

STATEMENT of OPINION

By

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Dimitrova Dimitrova, M Arch.,

Professional area 5.7. Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy,

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On

the scientific works and artistic production presented in the competition for the academic position of associate professor, in Professional area 5.7. Architecture, Civil Engineering, and Geodesy (Architectural technologies), published in SG no. 65/12.08.2022, with candidate

Chief Assistant Dr Plamen Mihailov Rilsky

I. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University

The materials presented by Dr Plamen Rilsky convincingly meet the minimum requirements of the current Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations on its Application, and the Ordinance on Academic Staff Development at the NBU for occupying the academic position of "docent" (associate professor). While 570 points are required when assessing the scientific, teaching and creative activities, the candidate has provided evidence in support 856 points, as follows:

Group of indicators	Content	Associate Professor	Indicator points in the reference table
A / A	Indicator 1	50	50
Б / B	Indicator 2	0	0
В / C	Indicators 3 or 4	100	100
Г / D	Sum of indicators 5 to 11	200	450
Д / E	Sum of indicators 12 to 15	50	56
Е / F	Sum of indicators 16 to 28	0	0
Ж / G	Sum of indicators 29 to the bottom	50	70
З / I	(mandatory for NBU)	70	80
И / J		50	50

II. Research and creative activities and results

1. Assessment of the monographic work, creative activities or other publications corresponding in volume and completeness to a monographic work, including an assessment of the scientific and applied-research contributions of the author.

The presented monographic work explores the creation of an adequate living environment for people "in the third age" (65+ years of age) thus being an expression of respectable social sensitivity of the author and long-term professional interest in a significant topic of European importance and of growing urgency in Bulgaria.

The specific requirements on the living comfort formulated in the monographic work are logically derived from the estimated public need for full integration of people of the high age groups (65+) in the life of society, but they also relate to the more general topic of the possible contribution of architecture to achieving a higher quality of life. The integral treatment of the functional, compositional, and construction aspects in the spatial organization of the physical environment allows for the trends and achievements in the development of design and

technologies to be critically conceptualized and the basic principles of the construction of buildings and complexes - from their location in the urban environment and the determination of their functional structure to the interior design, to be logically followed. The outlined principles are convincingly supported by comprehensively examined and analyzed cases from European and world architectural practice, among which some Bulgarian casestudies have been integrated. Thus, the theoretical approach is successfully illustrated, and the published habilitation thesis also provides useful methodological guidance for a broad range of institutions and experts involved nowadays in the planning, design and management the environment for people of the “third age”.

It is worth explicitly mentioning the author’s aspiration to cover the topic in its integrity and complexity, linking and deepening the theoretical and applied research from the PhD thesis defended in 2013 into the subsequent monographic work published in 2018. Thus, the habilitation work becomes a next step of the diligently followed individual research program of the author for more than 20 years, aimed at clarifying the theoretical basis of the spatial organization of an environment responding to specific needs, the systematization of a wide range of related topics and problems, and the critical interpretation of the latest global and European trends in the research field.

2. Evaluation of the contributions in other attached publications and creative works after the academic position "Chief assistant" has been acquired. It also includes an assessment of the peer review requirements met concerning the publications

The scientific publication entitled "Finishing coatings in homes for people of the third age", in the Collection of Scientific Publications of the NBU, vol. 6/ 2019-20 (a refereed edition) analyzes current European experience and systematizes recommended applications of floor and ceiling coverings and wall coatings in the studied buildings. It, thus, further develops the author's previous research and enriches his contribution to the body of knowledge about the architecture for people aged 65+.

The paper entitled "Conscious and UNconscious Principles in the Architecture of Classical Modernism", presented at the International Scientific Conference "100 years of Bauhaus", NBU 2019, and published later as an article of two parts (“The Birth of Classical Modernism” and “The underestimated Classical Modernism in Bulgaria”) in the Conference Proceedings "The Century of the BAUHAUS school' (a non-refereed peer-reviewed edition) indicates another field of the candidate’s research interests deserving explicit attention and respect. The paper and the publication are focused on the theoretical and practical understanding of the principles and cultural messages of classical Modernism in the architecture of early 20th century but also claiming the responsibility of contemporary Bulgarian society to protect the identity and authenticity of inherited architectural monuments of Modernism in the changing urban environment of today.

