

REPORT

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Krasimira Hristova Krastanova, Department of Ethnology,
Faculty of Philosophy and History, Plovdiv University
on the materials submitted for participation in the competition
for the academic position of Associate Professor
at *Paisiy Hilendarski* University of Plovdiv

field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences,
Professional field 3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Studies
(Methodology of Anthropological Studies)

In the competition for the post of Associate Professor, announced in the State Gazette, issue no. 98 of 19.11.2024 and in the Internet page of Plovdiv University *Paisiy Hilendarski* for the needs of the Department of Ethnology at the Faculty of Philosophy and History, as a candidate participated Assist. Prof. Stoyan Christov Antonov, PhD from Plovdiv University *Paisiy Hilendarski*.

1. General presentation of the materials received

Presentation of the procedure

19.02.2025: Deadline for submission of documents under the call for tenders.

31.01.2025: Rector's Order No. RD-22-253/31.01.2025 appoints a committee to meet on 21.02.2025 for the admission of candidates under this competition.

24.02.2025: The Commission examines the candidate's documents, which are submitted in due time, meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff of Plovdiv University and signs a Protocol for his/her admission to the procedure. The Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov PhD, received personally a notification letter with Outgoing No. RD-37-160 dated 24.02.2025 about his admission.

27.02.2025.: Protocol_1 of the first non-presidential meeting of the Scientific Jury of the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor at *Paisiy Hilendarski* University of Plovdiv in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Sciences (Methodology of Anthropological Studies) at the Department of Ethnology of the Faculty of Philosophy and History.

1. Election of the Chairman of the Scientific Jury (with a reply to all in this letter to vote on the proposal of prof. Dobrinka Parusheva to be elected Chair of the Scientific Jury Assoc. Meglena Zlatkova and to confirm her election);
2. Decision on the admission of the candidate to the competition, examination of the scientific production for compliance with the minimum national requirements (with a reply to all in this letter);
3. Selection of two reviewers and five members of the Scientific Jury to prepare opinions (with a reply to all in this letter to vote on the proposed reviewers and to confirm their selection, in compliance with Article 68, paragraph 3 of the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff of Plovdiv University. The other members of the Scientific Jury will prepare opinions);
4. Selection of the date and time for the final meeting: to select a date from 7.05.2025 to 16.05.2025, at 13:00 (In order to comply with the deadline for the completion of the competition within 6 months of its announcement in the State Gazette, at the latest by 18.05.2025, and the possibility of the Associate Professor to be elected at the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philosophy and History, and the members of the Scientific Jury to be entitled to travel and accommodation).

Inventory of materials received for review, with which the candidate participates in the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in 2025.

Subject of review

By Order No. P33 RD-22-253 of 31.01.2025 of the Rector of Plovdiv University *Paisiy Hilendarski* I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of the competition for the academic position 'Associate Professor' at Plovdiv University in the field of higher education Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Sciences (Methodology of Anthropological Research), announced for the needs of the Department of Ethnology at the Faculty of Philosophy and History at Plovdiv University *Paisii Hilendarski*

Only one candidate has applied for the competition: Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD
Presented by Assist. Prof. Stoyan Hristov Antonov's package of materials on paper and electronic media **is in accordance** with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of PU, and includes the following documents:

- Document of Request
- CV
- Diploma of higher education
- Diploma for Doctoral degree
- List of scientific works
- List of citations
- Reference for compliance
- Abstract in English

- Annotation in English
- Reference for contributions in English
- Reference for contributions in Bulgarian
- Declaration of Originality
- Certificate of work experience
- Documents on academic work
- Documents for research work
- Official note

The candidate, Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD, has accurately attached all the documents required for the competition, certifying the completed educational and scientific degrees, materials related to the overall scientific research and teaching work have been included, including documents, official notes, etc. A list of publications has been made, where all the necessary data from the scientific identification system is described. A certificate of compliance with the minimum national requirements has been completed. The package of documents contains a copy of the publications themselves, so that an objective assessment can be made.

