

## PEER REVIEW

in relation to the competition for holding the academic position *Associate Professor* in professional area 2.1. Philology, scientific discipline Bulgarian language – for the purposes of the Department of Onomastics at IBL according to the announcement in SG issue 36/ 3.05.19

Candidate:

**Senior Lecturer Maya Dimitrova Vlahova-Angelova, PhD, Department of Onomastics at IBL - BAS**

**Reviewer: Associate Professor Boryan Georgiev Yanev, PhD, Department of Linguistics and History of the Bulgarian Language, Faculty of Languages and Literature, The Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv**

According to Resolution № РД-09-21/ 01.07.2019, issued by the Director of the Institute for Bulgarian Language "Prof. Lyubomir Andreychin" I have been appointed as a member of the academic jury for the competition for the academic position of "**Associate Professor**" at IBL in the Area of Higher Education 2. Humanities, in Professional Area 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian Language), **announced for the purposes of** the Department of Onomastics at IBL - BAS, Sofia.

Maya Dimitrova Vlahova-Angelova, PhD, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Onomastics at IBL and a long-time collaborator at the same unit at the Institute, is the only candidate to participate in the announced competition.

### **General overview of the submitted material**

The set of material submitted by Senior Lecturer Maya Vlahova-Angelova, PhD in physical and digital format complies fully with the Rules for Academic Staff Development of IBL, which I became closely familiar with as required for the procedure.

The candidate Vlahova-Angelova has supplied 30 items of academic research in total, used to participate in the competition. In my review, I have taken into account all of the submitted material in view of the fact that none of it presents a conflict of overlapping with a previous procedure for the scientific or academic development of the candidate Maya Vlahova-Angelova.

According to the type of publication, **two monographs are considered**: one of them written as a habilitation work (*Ономастика и етноботаника: названия на плодове според данни от топонимията в Западна България. София: Издателство на БАН „Проф. М. Дринов“, ISBN 978-954-322-956-7, 2018, 120 стр.*) and one monograph defended in 2010 as a doctoral dissertation for the acquisition of the academic and educational degree of "doctor" (*Улиците на София: картографиране на градската идентичност. София: ИБЕ, ISBN: 978-954-92489-4-4, 2013, 328 стр.*). An impressive study is presented in the procedure (*Цветовете*

*в българската топонимия (върху материал от Западна България). В: Известия на ИБЕ, т. XXVII (2014), стр. 130-160. ISSN: 0323-9934* ), as well as *22 articles in national and foreign journals* and specialized publications, two of which are yet to be published, but the candidate has supplied certificates (official responses by the editors) from the editorial boards responsible for submissions. Seven of the articles Vlahova-Angelova has co-written, they show significant authorial contribution.

Also taken into account is the rest of the material because it exemplifies an objective and original presentation: *2 reviews by the candidate* (for a monograph and a collection of papers from a conference) *1 abstract and 2 chronicles*, published in prestigious international and national journals.

### **Publications before and after acquiring the academic degree**

After acquiring the academic and educational degree of “doctor”, the publication activity of Senior Lecturer Maya Vlahova-Angelova, PhD has noticeably increased. According to the submitted documentation, the candidate had 5 academic publications and 1 abstract before the academic degree (thus answering the required criteria), and after receiving it, the number of academic works rises tangibly, topping 30, among them the two monographs, numerous articles, studies, academic and scientific abstracts, etc. Prior to obtaining the academic and educational degree of “doctor”, Maya Vlahova-Angelova's publications reveal interest in urbanonymy, and specifically in: Sofia hodonymy and the processes of onomastic (urbanomastic) standartization in nominal processes. As of this moment, there is a significant expansion of the research perimeter, which is one of the prerequisites for academic development.

### **General overview of the academic, scientific applied, and pedagogical work of the candidate**

Taking into consideration the fact that the candidate is part of a research unit, the current review cannot provide evaluation of her pedagogical activity. In spite of this, it is important to note that Maya Vlahova-Angelova possesses exemplary communicational and organizational skills as a result of her frequent participation in a variety of initiatives at IBL in the academic and scientific popular circles. The candidate is a recognizable face at philological (onomastic) scientific forums in the country and abroad, she has had several media exposures on issues of a socio-onomastic character.

