

REVIEW

By Prof. Dr Andronika Martonova

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Member and Chairman of the Academic Jury

On the dissertation for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"

PERSONAL ARCHIVE FUNDS AND THEIR ROLE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORICAL ART KNOWLEDGE. (Based on materials from the archives of Lyubomir Tenev and Alexander Alexandrov.)

Author of the dissertation: Ani Vladimirova Yaneva, Institute of Art Studies, BAS, p. d. 8.1 Art Theory

Academic Supervisor: **Prof. Dr. Joanna Spassova-Dikova**

The review has been prepared in accordance with Order №192-RD of 26.05.2023, issued by the Director of the Institute of Art Studies, BAS. All legal provisions have been complied with - namely: RIASRB of Republic of Bulgaria; the Regulations on the Conditions and Procedure for the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and for the Occupation of Academic Positions at BAS, the Regulations on the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and for the Occupation of Academic Positions at IAS. The first meeting of the scientific jury was held on 02.06.2023.

I declare that I have received and thoroughly examined the documentation on the procedure. I have found no evidence of plagiarism. This review is also based on the materials received. The review is based on the following materials received: the dissertation for the degree of PhD and the accompanying abstract, in accordance with the necessary requirements; a list of scientific publications on the topic of the dissertation, as required by law; a declaration of originality and credibility of the results and contributions in the submitted scientific production; a declaration of compliance with the minimum national requirements, according to the ADASRB and RIADASRB; CV of the candidate - Ani Yaneva.

Before introducing the PhD candidate, as the genre of the review requires, I would like to highlight the particularity of the PhD and of the respective dissertation in the context of the Institute of Art Studies. Ani Yaneva is our only PhD student, in the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency - accredited PhD program in *Theory*

and History of Culture (awarded by NEAA 9.22), in professional direction 8.1. *Art Theory*. That is why the topic of this thesis is imbued with interdisciplinarity, uniting in a specific way the vectors of scientific knowledge that develop in the Theater and Screen Arts Department. In this case this was a great challenge for both the PhD student and her supervisor - Prof. Dr. Joana Spassova-Dikova. At the risk of breaking protocol right now, I would like to congratulate this research tandem for the result achieved, because as we all know the so-called PhD is in addition to a scientific also an educational degree.

The choice of the topic PERSONAL ARCHIVE FUNDS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORICAL ART KNOWLEDGE (BASED ON MATERIALS FROM THE ARCHIVES OF LYUBOMIR TENEV AND ALEXANDER ALEXANDROV) is also particularly topical and relevant for several reasons.

On the one hand, working with the Institute's archival heritage requires a particular focus that deserves to be applied from within the very arena of the performing (ergo theatrical) and screen arts. The personalities and the archives of Lyubomir Tenev and Alexander Alexandrov are highly emblematic for both fields of art.

Second - very few young, emerging scholars have the courage, ambition, and capacity to dedicate themselves to the archive in their research (this is, after all, a labor - and time-consuming process), and in the specific case of Ani Yaneva and her PhD we see not only the reference and processing of the archive, but also its comprehension in a multifaceted way. That is why the methodology of the dissertation is based on multidisciplinary approach, using the tools of different disciplines of humanities knowledge: history, archival studies, cultural studies, philosophy, art studies, sociology, theatre studies, film studies.

The third aspect, the cultural context, is particularly significant in this thesis because archives related to the arts, especially theatre and cinema, are a very specific metanarrative of productions, screen samples, authors, creative laboratory, correspondence, letters, handwriting, perception, audiences, photographs, posters, articles (e.g., badges from festivals), the interpretation of the theater and moving images. In fact, the list here could be further added to and expanded, depending on what a personal collection contains. The archive is not just memory and narrative, but much beyond these categories. The distance of time provides an inexhaustible opportunity for (re)interpretation, and this is where the emphasis on the construction of art knowledge comes in: whenever we use the archive, it gives us a new perspective and angle on authors, processes, patterns, relationships, and historicity in the Bulgarian performing and screen arts. That is - it is clear how many intersections are concentrated through and by the fund maker, the memory of art and of art itself. A past that accommodates the potential of the present and the future.

