

PEER REVIEW

by Prof. Ventsislav Dimov Dimov, Doctor of Sciences

regarding the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Georgieva Petrova-Kirkova

under a competition for occupation of the academic position “Professor”

according to 8.3. “Music and Dance Art” (“Folk Singing and Methodology of its Teaching”)

announced by Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv in State Gazette, Issue 35/18.04.2023

I. About the candidate and the documentation

The candidate for the announced competition is Associate Professor Dr. Galya Georgieva Petrova-Kirkova, born in the City of General Toshevo, Dobrich District. She successfully passed through all levels of specialized education: she graduated from Filip Kutev Secondary Music School in Kotel with specialty in “Rebec and Folk Singing” (1994); the Academy of Music, Dance and Arts in Plovdiv with Bachelor’s degree in “Folk Ensembles Conducting” (1998); Postgraduate qualification, with specialty “Pedagogy of Music Education” (1999); the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts with Master’s degree in “Folk Singing” (2006) and “Instrumental Art – Rebec” (2008). I am a witness of her upward academic development: educational and qualification degree “Doctor” in Musicology and Musical Art after a successfully defended dissertation on the topic: *“Musical and Folkloric Heritage of Dobrudzha – Connection with the Ethno-Demographic State and Migration Processes”* (2015) and academic degree “Associate Professor” in Folk Singing and Teaching Methodology (2018). She also has a serious academic experience (14 years and 6 months) as a lecturer of “Folk Singing” and “Pedagogical Practice” at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts. Dr. Kirkova is the Director of the Language and Specialized Training Department at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv (since 2020).

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Petrova-Kirkova submitted all the necessary documents and materials according to the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations that the procedure requires (curriculum vitae, diplomas for completed higher education and for the acquisition of educational and qualification degree “Doctor”, certificates – medical and criminal records, certificates for experience in the specialty and for teaching activity, reference for academic workload, scientometric table, author reference for scientific contributions – works and citations). The competition materials include attached evidence of the minimum requirements table: group indicators A, C, D, E, F. According to the submitted scientometric indicators report, the candidate meets the national minimum requirements for the academic position “Professor”, and her numerical indicators exceed the required number points significantly as follows: indicator A (dissertation work for the award of the educational and qualification degree “Doctor”) – 50 points; indicator C (habilitation work, applied published monograph “Repertoire in Folk Singing Education”) – 100 points; indicator D

(publications and creative performances) – from the required 150 points, she has 205; indicator E (citations) – from the required 80, she has 115 points; indicator F (teaching and expert activity, awards) – from the required 120, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Petrova-Kirkova has 190 points.

The following analytical part of the peer review was developed according to the order of Chapter three, Section III of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

II. Scientific research activity

The texts submitted for review can be divided into two groups: 1) Scientific publications; and 2) Citations.

1. Scientific publications

The scientific production presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Petrova-Kirkova in the competition for the academic position “Professor” meets the requirements as a profile of the issues being developed and in relation to the quantity. The following are proposed: a habilitation thesis (monograph), a published book based on a defended dissertation for the award of the educational and qualification degree “Doctor”, and five articles.

The habilitation thesis – the monograph “Repertoire in Folk Singing Education” (Plovdiv, 2023) corresponds to the topic (in the relevant scientific field), volume (242 pages), and scientific qualities of a complete, informative and analytical study in the theoretical and methodological aspect of issues, related to the repertoire in the teaching of folk singing (argued by two qualified scientific reviewers). Among the merits of the work are: a first-of-its-kind study of the path of the song repertoire – from theoretical folklore studies and song collections from various folklore areas, through the creation of didactic literature, to proposal of solutions to the issues. The work has a rich informativeness (it describes and analyzes over 100 song collections and tools of different applicability in the educational process); systematicity (basic principles of selection and arrangement of the repertoire through specific indicators are derived); actuality (points to the influence on the repertoire and folk singing education of the new socio-cultural environment, media, stage, public reception; takes into account new aesthetic searches); applicability and dialogicity (contains “feedback” with learners and shared personal pedagogical experience in applying innovative practices in the educational process of folk singing).

The published book on a defended dissertation work for the awarding of educational and qualification degree “Doctor”: *“Musical and Folkloric Heritage of Dobrudzha – Connection with the Ethno-Demographic State and Migration Processes”* (Plovdiv, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2022) has already been assessed in the candidate’s previous procedures. Here I will pay attention to the five articles published in scientific publications and proceedings of national and international scientific conferences (during the period 2019-2023). The research interest in them is entirely in the field of the announced competition: folk singing education, the role of collections, aspects of teaching methodology,

