

PEER REVIEW

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Veselka Toncheva, Institute of Ethnology and Folkloristics with the Ethnographic Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences under a competition for occupation of the academic position “Professor”, announced in State Gazette, Issue 35/18.04.2023, under field 8. “Arts”, Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”, specialty “Folk Choir Singing” and “Conducting a Folk Choir from the Piano” 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

Presentation of the procedure and the candidate

This peer review was prepared in compliance with the Order No ПД-27-068 of the Rector of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv for conducting a competition for occupation of the academic position of “Professor” under field 8. “Arts”, Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”, specialty “Folk Choir Singing” and “Conducting a Folk Choir from the Piano”, for the needs of the Musical Folklore Department, at the Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography.

Rada Borislavova Slavinska is the only candidate in the competition (announced in State Gazette, Issue 35 dated 18.04.2023). She has submitted all the necessary documents for participation in the competition and they meet the requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation by Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts.

Rada Slavinska graduated from Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts with a Master’s degree in Music Pedagogy. In 2012, she defended her dissertation and obtained the educational and scientific degree “Doctor”. Since 2016, she has held the position of Chief Assistant in “Folk Choir Conducting”, “Folk Choir Singing”, and “Conducting a Folk Choir from the Piano”, and since 2020 she has been an Associate Professor of “Folk Choir Singing with Choral Studies”. After her many years of appearances as a Second Conductor and Accompanist, in the period from 2001 until 2006, Slavinska was the Conductor of the Philippopolis Ensemble, and between 2006 and 2019 she was the particularly successful Chief Artistic Director and Conductor of the Evmolpeya Girls’ Choir Formation at Plovdiv Municipality, with which she had countless appearances – 630 on various concert stages in 18 countries are listed, among which 29 are participations in international festivals.

Along with the teaching employment of the candidate, her creative activity is impressive, which includes the creation of a number of arrangements of choral works for various ensembles, the creation of over 90 scenarios for concert programs or creative presentations of specific composers or performers, conceptual creation and participation in over 15 funded public projects, 19 author publications of comprehensive editions (scientific

monographs, fiction, author's music), composition of 6 choral collections, 72 professional articles in the specialized press, numerous diplomas, as well as honors and awards as a conductor, educator, researcher, poet, personality, etc.

Presentation of the materials received for review according to the various indicators from the scientometric table in the field of "Arts", Professional field 8.3 "Music and Dance Arts" according to the minimum national requirements

Group of Indicators A – necessary 50 points

Dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" – "The Songs of Krasimir Kyurkchiyski for Folk Choir – Specificity and Significance", 520 pages, Diploma No 0006, issued on 22.06.2012 (50 points). **Total points in Group A: 50 points.**

Group of Indicators C – necessary 100 points

Item 3 – Habilitation work – monograph – "Ivan Deliradev and His Chrestomathies for the Folk Choir", Plovdiv, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2023 (100 points); Item 4 – Realized author's product in the field of arts – 2 products (100 points); Item 5 – Leading (independent) creative performance in the field of arts – 3 performances (105 points). **Total points in Group C: 305 points.**

Group of Indicators D – necessary 150 points

Item 6 – Published monograph, which is not presented as the main habilitation thesis – "Let's Be Silent", Sofia, Union of Bulgarian Composers, 2022 (100 points); Item 7 – Published book based on a defended dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" – "The Songs of Krasimir Kyurkchiyski for Folk Choir – Specificity and Significance", Plovdiv, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2022 (75 points); Item 9 – Articles and reports published in specialized publications in the field of arts – 9 articles (135 points); Item 12 – Realized short author's product in the field of arts – 2 products (60 points); Item 13 – Leading (or independent) creative performance in the field of arts, which is not the main habilitation work – 4 performances (140 points). **Total points in Group D: 510 points.**

Group of Indicators E – necessary 80 points

Item 17 – Citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review – 34 citations (340 points); Item 18 – Citations or reviews in non-refereed journals with scientific review – 14 citations (70 points); Item 19 – Reviews for realized author's products or creative appearances in specialized publications in the field of arts – 3 reviews (30 points). **Total points in Group E: 440 points.**

