

## **PEER REVIEW**

**by Prof. Dr. Svetla Kaludova-Stanilova**

under a procedure for occupation of the academic position “Professor” under field 8. “Arts”, Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”, specialty “Folk Singing and Methodology of its Teaching” for the needs of the Musical Folklore Department at the Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, announced in State Gazette, Issue 35/18.04.2023. A candidate for the competition is Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Petrova-Kirkova

In the announced by Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv competition for occupation of the academic position of “Professor” under field 8. “Arts”, Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”, specialty “Folk Singing and Methodology of its Teaching”, only one candidate participates – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Petrova-Kirkova. The documentation presented by her is a complete set and is in accordance with all the necessary requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for occupation of the academic position of “Professor”. All the documents that the procedure requires are presented (creative curriculum vitae, diplomas for completed higher education and for the acquisition of the scientific and educational degree “Doctor”, medical certificate, criminal record certificate, certificates for internship in the specialty and for teaching activity, reference for academic workload, scientometric table, as well as author reference for scientific contributions – works and citations). The habilitation materials contain comprehensive and correct information about the candidate’s scientific-research, artistic-creative, citations, and teaching-methodical activities. The submitted materials correspond to the scientific specialty, for which the competition was announced. They are the basis for my assessment as a reviewer. No plagiarism was established when reviewing the submitted materials.

### **Presentation of the candidate:**

The only candidate under the announced procedure is Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Petrova-Kirkova. I have known her since her student days. She graduated with Master’s degree in “Folk Singing” in my class. I have reviewed many of her publications, dissertation, and monograph. Over time, she established herself as a successful educator and researcher of musical folklore from her native region – Dobruzha. Here is a brief information from her biography. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Petrova-Kirkova was born in the City of General Toshevo, Dobrich District. She has been involved in music since early childhood – she played the rebec and sang folk songs at the Children’s Music School in the village of Kardam. In 1994 she graduated from Filip Kutev Secondary Music School in Kotel with specialty in “Rebec and Folk Singing”. From 1994 to 1998, Petrкова-Kirkova studied at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts and graduated with Bachelor’s degree in “Folk Ensembles Conducting”, additionally completing postgraduate qualification

in the specialty “Pedagogy of Music Education”. In the next two years, she graduated with Master’s degree in “Folk Singing and Rebec”. In 2015, as a doctoral student at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Galya Petrova-Kirkova successfully defended her dissertation on the topic: “Musical and Folkloric Heritage of Dobrudzha – Connection with the Ethno-Demographic State and Migration Processes” and received the educational and qualification degree “Doctor” under Professional field “Music and Dance Arts”. The professional path of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Petrova-Kirkova began as an artist and choir performed at Trakiya Folklore Ensemble (1998-2001), a vocal teacher at Lyuben Karavelov Secondary School in Plovdiv since 2001, as well as a part-time lecturer of “Rebec and Folk Singing” at Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University (2008-2013). Since 2010 after passing a competition, she was appointed as an Assistant in folk singing at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts; since 2016, as a Chief Assistant, and since 2018, as an Associate Professor. The teaching activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Petrova corresponds to the profile of the competition. She teaches folk singing in the specialties: “Performing Art – Folklore” and “Pedagogy of Music Education”, as well as in the Language and Specialized Training Department. She participates in academic structures, was the Secretary of the Musical Folklore Department, and is currently the Director of the Language and Specialized Training Department. She also participates in general academic projects. Her activity also has a high public recognition, expressed in her numerous awards as a performer, educator, as well as as a jury member in national and regional folklore art competitions. The presented report on the scientometric indicators and the attached evidentiary material show that the uniform state requirements for occupation of the academic position of “Professor” are fulfilled to a sufficient extent, covering equally several types of activities – scientific-research, artistic-creative, teaching-methodical, citations, social activity, and personal rewards.

### **Scientific-research activity**

The candidate’s participation in scientific forums, projects, and publications are numerous. A significant place in the scientometric table is allocated to the defended dissertation work (Indicator A – 50 points) on the topic: “*Musical and Folkloric Heritage of Dobrudzha – Connection with the Ethno-Demographic State and Migration Processes*”. In it, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Kirkova researches and examines in detail the specifics of the musical folklore heritage of Dobrudzha with opinions on its current state. The work is the first of its kind and a significant contribution to local history literature.

Emphasis in the proposed habilitation materials under the current procedure is the monographic work (Indicator C3 – 100 points) entitled “*Repertoire in Folk Singing Education*”. This work presents in its entirety the problems related to the repertoire for the education of the folk singer in modern times. The structure of the work is built based on theoretical and methodological research related to the problem. Also important for the development are the applied didactic principles for repertoire selection and their importance for the development of singers as performers and educators. It is no accident

that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Kirkova focuses on this topic, based on her many years of experience and practice as a teacher of folk singing at various levels of education. That is why the analytical approach proposed in the individual chapters is significant.