“feedback” with students, etc. The article “The Repertoire in the Teaching of Folk Singing and the Possibilities for the Formation of Creativity in Students – Future Teachers” (Knowledge – International Journal, Vol. 30.2., 2019) examines a current problem directly affecting the goals and tasks of modern education and upbringing: the adaptability of the personality in the conditions of globalization and the formation of a creative attitude and creativity through non-standard means and repertoire. Two articles published in proceedings of scientific conferences are devoted to the repertoire of solo folk songs with piano accompaniment: “On Some Problems of the Repertoire of Solo Folk Songs with Piano Accompaniment for a Male Voice” (Proceedings of the “Science, Education and Innovations in the Field of Art” International Scientific Conference, October 24-26th, 2019, Plovdiv, Prof Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2019) and “On the Principles of Selection and Structuring of the Repertoire in Collections of Solo Folk Songs with Piano Accompaniment” (Collection III, “Science, Education and Innovations in the Field of Art” International Scientific Conference, Plovdiv, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2021). The contributions of these publications are in deriving some basic principles of repertoire selection and structuring, based on content analysis of collections of solo folk songs with piano accompaniment that are used in educational practice. The fourth proposed article by Petrova-Kirkova is “On the Repertoire in the Teaching of Folk Singing – a View from the Position of Students Studying at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv” (Collection of reports from the “50 years of Traditions and Development of Bulgarian Folklore Jubilee International Scientific Conference”, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2022). The conducted own survey with students from the “Performing Arts – Folk Singing” and “Pedagogy of Music Education” majors is a contribution to the dialogic and communicative side of folk singing education. The fifth article “Possibilities for Optimizing the Learning Process in the Folk Singing Discipline Through the Application of Digital Resources and Digital Transformation of the Program Musical Content” (Collection of reports. “Digital Transformation of Education...” National Scientific-Practical Conference, 2023) presents an actual problem: the digital transformation of the program music content (sound recordings, videos, music platforms YouTube, Spotify, and other media music productions) in the learning process of a special subject, by offering conclusions for the practical implementation of the combination of new approaches with traditional teaching in folk singing lessons, which contribute to the expansion of the general musical culture and provoke greater interest, satisfaction, and creativity among contemporary students.

2. Citations

Among the most cited author’s texts of the candidate are publications in two fields: the study of local music-folklore culture and traditional ritual practices (the monograph *“Musical and Folkloric Heritage of Dobrudzha...”*; the articles “Musical Folklore in the Bulgarian Holiday Calendar and Traditional Customary and Ritual Practices – Place, Role and Functions”; “St. Lazar’s Day in Dobrudzha – Place and Functions of Musical Folklore in Customary and Ritual Practices”, etc.); research on the repertoire in the teaching of folk singing (the articles “The Repertoire in the Teaching of Folk Singing and the Possibilities for the Formation of Creativity in Students – Future Teachers”; “On Some Problems of the Repertoire of Solo Folk Songs with

Piano Accompaniment for a Male Voice"; "On the Principles of Selection and Structuring of the Repertoire in Collections of Solo Folk Songs with Piano Accompaniment", etc. They are cited by Bulgarian authors who write about Bulgarian musical folklore and its research, the place and role of musical folklore and the repertoire of folk songs in educational processes and institutions, as well as training methods.

III. Educational (pedagogical and teaching-methodical) activity

The candidate, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Petrova-Kirkova, includes in the materials submitted for review a lot of evidence about the connection of the research work with her own educational activities in practice. The curriculum vitae and the study load report indicate her involvement in the educational process of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in the disciplines "Folk Singing" and "Pedagogical Practice" with Bulgarian and foreign students and during seminars and master classes. Attached is evidence of the candidate's impressive pedagogical and teaching-methodical activity as a leader of master classes and studios in the field of arts (Section F, item 28); the numerous awards for high artistic achievements and excellent pedagogical work indicated in the autobiographical reference, as well as the many awards and diplomas for creative achievements of students from the folk singing class, are also indicative of the pedagogical qualities of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Petrova-Kirkova, who alongside with her direct teaching work, also reports other activities: participation in expert committees, jurying at festivals, training courses, etc.

IV. Creative and artistic activity

The attached scientometric table of the candidate and the evidence to it (Indicators D and F for creative expression in the field of arts and awards) highlight the contributions of Associate Professor Dr. Petrova-Kirkova as a singer and vocal pedagogue. The candidate points to her participation as a soloist-performer in the television film "Since the Dawn of Time" (Bulgarian National Television, 17.04.2021) as a leading creative performance in the field of arts (D13). She is also active as an artist with a supporting creative expression or participation in a collective product in the field of arts (D14) – participation as a soloist in a television program (Bulgarian National Television, "Here Comes Our Music", 10.04.2021) and performance in a concert "With Soul..." (Pirdop, 15.12.2022). Among the numerous testimonies of Petrova-Kirkova in the section for artistic and creative achievements are also participation in recordings, concerts and stage performances, productions, seminars, as well as participation in radio and television shows. The candidate has listed a number of her awards for creativity and performance competitions given during national professional forums and organizations (indicator F.30).

V. Summary and conclusion

The overall activity, the scientific and applied, teaching and artistic-creative achievements and contributions presented in the competition documentation show that Associate Professor Dr. Galya Petrova-Kirkova is a serious researcher with her own contribution to the study of Bulgarian traditional music and its related educational practices, while at the same time being a practitioner (singer and musician) and a lecturer with

considerable experience. The evidentiary materials meet the requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation. This gives me reasons to give a high assessment to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Petrova-Kirkova as a candidate in the competition and to propose to the scientific jury to vote positively for her selection for the academic position of “Professor” according to 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts” (“Folk Singing and Methodology of its Teaching”) at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv.

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