

SHORT REVIEW

by Prof. D.Sc. Anna Topaldzhikova

re the candidacy of Dr. Petar Kaukov for the academic position of
Associate Professor

Dr. Petar Kaukov presents numerous and convincing evidence on all the items included in the Regulations on the Terms and Conditions for Obtaining Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at NATFA. He takes active participation in the professional life of the Academy with his teaching practice. His scientific activity is closely related to his work as a director. He has participated with reports in international scientific conferences – “Contemporary Trends in the Stage and Screen Interpretations of Shakespeare’s Drama”, “Shakespeare, “Nocturne”. He is the author of articles published in Bulgarian and international publications – “Hollywood’s Shakespeare”, The “Romeo and Juliet” Comedy, etc.

Dr. Kaukov’s major theoretical work is the Shakespeare’s Comedies between Eros and Thanatos monograph which is a detailed study and analysis of Shakespeare’s comedies through his own perspective. From the above stated, it is clear that his interest in Shakespeare is long-lasting and motivates the analytical approach in his productions of performances on the drama of this author as well as in his theoretical developments accompanying the practical realization of his ideas on stage.

The works submitted for participation in the competition are an expression of Petar Kaukov’s realization in the analytical writing and directing as these two areas of his interests and activity intersect in understanding their pedagogic effect and application. The materials presented by Petar Kaukov prove his ability to combine theory with practice, and this is also confirmed by the performances he directed – Love and Money by Dennis Kelly at the Nikolay Binev Youth Theatre,

Sofia, 2011, and DNA by Dennis Kelly at the Virovitica Theater and Academy for Art and Culture in Osijek, Croatia, 2019. The theatrical key found to solve a problem of this type of drama (although not considered in the theoretical development), namely its literality, is in harmony with the analytical approach of the theoretical development. The achievements of Love and Money are largely in the work with the actors on the monologue texts developed as a process of monologue action. This thinking about the character is achieved by the actor Boyko Krastanov most comprehensively. The semantic layer of DNA is carried out in a similar logic of performance.

Kaukov is a translator of the play Love and Money with which he convincingly declares yet another manifestation of his many-sided theater activity. In his theoretical work, entitled “Dennis Kelly and the Criminal Routine”, Kaukov derives his reasons to focus on the logic of the action and the driving motives of the characters, from his directing experience. He offers methodological decisions as a guide for the director to deal with the challenges the drama of this author poses to its theatrical realization. The study focuses on three major problems which, according to Kaukov, are characteristic not only for the author in question but largely for modern drama in general. Of course, it can be added that this refers to a certain direction of movement of ideas and aesthetic reasoning which, though quite widespread, is still a part of modern drama. These three problems, according to the author of the paper, are violence, obscene language, and unspoken/unfinished speech lines. In the course of the analysis, Kaukov places the phenomena in a historical context having in mind the development of British drama since the beginning of 21st century. His own theatrical practice provides the foundation of the action analysis which traces the motives of the behavior of the characters in the plays “Love and Money” and “DNA”.

In the various activities presented by Dr. Kaukov, the main emphasis on the pedagogic approach in both his analytical texts and directing work, makes an impression that favors the occupation of the

academic position he is applying for. Based on my short review on the habilitation materials submitted for the competition by Dr. Petar Kaukov, I suggest that the esteemed scientific jury directs to defense his candidature for the award of the academic position of Associate Professor.

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