

# EVALUATION STATEMENT

**By Vladimir Ivanov Donev, PhD,  
Associate Professor at St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko  
Tarnovo**

of materials submitted for participating in a competition  
for the faculty position of Associate Professor  
**at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv**

in the higher education field of study: 2. Humanitarian sciences,  
professional field: 2.1. Philology,  
research specialty: “Bulgarian Literature – Bulgarian Literature After World War

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By Order No. P33-2876 of 11 June 2019 by the Chancellor of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv (hereinafter UP), I was appointed member of the academic panel for a competition for the faculty position of Associate Professor at UP in the higher education field of study: 2. Humanitarian Sciences, professional field: 2.1. Philology, announced for the requirements of the History of Literature and Comparative Literary Studies Department at the Faculty of Philology at UP.

In order to participate in this competition, being the only candidate, application papers have been submitted by Senior Lecturer Gergina Vasileva Krasteva, PhD, from UP.

The application papers submitted in paper form by Senior Lecturer Gergina Vasileva Krasteva, PhD, are compliant with the Rules for Faculty Staff Development at UP.

Gergina Krasteva has enclosed a total of 28 scholarly works, including 1 monograph published as a book, 9 scholarly publications within the field of study of her habilitation thesis, 18 publications within the competition’s thematic field. All of the articles have been published in scholarly journals, 2 of them – abroad.

Senior Lecturer Gergina Krasteva, PhD, was a full-time doctoral student (2003–2006) at the Bulgarian Literature and Theory of Literature Department at the Faculty of Philology of UP. In 2007, she successfully defended her dissertation work titled *Aspects of Lyrical Self-Observation in the Poetry of 1970s*. Gergina Krasteva, PhD, is currently senior lecturer at the History of Literature and Comparative Literary Studies Department at the Faculty of Philology at UP.

I have known Gergina Krasteva since the time of her studies in the Bulgarian Philology specialty at the St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo, and I have been following her literary and professional development as a poet, journalist, and literary scholar. Over the years of enjoying the opportunity to dedicate herself to her literary interests, she has grown to become an active expert in both the field of literary criticism and of history of literature, where she has delivered original analyses and syntheses in comprehending the poetics of modern Bulgarian lyric poetry, in the scope of her doctoral dissertation, and in her new habilitation thesis. In life and career, Plovdiv has provided her the opportunity to display her talent in research and teaching at the university and expand her literary and critical work in the *Stranitsa* magazine. Thus has Gergina Krasteva established herself as one of the immediately recognisable names of Bulgarian literary life of the past 15 years, of the first generation completing their higher education after the “time of changes” following 10 November 1989.

Today Senior Lecturer Gergina Krasteva, PhD, is Lecturer in History of Bulgarian Literature after World War I and in History of New Bulgarian Poetry of the 20th Century. Her teaching and paedagogical work is characterised by close and fruitful work with students. Six students have successfully defended their bachelor theses under her supervision during the academic period of 2009/2010 – 2018/2019. During the above period, she has also participated as a reviewer in the successful defences of diploma papers of more than 30 students in bachelor’s and master’s degree programmes of the Faculty of Philology of UP. Gergina Krasteva is one of the most active organisers of literary panels and discussions, premiers of books of fiction and of specialised literary periodicals within the Faculty’s work.

Among the research papers submitted, her habilitation thesis titled *Personal and Anthological. Auto-Anthological Models and Personal Anthological Presences in Bulgarian Lyrical Poetry from the 2008–2017 Period* (LiterNet, ISBN 978-954-304-439-9, Varna, 2019) is the primary focal point of my attention. This monograph consists of four chapters and a conclusion. It comprises 315 pages and makes reference to 407 bibliographic sources, where 300 are fiction titles and 107 are texts of criticism, conversations, interviews.

The first part, *Contexts, Research Approaches, Classification Attempts*, is a theoretical outline of the specific status of the lyrical poetry book of the “private/personal/authorial anthology” type, pointing out its main features: a strong self-re-

flexive nature, the product of the personal authorial process of selection, and “a high aesthetic maximalism”. The auto-anthological model has been analysed on the basis of established research formulations (by Biliana Kurtasheva, Plamen Doynov, Svetozar Igov, Mihail Nedelchev) as “the result of certain maturity”, “a powerful expression of individual authorial will”, “an intensification of the process of personal anthological thinking”, “an important part of the process of self-comprehension of literature”. The choice of 2008–2017 as the period to study is grounded and predetermined by the accumulation of literary facts in result of the emergence of personal anthological editions. The chief examination approaches through which the thesis is accomplished have been clarified: literary and historical, literary and critical, and textological.

The second part of the monograph, *Personal Anthologies – Names, Models, Concepts*, introduces 14 Bulgarian poets and a total of 16 anthological books. This section sets in motion a complex optics of the author’s examination approach, which unfolds at two levels: textological and literary-historical. The textological work is performed at the textual and paratextual levels, aiming to uncover specific creative and biographic decisions that form the individual anthological “terrain”. Observations have been made of the selection, composition methods, internal hierarchy in the respective author’s creative field, auto-editorial interventions. The study’s temporal scope expands in the context of the years in which the first editions of works and books appear, in order to outline the evolution of artistic enquiries and solutions.

