

## PEER REVIEW

by

Prof. Dr. Zhelka Tabakova

in connection with competition

for occupation of the academic position of **“Associate Professor”**

under Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts” /specialty “Ballet Art”/

announced in State Gazette, Issue 52 dated 05.07.2022

to the Choreography Department /Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography/

Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv

### ***Candidate: Assistant Dr. Elitsa Petrova Lukanova***

In connection with the competition for occupation of the academic position “Associate Professor”, the materials submitted by Assistant Dr. Elitsa Lukanova meet the requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. They prove the high professional training and consistent growth of the candidate. All stages of purposeful and fruitful work in the field of ballet art and pedagogical work have been passed.

#### ***Education***

Elitsa Lukanova is a specialist in classical dance, who has connected her development with the most prestigious educational institutions in Bulgaria and Russia. She received secondary special education at the State Choreographic School (today National School of Music and Dance) in Sofia until 1984 and graduated from the Agrippina Y. Vaganova Leningrad State Choreographic School (today Agrippina Y. Vaganova Academy of Russian Ballet – St. Petersburg) in 1987.

In 1995, Dr. Lukanova graduated “Ballet Pedagogy” with the qualification “Ballet Pedagogue and Tutor” at Prof. Pancho Vladigerov National Academy of Arts in Sofia.

She defended her doctoral degree at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv in 2019 on the topic **“Creation, Development and Comparative Analysis of the Italian, French, Danish, and Russian Ballet Schools”**.

#### ***Carrier***

Elitsa Lukanova had a 27-year successful career as a ballerina in the Sofia Opera and Ballet in the period from 1988 until 2015. In parallel, she carried out pedagogical activities as an Assistant in Classical Dance at the National School of Music and Dance. Since 2016, she has been a part-time Assistant at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv, where she teaches “Fundamentals of Classical Dance” and “Methodology of Classical Dance Teaching”, and since 01.09.2017 she has been a member of the Educational Activities Department. Simultaneously with this activity, since 2017 Dr. Lukanova has been a Ballet Pedagogue-Choreographer of the Bulgarian Women Rhythmic Gymnastics National Ensemble – an ensemble of women with the Bulgarian Rhythmic Gymnastics Federation.

**Documents** related to the procedure for participation in the competition for occupation of the academic position “Associate Professor” are presented: Scientific table; Habilitation work

- monograph; Teaching activity.

I. According to the scientometric table, the candidate covers the required activities and points for Associate Professor according to the following indicators:

Indicator A/item 1/ - Educational and scientific degree "Doctor" (50 points);

Indicator C/item 3/ - Monograph (main habilitation thesis): *"Influence of the Russian Ballet School on the Development of Ballet Art in Bulgaria in the 20th century"*, published by Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv, 2022, p. 173// ISBN 978-619-7682-08-3 (100 points);

Indicator D/item 7/ - published book based on a defended dissertation work for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor": *"Creation, Development and Comparative Analysis of the Italian, French, Danish, and Russian Ballet Schools"*, Plovdiv, Color Print BG, 2022, p. 208/ ISBN 978-954-2963-00-4; **item 9** - three publications after the defense of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"; and item 14 - indicated participation in the ballet "Giselle", music by Adolf Adam, Sofia Opera and Ballet, 22.10. 2021 (130 points)

Indicator E/item 17/ - five citations (50 points)

Indicator F/item 22/ - two participations in Academy projects; **item 28** - a seminar for rhythmic gymnastics competitors in the Bulgarian Rhythmic Gymnastics Federation (50 points)

The candidate collects a total of 380 points out of the required 360, which is quite sufficient for the legitimacy of the procedure.

**II. Contributions of the candidate.** For the main habilitation thesis, Elitsa Lukanova presents a monograph in the relevant scientific field: *"Influence of the Russian Ballet School on the Development of Ballet Art in Bulgaria in the 20th century"*, published by Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv, 2022, p. 173// ISBN 978-619-7682-08-3.

In the presented study, Assistant Dr. Lukanova examines the problematic of ballet historiography in Bulgaria through a new prism. In Bulgarian ballet studies, there are works in which different episodes of the creation of ballet art in our country are highlighted. Dr. Elitsa Lukanova correctly notes them in the Bibliography and refers to them in her work. She herself indicates her contributions as follows. Quote: *"The search, summarization, and systematization of the existing printed materials, given that in the State Archives, the archive of the National Opera, the National School of Music and Dance and many theaters in the country is scarce and incomplete, what is reflected in the present work has a great contribution nature"*.

