

Statement

About the procedure for a "Professor" selection in the professional field 2.3 Philosophy, the scientific specialty Philosophy of Culture, Law, Economics and Politics, for the needs of the Social Theories, Strategies and Prognoses department of the Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge at BAS (ISSK-BAS) published in Bulgarian State Gazette, № 5 of 15 January 2019

Member of the Scholar Jury: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mila Mileva Maeva, IEFSEM - BAS (under Order № ПД-09-231 from 25 March 2019)

In the announced for the needs of the Social Theories, Strategies and Prognoses department of the Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge at BAS (ISSK – BAS) for an academic position "Professor" participates just one candidate – Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Yordanova Todorova. She submitted the required documents and materials, as well as additional information about part of the activities she has performed as a scholar, expert and supervisor. The materials are convincing and show that Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Yordanova Todorova meets the minimum requirements for acquiring the prestigious position of Professor as laid down in the Bulgarian Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations thereto, and the order for acquiring academic degrees and for occupying academic positions at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the Regulations of the Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge at BAS (ISSK-BAS), regarding the conditions and order for acquiring academic degrees and for occupying academic positions and the Rules of the Scholar Council of the ISSK - BAS. The course of the procedure until the drafting of this Opinion as a whole is fair to the current legislation. I also declare that I am not related to the applicant within the meaning of § 1, item 5 of the Supplementary Provisions of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRARSR) and I have no private interest in the procedure or with the applicant could affect my objectivity as a member of the scientific jury.

Candidate Assoc. Prof. Bogdana Todorova obtained Master Degrees in Philosophy and French Philology at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski" in 1994 and Ph.D. in Philosophy at Institute of Philosophic Researches – BAS (IPhR – BAS) in 2002. Since 2002, she has been in

full-time work at IPR – BAS / since 2010 – ISSK – BAS. In 2010, the candidate successfully habilitated in Philosophy according to the decision of Bulgarian High Attestation Committee from 5 January 2011. In 2015 Bogdana Todorova became a DSc in philosophical sciences at VTU "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" with a thesis "The Islamic Factor in Bulgaria and Europe – Trends and Challenges".

Committed tightly with research Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Todorova affirmed her name as a vivid interpreter of the philosophical aspects of classical and modern Islam. She is a recognizable scientist both in Bulgaria and abroad, which has a high potential for successful development.

Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Yordanova Todorova participates in the procedure with scholar production, which is original and does not repeat the published papers for obtaining the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" and for the taken academic degree "Associate Professor". It includes 2 books (1 in Bulgarian and 1 in English) and 2 books in co-authorship, 4 articles published in world scientific databases (2 of which co-authored), 6 studies in journals with scientific review and in edited collections, 5 articles published as reference and indexed publications in scientific information databases, 14 articles in unrefined journals with scientific review and in edited collections. The presented studies cover different stages of the academic research of the candidate, which show the scholar development, and are only part of the rich scholar production of Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Yordanova Todorova. The scholar publications included in this procedure show a clearly defined and deeply researched and analyzed scholar field that covers different aspects of Islam both at national and global level. The research focuses on various but current issues of democratization, religious identity, secularization and fundamentalism of Muslims in Europe and Asia. In addition, it should be noted that the applicant has presented a list of 23 citations in Bulgaria and abroad, published in the reference referee and non-referee publications.

Among the scholar publications of Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Todorova should be mentioned her book "The Objectifying of Islam". It is a result of her long research on the topic and it is a comprehensive study of Islam in a global context and conceptualizes the applicant's key scientific contributions. The books consider the objection of Islam as a process through the prism of moving away from classical tradition and changing the attitude towards religious authority. The study reflects the philosophical point of view of Islam from the point of view of

contemporary formulations regarding Islamism, modernism and the specific Shi`a "Velayat-e-Faqih".

The author tracks and analyzes Islamic political activism in the Middle East. Particular attention is paid to "black" and "red Islam" as the new Sunni-Shi`a opposition. B. Todorova's important conclusions are related to Islamism and its threats to the rest of the Muslims as well as to the Muslims themselves by removing them from modern trends in society, turning them into the opposition of the official secular status, stimulating xenophobic sentiment, strengthening terrorism, and not least, contributes to his identification with the whole of Islam. Particularly negative, Islamism affects "domestic Islam" as part of the cultural and historical heritage of communities because it contributes to its gradual change and demolition.

In the book, Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Todorova notes the mechanisms of influence of Islam on contemporary politics, such as the demographic factor (connected with the increase of Muslims on a global scale), the strong mission activity, the religious commitment of religion and politics (formation of political affiliation the economic power of the Muslim countries and, last but not least, the ideology predetermined by the disappointment and hostility of the people towards the neoliberal economy. The author's conclusion regarding the religion of Muslims is two-way, but interest is the view of strengthening the influence of Sufism on a global scale, especially in South Asia, as well as the emergence of new hybrid, recultivating Islamic forms that will continue to influence on the confessional identity of believers in the world.

One of the important scholar contributions of Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Todorova is the consideration of Islam as a societal project with its own value system for organizing society and as a political construct uniting the traditional values and processes of social, economic and political renewal.

The applicant's studies show remarkable knowledge of the trends in modern Islam and build a comprehensive picture of the problems in a global context. My recommendation was to continue and deepen the research by the oral history method and at the local level, not only in the Eastern Rhodopes but also abroad. This would help to make an even clearer look, more concrete, and strengthen the candidate's conclusions.

Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Todorova has a remarkable international presentation of her scholar achievements, which is visible in the presented list of participations in 35 international

and 21 national scholar forums in the last 10 years. She has two specializations in Slovenia and Iran, which undoubtedly contributed to her development.

The candidate has practical experience as head of the Social Theories, Strategies and Prognoses department of the Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge at BAS (ISSK – BAS) since 2015 until now. In the period 2008-2012 she is a Head of the Department of Anthropology and Religious Studies at IPhR – BAS. Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Todorova holds 3 lecture courses at Varna Free University “Chernorizets Hrabar” (each 30 hours) in 2011-2013. She was a scholar consultant for a PhD student who successfully defended at Kiev University in Ukraine. Assoc. Dr. DSc. Bogdana Todorova is a consultant of the Directorate of Religious Denominations at the Bulgarian Council of Ministers.

Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Todorova participates in two major international projects under FP6 and FP7 and manages a team of a national project funded by NSF.

Conclusion

The circumstances and findings presented in this Opinion reflect my assessment of the compliance of the application with the national standards for the acquisition of the academic title "Professor". The high assessment of the applicant's research, scientific and administrative work and the undoubted scientific contributions make it possible for me to recommend the members of the scientific jury to support the candidate. My opinion on this academic development case is POSITIVE and I am voting with YES on the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. DSc. Bogdana Yordanova Todorova for "Professor" in the professional field 2.3 Philosophy, the scientific specialty Philosophy of Culture, Law, Economics and Politics, for the needs of section "Social Theories, Strategies and Prognoses" of the Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. I also call on the members of the Scientific Council of the Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences to vote in favor of this procedure.

Sofia

30 April 2019

Associate Professor Mila Mileva Maeva