Fourth point - in today's digital world, we are witnessing more and more active processing, systematization, inventorying, uploading, accessibility, and usability of archival items. Unfortunately, in Bulgaria we are at the beginning of this process, and we are indebted to the arts.

All that I as a reviewer pay attention to, through the topicality of the subject, is very conscientiously, meticulously, logically, analytically and with the necessary scientific weight developed by Ani Yaneva. She presents us with a work of great length (234 pages, the actual part of the development 164 pages), divided in a classical deductive way into an introduction, three chapters (with the corresponding subchapters), a conclusion. The bibliography of more than 200 titles (monographs, articles, studies, Internet sources) in different languages. To the rich scholarly apparatus, I will add 379 footnotes. Many valuable appendices follow important, key visions and their respective descriptions of archival items from personal funds; especially valuable and important interviews conducted by Ani Yaneva with Bogdana Kosturkova, Lyubomir Garbev, Svetlana Pancheva, Anna Topaldzhikova, Krum Gergitsov, Petar Kardzhilov - all related to the personalities of Tenev and Alexandrov.

The scientometric indicators - i.e., the minimum requirements according to the RI of the ADASRB for the defense of the dissertation are exceeded. The candidate has submitted four articles on the topic of the thesis, it is noteworthy that some of them have been indexed and refereed in WoS, she has also participated in conferences.

Approbation of the following articles:

1. Янева, Ани. В лабораторията на театралния критик. Любомир Тенев и идеите му за ролята на театралната критика. – В: *Изкуствоведски четения` 2019*. София, Институт за изследване на изкуствата, БАН, 2020, с. 268-278.
2. *Yaneva, Ani*, Researcher between art and travel. In: *Art Studies Readings` 2020*. Sofia, Institute of Art Studies, BAS, 2021, pp. 287-296.
3. *Yaneva, Ani*. Archives as a "repository" of collective and cultural memory. In: *Art Studies Readings` 2022*. Sofia, Institute of Art Studies, BAS, 2023, pp. 266-273.
4. *Yaneva, Ani*. Archives in Bulgaria and their role in rethinking the past. In: *Papers of BAS`2022*. Sofia, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences – under print (ERIH +)

The contributions are well described, and as a reviewer I believe that they fully meet the objectives, the hypotheses expressed, and the goals achieved by the PhD student. In her thesis, Ani Yaneva consistently builds the idea that the archivist in the arts is very important, because thanks to his/her postmodern attitude towards the document it changes and transforms the idea of the corpus of information. From an array and a kind of institution, it (the corpus) becomes a compendium of knowledge and a carrier of the collective memory.

At an extended meeting of the Screen Arts Department held on 14 April 2023, the thesis was discussed and directed for public defense.

And now to present the text of the doctoral thesis entitled " PERSONAL ARCHIVE FUNDS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF

HISTORICAL ART KNOWLEDGE (BASED ON THE MATERIALS FROM THE ARCHIVES OF LUBOMIR TENEV AND ALEXANDER ALEXANDROV)":

The first chapter, *The Nature and Functions of Archives*, outlines the object and scope of the study, providing a historical and etymological overview of the word and the concept of what an archive is. In doing so, it proceeds from the evolution of human civilization (Ancient Greece, India, China, the Middle Ages, the Vatican, European empires, etc.) to the concreteness of Bulgarian archival studies. The point of view throughout this section is predominantly cultural. It applies the concepts and thinking of archives through the theoretical work of Paul Ricoeur, Pierre Nora, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Michael Naas, Terry Cook, Michel Duchenne, Martin Heidegger, Jan Asman, Jana Damyanova, Stefka Petkova, Ivan Duichev, Yuri Lotman, and Boris Uspensky, Tsvetan Todorov, etc. collective memory.

The following aspects are developed as sub-themes: the place of personal archival holdings and the diversity of funders; the functionality of archives and the historian/archivist correlation; the relations of archives in the perspective of past-present-future, memory/forgetting, archive/cultural heritage/power, archive-arts. Finally, attention is paid to archives in the BAS system.

