

PEER REVIEW

by Prof. Todor Aleksandrov Kirov, Ph.D.

dean of the Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography
at AMDFA “Prof. Asen Diamindiev” – Plovdiv,

on the creative activities of Sen.Asst. Danka Yordanova Tsvetkova, Ph.D,
applicant in a procedure

for awarding the academic position of Associate Professor

in the academic major of Folk Singing and its Teaching Methods

in Professional Code 8.3. Musical and Dance Art,

at Musical Folklore Department, Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography,
AMDFA “Prof. Asen Diamindiev” – Plovdiv

The applicant, Danka Yordanova Tsvetkova, participates in the procedure for awarding the position of an associate professor with rich creative results. Her creative path is characterized by many years of dedication to performing, pedagogical, conducting, and research work in the field of Bulgarian folklore music.

Danka Tsvetkova was born on 01.09.1967 in the Village of Krasново, Plovdiv Province. Her folk singing training began in 1982 at Secondary Music School in the Village of Shiroka Laka village and ended in 1991 after graduating from the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv (AMDFA) – Plovdiv with two Master's Degrees – Folk Singing Performer and Teacher, and Folklore Choirs Conductor.

After graduating in 1991, she has been worked for 4 years as a conductor with the Sliven Folk Song and Dance Ensemble, 6 years as soloist and choir singer in the AMDFA folklore choir, and since 2011 she is a full-time lecturer in folk singing, vocal educator and assistant conductor of the Academic Folk Choir at the Academy.

The activities performed by Danka Tsvetkova Ph.D. can be divided in several fields: performer, conductor, pedagogy, and academic research. Under the conditions of the procedure for awarding the academic position and in compliance with Art. 26, Para 1 of the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria Act, she submitted documents and studies, research and creative achievements published after defending her doctoral degree thesis (i.e. after 2014). Her creative biography includes:

1 – Concert activity

= 38 concerts in Bulgaria

= 14 concerts abroad

2 – Teaching

= Comprehensive work on vocal and staging issues, and the interpretation of the separate folklore singing styles with her Bulgarian and international students.

= 8 workshops in Denmark, Sweden, and Canada

= annual master classes in folk singing at the National Arts School “Prof. Veselin Stoyanov”, Ruse

- = 11 concerts by her students
- 3 – Scientific publications
 - = 3 published books (monograph studies)
 - = 2 articles (in Music Horizons Journal and the AMDFA Yearbook)
 - = 4 collections of folk songs
- 4 – CDs released
 - = 2 CDs abroad
 - = 4 CDs in Bulgaria
- 5 – Awards
 - = 9 certificates
 - = 4 diplomas
 - = 4 awards, of which 2 gold medals and the title World Champion and Grand Prix awarded at the World Choral Olympiad in Graz, Austria

According to Art. 15, Para. 4 of the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria Act, this collection of creative achievements is sufficient, even more so – it has made a significant contribution in terms of promoting the achievements in Bulgarian folklore singing in Bulgaria and abroad. It also corresponds with her pedagogical activity and helps improve skills and achieve high artistic mastery of the students and choirs she works with.

Danka Tsvetkova's teaching activity began in 1996 as a part-time lecturer at AMDFA and continued onwards without interruption as full-time assistant and senior assistant. An indicator of the advanced level of her educational process is the artistic and creative output by her students, the awards from various contest, and their subsequent realization as teachers and performers of Bulgarian folklore music.

According to Art. 24, Para 1, It. 3 of the same Act, Tsvetkova submitted the theoretical and practical study “The known and unknown male folklore performances in the Sliven region” as her habilitation work. In her creative path, Danka Tsvetkova, became a distinguished folk singer, concert performer, folk singing teacher, conductor of folk choir, and theorist. It is only logical to assume that she is the one expert, who is capable to answer questions related to folk singing, and in particular to make a comparative analysis of male folk singing in one particular region of Bulgaria.

Her monograph study is structured in three parts: geographical, historical and ethnographic data for the Sliven region; analysis of the regional peculiarities of musical folklore, style and the traditional singing pattern; an overview of the current theoretical studies. The focus of the study is on the style and performing pattern of male folk singing in this region, an attempt to find its place in the Bulgarian lifestyle is made, a comparative analysis between the male and the female folk singing as a physiological process on the one hand, and on the other – as ritual, domestic, ornamental and regional specificity with the relevant conclusions was made. Of particular importance is the differentiation of the Sliven male folk singing at various stages, including analysis of style and pattern of singing of each of the performers (illustrated with music sheets examples), as well as tracking the generational continuity.

Until now, male folk singing has stood away from the focus of the researchers and folklorists in Bulgaria, and especially with regard to the style and pattern of singing in the different regions and the individual singers. The monograph study “The known and unknown male folklore performances in the Sliven region” is a necessary scientific study, and every scientific research, including this one, leads to the establishment of regularities and scientifically applicable conclusions. It is assumed that this study will bring new light to the overall picture of the male folk singing in the Sliven region, and will give motivation for more extensive folklore studies in this and other Bulgarian regions. This will help to know better and will contribute to the conservation of the Bulgarian musical folklore and the folklore traditions in general.

Danka Tsvetkova's activity is of a large volume, diverse and meaningful. For more than 27 years she has been professionally involved with performing, teaching and conducting work in the field of musical folklore. And this is well documented with visual materials and backed by the talent and skills of her students. Tsvetkova definitely has the necessary qualities and experience as a performer, teacher and conductor, as well as academic research skills.

Based on above and on the grounds of the presented habilitation materials, I hereby propose to the honorable scientific jury to award Sen.Asst. Danka Yordanova Tsvetkova, Ph.D. with the academic position of Associate Professor in the academic major of Folk Singing and its Teaching Methods.

14.08.2019

Prof. Todor Kirov, Ph.D.