

## **PEER REVIEW**

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Veselka Toncheva, Institute of Ethnology and Folkloristics with the Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences with regards to a competition for occupation of the academic position “Professor”, Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”, Specialty “Tambourine and Conducting of a Folk Orchestra” for the needs of the Musical Folklore Department, Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – City of Plovdiv

### ***Data of the procedure and the candidate***

This peer review was prepared in compliance with Order No ПД-27-037 dated 06.04.2023 of the Rector of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv with regards to a competition for occupation of the academic position of “Professor” under Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”, Specialty “Tambourine and Conducting of a Folk Orchestra”, for the needs of the Musical Folklore Department, Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography.

In the competition for occupation of the academic position “Professor”, announced in State Gazette, Issue 13 dated 07.02.2023, the only candidate is Vladimir Kanchev Vladimirov. He has submitted all the necessary documents for participation in the competition, which are in accordance with the Regulations for the implementation of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv. It is clear from the attached materials that the candidate fully meets the parameters of the competition.

Vladimir Vladimirov graduated from Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv with a Bachelor degree with the professional qualification “Pedagogy of Music Education” and with a Master degree in the specialty “Folk Ensembles Conducting”. In 2014, he obtained the educational and scientific degree “Doctor”. Since 2002, he has been a part-time assistant in Tambourine, and since 2004 – a full-time assistant in the same higher education institution. From 2005 to today, he is the conductor of the Academic National Orchestra, with which he has performed over 70 concerts in Bulgaria and abroad. Since 2015, he has been holding the academic position of “Associate Professor” in “Tambourine and its Teaching Methodology”. Since 2018, he has been a leading lecturer (with the rank of “Associate Professor”) of Tambourine and Methodology at Josip Strossmayer Academy of Art and Culture in Osijek, Croatia.

Vl. Vladimirov has participated as a member of the juries at competitions and festivals, has released CDs with various formations, and has participated in recordings with a number of musicians, and successful collaborations and performances with Bulgarian and foreign artists. For his active creative activity, he is the recipient of a number of honors and awards, including a diploma from the Minister of Education of Croatia for his high achievements in pedagogical practice. Last but not least, the candidate is the author of 17 publications, including teaching aids, as well as scientific

articles in the field of research issues related to the tambourine – organology, history and modernization of the instrument, aspects of modern performing practice, etc.

***Scientometric results of the candidate according to indicators in the area of Arts, professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”, according to the minimum national requirements***

In **Group of indicators A**, item 1 “Dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree “Doctor”, the required points for the academic position “Professor” are **50 points** and Vl. Vladimirov complies with them – the thesis defended by him in 2014 on the topic “*The Modern Bulgarian Tambourine – Appearance, Influences, and Qualities*” is indicated, Diploma No 0010/15.07.2014.

In **Group of indicators C**, the required points for the academic position “Professor” are **100 points**. The candidate exceeds them – in item 5 “*Leading (independent) creative performance in the field of arts*”, he has indicated 5 performances with a score of **175 points**.

In **Group of indicators D**, the required points for the academic position “Professor” are **150 points**. Vl. Vladimirov exceeds them three times – he indicated in item 9 “*Articles and reports published in specialized publications in the field of arts*” – 4 articles (**60 points**); in item 12 “*Realized short author’s product in the field of arts*” – 1 product (**30 points**); in item 13 “*Leading (or independent) creative performance in the field of arts*”, which is not a major habilitation work – 7 performances (**245 points**), and in item 14 “*Supporting creative performance or participation in a collective product in the field of arts*” – 13 performances (**130 points**) – total of **465 points**.

In **Group of indicators E**, the required points for the academic position of “Professor” are **80 points**. The candidate exceeds them – in item 17 “*Citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review*”, he indicated 5 citations (**50 points**); in item 18 “*Citations or reviews in non-refereed journals with scientific review*” are indicated 2 citations (**10 points**) and in item 19 “*Reviews for realized author’s products or creative performances in specialized publications in the field of arts*” are indicated 4 reviews (**40 points**) – total of **100 points**.