In addition to the historical and chronological presentation of the material, useful conclusions and summaries are also made. Facts are presented - biographical and creative, about the constellation of leading dancers and choreographers who participated in the establishment of classical dance and productions that marked the direction of the future development of the Bulgarian ballet theater - classical and national repertoire, such as music, choreography and aesthetics. E. Lukanova indicates in the contributions the following: *"The writing about the figures of the Bulgarian folk dance, as well as about the first representatives of the Western modern (plastic) dance in Bulgaria, who contributed to the formation of the Bulgarian ballet, can be counted as a contribution"*.

The paper analyzes the work of Soviet choreographers - the scope, scale, and

professionalism with which they work, as a result of which an indisputably high level has been achieved in the Bulgarian ballet theater.

The research contains the most unknown information in a historical context about the initial years of ballet training in our country in the professionally organized structure – the State Choreographic School in 1951, about the selection, the organization, the first graduates, and the first teachers.

For the first time, the biography and activities of the Russian teacher Vladimir Beliy – a like-minded person and associate of the Bulgarian ballet dancers in creating a professional school of classical ballet in our country and its first director – are extensively illuminated. This is a quote from the contributions provided by the author E. L. in the documentation: “... *The data is enriched and compared with the memories of some of his first graduates, as we must emphasize his great influence and merits for the formation of the professional outlook of a number of choreographers in Bulgaria*”.

The monograph on Bulgarian ballet and the influence of the Russian school is structured according to chronology, and not according to sections – performers, teachers, choreographers (Russian and Bulgarian), titles (Russian and Bulgarian), because in the biographies of all individuals these activities are intertwined and mutually penetrate. That is why it is quite difficult to summarize the information with which Dr. Elitsa Lukanova successfully coped.

The work is voluminous and comprehensive and contains 179 pages. The bibliography contains 21 titles related to the topic and 23 from periodical sources and interviews

**III.** In connection with her teaching activity, Dr. Lukanova's workload exceeds the norm from 420 hours to 524 hours.

Dr. Elitsa Lukanova leads 5 main disciplines in the specialty Ballet Pedagogy: “History of Dance”, “Classical Repertoire Ballet Heritage”, “Methodology of Classical Dance Teaching”, “Patterns of Dances in Opera and Ballet Performances”, and “Fundamentals of Classical Dance”.

In 2010 she held a master class at the University of Tampa (Tampa, Florida, USA). In 2015, at the invitation of Mimar Sinan Fine Art University, Istanbul, Turkey, Dr. Lukanova led a ballet seminar with students in the II, III, IV and V courses of ballet and staged the third scene from the classical ballet “Don Quixote” – edited and staged by Prof. Petar Lukanov, with the participation of all the graduates of the Ballet Department.

**Other activities:** She has repeatedly been a member and chairman of international juries of various dance and ballet qualifications and competitions in Bulgaria, as well as member of expert groups on accreditations of higher education institutions.

**Recommendations:** As an addition, I would like to recommend to her to indicate the names of the choreographers who realized the titles of the ballets for the first time – analyzed in the work, on the Soviet stage, and not only those in Bulgaria, which will be a contribution to the overall history of ballet art.

The work of Assistant Dr. Elitsa Lukanova “*Influence of the Russian Ballet School on the Development of Ballet Art in Bulgaria in the 20th century*”, with the useful information and analysis contained therein, can serve as a textbook on the history of Bulgarian ballet. I recommend that it be published, which will enrich the scientific ballet literature in our country

by the new generation of researchers.

**Conclusion:** Assistant Dr. E. Lukanova is established as a lecturer in higher education at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv and meets the special needs of the Academy with her competences and activities in various main areas of Ballet Art. The presented monograph contributes to the history of Bulgarian ballet and can serve as a reliable source of information on the history of Bulgarian ballet.

Everything stated up to this point gives me reason to confidently propose to the Scientific Jury to award the academic position of “Associate Professor” to Assistant Dr. Elitsa Lukanova.

20.10.2022

Prof. Dr. Zh. Tabakova