The list of publications of the candidate Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD contains 32 titles of publications, of which for participation in the competition has attached a total of 15 scientific papers, 14 studies and articles, 1 monograph, and a list of documents for scientific research work, which contain a description of participation with 14 papers in national scientific conferences and seminars, 17 participation with papers and lectures in international forums, participation in 10 national and 5 international research projects. The 15 research papers submitted for the competition, which are outside the thesis and are counted in the final evaluation, and 15 research projects are accepted for review. The remaining publications are accepted as information and are not reviewed. The distribution of the scientific works by relevant headings, in the country and abroad, is as follows: 11 publications in Bulgaria and 4 abroad; reports and lectures in scientific forums 16 in the country and 15 abroad. Documents (in the form of official notes) for participation and for implemented developments in 3 projects, which were funded by the Scientific and Project Activity Division of Plovdiv University, as well as for their usefulness, are also presented.

2. Brief biographical details of the candidate

In 1995 Stoyan Antonov graduated from the Faculty of History of Sofia University *Saint Kliment Ochridski* with a degree in History of Bulgaria and the World. His qualification is a specialist historian, history teacher, and specialization in ethnology. After graduation he worked as a

history teacher in a secondary school and as a curator in a museum. In 1999 he received the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" after a public defense of his dissertation on "The Tatars in Bulgaria (Ethnological Research)". Since 2000 she has been a research assistant at the Regional Ethnographic Museum-Plovdiv. Since 2005, after participating in a competition, he has been appointed at Plovdiv University as a senior assistant professor, where he conducts ethnological and anthropological lecture courses and exercises, work with students, research activities, etc. From 2005 to 2010 he underwent professional training in presentation skills at Plovdiv University, portfolio for university courses at Central European University in Budapest, participated in theoretical seminars related to culture, heritage, social environment, etc. Develops artistic skills and competences related to designing coats of arms and creative writing. Fluent in English and Russian. Stoyan Antonov PhD is the founder and long-time president of the Bulgarian Heraldic and Vexillological Society, which is part of an active international network.

The candidate's biographical data shows a gradual development of knowledge, skills and competences that unfold both in his specific professional activity and in broader areas of culture and history that enrich him and contribute to his involvement in various national and international networks.

3. General description of the applicant's activities

Assessment of the candidate's teaching and training activities

Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD has independently developed 16 courses for the bachelor's degree, in collaboration with colleagues - 2 and has restructured and revised 3 of them, imposed by new requirements and changes in the curriculum. For Master's and Doctoral degrees, he has developed 1 course independently and 8 courses in collaboration with colleagues. These courses relate to the theory, history and methodology of ethnology and anthropology, to the problems of identity, communities and migration processes, but also to culture, cultural heritage and tourism. He is the author of two of his specific courses - Image, Sign, Symbol and Heraldry, which are desired by the students of the FIF of Plovdiv University, but also by students of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv and Veliko Tarnovo University. Its courses are chosen by students of the Erasmus+ Program at Plovdiv University. All course curricula are continuously updated according to new scientific developments and pedagogical requirements. The teaching workload, which is only reported for bachelor's programs, has varied between 376 and 710 hours in recent years. This is a full and even overloaded teaching workload, which requires additional effort and time for research work.

Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD participates in the organization of the regular for the Department of Ethnology Student Ethnological Meetings and works in support of the public activities of stu-

dents. For the period of his work at the university he has 12 graduates from the bachelor's programs in Ethnology and Social Anthropology and supervised 5 master's theses of students from the specialties Cultural Tourism and Cultural Design and Ethnology.

The broad theoretical background, supported by an analytical approach and empirical materials obtained from both scientific publications and research, the result of conducting personal and collective projects characterizes the disciplines he teaches, as well as his work with undergraduates, graduates and PhD students. The interest of students, postgraduates and colleagues in his courses and research results is high, as evidenced by their acknowledgements and thanks published in scientific studies.

Assessment of the candidate's scientific and applied scientific activities

The scientific research work of Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD can be divided into several main issues related to the identity of communities (local or ethnic), culture and heritage in the Bulgarian village, methodological approaches, cultural heritage, issues of heraldry, etc. These areas are often intertwined or stand in relation to analyzing the facts, to search for the meaning of the phenomena studied, to understand the processes of formation and transformation.

