

## REVIEW

**BY PROF. DR. IVAN GATEV MARKOV**

**BY COMPETITION FOR ACADEMIC POSITION "PROFESSOR"**

**FIELD OF HIGHER EDUCATION 4. NATURAL SCIENCES, MATHEMATICS  
AND INFORMATICS**

**PROFESSIONAL STRAND 4.4. EARTH SCIENCES**

**(SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY, CULTURAL TOURISM AND REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT),**

**UNIVERSITY OF SHUMEN "BISHOP KONSTANTIN PRES LAVSKI",**

**STATE GAZETTE, ISSUE 41/ 03.06 .2022**

According to the announced by the University of Shumen "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski", a competition for "professor" in a scientific field - 4. Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics, professional strand - 4.4. Earth Sciences, (Social Geography, Cultural Tourism and Regional Development), published in State Gazette issue 41/03.06.2022, documents for participation were submitted by one candidate, **Associate Professor Dr. Veselin Penchev Petkov**. The submitted documents for participation in the competition meet the requirements of Art. 52. (3) of the Regulations for application of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), Shumen University "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski". By law, there was no plagiarism found. The required documents in the competition are presented. The report on the inoculmetric indicators of the candidate Associate Professor Dr. Veselin Penchev Petkov shows that the candidate has fulfilled the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the LDASRB. Of the required for Professional Strand 4.4. Earth Sciences - 600 points, candidate achieved 819.64 points. This gives me reason to accept that the competition procedure is lawful.

### **Candidate data.**

Veselin Penchev Petkov was born in 1990 in the town of Shumen. In 2014 he graduated from the University of Shumen "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski", specialty "Geography and Biology", Educational Qualification Degree "Bachelor". In 2015 he graduated with a degree in Cultural Tourism, Master's Degree, at Veliko Tarnovo University "St. St. Cyril and Methodius". In 2016 he received a Master's Degree in „Geography and Interactive Education“ at the University of Shumen "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski". From 2014 - 2016 he was a geography teacher. From 2016-2020 Is an assistant of economic geography at Shumen University "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski". Since February 2020 he has been appointed to the academic position "Lecturer".

In 2019 he received an ESD "Doctor" in Organization and Management outside the field of material production (social activities), with a defended dissertation on the topic: "Sociocultural aspects of cultural tourism in Shumen region", diploma No D-202/19.09.2019.

After a competition of 26.09.2020 he was appointed to the Academic Position "Associate Professor" in Professional Strand 4.4 Earth Sciences (Social and Economic Geography) in the Department of „Geography, Regional Development and Tourism“ of the University of Shumen "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski". In 2020, Associate Professor Dr. Veselin Petkov was elected Deputy Dean of Candidate Student Activity, Accreditation and Maintenance of The Quality of Training and Academic Staff of the Faculty of Natural Sciences – University of Shumen "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski".

### **Description of scientific papers**

A total of 32 publications are offered to participate in the competition for academic position "Professor". Of these, there are a total of 10 publications in a

global database and other indexed platforms. Of the total number of publications 2 are in a global database Web of Science and Scopus, and the other publications, 8 in: Scientific Journal - Impact Factor, Cosmos - Impact Factor, Eurasian Scientific Journal - Index, Scholar Article - Impact Factor, EBSCO, etc. The remaining 12 publications were published in non-indexed editions, with publications from their Title 10 as a result of exported reports in national and international forums and one monograph. Of the 32 publications proposed for the competition, seven are in a foreign language. In the group of textbooks and teaching aids are presents 6 pieces that have come out in the last 2 years and related to specific subjects from the curricula in the taught specialties (list of publications). The publications submitted for participation in the competition can be systematized in three main directions: Publications related to the study of Social, Medical and Cultural Geography, 13 in the list of publications No 1, 3, 9, 10, 15, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27, 30, 31, 32; Geography of Tourism. Cultural tourism No 4, 5, 6, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 22, 29; Regional development and other No 2, 7, 8, 11, 18, 23, 26, 28.<sup>1</sup>

In the Monograph Study "Cultural Geography" the author strives to give a different view of geographical knowledge, in anticipation of a new approach to regional sociocultural and demographic problems in the world and Bulgaria. It was developed in several thematic aspects, at first the author devoted space to theoretical stagings and concepts in cultural geography, and then consistently considered civilizations as part of the main branch in this science. The author also attempts a different view on topical topics such as consumption geography, conflict geography, culinary geography, social themes in which we live and are personally touched by our desires, habits and cultural differences. Following the occurrence of cultural geography, the author turned to founder Carl Soer, an American professor

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<sup>1</sup> The presented publications No 5, 13, 14, 25, 26, 27 before 2020 are not included in the list of publications for the participation of the candidate in the competition for the Academic Position "Associate Professor".

who for the first time laid the foundations for geographical research more closely tied to culture and the interaction of culture – environment and society and gives the treatise on the influence of the natural landscape and its modeling (its modification) by culture. Of interest is the approach of examining the concept of "image geography". Preliminary clarifications shall be made for the concept of 'image' and 'geographical image'. The author summarizes both the image as a category and the geographical image is dynamic, variable time and under the influence of various factors (political, humanitarian, mass catastrophes and other adverse phenomena, etc.). Analyzing the links between "geography of images" and tourist activities, concludes that the tourist image is a function of the geographical image, highlighting concepts such as "image" and "identity", categories too popular for tourist activities. This is one of the intersections of geography of images with tourist activities.