Senior Lecturer Maya Vlahova-Angelova, PhD's academic work is impressive and despite gravitating in the orbit of onomastics, it incorporates different key aspects of linguistics (both sublingual problems and research prisms), which testifies to the fact that Vlahova-Angelova is a highly erudite linguist. Just as she has assessed herself, her scientific achievements belong mainly to the area of toponymy, her contributions in the area of antroponymy are just as many.

Vlahova-Angelova has participated in a few national projects, most of which have been financed by BAS, and fall within the field of onomastics (toponymy): „Електронна база данни на микропонимията от Западна България” (2011-2013); „Съвременната българска антропонимна система (мода на личните имена в България)” (2013-2016);

**„Топонимията на Западна България – свидетелства за национална идентичност”** (2014-2017); **„Влияние на съвременните демографски процеси върху топонимията в Пловдивския регион”** (2016-2017, as a PhD student supervisor); General academic project with the participation of 21 BAS institutes **„Траките”**. Topic: **„Следи от тракийския език в българската ономастика“** (2016-2019). It should be noted that Vlahova-Angelova has also beneficially participated (as a Master in *Polonistics*) in the important international project between IBL and PAS's Institute of Slavic Studies **„Българско-полски лексикални паралели“**, financed through EFE (2012-2014).

### **Main academic and scientific applied contributions**

The candidate's main body of work is dedicated to **the problems of Bulgarian toponymy** (settlement names and microtoponymy) and etymology (I separate it as an individual scientific sphere even though it functionally covers the onomastic research carried out), as seen through the prism of sociology, ethnolinguistics, linguoculturology, mentalinguistics and cognitive linguistics. The latter also have been touched upon more peripherally in Vlahova-Angelova's anthroponymic research.

The ethnolinguistic aspects of her academic work are most evident in the submitted habilitation work as well as in a number of articles, where she discusses the following specific problems: 1) Toponymy as a reflection of folk terms for fruit, 2) Toponymy as a source of folk terms for color and 3) Toponymy as a depository of folk geographical terms.

The sociolinguistic aspects of her work can be found in problems such as 1) Town toponymy, 2) Toponymy and contemporary demographic processes and 3) Anthroponymic research on contemporary naming in cities (personal names in cities and smaller settlements).

Especially demonstrative in an ethnolinguistic aspect is Vlahova-Angelova's monograph *„Ономастика и етноботаника: названия на плодове според данни от топонимията в Западна България. София, 2018”*. Since it is also the candidate's habilitation work, it entails a closer analysis. Vlahova-Angelova has often been professionally convincing, but untraditional in the long traditions of the academic field she operates in. This is why this work presents an original and unconventional view of Bulgarian toponymy and an interestingly conceived problem. The names of the 20 "fruits" the author finds in the analyzed local names (in Western Bulgaria and from the territories outside the borders Tsaribrodsko, Transko, and Bosilegradsko) are a sufficient basis to recognize and describe two consequential nominal processes: that of the primary onimization and of the subsequent one in a much later temporal frame, secondary apelativization, including transonimization. The successfully identified as "ethnobotanical" interlexical substance is analyzed in such a way as to clearly underline the cognitive character of the study - the place of the fruit and of the fruit plants in the value system of Bulgarians is presented. Significant in this regard is also the utilized Berlin principle of national taxonomy as a system for organization of folk (dilettante) knowledge. The author skillfully defends her position that toponymy can be a source of development of a national taxonomy of fruit (as well as of many other thematic groups), she provides commendable information about the national

biosystematics. Not only because fruit is an inseparable part of people's daily subsistence, but also due to the fact that they have an underlined symbolic character and find broad application in the rituals of the microsociety. The research of the local names uncovers lexemes which have long since been assigned to the passive layer of language. The analytical techniques of the conceptology have been offered as well because each phytoname acquires the status of a concept with an expanded research matrix, united in a taxonomic model which includes the lexical variants with their semantic, word-formative, and areal features. The ethnolinguistic and linguocognitive character of the study becomes prominent also from the acceptable and defended statement of the author that "... categorization of plants and further more of the national plant nomenclature reveal the ability of the folk person to acquire, analyze and structure accumulated knowledge about the flora surrounding him and to transform the assimilated information into names".

