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To Whom it May Concern!

On 6 April 2021 I was appointed as an opponent in the inauguration process of doc. RNDr. Tatiana Bužeková, PhD., to be awarded the title of Professor in the field of ethnology at the Comenius University in Bratislava. Below is my report.

Tatiana Bužeková was born in 1963 in Moscow, Russia. She first studied at the University of Lomonosov in Moscow, Russia, and received her B.A. degree in applied mathematics there; later she continued her studies in mathematics in Bratislava and in 1986 received a PhD in sciences. In 2000 she completed her M.A. studies in the field of religion and in 2004 successfully defended her PhD thesis in ethnology at the Faculty of Arts in Bratislava. In 2013 she was elected a "docent" at the Department of ethnology and museology where she has since taught various courses: Methodological foundations of ethnographic research, Rituals and ritualization, Witchcraft and obsession from an anthropological perspective, Folklore, popular culture and politics, Methodology of social sciences, Medical anthropology / Health and diseases in sociocultural context, Symbolic and interpretive anthropology. She currently serves as a head of the Department.

In her *scholarly research* in the field of ethnology & anthropology, Dr Tatiana Bužekova has proved very productive: she has published two scientific monographs (*Nepriateľ zvnútra: nadprirodzená hrozba v ľudskej podobe* (2009), *Mágia a čarodejníctvo v etnografických štúdiách do*

polovica 20. storočia (2019)), and forty scientific papers, of these nineteen in English, ten of which appeared in the scientific journals abroad. In addition, she has also published twenty-one professional papers. She participated in eighteen academic projects; she was a leader of three of them. In addition, she has participated with her presentations in eight national conferences, twelve national conferences with the international participants, and thirteen international conferences (in fact, she recently successfully participated in one more international conference that took place at the Ljubljana University on 14 May 2021, which is not mentioned in the application). She has lectured at various universities, several of them being foreign universities. Her scientific achievements have often been quoted in Slovakian as well as foreign academic books and journals.

Tatiana Bužeková, however, has not only been successful in her scholarly achievements; she also proved very successful in her *pedagogical work*. Her main focuses in teaching encompass religion, tradition and folklore, gender issues, and healing. At her home department, she has inaugurated many new courses: Methodological foundations of ethnographic research, Rituals and ritualization, Witchcraft and obsession from an anthropological perspective, Folklore, popular culture and politics, Methodology of social sciences, Medical anthropology / Health and diseases in sociocultural context, Symbolic and interpretive anthropology. She has also lectured at the universities abroad, among others as a Visiting Fullbright scholar in USA and within Ceepus and Erasmus projects in Slovenia and Poland and has given several invited lectures in Slovakian institutions outside the home Faculty. Moreover, she has published a university textbook, and two scripta and has been applying e-learning teaching methods to her pedagogical work since 2013.

She also actively participates in the preparation of doctoral students at the Department and has supervised twenty-eight B.A. thesis and 28 diploma theses; one of them was granted a

rector's award. She has been a mentor to five PhD scholars, four of who have already successfully defended their PhD studies. In addition, she has participated in other commissions and has been an oponent and has assessed many theses written under supervision of other mentors in Slovakia and abroad.

Likewise, Dr. Tatiana Bužeková has been successful in her *professional capacity*. She is the editor or editor-in-chief of three important Slovakian academic ethnological journals (*Ethnologia Slovaca et Slavica*, *Etnologické rozpravy*, *Speculum*), and was / is a member of two other editorial boards of other academic journals. She is a member of several national and international academic associations, societies, and committees. She has been a reviewer of various projects, programmes and grants' commissions, such as Horizon 2020 Framework Programme, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Individual Fellowships, and many other Slovakian projects. She has worked as a reviewer for ten international and several other national academic journals, and as a member of various commissions in national and international frameworks. In addition, was a member of organizing committees of three international and seven national conferences.

Tatiana Bužeková's work encompasses a wide range of interests: theory and history of the discipline, cognitive anthropology, symbolic anthropology, anthropology of emotions, medical anthropology, religion, folklore, gender studies, witchcraft, shamanism, politics, socialism, memory. This span of various areas of research alone demonstrates that she is a scholar with a broad knowledge in ethnology and cultural anthropology. Her academic achievements are impressive as regards quality as well as quantity. Her research in new spiritual movements, witchcraft and magic, as well as theoretical and historical studies are thoughtful, profound and well-taken. She is internationally recognized as one of the leading scholars in the field of contemporary vernacular religion in the post-socialist countries. Her contribution to the

research of neo-shamanism and other contemporary religious practices and beliefs in Slovakia are priceless for the field of ethnology. Due to Bužeková's endeavours, Slovakian as well as foreign scholars have been able to closely follow new developments in post-socialist vernacular religious movements in Slovakia – which, unfortunately, is not the case in many other countries.

Apart from meeting, and indeed surpassing, all the criteria, quantitative as well as qualitative, for the promotion as regards her scholarly work, Tatiana Bužeková also meets all pedagogical criteria necessary for the promotion. Personally, I have several times had an opportunity to listen to her lectures when she was a visiting professor at the University of Ljubljana, as well as most recently when he was presenting her paper at the conference organised by the Department of ethnology and cultural anthropology, and I can therefore fairly say that she is an excellent teacher, able to inspire and stimulate students.

Based on the submitted application of the candidate, and my personal knowledge of her work, I can therefore wholeheartedly conclude that Dr Tatiana Bužeková rightly deserves to be awarded the title of Professor in the field of ethnology and suggest that she is granted the promotion. Faculty of Arts at the Comenius university in Bratislava should be proud to have Dr Tatiana Bužeková in its midst.

Yours Sincerely,

Mirjam Mencej

