

OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Raina Dimitrova Gavrilova
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on the materials submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position of
"Associate Professor" at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"
in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences,
professional field 3.1. Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences (Methodology of
anthropological research).

The only candidate in the competition for the "Associate Professor" position, announced in the State Gazette, issue 98/19.11.2024 and on the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of "Ethnology" of the Faculty of Philosophy and History, is Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Stoyan Hristov Antonov from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

By order No. RD-22-433 of 18.02.2025 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU), I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of "associate professor" at PU in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.1. Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences (Methodology of anthropological research), announced for the Department of Ethnology of the Faculty of Philosophy and History (FIF).

Documents have been submitted by a **single candidate** for participation in the announced competition: **Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Stoyan Hristov Antonov**.

The set of materials presented by Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Stoyan Hristov Antonov is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the University of Plovdiv and includes the following documents: a copy of the application letter to the Rector for admission to participate in the competition; a curriculum vitae in European format; a copy of his higher education diploma with professional qualification "specialist historian, history teacher"; a copy of the diploma for the educational and scientific degree

"doctor"; a list of scientific works; scientific works (copies of publications); a list of citations; a certificate of compliance with the minimum national requirements; annotations in Bulgarian and English; self-assessment of contributions; a declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents; a document of work experience; documents for academic work; documents for scientific research activity; an official note for participation in scientific research projects.

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Stoyan Hristov Antonov has submitted 15 publications and a habilitation thesis for participation in the competition. The attached table shows compliance with the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of associate professor for the individual groups of indicators, as follows: group A – 50 points (out of 50 min.), group B – 100 points (out of 100 min.), group D – 200 points (out of 200 min.), group E – 50 points (out of 50 min.). According to the presented data for the groups of indicators for holding the academic position of "associate professor", it is evident that Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Stoyan Hristov Antonov meets the requirements of ZRASRB, PPZRAS and PRASPU.

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Stoyan Hristov Antonov graduated from the Faculty of History of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" with the qualification of "specialist historian, history teacher". In 1999, he obtained the educational and scholarly degree "Doctor". He worked for two years as a teacher, and from 1998 to 2005 – as a curator, and, later, as a research associate at the Ethnographic Museum – Plovdiv. In 2005, he won a competition and became Senior Assistant at Plovdiv University. In 2009, he attended a course at the Curriculum Resource Center of the Central European University in Budapest. The professional training and experience of Senior Assistant Professor Stoyan Hristov Antonov are evidence of his competence in both research and teaching work - a condition for successfully obtaining the educational and scientific degree of Associate Professor.

2. General characteristics of the candidate's activities

Stoyan Antonov teaches students at all three educational levels (bachelor's, master's and doctoral), with his courses being directly related to the topic of the competition and his research activities: such as "Social and Cultural Anthropology", "Theory of Ethnological Research", "Analysis of Ethnographic Materials", etc. Over the past five years, his annual

workload has been 476, 499, 710, 466, 376 hours, respectively. He has organized two of the regular "Student Meetings" for the Department of Ethnology; he has supervised the development of 12 bachelor's and 5 master's theses. He was a member of the FIF attestation committee; of the academic activity committee and of the quality management and control committee.

Chief Asst. Stoyan Antonov participated in the competition with a monographic work entitled "Synchronizations: Transitions and Transformations in the Bulgarian Village", which is completely different from his doctoral thesis. The work is 174 pages long, including 30 pages of bibliography and appendices. The author's research task was to trace how the inhabitants of a specific village "maintain their identity", individually and collectively. The chosen approach is multidisciplinary and located at the intersection of "genealogy, microhistory, ethnology, anthropology" (p. 13), and the methods – documentary research, unstructured interviews and direct observation. Stoyan Antonov demonstrated in his work solid acquaintance with the theoretical literature and ability to work with a variety of facts, as well as awareness of the ethical aspects of anthropological observation and interviewing. The study offers interesting empirical material (on the naming of residents, toponyms, oral histories, photographs, holidays), which is interpreted and produces the "understanding" of transitions and the updating of identities sought by the author.

The publications submitted for participation in the competition are distributed as follows: one article referenced in international indexes; 13 articles (including one study) – in peer-reviewed journals. The candidate has provided a reference for the noted citations: 3 in publications indexed in international databases; 41 – in peer-reviewed publications.

Acquaintance with the works submitted for consideration made possible to highlight the main scientific contributions of Stoyan Antonov:

1. The monographic work is valuable both with the collected empirical material and with its interpretation with classical and contemporary theoretical approaches. The complex processes of reproduction and transformation of individual and collective identities are studied in a framework adequate for the 21st century. The potential of microhistory and genealogy to produce understanding is fully used.

2. The articles proposed for participation in the competition have a contribution character in several directions:

- modern and methodologically sound presentation and interpretation of data and discourses about a little-known ethnic group (the Tatars);
- ethnographic research and documentation of small and disappearing communities;
- application of modern approaches to the anthropological study of local and/or cultural communities;
- modern understanding of heraldry and presentation of the Bulgarian tradition in foreign languages;
- problematic presentation of the dynamics of methodological searches in anthropology and connection with teaching activities.

In addition, the modern approaches applied by him to specific material demonstrate in practice the important connection between theory and practice. The observations in his monograph would be valuable reading for any administrator interested in the future of small communities.

The research activity of Senior Asst. Dr. Stoyan Antonov shows that he meets the quantitative criteria for holding the academic position of "associate professor" and demonstrates the qualities of a modern researcher who monitors the development of the disciplines he is interested in and uses a variety of modern methodologies and methods.

In the last five years, Stoyan Antonov has participated with texts in six national and five international scientific forums. He has participated in four national research projects.

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

The qualification and interests of Senior Asst. Stoyan Antonov suggest that his inclusion in international and especially European research projects is a real opportunity, which seems to be insufficiently used.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Senior Asst. Dr. Stoyan Hristov Antonov meet all the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic

of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of ZRASRB and the relevant Regulations of PU "Paisii Hilendarski".

The candidate in the competition has presented a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the ONS "doctor". The candidate's works contain scientific and scientific-applied contributions. The scientific and teaching qualifications of Senior Asst. Dr. Stoyan Hristov Antonov meet the requirements of the competition. After reviewing the materials and scientific papers presented in the competition, I confidently give **a positive assessment** and recommend that the Scientific Jury propose to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philosophy and History of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" to elect Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Stoyan Hristov Antonov to the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the University in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.1. Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences (Methodology of anthropological research).

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Author of the opinion:

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