The beginning of his scientific career began with an ethnological study of the Tatars, the development of a dissertation and, accordingly, the publication of a book. This has remained a running theme in the author's many years of work, in which he has deepened the issues initially considered in order to establish the variation and particularities in the expression of the Tatar community's identity ("Nebi, Imane and Kudarlez: Shades of Treasure in Tatar Culture", 2003; "The Gyrai in Bulgaria (Some Reflections)", 2009; "Khan Tatar and Todorka (A Reading of the Veliko Tarnovo Variant)", 2018). His research in this field has allowed him to seek contemporary tools for the sustainability of Tatar communal identity (The Tatar Community in Bulgaria: From Cultural Tradition to Cultural Politics. 2005), as well as to critically present the history of Tatar studies in Bulgaria (Tatar Studies in Bulgaria in the XXI Century. 2022). Stoyan Antonov finds new research directions by working on projects on current processes in modernity, such as issues relating to migration and encounters and dialogue between cultures (Russians in Plovdiv: Intercultural Dialogue and the City. 2012).

Another major area in which all our colleagues have sought his expertise is in methodological issues related to research and teaching in ethnology and anthropology. Here it is represented, as it were, more modestly (Teaching ethnology between theory and practice. 2018), but in the research teams of which he is a member, methodological aspects of research are always part of his expertise.

Heraldry, which is the research passion and artistic practice of the Asst. The System of Personal Arms of the Bulgarian Royal House (the Saxe-Coburg and Gotha Dynasty). 2021; Social Status and Heraldry. Applying his anthropological knowledge base, the author discusses heraldic issues in broader historical, cultural and symbolic aspects.

The general character of the cited articles and studies, and consequently their contributions, can be sought in several directions:

1. All of them are on topical social and/or scientific issues relating to the construction and maintenance of communities and identities, which are examined through different lenses: culture and history, memory and heritage, migration and diaspora, tools and markers of identity, inheritance and symbolic power.

2. A scientific interpretation seeking meaning and based on connections between terrains, themes and fields.

3. Published and circulated scholarly facts and empirical materials that enrich scholarly reading and can be a starting point for new directions.

In the last years, Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD has been working on projects that study cultural heritage and local development, as well as contemporary processes of transformation of the Bulgarian village. Apart from the noted articles in the list of scientific works (Symbolic vs. real - dichotomy of the intangible cultural heritage. 2012; Innovations and transformations in the anthroponymy of a village of the late XIX and early XX century. 2024), an important place in this type of his research has the monograph created on the example of the village of St. 2025. It is the fruit of many years of field research and is based on a multidisciplinary approach, combining the possibilities of anthropology with those of ethnology, microhistory, genealogy. Methodologically, the research corresponds with contemporary anthropological theory and the quest for understanding cultural/social phenomena rather than so much for their explanation. It is important to note that the author is "primarily guided by the perception that justification of conclusions following from the analysis of ethnographic data is essential, rather than testing a particular theory or hypothesis through the study."

The development of the specific methodology and the techniques used can be seen as a contribution to the specificities of the study and analysis of a contemporary social phenomenon such as the Bulgarian village. The combination of the different perspectives on the problem under study makes it possible to draw a relatively clear and nuanced picture that attempts to answer the question of how the local community, or the village, is re-created. Naming, memory, and tradition underline these answers, which seek not only and not so much stability as dynamics, changes, and processes. It is worth adding that the book does not provide definitive answers - it invites the reader to partici-

pate in a conversation about the Bulgarian village today, about the cultural reproduction of local identities in a changing world. The author also offers an anthropological methodology for understanding the processes of construction, persistence and change in images and (self-) perceptions of community and the synchronicities between them. This is an undoubted contribution that deepens the relationship between the researcher and those interested in the issues at hand. Attention to people and community exemplifies a humanistic attitude in science. The picture of the village of Chereshovo would not be the same without the people and the cultural intimacy they build and share.

