

REVIEW

of the academic output for participation in a competition for the position of Associate Professor in Professional Field 2.1. Philology (Theory and History of Literature – Theory of Literature), announced in *State Gazette*, № 74/ 21. 08. 2020. with sole applicant Dr. Maria Kalinova Baitosheva

1. Information about the competition

The competition for selection of associate professor in professional field 2.1. Philology (Theory and History of Literature – Theory of Literature) at Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski“ was announced in *State Gazette*, № 74/ 21. 08. 2020. The procedure fully complies with the requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act.

2. Information about the candidate

One candidate has applied – Assistant Professor Dr. Maria Kalinova Baitosheva. She is a lecturer at Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski“. She defended her PhD thesis („Literary publicity and the construction of the figures of morality“) in 2011. Since December 2013, she has been a senior assistant and teaches courses in literary theory. In 2016 she received a scholarship of the Center for Academic Research in Sofia.

Maria Kalinova has published three monographs (one co-authored) in the field of literary theory and the history of Bulgarian literature: „Childhood and intellectual history in the authors of the Revival“ (2012), „Chaos and disorder. The Randomness of Language, Literature, and Philosophy“ (co-authored with Vasil Vidinski and Kamelia Spasova, 2018) and the main monographic text with which she has presented for this

competition – „Exotopy: on the external context of discourse“ (2020). She has published several dozen articles, studies and reviews in academic journals and in specialized periodicals. She has participated in the compilation of two scientific collections and has edited academic and artistic collections and anthologies. There is an emphasis on the care and concern with which she works on the presentation of texts by students and young people.

In the bibliography of Maria Kalinova, the titles she co-authored make an impression. This is a sign that shows the attitude and skills for team research and for building texts in a group – qualities that distinguish her as a specific „collective player“ in science and literature.

To all this it is important to add that Maria Kalinova is among the emblematic new poets from the beginning of the XXI century and among the editors of the weekly „Literary newspaper“ – positions and activities that allow her to connect different types of commitments to the practice and theoretical understanding of contemporary literature. Her work stands out among that of many young researchers and teachers today with its complexity of interests and manifestations in the academic and literary field.

3. Description of academic texts

Maria Kalinova has presented one monograph and five academic articles, three of which in English. Her habilitation text „Exotopy: for the external context of discourse“ comprises 130 pages. It contains an introduction, five chapters, concluding remarks and a bibliography. It seems somewhat more modest in volume compared to other habilitation projects. But it is built on all the norms of internally coordinated research, the unity of which and the consistent proof of academic theses are beyond doubt. There are five articles by M. Kalinova, and they also follow the general research logic of the applicant. They act as preliminary studies and at the same time enrich a number of arguments from her habilitation.

4. Academic contributions of the habilitation text

The book "Exotopy: for the external context of discourse" (2020) seeks to reinterpret and actually transform a concept introduced by Tsvetan Todorov in the 1980s – exotopy (exotopie), variably building on Bakhtin's concept of *внезаходимост* (*извънпробиваемост* in Bulgarian). To this end, M. Kalinova carries out a kind of "collusion" between literary and psychoanalytic discourse in order to include Lacanian psychoanalysis and Bakhtin's ideas of dialogism in a mode of mutual exchange.

The work rehabilitates the concept of ideological postulate while returning it to its *original meaning*, but also transposing it into a new concept, intertwining ideological models and their intersubjective problematization. This creates something like an ideology for *personal and shared use*, which intimates, relativizes or even reforms the ideological in a personal or even domesticated discourse of the exotopic subject.

This approach directly leads to the idea of shaking the notion of the obviousness of context. Its discursive intermediateness and openness, its modeling of at least two languages leads to a specific *externalization* of the human in a new and constitutive for literature transsubjectivism. It turns out that *appearance* and *absence* are often the same thing (that is, if we radicalize Kalinova's terms): *the literary subject goes where it does not exist again*. It is transported elsewhere, where it is *not the same* and where through others it can exercise his freedom, devoted to its own frontier experience. It is here that I find the extremely fruitful idea of hidden resistance to the context of coercion through the invention by literature and literary theory of other *external* landmarks for the individual and for the writer.

From the very exotopic status of literary subjects arises the possibility of literary theory, losing its *end* or *completion*, to continue to resist the market and politics, valuing literature in the perspective of a reconceptualized aesthetic autonomy that draws strength and life from the various, deviating, unpredictable interpretations. It is somewhere here that lies the key contribution of this study: to see in *exotopy* a chance to achieve a new, *postmodern* autonomy of literature.

5. Academic and teaching activity

Maria Kalinova has completed various other academic activities. She has participated in six projects and presented papers at over twenty scientific forums. An interesting fact is that her research work is based on the organization and participation in many university seminars. Some of Kalinova's theses originate from *the oral academic speech* and are tested in the discussion environment of various forums. This is a feature that emphasizes the productivity of university publicity.

As an assistant and chief assistant professor, M. Kalinova taught the courses „Introduction to Literary Theory“, „Theory of Poetry“, „Logic of Disagreement in Language and Literature“. Her teaching experience corresponds to the specifics of the competition.

6. Conclusion

Based on the above, I strongly support Maria Kalinova Baitosheva's application for the position of associate professor in the competition of Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology (Theory and History of Literature – Theory of Literature) at Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski“ in the *State Gazette*, № 74/ 21. 08. 2020. Her publications, research, teaching experience and personal qualities support this view.

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