

## REVIEW

*by Radoslav Dimitrov Radev, Prof. Dr. at University of Veliko Tarnovo "St. St. Cyril and Methodius", for the dissertation work of Prof. Magdalena Petrova Kostova-Panayotova on topic "Modern linguistic and didactological aspects of continuing training of teachers in Bulgarian language and literature" for awarding of educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in professional direction "Pedagogy of education in ..."*

I have been designated as a reviewer of the dissertation work by order RD-38-134/6.3.2024. The dissertation contains 391 standard pages, 302 bibliographic units. The dissertation was discussed and accepted for defense at an extended meeting of Humanities Department, DIUU, held on February 28, 2024. All necessary procedures were followed. The scientometrics is fulfilled. The dissertation consists of six chapters and its structure is a combination of theoretical, problem-thematic, literary and didactological corpus. The idea is to parallel the literary critical reading with the methodological model for studying the work, so that the educational process is less manipulative and more reader-like. And in her previous studies, she offers concepts that are caused by the changes in the educational sphere and they are, so to speak, a quick but adequate reflection. She does not remain only in the field of pure theoretical contemplation, but offers teaching aids that assist teachers in studying the works. What is unusual about her works is that she is a very good literary scholar and brings life to details when she offers problematic type of teaching in studying of literary texts. Her scientific and methodical walk in classical and modern Bulgarian literature is amazing.

Magdalena Panayotova assigns more universal function to introduction, as in it she expresses her own concern about the way literature is taught. According to her, one of the most important principles of literary communication "is precisely the 'restlessness' of dialogue, in which the student is placed in the situation of a

discoverer" (p.9). However, she does not oppose literary reading to technologies, but prefers to accept them as competitors for the formation of the student's consciousness. And this, in my opinion, is the truer line, since it is not a question of negation, but of improvement. This naturally imposes higher requirements on teacher training. And those who will prepare it and propose methodological solutions must approach non-linear, but "multivocal and provocative interpretation of the literary work" (p.12). This is what Magdalena Panayotova sees as her task in her dissertation work.

In first chapter "Classics, canon and modernity", the author examines these concepts in relation. She quite rightly introduces determinants of classics, among which she accepts "the features of the era, its physiognomy" (p. 18). And this is an important approach to the problem, since in our country the physiognomic is often under the guise of ideological. In M. Panayotova's critical review of the concepts, she is able to present individual views not so much as stagings, but as irritants for thought and emotion, through which the need for negation is lost. The canon is necessary, the classics, even when neglected, live in us by hidden mechanisms, and modern literature is the pulse that measures our being. Therefore, according to Magdalena Panayotova, the issue is in their interaction, not in their opposition. She refers to Plamen Doinov, who accepts that the educational canon is very inert, but by dealing only with literature of "NRB" we once again hid the authors from the 1920s and 1930s who the communists suppressed (p. 24). In this regard, Panayotova is much more flexible in her concepts. She achieves a very good correlation between past and present, and makes successful attempt to complement male curriculum, in which literature created by women is represented only by Elisaveta Bagryana and runners-up such as Mara Belcheva and Dora Gabe. The perspective thinking of Magdalena Panayotova, which seeks a solution to some pressing problems, for example with the structure of educational content, is impressive (p. 10–22). It is clear that



project-oriented learning provokes the classroom-lesson system and teacher must be prepared for this step outside the framework, in order not to be, as Sartre says, "the guardian of a cemetery". Such a position also requires professional audacity, since the old canon in school has not yet been overcome. I believe that one of the priority activities of the Departments of Continuing Education should be precisely this preparation that will orientate teachers in modern literature ("Outside the canon"). In this regard, Magdalena Panayotova's dissertation work will be a good helper.

The dissertation work is aimed at the high school level of literature education and is based on a complex interrelationship between methodological decisions for studying the literary text with free initiative of interpretation, which must be carried out so that the dialogue between teacher and students is equal. The model becomes a form of intellectual tension to generate the student's individual joy that is being able to go beyond it. A fine job that I also dreamed of as a teacher. With this approach, it is natural to revive the contradiction as an educational method, insofar as Bulgarian literature is understood "as a process of crossing and reconciling contradictory motives" (p.12). On the other hand, Magdalena Panayotova revives the genre form "theses", not so much as content, but as composition. And this is a good finding, since the problems of students when they write is precisely the inability to build a composition.

