OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivelina Nikolova Nikolova
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of the materials submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski", in: field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology (Patrology and dogmatic theology)

In the competition for "associate professor", announced in the State Gazette, issue 96 of 11.11.2025, and on the website of the Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of "Theology" at the Faculty of Philosophy and History, the candidate was the former associate professor, Dr. Stoyan Iliev Chilikov.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

Subject:

By order No. PD-22-35 of 09.01.2026 of the rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU), I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury in a competition for the academic position of "professor" at PU in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology (Patrology and Dogmatic Theology), announced for the needs of the Department of Theology at the Faculty of Philosophy and History. Only one candidate has submitted documents for participation in the announced competition: Arch. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyan Iliev Chilikov from PU "Paisii Hilendarski" participated.

The set of materials on paper presented by Prot. Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Chilikov is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the University of Plovdiv and includes the following documents:

– Administrative documents

– Publications procedure

To participate in the competition, the candidate submits a total of 23 scientific papers, 1 monographic work, which are in the specialized field of the competition, relevant to the professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology. The publications have not been used in a previous procedure for the acquisition of other scientific degrees and titles. These publications certify that the candidate meets the minimum national requirements according to the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Register of Academic Staff. 1 scientific paper (monograph) is not taken into account for the award of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences".

Brief biographical data (of the candidate)

Arch. Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Chilikov graduated from the Faculty of Theology of the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in 1996. In 2000, he obtained the degree of "Candidate of Theology" at the Moscow Theological Academy. He specialized at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (2004-2005) and at the Lateran University in Rome (2001-2002). In 2019, he obtained the scientific degree of "Doctor of Sciences" at the Paisii Hilendarski University. His professional experience is related to his participation in the editorial board of numerous collections and participation in scientific projects

Personal impressions

My personal impressions of Arch. Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Chilikov are excellent. My many years of work with him as a colleague in the Department of Theology give me every reason to share his dedication to science, the efforts he makes to build on the achievements of his predecessors. I should also mention my personal impressions of the harmonious collegial relationships that the candidate maintains with his colleagues in the department, in the spirit of the Christianity he practices, especially as a clergyman. A decent priest, theologian and scientific worker.

2. General characteristics of the candidate's activities

The educational and pedagogical activities of Arch. Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Chilikov reflect his work as a serious teacher, who throughout his long teaching career systematically builds 9 lecture courses. They are profiled in his scientific field and logically complement and build on the two main theological disciplines that the candidate teaches - Dogmatic Theology and Patrology.

The assessment of the educational and pedagogical activity of the candidate's preparation can be theoretically observed from the surveys systematically conducted with the students, from which the high assessment of his work, the construction and constant renewal of the training courses and the precise work with the students only complement my overall positive assessment.

Assessment of the candidate's scientific and applied scientific activity.

The monographic study of Arch. Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Chilikov "Eucharist and Asceticism in the Tradition of the Church", covers 208 pages and is structured in three parts. In the first part, the author focuses on more important terms from the problematic he considers, placing them at the basis of building the internal structure of the text (dogma and ethos, image and likeness, grace and freedom, etc.). The thesis of the study unfolds in the following statement: the synthesis of the Eucharist and the feat. In the second part, the discourse that has begun is built upon, with attention focused mainly on the theological debate of the 4th century regarding the relationship between grace and freedom. The third part focuses on the topic of human salvation, in which the sacraments play an important role, developed in the perspective of the Palamite doctrine of essence and energy.

The deposited articles by the candidate Arch. Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Chilikov reflect his overall scientific research activity in the field of systematics, with a strong emphasis on the work of some holy fathers of the Church. It is commendable that he focuses his attention on examples of Bulgarian holiness.

Contributions (scientific, applied science, applied) and citations

The scientific contributions in the candidate's research work are primarily related to updating the patrological issues that he researches and which he places in the context of his teaching activity. From the attached list of citations (41 in total) it is seen that Prot. Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Chilikov

presents citations in scientific publications in our country and abroad, which shows his categorical scientific recognition.

4. Assessment of the candidate's personal contribution

All formulated theses, contributions and scientific results are the fruit of in-depth analyses, detailed scientific research and can be recognized as personal merits of Provost Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Chilikov.

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks regarding the overall package of scientific research and the materials presented by the candidate. I have recommendations that I can share if the candidate wishes.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Prot. Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Chilikov meet all the requirements(s) 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 the University "Pa-isiy Hilendarski". The candidate in the competition has presented a sufficient number of scientific works. The theoretical developments of Prot. Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Chilikov have practical applicability primarily to academic work. The results achieved by Prot. Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Chilikov in academic and research activities fully comply with the minimum national and additional requirements of the FIF, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the University for the Implementation of ZRASRB. After reviewing the materials and scientific papers presented in the competition and in view of analyzing their significance and the scientific, applied and applied contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philosophy for the election of Arch. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyan Iliev Chilikov to the academic position of "professor" at the University of Paisiy of Hillendar in: field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.4. Religion and theology (Patrology and dogmatic theology).

March 5, 2026.

Prepared the opinion: ..... (signature)
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivelina Nikolova Nikolova
(Acad. LL.D., N.S., name, surname)