Worthy of note alongside the many intralinguistic observations is the study and analysis of quasisynonymical ties within the excerpted phyto-vocabulary, which show that some botanical species enjoy a deep hierarchical categorization, while others (completely) lack one. Simultaneously, the necessary toponymical reconstruction has also been handled with the use of a typical onomastic approach (and the method of onomastic etymology). As justification for the newly emerged scientific field in Bulgarian linguistics also serve some of the submitted publications for the competition, among which are *Топонимията като извор на традиционна екологично познание: Няколко названия на плодове, запазени в старинни местни имена от Западна България* – сп. *Български език* (2017)", *Топонимията като извор за фолклорната биосистематика (за някои забравени названия на плодове в топонимията на Западна България)* – Сб. „Българският език – древен, съвременен, единен” (2018), *Народната таксономия на плодовете според данни на българската топонимия* – сп. *Български език* (2014), etc.

The second main topic which Maya Vlahova-Angelova works on is related to the socioonomastic aspects of the studies of personal names and more specifically, in urbanonymy. Important in that aspect is her work „*Улиците на София: картографиране на градската идентичност*. София, 2013”. The proposed research is based on her defended dissertation for the academic and educational degree of “doctor” therefore I shall comment on it laconically. Urban toponymy (in this case hodonymy (dromonymy)) offers a rich system of concepts which again carry an underlined cognitive character because they contain data not only about the academic but also about the folk (daily) manner of thinking of speakers, which reflects on the nominal processes themselves and on their analysis. They are part of the long-term collective memory and that is why the study has not only an underlined sociolinguistic character but is also mentalinguistic. The language picture of the world is reduced to a language picture of the town with all accompanying extralinguistic particularities of the subculture. As typical for Vlahova-Angelova, the academic and layman classifications are compared here again, based on two types of etymological data for the analyzed onyms with their name variants and their dynamics in a diachronic plan when crossed with language synchrony. Here I would like to conclude with the fact that the aforementioned book by Maya Vlahova-Angelova inspired the writing of several theses at Plovdiv University "Paisii

Hilendarski", with the author's ideas being assimilated and multiplied in researching urbanonyms in Plovdiv and the Plovdiv area.

The creation of new classifications and proving new facts alongside which new methods are used to discover existing academic fields and problems but it is executed through a different research perspective. It can be found in the rest of the candidate's academic research, which can be arranged in the following (as aforementioned) thematic fields:

*Folk names for colors (colorative terms) in Bulgarian toponymy.* In this research field Vlahova-Angelova examines the colors in Bulgarian toponymy (in settlement names and microtoponyms) along with their semantic features and reconstructs archaic and dialectical words for colors. Such publications are: *Цветовете в българската топонимия (върху материал от Западна България)*. В: Известия на ИБЕ, кн. XXVII (2014), *Colours in microtoponymy of Western Bulgaria (with special attention to metaphorical uses of colour terms)*. In: Proceedings from the 18th International onomastic conference *Macrotoponymy and microtoponymy*, Łódź (2015), etc.

Geographical terms in the toponymy and specifically folklore geographical terminology is another research problem that serves the purposes of the article „*Старинна топонимия от Западна България: местните имена като извор за народните географски представи*” – В: Международна юбилейна конференция на ИБЕ. Сборник с доклади. София (2017), co-written.