The monograph’s third part *Selected after the Death or the Poet’s Posthumous Existence* (*Veselin Sariev, Yanaki Petrov, Zdravko Kisyov, Grisha Trifonov, Veselin Tachev, Nikolay Kanchev*), analyses the specific character of posthumous anthological books appearing during the period. Emphasis has been laid on the compiler’s role.

The monograph’s fourth part, *The First Anthologies of “The Last Poets”*, reviews the auto-anthological projects of poets of the 1980s generation. The study angle is prompted by *The Last Poets of the 80s* collective anthology, published in 2010. The generation format has been utilised as an examination tool for the literary-historical reconstruction of the period.

The monograph's last part, *In Lieu of a Conclusion*, summarises the results of the research work and outlines the perspectives before future researchers of auto-anthological artistic models.

Senior Lecturer Dr Gergina Krasteva's monograph is part of an increased interest in studying anthological models in Bulgarian literature in recent years. Standing on the "shoulders" of contemporary scientific achievements, the research encompasses, for the first time, the truly recent decade of 2008–2017. I concur with the author's self-evaluation of the thesis contributions that: 1. The thesis builds a vault of complete and profound personal anthological presences of some thirty contemporary Bulgarian poets, both living and dead, describing the specific dynamics of forming their anthological models. 2. Thorough textological and analytical observations have been made that are elaborated in the context of several literary-historical decades. 3. The oeuvre of the poets studied is for the first time presented in detail in their development – from their first books of lyrical poetry to the auto-anthological projects. 4. In the course of research, an in-depth reconstruction of the literary-historical context is performed, against which the poets and their auto-anthological projects are presented. 5. A special emphasis in the monographic text is laid on the study of posthumous anthologies from the period. 6. Posthumous anthologies and auto-anthological editions have been presented as an expression of a peculiar "personal canon" and relate to canon-forming processes within the general literary process.

Senior Lecturer Dr Gergina Krasteva has demonstrated excellent grasp of literary facts and has conducted a rigorous analysis of the chosen problematics, while managing to carefully trace textological changes and the related figurative and semantic upgrades in the construction of the auto-anthological model in the respective authors. The text leaves the impression that the interpretations have been sifted through many times in order to accomplish a high richness of content of the exposition. Simultaneously, the author's language shows an internally-intense movement of thought, which both approaches the object being studied and distances itself from it to obtain a new exploratory angle. A constant doubt in the subtlety of one's own vision is always felt, which is seen in the frequent vacillation of the mind into the realm of stipulation, in order not to lose the wealth of meaning in analysis. This is not a role of the author in the critical text, but a form of a peculiar self-observation, which has become in Gergina Krasteva a testimony

of the thoroughness of her exploratory mind. Such an analytical style also ensures freedom of interpretation for the reader to choose their own direction, following the researcher's thought.

Nine (9) of the publications submitted have been categorised as “publications within the field of study of the monographic work”, and eighteen (18) as “other publications”. Most of these have been presented at national scientific forums. Their subject-matter is predominantly tied to the author's research interest in contemporary Bulgarian literature of the second half of the 20th century and the early 21st century. The articles have been published in prestigious academic editions. The large number of publications enclosed with the application documentation is testimony of the proper public verification of the researcher's personal theses and formulations.

I was impressed with the articles *In the Whale's Womb or the Silent Cry of Bulgarian Poets in the 1960s and 1970s* – with its review of alternative poetic presences (published in a prestigious Polish magazine) – *Poetic Art or the Many-Faced Canon*, and *Birds are Singing or On a Lyrical Model in Poetry from the late 1950s and the 1960s* – with their choice of research focus. The three review articles of books by the prematurely-departed Bulgarian poet Ivaylo Krastev reveal Gergina Krasteva's distinctive approach and contribution in a quest for high value in contemporary Bulgarian literature, regardless of where the author may have been located or lived.

Participation in national and international projects is testimony of the significance of Gergina Krasteva's scientific and research work. The candidate has participated in three international and national research projects during the 2009/2010 – 2018/2019 academic period. She has been an associate member of the research team of the *Literature of the People's Republic of Bulgaria (1946–1989)* programme since 2009; the programme is implemented by the New Bulgarian Studies Department at New Bulgarian University, and has participated in a number of different initiatives under the programme.

Senior Lecturer Dr Gergina Krasteva's socio-cultural and artistic activities stand out clearly. Gergina Krasteva has been a contributor with her own regular operative and critical column since 2008, and in 2018 became a member of the editorial board of the *Stranitsa* magazine for Bulgarian literature and criticism. She is a participant of long standing in annual initiatives (literary premières, literary

meetings, cultural discussions) within the framework of the *Plovdiv Reads* traditional book festival and within the framework of a number of cultural initiatives that are the result of collaborating with Plovdiv Municipality, Ivan Vazov Public Library, the Plovdiv Writers' Union, Hermes Publishing House, Janet 45 Publishing House, city libraries and cultural organisations.

Having acquainted myself with the materials and research papers submitted for the competition, having analysed their significance and scientific and applied science contributions, I find it well-founded that I should give my affirmative evaluation and recommend the academic panel to prepare a proposal report to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philology to elect Senior Lecturer Dr Gergina Vasileva Krasteva for the faculty position of Associate Professor at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, in professional field 2.1. Philology, research specialty "Bulgarian Literature (Bulgarian Literature after World War I)".

27 August 2019  
Veliko Tarnovo

**Evaluation prepared by:**  
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