

OPINION STATEMENT

by Professor Anna Choleva-Dimitrova, DSc,
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on the official competition announced for the academic position **professor** at the Bulgarian Dialectology and Linguistic Geography department, Institute for Bulgarian Language "Prof. Lyubomir Andreychin", Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Candidate: PhD. Ana Ivanova Kocheva

Issue number 56 of the State gazette from June 6th 2020, page 88, announces the opening of recruitment for a position in sector 2.1. Philology, Bulgarian language, for the needs of the Dialectology and Linguistic Geography department, Institute for Bulgarian Language "Prof. Lyubomir Andreychin" (IBL), for which Ana Kocheva, PhD, was the sole applicant.

The candidate has provided the required application documents. After completing her doctorate in 2014, the applicant's scientific publications include: the monograph „Смесеният език на виенските българи“ (2017 г.); maps and atlases: „Карта на диалектната делитба на българския език“ (collective); *Дигитална карта на българските диалекти*“ (collective); „Atlas Linguarium Europae“ (ALE), Volume I. 9, 2015 (carte de motivations; commentaires) (coauthor); *Карта на диалектната делитба на българския език*“ with text (collective); map „Българският език на ново място по света“ with text, 2016; the papers „On the (re)codifications of standard Bulgarian in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia“, (coauthor, 2017); „Плурицентризмът на българския книжовен език – резултат от диалектни кодификации и от диалектизирани прекодификации“ (coauthor, 2019); 45 articles in Bulgarian and international

publications; several popular science publications. During the same period, the author was quoted in Bulgarian and international publications on 46 occasions.

The candidate has actively pursued several linguistic disciplines: Old Bulgarian, the history of language, Bulgarian dialectology and linguistic geography, sociolinguistics.

In the period from 2014 until the present day, the candidate has participated in nine projects, one of them international, two financed via EBR/ЕБР, two by the Scientific research fund, while also supervising some of them. Their successful completion attests to the candidate's high level of professionalism and excellent organizing skills.

The candidate's attentive work at the IBL's Dialectology and Linguistic Geography department with 28 students from SU Kliment Ohridski, SWU Neofit Rilski, NBU, University of Shumen, must be emphasized as well. The candidate supervised a graduate student at IBL, who is pending dissertation.

The candidate has participated in 38 local and international scientific forums.

The candidate's excellent command of German has directed her scientific interests toward the linguistic links between Bulgarian and Austrian German, and her monograph *The mixed language of Bulgarians in Vienna* („Смесеният език на виенските българи”, 2017, 280 p.) studies this connection.

The study is innovative and it is a first-of-its-kind thorough description of the mixed language of Bulgarian immigrants abroad, for which the author created special research methodology. The candidate expertly combines her knowledge on the history of language, dialects and sociolinguistics. She efficiently details “the peculiarities of the mixed language of Bulgarians in Vienna in a bilingual environment”. The study also contributes the introduction of new terms that reflect different instances of the bilingual practices of Bulgarians living in Vienna, such as phono-lexical interferential (*напумпам, перзона*); morpho-lexical interferential (*коректур, зуле*); derivative-lexical interferential (*директ* for ‘директно’, *нормал* for ‘нормално’), etc. The study is very valuable in terms of its multilevel interpretation, as it approaches data from a spoken language theory and sociolinguistic point of view. The author has analyzed the principal forms of the mixed language of Bulgarians in Vienna and has classified the German

elements according to their level of insertion. The monograph is notable for the conclusions it draws – this mixed language is of a popular character, and is based on abundant linguistic material.

This language has “predominantly Bulgarian phonetics and grammar (morphology and syntax). It is chiefly the lexical system that is mixed. In view of this, it could be legitimately claimed that this is a mixed Bulgarian language of the Bulgarian immigrants in Austria.”

This is an undeniably valuable work that preserves our linguistic heritage as part of the history and culture of our people.

Another of the candidate’s original works is the map *Bulgarian language and its new place in the world* („Българският език на ново място по света” with text (2016). This innovative study in linguistic geography has a scientific functionality that registers Bulgarian language users around the world, and provides detailed information about Bulgarian communities living abroad. It brings forth important conclusions regarding the dissemination of the Bulgarian linguistic continuum (the language of the old historic and geographic regions Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia, as well as those outside of the state borders), and asserts that when “the number of Bulgarian speakers around the world” is considered, “the individuals that speak one of the different forms of Bulgarian can be placed at about 15 million people. This is indicative of the central role played by Bulgarian in the unification and preservation of the nation, even in the context of rapid globalization.”

The author’s participation in a number of collective works and numerous maps and atlases mentioned above, is another exemplary scientific achievement.

The majority of the candidate’s publications are dedicated to the Bulgarian dialect continuum, part of which is distributed abroad. It is worth noting that the author has an active scientific position in respect to the influence of Old Bulgarian on other Slavic languages, and the defense of the truth about the Bulgarian language in neighboring countries.

Dr. Ana Kocheva is a highly qualified scientist. She is fluent in three languages. From 1992 until 2004, she held a stipend from the Austrian ministry of science and education to work at the Slavic Institute in Salzburg, where she specialized and

taught seminars on sociolinguistics. The candidate also earned a Humboldt Fellowship at the Slavic institute in Marburg, Germany (gave lectures to academic audiences at the universities of Marburg and Giessen), as well as a Hertie Foundation scholarship at the Slavic institute in Marburg, Germany.

The candidate's qualities as an expert merit a high evaluation. She is a member of the National council on nonmaterial cultural heritage at the Council on ministers, a member of the consultative board of the Bulgarian memory foundation (where she works on a project for the reintegration of the Bulgarian diaspora), and a member of the Public council relations with Bulgarians abroad with the vice President of the republic since 2017.

The candidate meets the national requirements according to art. 26, paragraphs 2, 3 and 5 of ЗРАСРБ, and art. 1a of ППЗРАСРБ (Appendix A to the Requirements for the attainment of academic titles and positions at IBL, BAS).

The aforementioned information undoubtedly attests to the volume, versatility and high quality of the candidate's scientific research. This gives me reason to confidently vote affirmatively in regard to Dr. Ana Ivanova Kocheva's candidacy for the academic position *Professor* at the Bulgarian Dialectology and Linguistic Geography department, Institute for Bulgarian Language "Prof. Lyubomir Andreychin" .

20. 10. 2020

Prof. Anna Choleva-Dimitrova, DSc