

South-West University "Neofit Rilski"

REVIEW

of the works submitted for participation in the  
competition for awarding the research degree of  
DR. HABIL. announced by South-West University  
"Neofit Rilski"

Reviewer: Prof. Amelia Licheva, Dr. Habil.

Candidate: Prof. Dr. Magdalena Kostova-Panayotova

**Outstanding merits of the academic theoretical and applied research  
and teaching work of the candidate:**

An outstanding merit of the work is the excellent theoretical framework which is outlined in the introduction and then skillfully reflected in the analyses. The key author is Homi Bhabha whose works are scarcely translated into Bulgarian. The work of Prof. Panayotova makes a detailed review of some of his fundamental ideas on hybridity and ambivalence which open the discourse on cross-cultural authors who are the subject-matter of the research. The work covers also important theoreticians of world literature and modern comparative studies.

It is an interdisciplinary work with its mastery of combining the methods of comparative literary studies, post-colonial research, Balkan studies, imagology, and Eastern studies.

Another merit of the work is its relevance to modern times and its ability to grasp nascent trends in literary studies and also in contemporary fiction.

A salient feature of the work is the author's skill to make references and associations to Bulgaria, be it to the image of the Bulgarian as an Alien in various Balkan literatures or to Bulgarian literary research.

It exhibits her outstanding ability to reach the root causes of problems and to problematize stereotypes at times of seeming reversion to recalcitrant clichés.

Last but not least, the contribution of this work is the introduction of some writers into the Bulgarian context for the first time and the detailed review of some of their seminal books: Francois Cheng, *Eternity Is Not Too Much*; Amy Tan, *The Joy Luck Club*; Hanif Kureishi, *The Buddha of Suburbia*; Yoko Tawada, *Where Europe Begins* and *The Bridegroom Was a Dog*; Amin Maalouf, *In the Name of Identity: Violence and the Need to Belong* (*Les Identités Meurtrières*) and *Lift Scales*; Anna Moï, *Black Rice*.

The work contributes to the reassessment of the Western canon and presents multiple perspectives of its change which is part of the current thrust of cultural and post-colonial research and of the authors working on world literature issues.

Finally, it is an outstanding merit of the work to review authors and texts as formative components of “in-betweenness”, of cultural permeability and dialogue.

### **Conclusion:**

Having regard for the merits of the work, the analytical skills and highly erudite approach of the author, all the contributions outlined above, and her overall tangible presence in Bulgarian literary studies, I vote with conviction for the academic rank of Dr. Habil. to be conferred on Prof. Dr. Magdalena Kostova-Panayotova.

4 December 2020

Reviewer: Prof. Amelia Licheva, Dr. Habil.