The Second Chapter, titled *The Role of Archives for Art Knowledge* (pp. 49 - p. 65) is somewhat brief, but does make an apt transition to the subsequent Chapter Three by narrowing the aperture to the specifics of the art archive. And the exposition itself concentrates on very specific, simultaneously similar, and yet different archives related to the performing arts and to the screen (ergo cinema). The personal archival holdings at the IAS are highlighted. The interview or so-called oral history/witness narrative (which we also see in the appendices) is introduced as a method in the complementary study of art archives.

I should perhaps make some remarks to the dissertation here:

- 1.) cinema archives are not limited to the recording on filmstrip or on any other medium - somehow, we are left with the conviction that this is all that Annie Yaneva is referring to, but it can be emphasized that the meta-archive to a film work is precisely the compendium of various private funds, some of which do not even belong to the screen arts.
- 2.) some concepts would be better clarified in a subsequent publication (I recommend, by the way, that this work be printed as a monograph!) in a footnote. For example - on p. 60 Derrida's term "archivolithic" is mentioned, but further clarification is required, which has not been done by the dissertator.
- 3.) A general remark - the footnoted bibliographical citation is not uniform and somewhat poorly done as a clear pattern. That is - a single, clearly recognizable standard was not met.

The Third Chapter is dedicated to the detailed presentation, tracing, systematization, generalization, analysis of *The Personal Archive Funds of Lyubomir Tenev and Alexander Alexandrov* (as indicated in the title).

I find it to be not only the most detailed and extensive in the entire dissertation, but also the most thorough and contributory. The empiricism and the volume are as follows: 608 archival units for Lyubomir Tenev and 3634 archival units for Aleksandar Aleksandrov. The two scholars and researchers are represented not only through their biographies but through the documentation. In fact, it is through the arrays of personal funds that Ani Yaneva constructs portraits of theatre and film history. That is to say - there is a very interesting dualistic dynamic in this chapter, a constant play of repositioning of readings: the personal as archive and vice versa, the personal through the archive, art in the mirror of the personal and the archival, the spirit of the times with all its contradictions shining through art history. Finally, a comparison is made between the two personal corpora with documentation. Many moments from the fonds are quoted: personal notes, drafts, letters, memoirs. The appendices show extracts from documents, photographs, etc. Ani Yaneva also comments on different positions through Tenev and Alexandrov: what are the limits of the concepts of culture, criticism, censorship.

The conclusion of the dissertation is logical and natural - Annie Yaneva focuses her attention again on the necessity and the obligatory precision when working with source material, especially necessary and applicable in the contexts of the arts. The dissertation focuses on the importance of fonds, their proper preservation, processing according to a certain classification scheme professionally developed by archivists, promotion, and digitization.

Data about the PhD student, according to the provided modest biographical reference. She was born on 11 April 1986 in Sofia. Graduated from a language high school with studies in Spanish and Serbo-Croatian. University education: master's degree in Culturology, PhD in Sofia University (Sofia). She graduated in 2002 (MA) with a thesis - "*The role of water in funeral customs*". For a short time, she worked in the BAS system - at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum. In 2016 she took the position of a specialist in the archives of the Institute of Art Studies. During her studies she participated in various scientific and applied projects.

SUMMARY:

The work of Ani Yaneva **PERSONAL ARCHIVE FUNDS AND THEIR FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORICAL ART KNOWLEDGE (BASED ON MATERIALS FROM THE ARCHIVES OF LYUBOMIR TENEV AND ALEXANDER ALEXANDROV)** is an important first scientific-applied step towards the popularization and analysis of the archive of IAS, and the Theater and Screen Arts Department. I firmly believe that, with good editing, it should also be published in the form of a monograph. It has significance as a scientific work and the cultural aspect is evident, for which I once again congratulate Yaneva. A huge volume of work done with the necessary attention and knowledge. Despite the small remarks, I think this does not detract from the merits of the work. I appreciate the effort to enter a little-explored area related to the triad of archive-personality-arts (theatre and cinema). I

think that the work will be useful both for established scientists and for doctoral students coming after Ani Yaneva, and why not students in specialties such as Theater Studies, Cinema Studies, Cultural Studies, Archival Studies.

I gladly support the dissertation work and vote "YES", recommending the respected colleagues of the scientific jury to award Ani Vladimirova Yaneva the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in professional field 8.1. Theory of Arts.

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