 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian language – Modern Bulgarian language)

The only candidate in the competition for the position of professor, announced in the State Gazette, no. 96 of 17.11.2023, and on the website of Plovdiv University, for the needs of the Department of Bulgarian Language at the Faculty of Philology, is Assoc. Prof. Dr. Habil. Konstantin Ivanov Kutsarov from Paisiy Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

By order No. RD-21-384 from 16.02.2024 issued by the Rector of Plovdiv University, I was appointed as a member of the academic jury in the competition for the academic position of professor in PU in the area of higher education 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.1. Philology, Scientific specialty Bulgarian language (Modern Bulgarian language) announced for the needs of the department of the Bulgarian language at the Faculty of Philology at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Habil. Konstantin Ivanov Kutsarov from Plovdiv University is the only candidate in the competition. The documents and materials submitted by him for the procedure are in full compliance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of Plovdiv University.

The candidate has submitted a total of 51 research publications (4 monographs, 2 studies, 45 articles). He has participated as an author in 13 books with teaching materials. For the current procedure, 3 monographs and 3 articles were submitted for evaluation. The presented academic production is in full compliance with the requirements for the academic position of professor. The author's contributions, which are subject to evaluation in the procedure, are definitely significant in terms of their content scope. This is evidenced by the citations of Prof. Kutsarov's contributions in authoritative research publications.

2. General characteristics of the applicant's work

In modern Bulgarian studies, Assoc. Professor Konstantin Kutsarov is a recognizable scholar with solid academic output and original ideas. I have only indirect access to his teaching profile, but the publicly available data are indicative of qualities, as he has had two doctoral students who successfully defended their theses, and he has given a series of tutorials, and developed specialized lecture courses dedicated in the field of Bulgarian studies. In the course of his thirty-year academic development, Konstantin Kutsarov has become a doctor of philosophy (2000), associate professor (2010), and doctor habilitatus (2019). Over the years, he has taught disciplines related to various aspects of modern Bulgarian language. Among them, the study courses which are directly related to Assoc. Professor Kutsarov's research deserve special attention. Here I would like to single out disciplines such as Morphology of the modern Bulgarian language, Alternative grammar, Parts of speech.

Associate Professor Konstantin Kutsarov's contributions to research are indisputable. His scientific output significantly exceeds the minimum scientometric requirements for holding the position of professor. In the works submitted for evaluation, the candidate remains true to his uncompromising professionalism and his research precision and thoroughness, which is also characteristic of his entire work. The permanent focus of Konstantin Kutsarov's work is on the grammatical structure of the modern Bulgarian language, and the choice of his research topics is eminently based on solid knowledge of the achievements in Bulgarian and world linguistics, which is also characteristic of his competent and motivated presentation of the discussion areas. In this way, a number of underresearched areas and misconceptions in the description of the grammatical structure of the Bulgarian language come to the attention of the author, who incorporates them into his theoretical constructs, which are always based on solid argumentation with examples from authentic language.

Among the significant author's contributions that have been listed for the procedure, I would like to pay special attention to the habilitation work of Prof. Kutsarov, *Theoretical aspects of the vocative form. Morphological category of appellative* (2024). It proposes a new interpretation of the theoretical status of the vocative form, according to which it is understood as a non-case grammeme, whose semantic and functional uniqueness gives the author reason to incorporate it into an autonomous morphological category designated as appellative. Thus, in the course of the exposition, two main tasks are outlined by the author, namely to provide evidence for the non-case nature of the vocative grammeme and, on this basis, to constitute its new place in the grammatical structure.

The monograph consists of an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography, and a list of excerpted sources. In view of the main tasks of the study, the logic in the arrangement of

the main parts of the text was to start with a comprehensive review of the historical development of the vocative form in the years from the 10th century to the present (in the first chapter), go through the interpretations of the case category and the vocative form in systematic Bulgarian grammars and in some specialized studies (in the second and third chapters), and present the author's conceptualisation of the vocative form in the Bulgarian language (in the fourth chapter).

The main goal is the clarification of the formal-semantic nature of the grammeme and its embedding in the structure of a morphological category relevant to its grammatical status. Therefore, when tracing the development of the vocative, a special place is devoted to its semantic realizations, to the types of forms, the formal indicators, the types of syntactic uses, and the changes occurring in the vocative in the context of the changes in the case category and in the nominative system as a whole. All these observations are verified in the context of an analytical description of their interpretations in Bulgarian linguistics. At the same time, the development of the theoretical understanding of the nature of the vocative in Bulgarian has been clearly traced, in which its initial understanding as a case grammeme is gradually transformed into its acceptance by most specialists as a non-case grammeme.

In this context, the author presents his understanding of the linguistic nature of the vocative, noting that it "morphologically expresses an addressing formula, a call to the linguistic addressee", while "the signaling of the content is not conditioned by a syntactic relationship, but has its authentic morphological nature". At the same time, the vocative is included in the paradigm of the appellative category (Konstantin Kutsarov's original construct), formed by the opposition vocative ~ non-vocative. It has also been noted that it is used only with nouns, and adjectives have only a coordinating status. In the detailed presentation of the appellative category with a view to its formation and usage, the author draws attention to some specific current trends in the Bulgarian language.

The rest of the publications, submitted for the current procedure, are included into two theoretical projects, which in modern Bulgarian studies are associated with the name of Associate Professor Konstantin Kutsarov, namely his important work on of a new taxonomy of the parts of speech (word classes) in Bulgarian, and his contribution to the understanding of sequence in the modern Bulgarian language, in which this category is presented in terms of functional-semantic grammar.

As a whole, associate professor Konstantin Kutsarov's research can be defined as original and innovative. The innovative solutions proposed by him, based on a precise assessment of what has been achieved in the academic tradition, are always convincingly justified by the need to overcome existing imperfections and incompleteness in the description of the grammatical structure of the Bulgarian language.

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

In this section, I have a proposal that is related to a possible research perspective for expanding the study of the vocative form, presented in Konstantin Kutsarov's habilitation thesis *Theoretical aspects of the vocative form. Morphological category of appellative*. My idea is that the indisputable merits of his work could find new projections in the field of morphopragmatics in the author's future research.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Associate Professor Konstantin Ivanov Kutsarov meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the law and the relevant Regulations of Plovdiv University.

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of research publications published after the materials used in the procedures for obtaining his degrees as a doctor of philosophy, associate professor and doctor habilitatus. The research contributions of Associate Professor Konstantin Ivanov Kutsarov can be defined as significant both for the theory and teaching practice. They are the result of many years of the candidate's own original research, and are based on his erudition and excellent knowledge of the linguistic tradition. His theoretical views have practical applicability, and some of them could have their projections in teaching and textbooks. The academic and teaching qualifications of Associate Professor Konstantin Kutsarov are unquestionable.

The results achieved by Associate Professor Konstantin Ivanov Kutsarov in his teaching and research fully correspond to the specific requirements of the Faculty of Philology, adopted in connection with the Regulations of Plovdiv University.

After reviewing the materials and research submitted for the competition, and analyzing their significance and contributions, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and recommend that the Academic Jury prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philology for the promotion of Assoc. Ph.D. Konstantin Ivanov Kutsarov to the academic position of professor at Plovdiv University in professional field 2.1. Philology (scientific specialty Bulgarian language - Modern Bulgarian language).

18.03.2024

Reviewer: Prof. Velka Popova, PhD