

REVIEW

for the scientific and teaching activity of

Associate Professor Dr. Gergana RumenoBa Ptkova –

participant in a competition for the academic position of “Professor” in a professional field 2.1. Philology (Japanese Literature and Culture), published in the Darjhaven vestnik, issue 21/17.03.2020

for the needs of The Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Department of Japanese Studies

by Prof. Dr. Habil. in Sociology Maya Bedros Keliyan,

professional field

3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Sciences, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,
member of Scientific Jury (Order of the Rector № RD 38-150/23.03.2020)

Associate Professor Dr. Gergana Petkova is the only candidate in the announced competition for the academic position of “Professor” in the professional field 2.1. Philology (Japanese Literature and Culture), published in the Darjhaven vestnik, issue 21/17.03.2020. On the submitted set of documents for participation in the competition, candidate delivered all necessary documentation as required by the Law for Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, of the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations on the Terms and Conditions for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at The Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”.

No violations in the competition procedure have been identified.

1. Minimum scientific requirements for holding the respective academic position

In compliance with the minimum national requirements under Article 2b of The Law for Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, candidate **fully meets** the minimum scientific requirements for the scientific field **2. Humanities**, professional field **2.1. Philology** for holding the academic position of „**Professor**”. Dr. Petkova holds a Certificate № 1288 from December 15, 2005 issued by High Qualifying Commission for the recognition of the acquired educational and scientific degree “Doctor” in the scientific specialty “Literature of the Peoples of Europe, America, Africa, Asia and Australia”, given to her in Switzerland, as her dissertation on “Male images in the Japanese fairy tale: classification and analysis” was defended at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zurich on May 14, 2004. Based on her dissertation for the award of PhD degree, was published a monograph in English in Bulgaria in 2004. Dr. Petkova published a second monograph – “House of Miracles - Symbolism of Traditional Architecture and Interior in Japanese Fairy Tales” in 2011, which is a habilitation thesis for her election as “Associate Professor”. After her appointment to the academic position of “Associate Professor” in 2012, she published another, third monograph – “Conscious Education: On the Example of Bulgarian Japanology School” in 2020, chapters from collective monographs published abroad - respectively in 2017 in Japan and in 2018 in Russia, as well as a number of other publications.

2. Lack of data on plagiarism

The dissertation and publications of Dr. Gergana Petkova are entirely the result of her own research work. This allows me to confidently state that **I have not established** plagiarism under Article 4, paragraph 11 of The Law for Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, and that I, as a member of the Scientific Jury, **have not received such signals**.

3. Teaching activity

According to the attached CV and reference to the circumstances under Article 97 for the academic work, the classroom and extra-classroom classes, the study load of Dr. Gergana Petkova not only covers, but even many times exceeds the minimum annual standards established at The Sofia University. From 2003 to 2007 she was a part-time lecturer, after which she was appointed as a full-time lecturer, and her internship in the specialty covers a total of 17 years. Throughout the described period her teaching activity fully corresponds to the theme of the announced competition, impressing with its wide-ranging issues aimed at important for the education of Japanese literature research fields. The developed lecture courses and the disciplines led by her cover the training of students majoring in “Japanese Studies” at the bachelor’s and master’s level directly related to the topic of this competition. In the bachelor’s program she teaches basic disciplines such as: “Old Japanese”, part 1 and part 2, respectively; “Ethnography of Japan” part 1 and part 2; “Japanese Fairy Tales”, “Introduction to Academic Writing and Presentation”, “Achievements and Trends in Contemporary Japanese Studies”, “Introduction to Teaching Japanese”. Dr. Petkova is the holder of the following courses: „Gender Studies. The Role of Gender in Literature”, „Artistic Translation and Reception: Literary Treasures of Japan” as well as of subjects as „European Language Framework and Standards of the Japan Foundation” and “Global Japanese Studies: Best Schools in the World”, which expand students’ cognitive horizons.

The candidate was a research supervisor of two successfully defended doctoral students (in 2015 and in 2018), and currently also supervises a doctoral student. She was a member of a senior advisors’ team at the 15th EAJS PhD Workshop, University College Cork, Ireland, 20–23 August 2019.

The work of Dr. Petkova for improving the quality of teaching in Japanese is also impressive: she actively shares her experience with colleagues, an example of which are: an online lecture on the methodology of teaching in Japanese; a short methodological guide for Japanese students, co-authored in 2016, surveys to improve the quality of the learning process,

the results of which were used to update the curricula at the bachelor's and master's level; organization of a round table to discuss the methodology of teaching Japanese and others.

Dr. Petkova has extensive experience as a leader of a number of programs: a master's program "Japanese Language and Culture", a two-year postgraduate course in Japanese language and culture, a postgraduate course to prepare for the exam of the Japan Foundation - JLPT (Japanese - Language Proficiency Test), as well as a postgraduate course "Improving Communication Skills for successful Dialogue with The East". She actively works to promote the activities of the Department of Japanese Studies, maintaining its website in Bulgarian, English and Japanese, and also creates and maintains the YouTube channel of the Department. She is the initiator and leader of public events such as exhibitions, open days and others, which not only promote but also make the achievements of the Department visible and recognizable to the Bulgarian public.

