

STATEMENT

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Antonia Tsankova,
Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

on dissertation thesis for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"

Field of higher education: 2. Humanities

Professional field: 2.1. Philology, Literature of the Peoples of Europe, America,
Africa, Asia and Australia (Contemporary Korean Literature and Culture)

Topic: **“National Strategy of the Republic of Korea to Promote Korean Culture
and Language around the World”**

Author of the dissertation: Tsvetelina Panayotova Borisova

The presented dissertation thesis on the topic "National Strategy of the Republic of Korea for the Promotion of Korean Culture and Language in the World" is completed in accordance with the regulatory requirements and applicable provisions of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria and the current Regulations on it, as well as in accordance with the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" regarding the conditions for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".

The dissertation consists of a total of 214 pages and includes an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography, a directory with the cited names and an appendix presenting a questionnaire used for the purposes of empirical research in the study. The scientific contributions of the research and the declaration of originality of the dissertation are duly presented. The bibliography contains a total of 204 sources, among which 50 media sources. The study has a clear, logically sound and balanced structure.

The Introduction to the dissertation motivates the choice and relevance of the topic, which examines the development of Korean cultural policy in the context of current issues of preserving the cultural identity of peoples in today's globalizing world, as well as practical opportunities to achieve significant economic, diplomatic, educational, scientific and cultural expansion through the means of the so-called "soft power" in the face of a state-supported and well-focused cultural strategy. The objectives of the dissertation study are the research and analysis of the national strategy of the Republic of Korea to promote Korean culture and language around the world with an emphasis on the effects of its implementation in Bulgaria. In connection with the set goals, the specific research tasks of theoretical and experimental-analytical nature have been determined. The hypotheses of the dissertation research are formulated in two parts, namely: Hypothesis 1 - The spread of Halyu is the main reason for the growth of interest

in Korean culture and language around the world and in particular in Bulgaria; Hypothesis 2 - The sustainable development of Halyu is a direct result of the carefully planned and consistent policy of the South Korean government. The author clearly and consistently presents the theoretical and empirical approaches and methodology of the research applicable to the dissertation thesis.

The First Chapter discusses the main characteristics, stages of development and forms of the Korean cultural wave Halyu. A historical overview and analysis of the given phenomenon in the world and in Bulgaria are presented, the specifics of each of the four phases of the cultural expansion observed so far are considered; the key factors that contributed to the global spread of Halyu are analyzed, as well as the main effects of the cultural policies.

The Second Chapter of the study presents and analyzes the stages and key events related to the evolution of the national strategy of the Republic of Korea to promote Korean culture and language around the world. They are derived from summaries of the cultural policies of the government bodies that ruled the country in the period 1988-2021, and the period 1900-1988 is briefly presented in the form of a historical background.

The Third Chapter presents the leading government institutions related to the implementation of the national strategy of the Republic of Korea to promote Korean culture and language abroad, including institutions of the South Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education. Extensive statistics from the last twenty years on various indicators of the development of the cultural policy of the Republic of Korea abroad are presented.

The Fourth Chapter is devoted to empirical research and presents a summary analysis in two directions: (1) Results of interviews, whose main purpose is to outline the history of the spread of the Korean wave in Bulgaria in connection with Korean language training in our country, and (2) Results of a survey, which aims to identify key characteristics related to the current state of interest in Korean culture and language in Bulgaria. For the purposes of the first type of study, in-depth interviews were conducted with nine people, eight of whom were related to the three targeted educational institutions and one related to the early history of the Korean wave in Bulgaria. The second empirical study in the form of a questionnaire was conducted in the three most influential educational institutions related to the study of the Korean language in Bulgaria - 18 William Gladstone High School, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and the only Bulgarian branch of the Sejong Government Institute. The empirical data obtained from the research are presented precisely and in detail with visual tabular and graphical material, accompanied by well-founded analysis and conclusions on the set topics.

Each of the four chapters of the dissertation ends with a summary, analysis and main conclusions on the materials presented in the chapter.

In the **Conclusions** of the dissertation research Tsvetelina Borisova presents well-argued and reasonable conclusions about the effectiveness of the national strategy undertaken by the government and state institutions in the Republic of Korea to spread

Korean culture and Korean language worldwide in order to increase international prestige, economic growth and cultural influence in today's globalizing world. As a result of the comprehensive research and analysis of the presented factual, theoretical and empirical data, the author convincingly proves the two research hypotheses of the study. The author also concludes that the Republic of Korea clearly demonstrates how important and successful it is to borrow foreign good practices in combination with the presentation of attracting aspects of national culture abroad, as in fact Korea borrows the proven successful model previously introduced by countries such as the United States and Japan, and as a “good student” adapts, refines, and "puts it into new circulation". Tsvetelina Borisova reasonably points out that the Korean cultural wave, known as Halyu, can serve as a benchmark, as it is an example of how a small country with a dramatic modern history manages to achieve cultural expansion beyond even the wildest dreams. Accordingly, the study of Halyu with its mechanisms of functioning through state support and relevant strategies could be used for the purposes of Bulgarian cultural diplomacy, especially given the similarities between the two countries.

At the end of the study, the scientific contributions of the dissertation are formulated, which according to the author is the first comprehensive study in Bulgaria and in Europe exploring the Korean model for promoting national culture and language abroad.

Based on my impressions of the dissertation, I can summarize that the work is a thorough, comprehensive and well-structured research that has a scientific value, it is based on theoretical and empirical methods with reasoned analysis and conclusions, the research theses are well defended. On this basis, I express my high appreciation for the submitted dissertation work and propose to the esteemed scientific jury to vote for awarding Tsvetelina Panayotova Borisova the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field 2.1. Philology, Literature of the Peoples of Europe, America, Africa, Asia and Australia (Contemporary Korean Literature and Culture).

May 10, 2022

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Antonia Tsankova