The quality of the publications is also indicated by the citations noted. Issues concerning the communities, including the history, culture and identity of the Tatars are the most sought after internationally and nationally. More than 50 citations or reviews have been noted for them in scientific journals, referred to and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes with scientific peer review. There are over 70 citations in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals and others. Titles with heraldic issues have also received great interest, with over 50 citations. Other articles and studies also show interest and sustained citation, indicating the valuable nature of the scientific output, clear scientific exchange and the candidate's involvement in professional networks. This is also confirmed by the participation of the Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD in numerous prestigious international scientific forums, where he is a valuable and sought-after researcher.

As an expression of the quality of the candidate's scientific and teaching work, the data from the science metric table, reflecting in numerical form his scientific results, can also be accepted.

Indicators		Minimum requirements	
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Indicator 2	-	-
C	Indicator 3	100	100
D	Sum of indicators from 4 to 10	200	240
E	Sum of indicators from 11 to 13	50	335
F	Sum of indicators from 14 to the end	-	-
		400	725

They show that the values of the Minimum National Requirements for the Scientific and Teaching Activity of Candidates for the Academic Position "Associate Professor" are exceeded almost twice.

I would like to add one more aspect of his work, namely the applied one. In the social sciences it is harder to talk about implementation, but we can easily talk about concrete benefits from applied projects. One such project, which the applicant has just mentioned, is 'Together and Equal - the rights of asylum seekers and protection seekers', with financial support provided by Iceland, Liech-

tenstein and Norway under the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism. In this project, the Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD worked on methodology and the application of *emergency anthropology* in the study of a crisis. He adapted the methodology of our work to the situation that followed the aggression of Russia in Ukraine and the situation of refugees in Bulgaria, Plovdiv and the region. The team's collaborative work on this project identified the main problems of those fleeing the war at that time (2022-2023) and produced a booklet with advice on how to address them from any refugee in difficulty. Moreover, thanks to our expertise and cooperation with other organizations, we were able to facilitate the enrolment of Ukrainian youth in Bulgarian higher education institutions. Anthropological expertise has proved important in addressing serious social problems of Ukrainians fleeing the war and in quelling community tensions.

4. Assessment of the candidate's personal contribution

All presented scientific results, and creative achievements are the personal authorial contribution of Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD. Although there is no place here for the applied and artistic expertise related to coats of arms, it is also important in the scientific and creative development and realization of the candidate.

5. Critical remarks and recommendations

I believe that it would be good for the text of the monographic study *Synchronizations: Transitions and Transformations in the Bulgarian Village* to be revised for a wider audience and aimed specifically at the residents of the village of Chereshovo, and then to include genealogical data (in whatever form the author deems appropriate), more photographs, memoirs, or media coverage that are appropriate not only and not so much illustratively as substantively for the topic.

6. Personal impressions

I have known Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD since he was a research associate at the Regional Ethnographic Museum – Plovdiv. Over all these years, we have participated together in various research projects, worked with students, and I can confirm that he is a serious and responsible colleague with principles, but also with broad horizons. Both colleagues and students appreciate his professional and human qualities.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff of Plovdiv University and signs a Protocol for his/her admission to the procedure.

The candidate in the competition has presented a significant number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the grade PhD. The candidate's works have original scientific and applied contributions that have received international recognition, as a representative part of them have been published in journals and scientific collections published by international academic publishing houses. His theoretical developments have practical applicability, as some of them are directly oriented towards academic work. The scientific and teaching qualification of Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD is undoubtedly extremely serious.

The achievements of Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD results in academic and research activities, fully comply with the minimum national requirements adopted in connection with the Regulations of the University for the implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria.

After familiarizing myself with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, applied scientific and applied contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and confidently recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philosophy and History for the election of Assist. Prof. Stoyan Antonov, PhD to the academic position of *Associate professor* at the University *Paisiy Hilendarski* in field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.1. Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences (Methodology of anthropological research).

16.04.2025

Reviewer:

Assoc. Prof. Krassimira Krastanova