She has chaired organizing committees of national and international conferences, two of which are sponsored by the Japan Foundation. She has led 6 projects to promote the teaching of Japanese language and culture, as well as the activities of the Department of Japanese Studies and its scientific and educational achievements. Dr. Petkova actively participates in a number of international exchange programs; she lectures at prestigious foreign universities and research centers; she is a member of international organizations on the field of Japanese Studies and holds an award – diploma of the Japanese Ambassador for her contribution to Japanese language teaching and research in the field of Japanese studies. After her election as an "Associate Professor", she continued to improve her professional skills and training, attending two qualification courses for Japanese language teachers organized by the Japan Foundation in France and Hungary.

I am fully convinced that Dr. Gergana Petkova meets both the criteria regarding the academic employment for the academic position of "Professor" and those on the topic of the announced competition. She has proven her qualities as a lecturer who improves her skills and has accepted as her professional and personal cause the development and international recognition of the prestige of the Department of Japanese Studies at The Sofia University.

4. Research and /or creative work

The scientific publications of Dr. Petkova fully correspond to the topic of the announced competition. Her publishing activity after her election as an “Associate Professor” is impressive: in addition to the above mentioned monograph, chapters of a monograph, textbook, she also publishes a popular science book, 26 articles, 6 studies, 5 of which in indexed and referenced publications. She has presented 21 conference papers, organized 4 exhibitions, participated in 16 projects, translated 2 books and the opera libretto; she is an editor of 4 editions and has been the compiler of two other collections, as well as a member of editorial boards.

Among the various topics in the scientific interests and achievements of Dr. Petkova, three main groups of problems can be distinguished:

1. Dr. Petkova is an established and recognizable scholar in the field of Folklore and Ethnographic research in Japan: an example is a number of her works, such as the study “Night and the Japanese Fairy Tale”, the article “Night, Reality and Dreams in Japanese Fairy Tales”, the book “Ethnography of Japan: Eight Introductory Topics”, and more.

2. She is a prominent researcher in the field of Gender Studies, as evidenced by publications such as “Masculinity on Stage: Male Characters in Contemporary Japanese and Chinese TV Dramas”, “The Softening Masculinity: in Desperate Search of the Perfect Man. On the Example of Japanese and Korean TV Drama Serials”, “My Perfect Darling and My Love from the Stars”, and others. Dr. Petkova traces the development of images of masculinity in Japanese society in the course of its socio-historical changes and their reflection in Japanese literature and culture, as well as their perceptions in contemporary pop culture in East Asia and Bulgaria.

3. The analysis of educational practices in the area of Japanese studies naturally leads Dr. Petkova to the creation of her concept of “conscious education”. According to the author, it is a key factor in the development of foreign language and culture education in the 21st century. She developed this idea in two of her key publications, with which she participated in this

competition. In the monograph “Conscious Education: Examples of Bulgarian Japanese Studies”, published in 2020, the candidate substantiates her concept of conscious education, through which she analyzes the educational process of Japanese Studies at The Sofia University at the institutional and individual level. Her approach is based on the idea of awareness, as the specific examples from the history and present of the specialty „Japanese Studies” used by her once again confirm the overall dedication of the author to the cause of the development of the specialty. For Dr. Petkova, teaching is not only training and accumulation of new knowledge, it is a complete process of development and growth, in which the individual is enriched not only cognitively but also spiritually. According to her, the development of Bulgarian Japanese Studies should be considered both in its direct connection with that of other Oriental Studies, as well as in an international context. In the study „Conscious Education: Challenges and Prospects for Teaching Eastern Languages and Cultures”, also published in 2020, the author presents the relationship and interdependence of language and cultural education with specific examples from the Bulgarian school of Oriental Studies.

Dr. Petkova has cited 23 citations of her works, 15 of which are in foreign publications.

Her six-month research career as a guest researcher at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) in Kyoto is another proof of the international recognition of her qualities as a scholar and lecturer.

Her publications, both in number and in importance, fully cover the expectations and criteria for holding the academic position of “Professor” at The Sofia University.

Conclusion

On the basis of the documentation provided, I am **fully convinced to declare**, that Associate Professor Dr. Gergana Rumenova Petkova is **fully developed and recognizable as a scientist, researcher and teacher**, working in the field of Philology (Japanese Literature and Culture). She has gained **rich teaching experience and fully meets the requirements** for the

academic position of “Professor”, formulated in The Law for Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, in the Regulations for its Implementation and in the Regulations for the Conditions and the Order for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions in The Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”.

As a member of the Scientific Jury in this competition, I recommend to the respected members of The Faculty Council of Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology to choose **Associate Professor Dr. Gergana Rumenova Petkova for Professor in the professional field 2.1. Philology (Japanese Literature and Culture).**

10. 09. 2020

Prof. Dr. Habil. Maya Keliyan

Sofia

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