

WRITTEN STATEMENT

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vladislav Ognianov Milanov -

Lecturer in Modern Bulgarian Language at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"
in the procedure for the selection of an associate professor in 2.1 Philology - History of the
Modern Bulgarian Literary Language
for the needs of the Department of Modern Bulgarian Language at Shumen University
"Episkop Konstantin Preslavski"

I have been selected as the author of this position with an order from the rector of Shumen University, No. . I have familiarized myself with the entire documentation regarding the competition and confirm that the procedure complies with both the Law on Academic Development and the regulations for its implementation at Shumen University. As seen from the attached documentation, the sole candidate for the position is Dr. Ivo Bratanov. Colleague Bratanov has defended his doctoral dissertation under the scientific supervision of Prof. Kina Vachkova, which is one of the prerequisites that justify his participation in the competition. On the one hand, he continues her scientific school at Shumen University, and on the other hand, he clearly outlines his own contribution to the study of diverse issues related to the history of the modern Bulgarian literary language.

I will begin my position with a brief statement, which is more typical for the concluding part than for the introduction. Dr. Bratanov possesses an important characteristic that every modern researcher should have, namely the ability to identify contributory problems, to analyze them in-depth within a suitable theoretical context, and most importantly, not to be afraid to defend his own scientific position even when it is not in agreement with established scientific hypotheses. I hope that this understanding of science will be increasingly affirmed in Bulgarian linguistics because the dynamics of language determine the dynamics of linguistic typologies, linguistic generalizations, and analyses. Today, Bulgarian linguists need courage in order to defend their scientific contributions and engage in debates with established hypotheses, which often require reevaluation and contemporary new comments. On the other hand, Dr. Bratanov is a trained linguist who continues the line established by Prof. Vachkova, and I can categorically confirm that this line is original, contributory, and cannot be bypassed by any researcher in the field of the history of the modern Bulgarian literary language. This line examines complex language processes in the Bulgarian Renaissance within a broad theoretical context, including a wide range of comparisons with Slavic languages and through a thorough understanding of the Bulgarian theoretical framework that outlines the history of the modern

Bulgarian literary language as one of the most authentic linguistic disciplines. It is a science with its own toolkit that examines the development of all contemporary processes and scientific knowledge about them. With his scientific observations, Dr. Bratanov successfully joins a generation of linguists who not only laid the foundations of our scientific discipline but also developed it into a level of science that measures its achievements against the best practices in world historical and contemporary linguistics. Even the fact that the scientific contributions from the history of the modern Bulgarian literary language are used by both language history specialists and experts in modern Bulgarian language is categorical evidence of the increasingly blurred boundaries between synchrony and diachrony, which are encountered and conditioned in every modern and adequate study of language processes to provide an accurate and scientifically sound description of language processes.

The articles in Dr. Bratanov's collections and his linguistic notes confirm his enduring interest in the history of the modern Bulgarian language, placing the topics of his research interests in a broad comparative and interdisciplinary context. If I have any remark regarding his work in this regard, it is not related to the substance of the texts and their depth, but rather the recommendation to publish them in scientific journals with a wider scientific readership or in foreign scientific publications. This will allow more readers interested in this issue to become acquainted with his observations and scientific conclusions, to use them in their work, and to refer to them.

I would like to emphasize that through his texts, Dr. Bratanov emerges as a researcher with broad interests, and in my opinion, this should be a characteristic of every contemporary linguist. The tendency towards excessive specialization in the professional field has its advantages, but our scientific object—the language—is not a fragmented phenomenon, and the scales of its dynamics determine the scales of research inquiries. The linguist cannot confine themselves, just as language and the science about it cannot. This especially applies to specialists in the history of the modern Bulgarian literary language, who are familiar with synchronous and diachronic processes and incorporate them into their research in order to reach the level of scientific maturity that few Bulgarian linguists achieve. An influential contribution to such a level is, for example, the contribution of Prof. Ivan Haralampiev, who, through the prism of historical developmental tendencies, makes an exceptionally successful attempt to unfold the future of certain forms based on solid theoretical and practical observations of their development.

In order to avoid repetitions through the generalizations of facts, which the reviewers elaborate on in more detail, I would like to add a very important characteristic that is necessary

but unfortunately rarely found in Bulgarian linguists today—to popularize their observations and reach a wide range of language users. Dr. Bratanov achieves this through his linguistic notes, which, besides being very successful in terms of their thematic content, are presented in a thorough and persuasive manner. Here, I can confidently summarize that colleague Bratanov has achieved the same influence that the texts of Prof. Vladko Murdarov have on language users. And yes, this is not a desk job but a mission that few Bulgarian linguists have fulfilled, understanding one of the most complex tasks of the linguist—not just to describe, but to be useful to the language user.

The monograph with which the candidate presents himself in the competition is on the topic "Literary Language Models in the Ruse Literary Environment during the Revival." In my opinion, the title needs clarification. The choice of the topic is significant to the extent that it is time for researchers in the history of the modern Bulgarian literary language to shed light on the personalities and works of the Revival period writers who have not yet fallen within the scope of scientific interest. I strongly support this approach because in recent years, the focus of my own interests has been directed towards poorly researched texts by Revival period writers that have remained on the periphery of researchers. Without repeating the conclusions outlined in the review, I will attempt to arrange the contributions based on my own understanding:

1. A successfully selected object of study;
2. Classical analysis, convincingly placed within the tradition of previous studies, especially in the paradigm of the scientific directions of Prof. Kina Vachkova;
3. The linguistic analysis is precise, with few omissions, encompassing all characteristic language processes reflecting the literary language practice of the Revival period writers;
4. Successful use and imposition of terminology with a less popular character;
5. Contribution to the study of writers and their work, which have been under-researched in the history of the New Bulgarian Literary Language; This refers to a major theme that interests me as a researcher: does a core exist, and what does the periphery represent during the Bulgarian National Revival in linguistic terms? Dr. Bratanov's monograph partially answers my questions by explaining the role of Paraskev Damyanovich and Hristaki Draganovich and by examining poorly researched documents from the archive of the Ruse Literary Society "Zora."

In conclusion, I would like to note that the texts presented by the candidate for the competition exceed the requirements for this degree in some respects. The scientific contributions clearly demonstrate Dr. Bratanov's prominent position among researchers of the history of the New Bulgarian Literary Language, alongside Prof. Andreychin, Prof. V. Popova, Prof. Rusinov, Prof. Hr. Parvev, Prof. B. Valchev, Prof. D. Ivanova, Prof. Kina Vachkova, Prof. N. Nikolova, Prof. VI. Murdarov, and others.

The scientific contributions and his ability to defend positions in science with his own style, rather than as a retelling of scientific hypotheses, working with material, sensitivity towards important topics for the history of the literary language, and last but not least, the popularization of language-related issues relevant to Bulgarians in the public sphere, are sufficient grounds for me to vote IN FAVOR of awarding the title of Associate Professor to Dr. Ivo Bratanov.

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City of Sofia

Prepared by:

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