

PEER REVIEW

By Prof. Dr. Todor Aleksandrov Kirov

for the creative activity of

Chief Assistant Dr. Zoya Iliycheva Mikova,

candidate for participation in competition

for occupation of the academic position “Associate Professor”

under Scientific field “Ethnomusicology”,

under Professional field 8.3 “Music and Dance Arts”

Musical Folklore Department, Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography,

Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – City of Plovdiv.

In modern times, Bulgarian folklore traditions need to be studied, preserved and passed on to future generations. It is logical that a college like the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, which establishes artists in the field of art, should train professionals with such skills. In order to prepare such specialists, folklore specialties were created at the Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv. Throughout their 45-year (and over) existence, they have evolved and established themselves extremely successfully. In the sense of their strengthening and the academic growth of the teachers, competitions are announced, one of which is the competition for the occupation of the academic position “Associate Professor” in Ethnomusicology under Professional field “8.3 Music and Dance Arts”.

Chief Assistant Dr. Zoya Iliycheva Mikova participates in this competition with considerable (15-year) pedagogical experience in the specified scientific specialty, supported by previous organizational, administrative and teaching activity in folk singing and solfeggio in a Children’s and Youth Music School.

Dr. Mikova is closely connected with the folklore arts: She graduated from the Shiroka Laka Specialized Music School with a Bachelor’s degree in “Performing Arts” and “Head of Folk Groups”, and has a Master’s degree in “Ethnomusicology” from the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv. At the same time she also graduated with a degree in “Head of Dance Groups” and has a postgraduate qualification – specialty “Music Training Pedagogy”. She has extensive pedagogical experience. Dr. Mikova is a specialist in the field of folklore music and theoretical subjects – she studied in the first class of the specialty

“Ethnomusicology” under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Mariya Samokovlieva and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vasilka Yoncheva.

In 2003 Zoya Mikova started working at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts as a teacher in the disciplines: “Folk Singing”, “Musical Folklore”, “Collection and Decoding of Musical Folklore”, “Music Theory” and “Bulgarian Folk Music”. She is currently working at the Musical Folklore Department, teaching the disciplines “Musical Folklore”, “History of Folk Performing Arts”, “Bulgarian Folk Music”, “Bulgarian Ethnography”, “Collection and Decoding of Musical Folklore”, “Music Theory”.

Zoe is an initiative person with extensive organizational experience. In 2000 she founded a private music school and in 2001 with her students and friends formed the Elika Folklore Formation. In the period 2002 – 2003, she participated and worked in a teaching team under the project “Integration of the Roma Population through Culture and Education” in the City of Rakovski. Annually in the lobby of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Mikova organizes the “Martenitsa” Exhibition with students. According to its conceptual design and as part of the training in the discipline “Musical Folklore”, every year in the Hall of the Academy there is a concert-show with authentic costumes and performances of students from different courses and specialties, full-time dance troupe and external formations.

In 2015 Mikova defended her doctoral thesis on the topic: “*Traditional Practices and Music of the Ethnic Communities in the City of Plovdiv*”. Her work from the dissertation she continued as a Manager of “The Unknown” Cultural Seminar at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv in 2016. The Seminar is implemented in three separate modules and presents the communities of Armenians, Jews, Turks and Roma in our country. The main objective is to broaden the knowledge about the traditional culture of the different ethnic, ethnographic, confessional and cultural communities in Bulgaria. Mikova is involved with publications in the Yearbook of the Academy, Spring Scientific Readings, scientific conferences and seminars. She also guides and advises graduates. In 2017, Mikova was the Editor-In-Chief of the “Narodna Madrost” Newspaper in the section “National Holidays and Customs”. As a result of field studies with students, her first book, “*Road to the Spring*” (2018), which contains materials from expeditions, was published.

Under Article 24, Paragraph 1, Item 3 of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Chief Assistant Dr. Zoya Iliycheva Mikova presents the monographic work “*Milkovitsa – History, Ethnography and Culture*”.

What do we know about the “Wallachians”? What is the history and culture of the Romanian-speaking population along the Danube River, and in particular in the settlements around the City of Nikopol? “What are the directions and the possible connections of this population with the culture of other population groups in Bulgaria and on the Balkan Peninsula?” (*Mikova*) These questions are related to a topic that is useful and relevant today, especially in the light of the trend towards “studying groups and communities of all origins” (*Mikova*) existing in Bulgaria.

Zoya Mikova took up the development of this topic, specifying it in the object of study – the village of Milkovitsa, Nikopol District. The choice of object in this case is multifaceted: The emotional connection with this village, related to her childhood, the desire for “personal reinvention and self-knowledge” (*Mikova*), a sense of “obligation to loved ones and all the people of Milkovitsa” (*Mikova*), lasting interest and attraction on her part to research and exploration of the different ethnic groups and communities in Bulgaria, as well as her ambition to do a thorough study of the “history, ethnography and culture” (*Mikova*) of her native village, which in turn is related to the abovementioned topic.

The study is of an applied nature and addresses a rarely addressed topic. The development is competent, gives information and knowledge, and the author shows extensive and thorough preparation. I am convinced that the study will be useful for folklore specialists. This matter will also be essential for the education of students of art schools. The work is valuable and has made a significant contribution to the field of arts and to science in general.

Under Article 24, Paragraph 1, Item 4 of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Chief Assistant Dr. Zoya Mikova presents multiple scientific developments:

1 – “Towards the Preparation of an Ethnomusicological Field Study” – article in the 2015 Yearbook of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts.

2 – “A Look at the Musical and Cultural Life of Ethnic Communities in Plovdiv” – report for Spring Scientific Readings, April 26th – 27th, 2016.

3 – “Armenian Songs for Vijag” (based on field work materials by the Armenian community in Plovdiv) – report of for Spring Scientific Readings, 2016, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts.

4 – Report “Layers from the Musical Life of the Roma Community in Plovdiv” – “The Unknown” Cultural Seminar, 25.11.2017.

5 – “Rosh Hashanah” (Jewish New Year) – publication in the Collection of Reports and Articles, “The Unknown”, Plovdiv, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2017.

6 – “Education and Traditional Cultural Practices” – Report for the “Science, Education and Innovation in the Arts” International Scientific Conference – Plovdiv, 12.10.2017 – 13.10.2017.

7 – “The Wedding Customs in the Village of Milkovitsa, Pleven District” (by field work materials) – report for “The Unknown” Cultural Seminar – Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2018.

8 – “The Last Carol-Singers” (based on field work materials from the village of Milkovitsa, Pleven District) – report for the “Spring Scientific Readings 2019” National Scientific Conference.

9 – “Male and Female Lazaritsa – Spring Holidays from the Village of Milkovitsa, Pleven District” (by field work materials) – article in the Collection of the National Conference on Organization, Management and Protection of Cultural and Historical Heritage, on the topic: “SPRING IN THE FESTIVE RITUAL CALENDAR (TRADITION AND MODERNITY)”, held at Uni BIT, Sofia, on 17.04.2019 and 18.04.2019.

After all that was said so far, I definitely think that Chief Assistant Dr. Zoya Iliycheva Mikova has the necessary qualities and experience as a specialist and teacher. Based on this and based on the presented habilitation materials, **I propose to the honorable Scientific jury to award Chief Assistant Dr. Zoya Iliycheva Mikova with the scientific title “ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR” under the Scientific specialty “Ethnomusicology”.**

08.11.2019

Prof. Dr. TODOR KIROV