3. Citations by other authors

The information provided in the reference table indicates two citations of Dr Rilsky’s work in the monographic work of Kliment Ivanov entitled "High space in living rooms". The five reviews on realized interior design projects of Dr Rilsky, published in the specialized "Brava Casa" magazine in the period 2006-2016, have highly estimated the results of his creative work.

4. Assessment of the results of participation in research and creative projects and the practical application of these results.

Arch. Rilsky has been awarded full planning legal capacity by the Chamber of Architects in Bulgaria (CAB) and is the owner of a design office with a long-term successful design practice (Archibau Ltd, since 2003), which is indicative about acquired considerable professional experience. The presented 13 design projects (12 of them realized and in operation), structured

in several groups - residential buildings (single-family and multi-family with offices and commercial areas), public buildings, reconstructions + interior, and interiors, illustrate a wide range of creative interests and diverse areas of professional competence.

III. Teaching and training activities

1. Curricular and extracurricular activities, work in the "MOODLE-NBU" electronic training module, organization of student practices and internships, work with graduate and doctoral students.

The candidate has acquired significant teaching experience in the field of architectural technologies, which is successfully combined with his research interests and his design activity. This could be considered a good prerequisite for in-depth knowledge and understanding of modern construction trends, which has been utilized in the development of a new training course ("Specialized zones - Business Park" ARCM059) and in the upgrading of the lecturing and training courses in "Building construction" (1st and 2nd part) and "Architectural structures" (1st and 2nd part). The materials for all the courses developed by the candidate have been uploaded to the NBU's Moodle electronic training module. It should be noted that arch. Rilsky has been also involved as a trainer in the "Teachers' Cafe" program (training of teachers for working with Moodle). The practice provided for 3 students in the Archibau Ltd office alongside the work done in supporting NBU students' preparation for participating in an international student competition for a museum building in Buenos Aires, Argentina, are indicative for the candidate's responsible attitude and full commitment to the overall professional development of his students.

2. Work with Erasmus students.

Although the reference provides no information about the candidate's work with foreign students, a personal conversation confirmed a considerable interest among foreign students from the ERASMUS program at NBU for joining Dr Rilsky's courses.

3. Student survey ratings

According to the provided reference, the teaching work of arch. Rilsky is very positively evaluated in student surveys (rating above 4.00).

IV. Administrative and public activity

1. Participation in collective management bodies of the NBU.

No information has been provided regarding the applicant's participation in collective management bodies of the NBU

2. Public activities.

No information has been provided regarding the candidate's public activity.

3. Attracting students to the Program.

No information has been provided regarding students enrolled in the NBU program

V. Personal impression of the candidate (if any)

My personal impressions of arch. Rilsky are only related to our contacts in relation to the present procedure. I highly appreciate his responsible and accurate attitude in providing the necessary materials. The candidate has demonstrated abundant and diverse professional experience and high competence in the field of architectural technologies; he has convincingly expressed his motivation to apply them in addressing significant societal challenges. This gives a good reason to expect further fruitful academic development based on successful integration of research, teaching and design activity.

VI. Opinion, recommendations and notes on the activity and achievements of the candidate

I would strongly recommend Dr Rilsky a greater initiative and persistence in his publication activity in the country and abroad, which would also contribute to a broader recognition of his achievements in the fields of research, design, and teaching.

A conclusion, with a clearly formulated positive or negative assessment of the candidate's academic activity and a proposal for his admission or non-admission to selection by the Academic Council.

Based on my positive assessment of the candidate's overall academic and creative activity, resulting from the analysis of the submitted materials and all the accessible supporting information, I strongly recommend that Dr. Arch. **Plamen Mihailov Rilsky** be admitted to an election procedure by the Academic Council of NBU for the academic position of "associate professor" in Professional Area 5.7. Architecture, Civil Engineering, and Geodesy (Architectural Technologies).

Date 25/11/ 2022

Signed:

Elena Dimitrova