

EXAMINER'S REPORT

Required under the competition procedure for the academic position of

Associate Professor in Ethnography - Bulgarian Ethnology

Higher education field 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional area 3.1 Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Studies for the needs of the Department of History and Archaeology at the Faculty of Humanities of *Konstantin Preslavsky* University of Shumen, announced in State Gazette, iss. 37 of 17.05.2022

By **Scientific Jury Member**: Associate Professor Meglena Ivanova Zlatkova PhD, Department of Ethnology, *Paisii Hilendarski* University of Plovdiv (appointed by Order of the Rector of Shumen University No. PД16-133 / 15.07.2022)

Documents for the competition procedure were presented by one candidate - Ivelina Avramova Eftimova PhD, Chief Assistant Professor at the Department of History and Archaeology, University of Shumen. All the documents submitted by the candidate comply with the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, the Regulations for its application, as well as the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of *Konstantin Preslavsky* University of Shumen.

Chief Assistant Professor Ivelina Eftimova PhD participates in the competition with the following publications: one monograph, 23 articles and papers published in refereed journals, of which three articles are written in English and one in Turkish language. All publications fall in the sphere of the announced competition and were produced posteriorly to the defense of the doctoral dissertation. The set of the publications and enclosed citations exceed the minimum requirements for holding the position of Associate Professor defined by the DASRBA.

The attached references for her academic and extracurricular activities and for her work with students evidence the high degree of commitment of the candidate to her lecturing activities. Ivelina Eftimova has developed and teaches mandatory and elective ethnology courses under several BA and MA programs and supervises summer fieldwork in Ethnology. Chief Assistant Professor Ivelina Eftimova PhD has acted as supervisor of 3 BA graduation works and 3 MA graduation theses in the last eight years. The problems developed require substantial competencies in ethnological knowledge on behalf of the supervisor and the graduate students, and the successful defenses prove the qualities of Dr Eftimova as an established scholar who is able to effectively

direct young colleagues. In addition to graduate students, Ivelina Eftimova actively works not only with the students who are being trained in ethnological field research, but also on the interpretation, analysis and presentation of the results of those studies. She is a valued and demanded scientific mentor and colleague who guides students on their participation at scientific forums, including the traditional *Ethnological and Anthropological Meetings of Graduates, PhD Students and Young Scientists* at the Plovdiv University, we host.

It is worth mentioning that Dr. Eftimova is editor of a few issues of *Historiki* journal and of a scientific collection of articles in English, which is another proof of academic maturity and accumulated experience in the academic communication and discussions.

It is clear from her scientific autobiography that she has participated in a number of national and international research projects with substantial research problems and a partner network.

The academic publications, with which Chief Assistant Professor Ivelina Eftimova PhD takes part in the competition for Associate Professor, have been distributed into two thematic sections by the candidate herself. The first, which I will tentatively outline, is: Old age and aging as an ethnological scientific problem. Her monographic work belongs to this area: *Ethnological Aspects of Old Age and Aging in the Bulgarian Society (from Tradition to Modernity)*. The book is original research on a basic social and ethnological issue - aging and old age as one of the life stages in its individual and community aspect. The author undertakes a detailed study of the images of old age ("the ideal old age") and aging in Bulgaria by shaping two time periods of transition - from tradition to modernity, during Socialism and post-1989, which provides a comprehensive perspective of the dynamics of the research problem in the 20th and 21st century. The major parts of the book also revolve around these transitions. The research framework is very well grounded, based on an interdisciplinary review from several perspectives, with the ethnological approach adequately developed and reasoned in the first part of the monograph. The methodology is clear and the research reveals the results of Dr. Eftimova's long-term fieldwork experience. The fieldwork was performed and presented systematically, respecting the interlocutors. As innovative and contributing to the problem, I would like to highlight the study of the particular socialization of old age through the pensioners' clubs, which the author has been personally examining for over five years, and through them has positioned aging in a wider social, cultural, but also political and economic context.

In summary, I will state again that the monograph *Ethnological Aspects of Old Age and Aging in the Bulgarian Society (from Tradition to Modernity)* is a valuable monographic study which reveals a significant public problem in its national and global dimensions, investigated via

ethnological methodology, based on a plentiful, personally collected field material. Through the book, not only new knowledge and field results are introduced into the scientific discussion, but also the tradition of research in the field of ethnology is enhanced, which is a contribution to the Bulgarian and not only humanities and social sciences.

The publications 12.2.1 to 12.2.10 from the enclosed set of documents show aspects of the issues of the monographic study. They are the outcome of consistent research work, active participation in scientific forums and publication activities, with which the theme is introduced into the scientific discussion. There is also one article in Turkish language.

The second group of articles numbered 12.13.1 – 12.13.13 could be consolidated as problems of the otherness and differences – primarily ethnic and gender – as a cultural and social construct. The texts feature the author's competence to conduct field research in a variable cultural and linguistic environment and to interpret and analyze the results of this research in a wider theoretical and historical context. Although different in terms of subject matter, all articles share the ethnological sensitivity to the otherness and the understanding of the groups and communities she examines. In each publication Ivelina Eftimova PhD incorporates a micro-research, adequately justifying her approach and showing her fieldwork style.

I am familiar with Dr. Eftimova's work as an author of articles and a colleague who actively does field research and lectures students at Shumen University, contributing to the development of Ethnology as a university subject. It is noteworthy that she continues the traditions of the school already established there. Ethnological knowledge complies successfully with the training of students from various bachelor's programs as the deliberate need to acquire sensitivity to cultural differences, intercultural communication skills, interest in one's own traditional culture and the culture of others - knowledge and abilities of high importance in modern times. I declare that I have no publications co-authored with Dr Ivelina Eftimova, nor any other conflict of interest. I did not notice any plagiarism.

CONCLUSION

The submitted papers and publications of Chief Assistant Professor Ivelina Eftimova PhD fully comply with the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, the Regulations for its Application and the Regulations of *Konstantin Preslavsky* University of Shumen. The results achieved by the candidate in the lecturing and research activities fully correspond to the requisites for awarding the academic position of Associate

Professor. On the grounds of my overall positive assessment of the teaching activities, the publications presented and the scientific contributions developed in them, I recommend the members of the Scientific Jury decide on awarding the academic title of Associate Professor in Ethnography - Bulgarian Ethnology to the Chief Assistant Prof. Ivelina Avramova Eftimova PhD.

Plovdiv, 21.08.2022

Meglana Ivanova
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