In **Group of indicators F**, the required points for the academic position “Professor” are **120 points**. Vl. Vladimirov exceeds them twice – in item 21 “*Guidance of a successfully defended doctoral student*” is specified 1 person (**40 points**); in item 22 “*Participation in a national scientific, educational or artistic project*”, participation in 2 projects (**30 points**) is indicated; in item 24 “*Management of a national scientific, educational or artistic project*”, 2 projects (**60 points**) are indicated; in item 28 “*Guidance of a master class, studio or workshop in the field of arts*” are indicated 5 pcs. (**100 points**), and in item 30 “*Prizes of competitions for creativity and performance, given by national professional forums and organizations*”, 1 award is indicated (**10 points**) – total of **240 points**.

All the above shows that the candidate not only fulfills the scientometric indicators according to the minimum requirements of the Act for the Development of the

Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, but in some groups of indicators he repeatedly exceeds them.

### **Contributions to the materials proposed for the candidacy**

In his candidacy for “Professor” as a *leading (or independent) creative expression in the field of arts*, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vl. Vladimirov presents 5 concerts, in each of which his important role and high performing and conducting level stand out. The concert “*When the Conductor Takes the Instrument*” (2022) is practically an individual stage performance of Vl. Vladimirov with the Academic National Orchestra, with which he popularized the traditional Bulgarian instrument tambourine through his own performance style, improvisation, and even experimentation. In his conducting role, he is part of the “*Accordion and Folklore*” cycle, which has become a tradition, with three concerts (2017, 2018, and 2022) with the participation of accordionist-soloists and the Academic National Orchestra. Also as a conductor, Vl. Vladimirov performed successfully in the larger-scale Christmas concert of the Academic National Orchestra with the participation of soloists-instrumentalists and the Academic National Choir (2019).

In all other habilitation materials presented by Vl. Vladimirov, a number of contributions stand out. In the field of scientific research work, 4 publications are indicated (*articles and reports published in specialized publications in the field of arts*). The publication “*Balkan Tambourine Parallels at the Beginning of the 21st Century*” (1) considers the instruments of the tambourine family as one of the common and unifying elements in the musical culture of a number of Balkan countries. The tambourine with its different varieties has its own life in each national context and at the same time there are processes of interpenetration and interactivity, and this can be seen especially significantly in the emergence of tambourine orchestras in Croatia and their spread outside Croatia at the end of the 19th century. The contribution of the text is the sharing of the author’s authentic experience as a leading lecturer in the City of Osijek with an emphasis on the peculiarities of the structure of the Croatian tambourine and the delineation of directions of possible mutual influences and enrichment between the Bulgarian and Croatian traditions, which reveal new creative fields for both countries.

The object of research in the article “*The Nightingale from Chernogorovo*” (2) is the creative biography and professional profile of one of the pioneers in tambourine art – Ignat Kukov. The contribution of the text is the presentation of his distinctive performing style, formed as a result of a sustainable generational relationship and hereditary transmission of knowledge. His repertoire is examined, deeply connected, and influenced by the musical tradition of the Pazardzhik region, which he popularized in his instrumental practice.

The text “*Guardians of the Tradition*” (3) is dedicated to the modern existence of the “*bulgarina*” instrument, which two centuries after the first information about it can still be found preserved in a close to its original form in the community of the Qazalbash (*aliani, alevii*) from the village of Yablanovo (Kotel Municipality). The Yablanovo *bulgarini* come close to the samples of the instrument from the 19th century and have too many differences from the modern Bulgarian tambourine. The author examines the

dimensions and type of the preserved local version of the instrument, as well as the context in which it exists, which is an indisputable contribution, since at the time of the study there is no data of the use of a similar one among other ethno-confessional groups in Bulgaria.

