

EXAMINER'S ASSESSMENT

by **prof. Romyana Balinova Todorova, PhD, lecturer in English at the English Studies Department, Faculty of Humanities, Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen,** regarding the selection procedure for the academic position of **Associate Professor** for **Paisii Hilendarsi University of Plovdiv**

in the area of: 2. Humanities

professional field 2.1. Philology (English Literature: Romanticism and Translation of Culture)

In the selection procedure for the academic position of **Associate Professor**, announced in the *State Gazette*, issue 31, dated 12 April 2019, and on the Internet site of *Paisii Hilendarsi University of Plovdiv* for the needs of the English Studies Department, Philological Faculty, *Paisii Hilendarsi University*, one candidate has applied – Dr. Vitana Vassileva Kostadinova from the English Studies Department, Philological Faculty, *Paisii Hilendarsi University*.

1. General introduction of the procedure and the candidate

I present the Assessment below in my capacity as a member of the Academic Jury for the selection procedure for the academic position of **Associate Professor** on the basis of *Paisii Hilendarsi University's* Rector's order No P33-2882 dated 11 June 2019 in the area of: 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology (English Literature: Romanticism and Translation of Culture) announced for the needs of the English Studies Department, Philological Faculty. One candidate, Dr. Vitana Vassileva Kostadinova from the English Studies Department, Philological Faculty, *Paisii Hilendarsi University*, has applied for the selection procedure.

The presented documents fulfil the Requirements *for the Development of the Academic Staff* at Plovdiv University. Vitana Kostadinova has worked as a lecturer in English Literature since 1995. She gives lectures and seminars in Romanticism and Enlightenment and in Creative and Critical Methods in the Teaching of Literature to BA students of English Studies, Applied Linguistics and Bulgarian and English Language, as well as of English Literature and Translation and Culture to MA students of Linguistics and Translation, Translation and Business Communication and English and Methods of Teaching English. She got a PhD degree in English Literature in 2008. Before that she got an MA degree in Romanticism from the University of Glasgow in 2001 and in Bulgarian and English from Plovdiv University (1989-1994).

2. General characteristics of the candidate's activities

Apart from the lecture courses Vitana Kostadinova has created the following teaching materials: Course book for English Literature: Romanticism with critical texts on topics from the syllabus; Tests and activities for continuous assessment and written exams; Tests with open-ended questions for preparation for the written exams in Enlightenment and Romanticism.

She was an academic advisor of 6 BA/ MA students' theses (2011-2016).

Judging from the application documents, we can say that Vitana Kostadinova has participated in a considerable number of international conferences, in various educational qualifications and in 7 different projects, has edited 2 books of collected papers, and is a member of various scientific organizations and boards; she is also responsible of and chairs various academic events. All this speaks of her activity as a researcher and organizer along with her teaching load. My personal impression from the meetings with staff members of the department is that Vitana Kostadinova is a highly respected teacher and colleague.

Dr. Kostadinova's monograph (288 pp.) *Jane Austen Translated: Cultural Transformations across Space and Time*, written in brilliant English, comes to fill the gap and adds up to various authors' receptions in Bulgaria and in Europe, by paying due attention to the interrelation between

translation and culture, translation and/or transfer of culture, as well as their interpretation in the Bulgarian context and transfer from the unknown to the known (familiar) with the help of translation. It dwells upon and analyzes various definitions of *translation* and *culture*. The transfer of culture is interpreted through the translated works of Austen's in the reality we live. The author dedicates enough space to Jane Austen's works in the original and in translation in Bulgaria through time, as well as to the adaptations of some of her books in the Bulgarian literary and cinematographic world. Various interpretations of high/elite and low/mass culture are presented, as well as the difference between the two and the way of receiving either of them, the interrelations and differences between the local and the global. She even touches upon difficulties in the translations of synonymous words such as, for example, "convince" and "persuade" in Austen's novel *Persuasion*, whose title has two translation equivalents („Dovodite na razuma“ and „Vazdeistvie“). Due attention is paid to the illustrations in the comics' versions of *Pride and Prejudice* in time, its screen adaptations as well as the sequels of a classic constructed in a creative way by combining the romantic with the ironic (*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*/ Chapter 5). The book dwells upon adaptation as a type of translation. The research is profound and the theoretical statements are supported by concrete examples. The rich references speak for the author's knowledgeability and the thoroughness of her study, which is inevitably a contribution to the Bulgarian reception of foreign classics in time.

The candidate has published 1 academic paper, more than 20 pages long, and 12 articles on the topic of her habilitation thesis. From the sum total of 26 academic papers for assessment, which are apart from her PhD thesis, she has 2 papers of more than 20 pages, 1 monograph, 1 book published on the basis of her PhD thesis and a list of 22 other academic works. The latter (22), as well as the two bigger studies, are published in non-refereed journals with academic reviewing or are published in edited books of collected papers. Her PhD thesis and the papers on the topic of the thesis will not be assessed here. Her works in Bulgaria and abroad are published as follows: 1 bigger study and 3 articles abroad (12, 15, 20); the rest 24 papers are published in Bulgaria. The greater part of the candidate's publications are dedicated to the reception of various authors and translations of cultures along with the respective information in Bulgaria and in Europe (1-3, 8-10, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20), others – to film adaptations (5, 6), still others – to methodological issues (11-13, 16-18). Part of the articles are published in books of collected papers (3, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 17, 21), jubilee books of papers (1, 2, 4, 5) and international conferences in Bulgaria (10, 22). Dr. Kostadinova's PhD thesis is published in Bulgarian as well as some of her articles (5, 11, 14, 16, 17), which is praiseworthy because when we talk about the reception of foreign literatures and cultures, in the present case, in Bulgaria, it is good for the information to be made known among wider audiences.

The candidate's contributions and results are academic (4-7, 14, 15, 17-22), applied (1-3, 8-10, 15) and methodological (11-13, 16, 18) and are entirely hers. Her papers are published in prestigious editions. She has 5 citations in international sources – monographs and books of collected papers with academic reviewing as well as 3 more in non-refereed journals with academic reviewing, 1 of which in an article. The fact that her papers are quoted in foreign sources speaks well enough for her popularity as a researcher.

3. Critical comments and recommendations

There are some quotations in the book which are too long, to my mind (e.g. p. 18-19 – House – 14 lines).

What is the reason for the projects Dr. Kostadinova has participated in not to be included in the list of academic requirements and regulations? I found out about them in her CV.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I declare that, the above mentioned qualities of Dr. Vitana Vassileva Kostadinova, as well as her academic and professional orientation in the field of philological sciences, more specifically English Literature and the Translation of Culture, as regards her publication activity and the citation of her works pointed out by her in her documents, her knowledgeability and skills for

conducting an academic analysis and the excellent English in which her publications are written, all of these fulfil the requirements of the *Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria* and its accompanying regulations. That is the reason why, on the basis of the materials and the academic works presented for the selection procedure and after analyzing their significance and academic, applied and methodological contributions, I recommend to the Academic Selection Committee to vote **POSITIVELY** for awarding the **academic rank ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR to Vitana Vassileva Kostadinova in the area of: 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology (English Literature: Romanticism and Translation of Culture), at the English Studies Department, Philological Faculty, Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.**

02 Sept 2019

Prepared by:

(Prof. Dr. Romyana Todorova)