Part of the publications focuses on those within the scope of medical geography. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all mankind, but geographical research with its toolkit has something to contribute to the study of genesis, geography of prevalence, geographical and demographic feature of the disease, etc. Individual publications analyze both migrations as a basis for rapid time distribution, as well as demographic structures such as age and gender, settlements, etc. who manifest their territorial differentities and specificities. The proposed indicator "average morbidity density" is also cited in various thematic editions in Germany, China, Brazil, Mexico, Taiwan, etc. and is inherently of a contributing nature. The author also looks at issues such as - the main changes in the labour market since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, which most affect the mobility of the population, and this enters into a direct correlation with the tourism industry. There is also a focus on a little-explored problem, namely the primary

influence of the tourism industry on pandemics. Both the state of play on key indicators and a number of purely geographical aspects of the Pandemic have been analysed. These studies shall have the most pronounced individual handwriting in the applicant's scientific work during this period.

In publications related to tourist theme focuses on cultural tourism. The interconnections between cultural and culinary tourism are explored, yet not sufficiently appreciated in the system tourist activities. The author analyzes the possibility of development of culinary tourism as part of the culinary regional traditions of the territory, terminological problems of identity and including culinary identity.

According to him, looking at the past, in the roots of the separation of ethnographic regions also give us the opportunity to preserve the authentic Bulgarian "culinary heritage". In this he sees a kind of new alternative resource for tourism. Many cultural sites, rural territories are visited and each of them has its culinary feature. This would also add value to the already adopted alternative forms of tourism – rural, ecotourism, hiking, etc. In other publications, a sociocultural profile of tourists in Shumen region is made.

In publications with a regional focus the topical regional problems such as depopulation, the deteriorating balance of demographic structures in the town-village dichotomy are analyse. Urbanisation and the problems of major cities are also addressed. The assertion that differences in the qualification and working habits of human resources directly affect the sectoral specialisation of the holding of individual countries is of a sustainable nature. The author concludes that new research and application of an up-to-date scientific method and methodology are needed in the regionalization of the country. In the face of demographic crisis and economic decline, the discovery of "problem" areas is an important task of modern

geographic science. It reveals territorial disparities mostly in demographic and socio-economic development in separate "marginal" territories in Bulgaria: border, rural, mountainous, etc.

### **Contributions**

- A successful attempt has been made to explore aspects of cultural geography as part of economic and social geography. Her most up-to-date manifestations have been analyzed. The author makes a different reading of geographical knowledge, looking for a new approach to regional sociocultural and demographic problems in the world and Bulgaria
- Aspects of the geographical nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the role of medical geography in such studies are clarified. The COVID-19 pandemic affected all mankind, but geographical science has a toolkit for the study of genesis, geography of prevalence, geographical and demographic feature of the disease, etc. The author analyzes migrations as a basis for rapid time distribution, as well as demographic structures such as age and gender, settlements, etc. who manifest their territorial differentities and specificities.
- For the first time, the indicator "average morbidity density" was applied. The link "migration-infestation", the different manifestation of the pandemic in the village-town, has been revealed.
- There has been a successful attempt to clarify a hierarchical structure between cultural, culinary, alternative tourism. Emphasis is placed on culinary differences and culinary tourism.
- Specification of the profile of the tourist practicing cultural tourism for Shumen region.

- Territorial disparities are successfully revealed, especially in demographic and socio-economic development in separate "marginal" territories in Bulgaria: border, rural, mountainous, etc.

For participation in the competition for "Professor" Associate Professor Dr. Petkov offers a total of 53 citations, that brings to the candidate – 163 points. Structurally, they are allocated like this: two citations of 10 points in a referenced edition, 51 citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review – 153 points (reference to citations). Citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review prevail. This shows that the author is recognizable in the academic community.

Associate Professor Dr. Petkov has participated as a leader and participant in an international project „LET'S CYCLE AT THE BLACK SEA/LetsCYCLE“ under „Operational Program Black Sea Basin 2014-2020“, 2021, four national projects and eight internal university projects. He participates in a number of national and international scientific forums, as a lecturer and member of organizing committees. Member of the editorial board of seven collections. He leads a lecture course at Porto University, Portugal (Erasmus+).

### **Training and teaching activities**

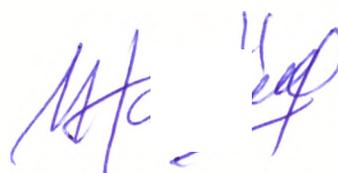
During the 2021/2022 study Associate Professor Dr. Veselin Petkov leads lecture, seminar and laboratory exercises in bachelor's degree in 12 subjects in the specialties "Geography and Biology", "History and Geography", "Geography and Regional Policy" and 6 disciplines in three master's programs, "Geography and Interactive Education", "Geography and GIS", "Regional Development and Tourism". Its audience load equated to exercise is 652 hours (reference workload). During the period after the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor", Associate Professor Dr. Veselin Petkov has developed 13 curricula in

disciplines in bachelor's degree and II in "Master". Associate Professor Dr. Veselin Petkov is the scientific leader of a PhD student in training. During the period he prepared 24 students for participation in scientific forums and conferences. Member of the Bulgarian Geographical Society. The lectures and seminar classes are accessible and attractive and are well received by students. The proposed textbooks and teaching tools are distinguished by the high scientific style and topicality of the proposed information.

### **Conclusion**

Associate Professor Dr. Veselin Petkov achieved 819.64 points from the 600 points required for Professional strand: Earth Sciences. It offers an audience activity that is distinguished by complexity and upgrade after the first habilitation. It enjoys authority among an academic community. Scientific leader of a PhD student. The proposed textbooks and teaching tools are distinguished by the accessibility and topicality of the proposed issue. Actively participates in project activities and scientific forums at different levels. **All this gives me reason to strongly support with "YES" the choice of Associate Professor Dr. Veselin Penchev Petkov to the academic position "Professor" in Professional strand: Earth Sciences (Social Geography, Cultural Tourism and Regional Development).**

26.08.2022



(Prof. Dr. Ivan Markov)