

PEER REVIEW

by

Prof. Dr. Yavor Svetozarov Konov, Doctor of Sciences
with regards to the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Petrova-Kirkova
in the competition for occupation of the academic position of “Professor”
under Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”,
specialty “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
for the needs of the Musical Folklore Department at the Faculty of Musical Folklore and
Choreography

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Georgieva Petrova-Kirkova was born in 1975 in the City of General Toshevo in the Dobrudzha District. From a young age, she began to sing folk songs and play the rebec, accompanying herself when singing – something rare (especially for girls). She started examining folklore from the Dobrudzha region from a young age. Her talent and passion for music led her to the Dobrudzha Ensemble in the City of Dobrich. In 1994 she graduated from Filip Kutev Secondary Music School in Kotel (with specialty in “Rebec and Folk Singing”), after which she graduated from Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv (1994-1998: Bachelor’s degree in “Folk Ensembles Conducting”; 1999: Postgraduate qualification, with specialty “Pedagogy of Music Education”; 2006: Master’s degree in “Instrumental Art – Folk Singing”; 2009: Master’s degree in “Instrumental Art – Rebec”). Dr. Kirkova started working at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts (2010) and is currently an Associate Professor (since 2018) of Folk Singing, after defending her dissertation (educational and scientific degree “Doctor”) on the topic “Musical and Folkloric Heritage of Dobrudzha – Connection with the Ethno-Demographic State and Migration Processes” (Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2015).

Since she was a child, Galya Petrova performed brightly and received the highest awards in Smolyan, Koprivshitsa (Gold Medal), and other similar important forums. She highly respects her educators: Atanas Panayotov and Petko Radev (rebec) from Dobrich; Mariana Peneva (rebec) and Penka Dunchева (folk singing) from the Secondary Music School in Kotel; Prof. Dr. Anka Kushleva (folk singing), Prof. Dr. Svetla Stanilova (folk singing), and Prof. Dr. Todor Kirov (rebec) at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, and countless other musicians, from whom she learned and is still learning to this day – although already a long-established singer and instrumentalist (<https://youtu.be/4AveNGh5GZw>, August 12th, 2023). She is also a long-time educator, author of teaching aids (including 2 collections of folk songs), and scientific publications (including 2 monographs). Dr. Kirkova is the Director (since 2020) of the Language and Specialized Training Department at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – a leading

higher education institution in Bulgaria and increasingly authoritative in the world: teaches folk singing and pedagogical practice to students of various specialties. In parallel – and mutually complementary – is the work and development (1998-2001) in the prestigious Trakiya Plovdiv Ensemble, both in Bulgaria and around the world.

Dr. Kirkova also participates in concerts, radio, and television shows, and has a solo CD. She has also held 7 master classes. Its graduates have received various national and international awards. Dr. Kirkova has also participated in the juries of various competitions, as well as in the composition of commissions and working groups.

In this competition for occupation of the position of “Professor” at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Galya Petrova-Kirkova meets the scientometric indicators required by the law, and in most respects (D, E, F) significantly exceeds them (A: 50/50, C:100/100, D: 150/205, E: 80/115, F: 120/190).

She is a bright, cheerful, understanding, sociable person and colleague, always smiling and effectively ready for professional and administrative assistance – these are not only my impressions, but also those of colleagues, who spontaneously expressed them to me.

The habilitation thesis of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Petrova-Kirkova for her participation in this competition for a professorship is “Repertoire in Folk Singing Education” (monograph, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2023). I have fully familiarized myself with the monograph, the first of its kind – a comprehensive study of the folk singing repertoire has been done: research, presentation of the repertoire suitable for teaching folk singing, where one can take pedagogically appropriate songs (authentic folklore, published collections of songs, author’s work, including today’s, etc.), how to usefully and step by step be used in the teaching and creative development of young singers, while seeking and finding the appropriate fruitful balance between the “old” and the “new”. In a volume of 242 pages, the monograph consists of an Introduction, 4 Chapters (1. General theoretical and methodological statements; 2. Sources of the repertoire; 3. Didactic literature, types of disputants and aids – the main one for the monograph; 4. Contemporary problems of the repertoire), Conclusion, 4 Appendices, with specified 112 sources of information (“Literature”). I am not a narrow specialist in folk singing and playing, and I cannot go into specific detailed assessments, but as a musicologist and a long-time university lecturer, I would like to point out that the monograph shows the great interest, knowledge, and many years of wide and deep personal performing and teaching experience of Galya Petrova-Kirkova in the conceiving, conducting and making sense of the research, as well as her great desire to be useful (and she is!). The author has made a number of significant contributions.

Against the background of the above, I would like to give my positive vote for the selection of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Georgieva Petrova-Kirkova to the academic position of “Professor” in the specialty “Folk Singing and Methodology of its Teaching” at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv.

12.07.2023

Prof. Dr. Yavor Svetozarov Konov, Doctor of Sciences
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