

OPINION

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Regarding: Competition for Professor in Professional field 3.1 Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences, Sociology ("History of Sociology - Phenomenological Sociology and Socioanalysis"), in the Department of "Sociology and Human Sciences" at the Faculty of Philosophy and History of PU "P. Hilendarski

Information about the competition.

The competition for "professor" was announced in the State Gazette, no. 92 of 18.11.2022, as well as on the website of Plovdiv University "P. Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of "Sociology and Human Sciences" at the Faculty of Philosophy and History of PU "P.

Hilendarski". The only candidate in this competition is Associate Professor PhD Svetlana Temelkova Sabeva from the same department. Regarding the documents required for the competition, Associate Professor Sabeva has provided everything necessary in 18 attached copies on paper and electronic media, so all the formal requirements of the procedure had been met. I also declare that I am not in any conflict of interests with the candidate.

1. General description of the applicant's activity.

Svetlana Sabeva was born in 1964 in Sofia. She completed her higher education with honors, majoring in Sociology at the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in 1988. In the period 1994-1997, she was a full-time doctoral student at the Department of Sociology at the same university. In 2001 she defended her PhD thesis "Publicity and Recognition. (Hannah Arendt as an Opportunity for Sociology)". In the years 1989-1990, Svetlana Sabeva was a specialist, scientific researcher at the then existing Research Institute for Youth. For the next two years, Dr. Sabeva worked at the National Center for the Study of Public Opinion, and later at the Institute for Social Criticism "Criticism and Humanism".

From 1997 until now, Svetlana Sabeva has been a teacher in the Department of "Sociology and Human Sciences", successively holding the positions of assistant, chief assistant and associate professor. In addition to the general courses in History of Sociolog and Introduction to Sociology, Svetlana Sabeva has specialized in Phenomenological Sociology and Socioanalysis in recent years. In addition to the sociological teaching, Associate Professor Sabeva, as the Head of the Department of Sociology and Human Sciences until recently, was a skilled organizer of its educational and research activities. In the field of scientific research Assoc. Prof. Sabeva is a recognized authority in humanitarian academic circles, as evidenced by her numerous scientific specializations in Germany in a number of prestigious

universities (in Bielefeld, Freiburg, Bochum, Wuppertal and Kassel). Associate Professor Sabeva's combination of teaching and research activities are her trademark, and this makes her not only an indispensable member of the university's sociological unit, but also its permanent leader.

For the needs of the competition, Assoc. Dr. Svetlana Sabeva presents:

Her new monograph:

Sabeva, S. (2023). *Overlivings. Phenomenology and the Socioanalysis of Generative Time*. Sofia: ast-West. 272 pp. ISBN 978-619-01-1163-4;

Two studies in academic editions, referenced and indexed in world-known databases:

Sabeva, S. (2021). "Life with the Virus". A Phenomenology of Infectious Sociality. *Phainomena. Journal of Phenomenology and Hermeneutics*. 301 116-1171 April, The Covid19 crisis, 41-60. DOI: 10.320221 PHI 30.2021.116-117.3 p-ISSN 1318-3362 e-ISSN 22326650 (SCOPUS, Web of Science)

Sabeva, S. (2021). Reification of Life-Time: Towards a Phenomenological Critique of Biocapitalism. *Metodo. International Studies in Phenomenology and Philosophy*. Vol. 9, n. 2, 447-468. DOI: 10.19079 | metodo. 9.2.469 ISSN 2281-9177 (SCOPUS)

Other studies and articles, published in prestigious academic journals:

Sabeva, S. (2021). The Sublimeness of the Rational: Approaches to Weber's Disenchantment of the World (commentary on the article by Johannes Weiss). *Sociological Problems*, 1, 346361. ISSN 0324-1572

Sabeva, S. (2011). Violence and Language. Notes on the Socioanalysis of the Former State Security Documents. *Sociological Problems, Special Issue*, 20-37. ISSN 0324-1572.

Nikolova, N. & Sabeva, S. (2005). The Authorized Body: Polythesthetics of Montage in Weekly Newsreels. *Sociological Problems*, 1-2, 7-33. ISSN 0324-1572;

Sabeva, S. (2022). Biosocial Fragmentations: Bodies, Minds, and Women's Caring Labor. In: Georgiev, D. & Nencheva, D. (eds.). *The Gender. Between the Humanities, Social sciences and Law*. 191-202. Scribens Publishing. ISBN 978-619-7467-38-3

Sabeva, S. (2014). The World of Bodies and the Age of Biopower. The Immunity Paradigm. *Sociological Problems*, 3-4, 167-178. ISSN 0324-1572

Evaluation of the texts submitted for the competition.