Defining the work as "linguodidactological" is rather an attempt to aestheticize didactics so that there is affection in communication and an intention to fulfill. This approach defines the structure of the second chapter "The Golden Classics" for additional and continuing training of teachers in Bulgarian language and literature". In addition to the wealth of interpretive and methodological approaches, the author does not miss the ethical, however, it is inherent to her thinking, so it is natural that she works more for the dialogue in teaching and for forming in student respect for classics. For her, creating education means



preserving the dignity of students, and this will happen if the dignity of the teacher is also preserved. That is why the model she adopted for studying the classics from Hristo Botev to Dimitar Dimov is essentially a dissertation within the dissertation and relies on different points of view. And even the introduced theses section uses the framework of the logical to bring in emotionality, to open up curiosity, to teach the student that statement is not the master of truth, but needs context to make the mind's table rich. The individual interpretations of works of art are made in such a way that the transition from genre features to composition and essence is smooth, from which the communicative nature of problems can be opened. This approach is particularly important because very often teachers ask problematic questions without creating the necessary context for the student to achieve volume in their response. The freedom and multiplicity of learning is in the context, and the energy is in the question. And since the methodology got bogged down in the questions, M. Panayotova avoided them, because she thinks more about empathy and not about dissecting the text. And Theodore Fontane successfully poeticizes: "Why? Why? Don't worry - / questions spoil the pleasure".

The third chapter, "New classics to help high school teachers", considers Bulgarian modernism, and quite rightly so, since lately we have been thinking more about postmodernism. I accept M. Panayotova's statement that "Even if futurism was born alongside expressionism in Bulgaria, it failed to develop so fully" (p. 244), but it influenced the so-called extreme bohemians - the Zemanfishists around the circle "Bulgaran". The question is, however, when we write about need of the game, can we offer their motto: "Dumba, lumba, tra-la-la, life is a giddy game." To what extent we should protect children from such texts and aesthetics, especially since Italian futurism propagated the necessity of wars as purification of civilization and disregard for women. Is studying of literature only pleasure of what is nice and good when we talk about socialization of students? Will "total rebellion" of futurists with future in mind (p.247) be accepted



as rebellion by students? The very emergence of these reflections shows the completeness of the research, and that's why the author notes that there is much to discuss in the field of literature education. That is why, when she examines the texts of Emiliyan Stanev, Nikolay Haitov, Yordan Radichkov, Stanislav Stratiev, Viktor Paskov, she gives a meaning of difficult problems - the contradictions in life, the conflict between man and nature, deviation from the norm, dehumanization, the need to live according to natural laws. And this is true, but they are all worries for children who have a right of joy. In the fourth chapter, "Out of canon", the author is seduced by her freedom and her right to subjectivity, through which it is best to give new life to artistic texts. The "feminine' April Line of the 1960s" was written with inspiration, as the work of poetesses was also seen as happening of intimate life outside of ideology. Party affiliation has another image when it is a question of destinies and sensibility. This analyticity with preserved sensitivity is deep in M. Panayotova, because it awakens trust. It also gives strength to her reasoning in the fifth chapter "Modern canon - is it possible?" Perspectives and problems'. Comparisons, intertextuality, analogies also become active in it. Besides the subtle observations on the work of Zdravka Evtimova, Milen Ruskov, Georgi Gospodinov and others she also manages to introduce conceptual, original views for development of modern Bulgarian novel, which, according to her, is "a kind of hypostasis of the missing center" (p. 326).

The pedagogical experience of M. Panayotova is very well demonstrated in the applied developments in sixth chapter. Her reflections for the place of teacher in the Fourth Industrial Revolution are also impressive. In general, when the author looks she thinks and when she thinks - feels, and by feeling makes truth possible.

The abstract in synthesized form accurately and systematically presents the essence of dissertation work.

The contributing moments are brought out convincingly and reveal the completely original character of proposed work. At theoretical and pragmatic

level, significant topics in the field of literary education are highlighted. It is functional for the preparation of teachers, as well as for the overall literary education in the high school stage. The work can also be considered as practical literary studies, since original interpretations of artistic texts, especially contemporary works, have been carried out in it. Therefore, I vote for Prof. Magdalena Petrova Kostova - Panayotova to be awarded the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in the professional direction "Pedagogy of teaching in..." (Methodology of teaching in literature).

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