The work covers song sources and tools of different applicability and usefulness in the educational process. The path of the song is examined from the theoretical studies of folklorists and the numerous collections with samples from different parts of Bulgaria, through the creation of didactic literature, collections with piano accompaniment, and the problems with their application and performance today. Very valuable for the overall process of teaching folk singing is the detailed analysis presented of various collections of songs that have found wide use today in teaching folk singing in music schools, universities, and beyond. The principles of selection and arrangement of the repertoire in various tools are highlighted through specific indicators: methodical consistency, specificity and regional characteristics, performers, arrangements of different difficulty, etc. Collections of folk songs for mass musical education in the educational system have not been left out. Literature about the male voice is also purposefully presented, taking into account the peculiarities of sound extraction, tessitura, tonal range, and regional affiliation. A very important place in the work is occupied by the fourth chapter, related to "Reflection of modern trends in the development of folklore". In it, the influence of the socio-cultural environment, the media, the concert podium, the attitude of the public, and especially of the young generation studying musical folklore and folk singing in particular, is thoroughly examined. Current issues about the aesthetics of young talents, their searches in the sound environment, and the repertoire are touched upon. The presentation of the present monographic work is proof of the author's desire to follow the path of the song and outlines some future trends in its confirmation and development.

Five articles and reports published in specialized publications in the field of arts are presented in Indicator D9 (75 points). The issue they consider is related to the main research goals of Associate Professor Galya Kirkova regarding the repertoire in the teaching of folk singing. Other highlights are related to performance art, teaching methodology, and contemporary problems and trends in preserving the specificity of folk singing and its regional stylistic characteristics.

### **Artistic and creative activity**

The candidate's reference presents: (Indicator D13 – 35 points) Leading creative performance and (Indicator D14 – 20 points) Supporting creative performance, personal participation in musical projects, radio and television shows, released independent CD. Assoc. Prof. Kirkova also shows her creativity during participations in projects at an academic level; master classes presented in (Indicator E28, 8 pcs. – 160 points); productions and graduation concerts of students from her folk singing class, etc. Of interest are the organized creative meetings between students from Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts and students from the National

School of Folk Arts in the City of Kotel, as well as meetings with participants from the school of Tsvetelina Gramova in the City of Pirdop.

### **Teaching and methodical activity**

In her many years of teaching activity at Lyuben Karavelov Secondary School, Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University, and Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Assoc. Prof. Kirkova has asserted herself as a leading educator. With her skills as a performer and singer, she managed to inspire many young talents to turn professionally to musical folklore. At the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, she teaches the disciplines "Folk Singing" and "Pedagogical Practice". She also trains students from the "Folklore Arts" and "Pedagogy of Music Education" specialties, as well as students from the Language and Specialized Training Department. Many of its graduates regularly participate in national folk-art competitions. Among them there are laureates of prizes, as well as winners of special and prestigious awards. She is the author of the collection of songs with piano accompaniment "Milichka mi e Dobrudzha" and a collection of songs from the Dobrudzha region.

### **Citations**

In the scientometric table in Group of indicators E, the required points for the academic position "Professor" are 80 points. The candidate exceeds them and has 115 points. In "Citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review" 2 citations are indicated – 20 points; in item 18 "Citations or reviews in non-refereed journals with scientific review" 11 citations are indicated – 55 points, and in item 19 "Reviews of realized author's products or creative performances in specialized editions in the field of arts" 4 citations are indicated – 40 points. Assoc. Prof. Kirkova also has public recognition for her work. She has been honored with personal awards. Every year she is a member of the juries in a number of national competitions and festivals of folk singing. She is also a member of the Union of Bulgarian Musicians and Dancers and of the Academic Council of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, a Chairperson of the Attestation Commission at the Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography, as well as a member of the Academic Activities Committee and the Control Board. All this gives her 30 points in Indicator F30.

The candidate's proposed monographic research contributions, publications, and overall activity reflected in the reference are completely credible. I know the scientific and pedagogical growth of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Kirkova. In her research and practical work, she has made a significant contribution to Bulgarian folkloristics, pedagogy, and performing arts. I believe that the presented habilitation materials in all sections have high practical-applied qualities. All of them are accompanied by a large amount of evidentiary materials.

### **Conclusion**

The presented habilitation materials of the candidate under the current procedure correspond in volume and content to the requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation. They show a high contribution to the enrichment and development of Bulgarian folklore science and practice. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kirkova's scientific and research activities show depth in a specific field of research, according to her personal research field. This is a reason for the candidate to receive a high assessment for her overall activity. Proof of this is the fulfilled, even exceeded, requirements for occupation of the position of "Professor". Based on the stated arguments, I give a high and positive assessment. I recommend to the respected scientific jury to award Associate Professor Dr. Galya Petrova-Kirkova with the academic position of "Professor" under Professional field 8.3. "Music and Dance Arts" ("Folk Singing and Methodology of its Teaching").

Plovdiv

Prof. Dr. Svetla Stanilova

July 2023

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