Group of Indicators F – necessary 120 points

Item 22 – Participation in a national scientific, educational or artistic project – 2 projects (30 points); Item 24 – Management of a national scientific, educational or artistic project – 3 projects (90 points); Item 26 – Published university textbook or aid that is used in the school network – 1 textbook (40 points); Item 27 – Published university teaching aid that is used in the school network – 4 aids (80 points). **Total points in Group F: 240 points.**

From the above it is clear that R. Slavinska exceeds (in some cases many times over) the scientometric indicators according to the minimum requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

Contributions to the materials proposed for the procedure

Among the main materials proposed by R. Slavinska in the competition for the academic position of “Professor”, her habilitation work “Ivan Deliradev and His Chrestomathies for the Folk Choir” (2023) stands out. The main contribution of the monograph is the illumination of the personality and activities of I. Deliradev with an emphasis on his four volumes of chrestomathies for folk choir, placed in the context of the general development of folklore specialties and as an essential methodical contribution to educational literature. Along with the scientific research, the candidate has also proposed two author’s products, which are a contribution to the sphere of Bulgarian compositional creativity and have their own “life” in performing practice. These are: the composition “Messa Liliium” (1997), which is the first mass created by a Bulgarian composer, combining “classical” sonority, modern jazz intonations and a connection with Bulgarian folklore”, and “Rumelia Concerto for Piano and Orchestra” (2005), published in two editions – a score for piano and orchestra and a piano excerpt, in which the “Bulgarian spirit” is again present, interpreted as compositional by the author.

In the habilitation materials, three creative performances of the Evmolpeya Girls’ Choir Formation are also indicated – at the 46th International Festival of Chamber Music in the Ethnographic Museum – Plovdiv (2010), a concert “Working-Bee at Christmas” in the Drama Theater – Plovdiv (2017), and “Gloria in Excelsis” – disc of the Formation with concert and studio recordings (2009). Each of these performances presents R. Slavinska’s own conducting reading and brings to a higher level the importance of conducting art in the presentation of choral works.

I cannot fail to note the two monographs of the candidate, which are not presented as the main habilitation thesis, but which have their undeniable contribution to the study of the personality and compositional work of Krasimir Kyurkchiyski – “**Let’s Be Silent**” (2022), focused dominantly on the biography and Kyurkchiyski’s place in the Bulgarian musical history, and the book “The Songs of Krasimir Kyurkchiyski for Folk Choir – Specificity and Significance” (2022), published on the basis of Slavinska’s defended dissertation work, aimed at systematizing and analyzing his works for folk choir.

In addition to the cited three monographs, the candidate also offers nine articles and reports that touch on various problems in the field of research on composer’s work, choral music, and folk choir conducting.

Individual examples of R. Slavinska’s extensive activity as a conductor of the Evmolpeya Girls’ Choir Formation are offered as a realized short author’s product (two author’s songs) and as a leading (or independent) creative performance that is not a major habilitation work (four concerts).

The number of citations of the candidate is impressive – a total of 48 in different types of publications, which means that she has a convincing presence in the research field, in which she works. Leadership and participation in national scientific, educational, or artistic projects also presents her as an established scholar and educator suitable for the academic position of “Professor”.

Finally, but far from least, is the contribution of the textbooks published by R. Slavinska: four collections of songs for choir and chamber ensembles, and the textbook “Choral Conducting Technique” (2002), which finds its rightful place in the field of higher education and secondary music education.

Conclusion

In conclusion of all that has been said, I would like to summarize that R. Slavinska is a scientist and creator with a bright presence – she strives to fill less researched niches, but also to deepen already researched topics based on her own experience, and in her creative and conducting work she demonstrates experience, simultaneously with innovation on various levels. This gives me the reason to give my positive assessment with complete conviction and to propose to the respected Scientific Jury to support the candidacy of Rada Borislavova Slavinska for the academic position of “Professor” under Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”, specialty “Folk Choir Singing” and “Conducting a Folk Choir from the Piano”.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Veselka Toncheva