Toponymy and the current demographic processes is a topic inspired by a successful project under Vlahova-Angelova's supervision. 30 settlements in the Plovdiv area are examined and as a result of that many publications appear with the candidate's co-authorship: *Топонимната гъстота в Пловдивско като отражение на демографските процеси в региона*. – В сб. Доклади от Международна научна конференция на Факултета по славянски филологии „Надмощие и приспособяване“, т. 2. Езиковедски четения (2017) and *Социодемографските процеси в Пловдивска област и тяхното отражение върху топонимията*. – В: Сб. с материали от XIII международна конференция по социолингвистика на тема: „Обществените процеси и тяхното отражение в езика” (2018).

Last (but not least) I would like to shed light on one more topic which Vlahova-Angelova works on, which is very important in a social and linguistic aspect and is also intriguing to researchers and the community, this time in the area of anthroponymy: *trends in the contemporary Bulgarian personal name system*. The explorations are a continuation of beneficial research at the "Applied Onomastics" Unit, now Department of Onomastics, which examines the trends of personal names in Bulgarian cities and the naming tendencies with prenomina of Bulgarians. The aforementioned topic is incredibly current in multiple leading onomastic research divisions in (Western) Europe because it provides information not only about current linguistic processes but is also indicative of the value reorientation and reconsideration of subculture under the influence of a wide palette of extra- and intralinguistic factors, for a large part of which the statistical method has been used. It is exactly on this topic that the candidate has several very successful media exposures. Key publications include: *Съвременната българска антропонимна система (Личните имена в големия град и малките селища)*. – В:

Международна юбилейна конференция на ИБЕ. Сборник с доклади. (2017), *Актуальные тенденции при выборе болгарскими личными имен: исследование имен новорожденных в Софийской области* –В: Вопросы ономастики, кн.3, (2017), *Тенденции при избора на личните имена – съпоставително изследване на имената на новородените в гр. Варна и област София през 2010 г.* – В: Списание на БАН (2017), etc.

### **Reflection of the candidate's academic publications in our and foreign literature (based on her information)**

According to the criteria Senior Lecturer Maya Vlahova-Angelova, PhD possesses *very good scientometric indicators*, relating to the presentation of indexed and peer-reviewed articles and correctly marked vital quotations. The candidate exceeds the required point minimum for *Associate Professor* according to the Regulations of IBL, which is higher than that of the Rules for the Implementation of the Law for Academic Staff Development in the Republic of Bulgaria in 2. Humanities. The scientometric indicators are presented *comprehensively and accurately* in the special references for minimum requirements, publications and quotations, attached to the candidate's documentation.

### **Conclusion**

I have known Maya Vlahova-Angelova as a colleague and an academic for years. I follow her academic production and am interested in her professional activities. I am convinced that she is an extremely dedicated and competent linguist with distinct contributions in onomastics. Maya Vlahova-Angelova is not only competent but she is very responsible and positive toward work and colleagues, which makes her a desired partner in different initiatives at the Institute and other institutions. Many factors outside her academic and publication activity linked to her organizational skills and her creative and innovative way of thinking could be an addition to the present review. I shall mention only one of them: Since 2008 she has been the editorial secretary of one the most prestigious national journals: "Linguistique Balkanique". She executes diligently and professionally this task, having prepared 32 issues of the journal and five projects for its financing from BNSF. This is why "Linguistique Balkanique" earned its place in the indexed databases of **SCOPUS**.

The documents and material submitted by Senior Lecturer Maya Vlahova-Angelova, PhD **are in compliance with all** requirements of Law for Academic Staff Development in the Republic of Bulgaria, Rules for the Implementation of the Law for Academic Staff Development in the Republic of Bulgaria and the corresponding Regulations of IBL. She has presented an **impressive** number of academic works, published after the material, used in her defense for the academic and educational degree of "doctor" and senior lecturer. Her publications show original academic and applied contributions, which have received international praise, a significant part

of them have been published in journals and academic collections, issued by international academic publishing houses.

After reviewing the submitted material and academic works for the competition, an analysis of their importance and the academic, science applied and applied contributions contained within I find it reasonable to give a **positive** evaluation and **to** recommend to the Academic Jury **to select** Maya Vlahova-Angelova for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at IBL in Professional Area 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian Language).

25.08.2019

Reviewer:

Assoc. Prof. Boryan Yanev, PhD