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| БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ                  |                    |
| ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИСТОРИЧЕСКИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ            |                    |
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## OPINION

by Prof. Mancho Vekov, DSc.

Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS)

For the competition for academic position “Associate Professor”

in professional field 2.2. History and archaeology, scientific specialty “Documentation Studies, Archival Studies, Paleography (incl. Historiography and Source Studies)” for the needs of the “Auxiliary historical sciences and informatics” section of the Institute of Historical Studies, announced in the State Gazette no. 53 of 09.06.2026.

The only candidate in the announced competition is Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Strahil Valentinov Panayotov. The documents and scientific materials submitted by him fully comply in administrative, formal, and legal terms with the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADSRB), the Regulations for its implementation, and the relevant regulations of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the Institute for Historical Studies. The candidate's scientific output quantitatively and qualitatively covers and exceeds the required criteria for holding the academic position of “associate professor”.

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Strahil Panayotov is an established and internationally recognized scholar in the field of Assyriology, cuneiform epigraphy, paleography, and the history of ancient medicine and magic. His academic development has passed through leading world centers. He obtained a master's degree in Assyriology in 2009 at the Ruperto Carola University in Heidelberg, Germany (with the support of the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes scholarship). In 2014, he defended his doctoral dissertation in Sofia, dedicated to Mesopotamian amulets and clay monuments. In the period 2013-2018, he was a postdoctoral fellow and research associate at the Free University of Berlin (Freie Universität Berlin) on the ERC project *BabMed* under the supervision of Prof. M. Geller. From 2020 to 2023, he held the position of Curator of Assyrian Medicine at the British Museum in London. Since 2022, he has been a senior assistant professor in the section “Ancillary Historical Sciences and Informatics” at the Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

The candidate participated in the competition with over 15 scientific papers published after the defense of his doctorate in refereed publications in world databases (Scopus and Web of Science) and in renowned academic series (Brill, De Gruyter). His research enjoys a wide international response and active citation.

The main habilitation work is the monograph “Mesopotamian Eye Disease Texts: The Nineveh Treatise” (De Gruyter, 2020), co-authored with Prof. M. Geller. The work is a completely original research project, independent of his dissertation. The monograph is a large-scale epigraphic and paleographic study of Akkadian and Sumerian medical cuneiform tablets from the Royal Library of Ashurbanipal in Nineveh (7th century BC), stored in the British Museum. The Nineveh Treatise on Eye Diseases under review is the longest preserved ancient medical text on eye pathology, predating the Hippocratic Corpus by centuries.

As part of the co-authorship, Dr. S. Panayotov has carried out the full cycle of processing the sources – identification, decipherment, transliteration, translation, philological and paleographic commentary, joining of material fragments (joins), as well as recording of the epigraphic material in the British Museum. The candidate has compiled over 450 pages of analytical text, including a specialized list of sumerograms/logograms, which is the first paleographic list for medical cuneiform treatises.

Among his other publications, research on prayer texts, ancient catalogs, magical calendars, and comparative analyses of Mesopotamian medicine, demonology, and epidemiology in Antiquity stand out.

Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Strahil Panayotov also develops active teaching activities as the author and instructor of the courses “Introduction to Assyriology”, “Akkadian Language”, and “History and Culture of Ancient Mesopotamia” at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” and New Bulgarian University, in which he innovatively combines classical philology with digital humanities.

The presented materials reveal the candidate as a well-established scholar of high international rank, with precise source methodology and impeccable language preparation.

All this gives me full reason to confidently give my positive assessment and to recommend to the Scientific Council of IHS - BAS to elect Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Strahil Valentinov Panayotov to the academic position of “associate professor”.

Date: 08.09.2026 г.

Sofia

Author of the Opinion: .....

(Prof. Mancho Vekov, DSc.)