

Opinion

regarding an application by Senior Assistant Professor Bogdana Paskaleva, PhD, for tenure as Associate Professor, Academic Code 2.1. 'Western European Literature', promulgated in *State Gazette*, No. 61/02.08. 2022

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A single contestant has submitted an application for tenure as Associate Professor in Western European Literature: Senior Assistant Professor Bogdana Paskaleva, PhD. She fully satisfies the minimum eligibility requirements for the position, and complies with all technical requirements for participation in the competition. Her papers are all in order.

Leaving aside the technical arrangements, we are bound to say that Bogdana Paskaleva's application is more than compelling, and the announcement of the vacancy she is applying for, is quite timely. Bogdana will be one of the youngest associate professors at Sofia University, but she is young in age only. In all other respects, she is a consummate scholar. Very few young scholars, and even fewer literary scholars of any age today can boast her level of erudition and training. In a nutshell, the quality of Bogdana Paskaleva's body of work is such as to rank her among the best Bulgarian literary scholars, period. Because Bogdana is a scholar with her own personality, a very wide range of academic interests and a rare ability to create genuine science from whatever she puts her mind to. Her excellent knowledge of ancient and Renaissance culture, her own experience in literary translation and the enviable theoretical foundation of her academic expertise enable her to experiment, to use unorthodox keys when she tackles contemporary subject matter, as well.

As a teacher of Western European literature, Bogdana uses freely the major European languages while also possessing an excellent knowledge of the ancient tradition, which she explores and popularizes. She herself, as mentioned above, is credited with the translation of important literary works, without which the Bulgarian cultural scene would be much poorer.

Senior Assistant Professor Bogdana Paskaleva, PhD, has supported her application for tenure with a large number of scientific articles published both in Bulgaria and abroad, some of them in referenced publications and all of them having a considerable academic merit. In the context of

the application, however, in which the crucial factor is the habilitation paper, below I shall focus briefly on it.

It is a monograph titled 'Dressing Nudity: Transformations of the image in the subject matter of Echo and Narcissus' and joins together Bogdana's multipronged academic interests and her knowledge of diverse traditions and cultures, as well as her ability to reconcile history and theory, past and present. And, last but not least, her ability to place Bulgarian literary studies in the wider context of global literary studies, demonstrating that their accomplishments and potential far transcend the regional. It is also important to note that Bogdana has approached her research methods as a scholar, whose duty is to analyze and prove her assumptions. She formulates clear research hypotheses, resolves disputes, cites evidence, makes connections, summarizes, explores alternative options, makes conclusions. In this sense, her paper is a piece of scientific research in its purest form, and one in which the researcher's voice is heard loud and clear, because she has a say on every point of discussion.

A big merit of her work lies in her ability for complex intertextual and metafictional interpretations, demonstrated at many levels and fusing together texts, genres, philosophy, mythology, literature and some intriguing reconstructions. Although the tasks she has been faced with in her work are not narratological but rather dealing with the image and the ways it can be interpreted – whether as a visual or mental and imagined one, as well as through its extension into the non-visual, subsumed in which are usages and functionalities, as well as the conditions for its emergence, and its treatment as both a semiotic and an ontological problem. In other words, a serious emphasis has been placed on the language and the way it works for the benefit of what has been defined as theory of the image. And all of that, on a foundation of brilliant analyses and interesting, memorable interactions of texts and personages.

Last but not least, an achievement of this work is the author's insight of the ideas of Saussure, their harnessing into the subject matter of the study, which takes place under the sign of the idea of reviewing the Saussurian semiology, especially that of ancient poetry, and taking a closer look at the materiality of sound. All of that supported by close reading, beautiful metaphors and unexpected contextualizations.

In conclusion, bearing in mind the solid professional biography of Senior Assistant Professor Bogdana Paskaleva, PhD, the quality of the body of work she has submitted in support of her

application for tenure, her brilliant writing and bold ideas, her ability for thorough and sensitive self-analysis, as well as her superior erudition as a literary scholar and the high appreciation of her students for her abilities as a lecturer, I can state with conviction that Senior Assistant Professor Bogdana Paskaleva, PhD, fully deserves to be awarded the academic title of Associate Professor in a competition for tenure as associate professor in professional area 'Philology', Academic Code 2.1. 'Western European Literature'.

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