My opinion will focus primarily on the monograph that most fully represents the applicant's achievements and scientific contributions. The work is oriented toward postmodernity, toward contemporary times, but it is essentially a debate with classical sociology, which remains powerless and impotent in its failure to notice a series of human phenomena. The common thing that unites these phenomena is the phenomenon of suffering, i.e. a realm that is thought either to belong to the personal, intimate space of experience, which is a kind of "noumenal" and beyond the claims of sociological

validations, or else is voluntarily "granted" by the sociology of spiritual fields such as religion, existential philosophy, or psychology. Svetlana Sabeva makes an initial and largely successful attempt to orient sociology towards forgotten phenomena with the search for methodological approaches. As such an attempt, the text is not only a critique of postmodernity, but also a critique of old forms of sociologicalization — e.g. those that are related to generalizations based on quantitative, statistical accumulations relating to large aggregates of people or, as she herself notes, to positional and dispositional structures of the social world. The question posed by Svetlana Sabeva is whether a sociology of "vulnerability" is possible, whose indisputable evidence is above all death and the suffering experienced by people. As such, sociology like socioanalysis is by no means a completely new phenomenon in the history of humanities knowledge and fits into traditions such as those of Dilthey's "understanding psychology", hermeneutics, existential psychology. The new thing, which is also a contribution to the work of Assoc. Sabeva, is the involvement of the resources of Husserl's late transcendental phenomenology and, in particular, of its possibilities for experiencing the corporeality of the "Other", that is, for the constitution of a practical intercorporeal social reality. Such an approach would overcome the existing objectifying model of sociology, based on the dualism of limited and stabilized constructs of "the Self" and "foreign", in which, in a rationalistic sense, the foreign is the other of the Self, and to cognitive and practical forms of interpenetration, in which a kind of identification of the Self with the Other takes place, i.e. to create what Sabeva calls "intimate foreignness". Svetlana Sabeva sees a pivotal contribution to this creation in the concept of the so-called "generative time". The author illustrates the essence of generative time with the polysemantic field of the word "overlivings" (isn't this a retort to the romantic and Dilthey's fixation on the so-called empathic experience), in which we realize, as well as what we ourselves have overcome in the time of our lives, as well as our contemporaneity with others, which not only outlives us, but also determines the structures of our inner outlives in the particular Selfhood of our own history. A clear example of such a definition is that the impossible simultaneity of everyone's death provides society with various mechanisms (including those of power) to grant life time to some or limit the time of others. In a similar sense, overcoming an actual suffering (the example of Merkel's meeting with the Lebanese girl) in the perspective of a decent and better life, turns out to be stopped by the formal-administrative approach with which the German state treats foreigners on its territory. If sociology looks only externally and objectifyingly at suffering and death, then at least it could be expected to engage in the production of some type of inhumane classification and grading of types of death as acceptable and certain sufferings (Butler) as deplorable. This turns the field of suffering and death as a tempting territory for any practices of biopolitics (a theme relevantly included in the outlined content of socioanalysis by Svetlana Sabeva), relapses of which we ourselves have observed e.g. during the Covid epidemic.

It is against such a sociological discourse that objectifies human phenomena that Svetlana Sabeva insists on a new socioanalytic strategy based on the sharing of the experience of the sociologist and the

individual forms of Lebenswelt studied by him/her, not only in the conduct of formally equal dialogic communication, but in a kind of listening to the Other's life time horizon, as a sense of what that horizon appeals to and what the listener can foresee as his/her future state. Here is my first question to Dr. Sabeva. What is the difference between this, expressed with the metaphor of listening (by the way, the cultural history of humanity knows a number of forms of prioritization of one or other senses - antiquity emphasizes the importance of contemplation - the optical discourse, and the Christian era - following the example of Luther - precisely the role of acoustics in preaching listening to the words of God) sociological reference and the emotional empathy and compassion (Schopenhauer)? The idea of the so-called an existential reflexivity provoked by insufficiently verbalized but bodily signaling views of suffering is indeed a path to the question of "Who is the Other?" However, is capturing the primal disposition of suffering, even the individualizing intuition of

"happening to me" as a manifestation of an intersubjective type of experience sufficient for sociologically relevant inferences? In what capacity, with this approach, could the sociologist claim that he is not a psychoanalyst? The identification (including physical) of the spheres of vulnerability, as noted by Svetlana Sabeva herself, still do not clarify how they are founded. However, in the subsequent analyzes in the monograph, the author reveals a series of manifestations of these spheres of vulnerability in the territory of postmodern phenomena such as the war, the pandemic, the policy regarding foreigners, as well as those of the recent sociological past (related, for example, to the denunciations and violence of the totalitarian country). In itself, this shows the heuristic potential of Assoc. Sabeva's sociological strategy.

In conclusion, based primarily on the theoretical, innovative and in-depth content of the texts submitted for the competition by Assoc. Dr. Svetlana Sabeva, but also as someone familiar with her many years of teaching activity and work with students, I vote with full confidence for her to take the academic position of "professor" in the Department of Sociology and Human Sciences at PU "Hilendarski" and I call on the other colleagues from the jury to do the same.

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