The article *"Tambourine vs Guitar in our Contemporary Folk Instrumental Practice"* (4) sets out to illuminate and analyze the motivation of tambourine performers with the purpose to transfer their instrumental skills to the electric guitar, which the author defines as a problem in contemporary musical practice that has not been addressed so far in ethnomusicological publications and studies. Vl. Vladimirov found a deep cause of the problem in the boom of wedding bands in the 1970s and 1980s, when a number of tambourine players reached for the electric guitar in order to fit into the trends of the time, i.e. the high popularity of wedding music. The author's contribution is not only to focus on the problem from the perspective of a well-informed performing musician and to articulate the negative sides of the process, but also practical guidelines for overcoming it, such as the suggestion of changing the tuning of the tambourine, which would lead to the discovery of possibilities for new applicative patterns and melodic movements, and hence to the unfolding of its potential as a solo instrument.

The importance of the research work of Vl. Vladimirov also stands out in his cited citations – five in *peer-reviewed monographs and collective volumes* and two in *non-refereed peer-reviewed journals*. By referring to the candidate's texts, the contributory nature of his publications is emphasized and this confirms him as an author who has his presence in the field of ethnomusicological issues.

In the role of scientific supervisor of a doctoral student Vl. Vladimirov declares the successfully completed procedure for the acquisition of the educational and qualification degree "Doctor" of Paolina Vasileva, with the topic of the dissertation work: "Folklore Instrumental Practices in Varna and Some Settlements in the Region" (2022).

In the plan of the candidate's applied scientific work is his management of two projects – "Working Studio with Prominent Folklore Performers" (2016) and "50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Musical Folklore Department" (2022). He is also a participant (twice) in "The Strangers" project with supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zoya Mikova (2016, 2018).

As part of the educational activity of Vl. Vladimirov especially valuable are the series of master classes and workshops that he leads within various forums in Bulgaria – Varna, Rila, and Targovishte.

The result of his work as a composer is the realized *short author's product in the field of arts* – the play *"Memory of Vesko"*, which was recorded by Vladimirov himself on an anniversary disc of the Musical Folklore Department.

Along with the five concerts discussed above, the candidate has presented many more creative performances that are not the main habilitation work – seven concerts as *leading (solo) performances* in Bulgaria and thirteen *supporting creative performances* with Bulgarian and foreign musicians in Bulgaria (Varna, Plovdiv, Sofia) and abroad (Vinkovci, Osijek, Đakovo, Croatia, Xanthi, Greece, Ghent, Brussels, Belgium, Algiers, Algeria)

The impressive concert activity of Vl. Vladimirov is also reflected in a number of *reviews in specialized publications in the field of arts* by authors such as Prof. Dr. Rada Slavinska, Assistant Angel Marinov, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Svetoslav Karagenov, Tihomir Ranogajec.

### ***Personal impressions***

I know Vl. Vladimirov as a result of collegial contacts and communication, and I think that he is a brilliant professional, dedicated to his work in creative and executive terms, but also in the pedagogical sphere, where he is particularly active and engaging students in the discipline he teaches, and also as conductor of the Academic National Orchestra. His achievements undoubtedly make him suitable for the academic position of "Professor", which would open before him new horizons for expression in all fields of his interests and talents.

### ***Conclusion***

Everything with which Vl. Vladimirov appeared in relation to the competition, his performance, educational and research activity impresses with its scale, and this indisputably presents him as a thorough musician and lecturer. Along with the high results of his concert and conducting work, his candidacy is also convincing because of his active educational work, which he approaches with high commitment. His academic and creative biography give me reason with full conviction to give my positive assessment and to propose to the respected scientific jury to support the candidacy of Vladimir Kanchev Vladimirov for the academic position of "Professor" Professional field 8.3. "Music and Dance Arts", Specialty "Tambourine and Conducting of a Folk Orchestra".

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Veselka Toncheva