

REVIEW

**by Nikoleta Vasileva Patova – Associate Professor Dr. at the Institute of Literature
at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,**

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position of
"professor" at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"
in the field of higher education **2. Humanities,**
professional field **2.1. Philology. Bulgarian Literature – Revival Literature**

In the competition for "professor" announced in the State Gazette, issue No. 31 of 11.04.2025 and on the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of Bulgarian Literature and Theory of Literature at the Faculty of Philology of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski," Assoc. Prof. Elena Slavova Getova from the Department of Bulgarian Literature and Literary Theory, Faculty of Philology, Plovdiv University, is participating as a candidate. No other set of documents was submitted for participation in the announced competition, and Assoc. Prof. Elena Slavova Getova from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" is the only candidate who applied for the competition.

By Order No. RD 22-1339 of 10 June 2025 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU) I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for the competition for the academic position of "professor" at PU in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.1. Philology, Bulgarian Literature – Renaissance Literature, announced for the needs of the Department of Bulgarian Literature and Literary Theory at the Faculty of Philology of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski."

1. General presentation of the materials received

The competition for the position of "professor" described above complies with the relevant procedural requirements. Among the materials submitted for review is Elena Getova's monographic study "Petko Slaveikov's Journalism in the 19th Century" (Paissii Hilendarski University Press, 2022, ISBN 978-619-202-744-5), which meets the requirement for participation in a professorship competition. Twenty scientific articles have been submitted, which supplement the list of scientific publications for the competition.

The set of materials prepared by Assoc. Prof. Elena Getova has been submitted in hard copy and digital format and complies with the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at Plovdiv University. The documents for participation in the competition include:

- Scientific works (copies of publications);
- Documents for teaching work;
- Documents for scientific research activity;
- Application to the Rector of PU;
- Curriculum vitae;
- Diploma of higher education;
- Diploma of scientific and educational degree "Doctor";
- Certificate of academic title;
- List of scientific publications;
- Certificate of compliance with minimum national requirements;
- Declaration of originality and authenticity;
- Abstracts of materials;
- Abstracts of materials in English;
- Self-assessment of contributions;
- Self-assessment of contributions in English;
- List of citations;
- Certificate of work experience.

The candidate, Assoc. Prof. Elena Slavova Getova, has published a total of 21 scientific papers – 20 articles and 1 monograph. The distribution of scientific papers by relevant categories, in Bulgaria and abroad, is as follows: the scientific papers are published in Bulgarian editions; two of the articles are published in a journal referenced and indexed in world-renowned scientific information databases; the remaining published articles have been published in peer-reviewed journals or in collective scientific collections. The documents indicate E. Getova's participation in 29 national scientific conferences during the period 2014–2024. Most of these forums are international, and Assoc. Prof. Getova is a co-organizer of some of them. Documents (in the form of official notes) are presented for participation in seven research projects—three with the Scientific Research Fund and four international ones. Prof. Getova is the head of four other projects under the Scientific Research Fund to support international scientific forums, which have funded several editions of the annual scientific conferences of the Faculty of Philology at Plovdiv University "Paisii Readings." Assoc. Prof. Getova is a member of the Union of Scholars in Bulgaria and the Academic Circle for Comparative Literature. The documents on her research include her French translation of parts of a

publication by Louis Leger, published in the journal *Slavic Dialogues*, two reviews by E. Getova of scholarly monographs and two reviews of the proposed habilitation thesis for the current competition (Petko Slaveikov's *Journalistic 19th Century*).

2. Brief biographical information

Elena Getova graduated from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" with a master's degree in Bulgarian Philology and a second major in French Philology in 1995. Her postgraduate qualification at the Faculty of Philology of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" was followed by a doctorate in Bulgarian Renaissance Literature. Since 2004, she has been an assistant at Plovdiv University, and since 2005, she has been a doctor of Renaissance Literature. Since 2008, she has been an associate professor in the Department of Bulgarian Literature and Literary Theory at Plovdiv University. From 2015 to 2023, Assoc. Prof. Getova is the deputy dean of the Faculty of Philology at Plovdiv University. She teaches children's literature, Renaissance literature, and post-liberation literature at the Plovdiv University branch in Smolyan. From 2012 to 2015, she was a lecturer in Bulgarian language and literature at the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Strasbourg, France.

3. General description of the candidate's activities

I am well aware of Elena Getova's responsible attitude towards her teaching work. Her lectures at the University of Strasbourg and the classes she teaches at the Plovdiv University branch in Smolyan broaden the thematic scope of her main lecture courses at Plovdiv University, which naturally stimulates new areas of scientific research in which Elena Getova invests her research energy. Getova invests her research energy. The international scientific projects in which Assoc. Prof. Getova participates through joint work and supervision of French students are aimed at stimulating their interest in learning the Bulgarian language and culture.

Assoc. Prof. Getova supervises graduate students, prepares joint reports and articles with French and Bulgarian students, and works actively with young colleagues in some of the projects in which she herself participates. Two of the students she supervised in their project tasks and thesis work were awarded in the PU competition for Student of the Year. These nominations and awards are an indisputable recognition of the effectiveness of the teaching efforts invested by Assoc. Prof. Getova.

A type of teaching aid that guides the work of graduate philologists and humanities students (also useful for doctoral students) is the collection "The Thesis. From the Framework of Regulations to Freedom of Creativity," published by the Faculty of Philology at Plovdiv University. The texts published in the collection are of practical use. They clarify the relationship between the academic

supervisor and the graduate student, the essence of thesis projects, and the meaning and prospects they offer to young researchers. Elena Getova contributes to the collection with the article "The Path to/from the Library and the Book – Possible, Surmountable, (Not) Mandatory (with a view to writing a thesis)," which is a scientifically based practical guide for working with an interdisciplinary perspective, summarizing the interaction between literary sociology, academic writing, and library studies. The article emphasizes the importance of working with sources as part of the formation of a research culture. The library is analyzed not only as a place for accessing knowledge, but as a semiotic and sociocultural space that actively participates in the formation of scientific thinking and strategies.

Since 2005, E. Getova has been a member of the editorial board (including editor-in-chief) of the Scientific Works of the Faculty of Philology at Plovdiv University. She is a member of the editorial board of the journal *Slavic Dialogues*. With her active editorial participation and initiative, several anniversary collections have been published (in honor of Prof. Diana Ivanova, Assoc. Prof. Yulia Nikolova, Prof. Elena Kanevska-Nikolova, Assoc. Prof. Zlatarosa Nedelcheva-Belaffante, and the 200th anniversary of the birth of Dobri Chintulov). She is the compiler and scientific editor, together with Prof. Lyubka Lipcheva-Prandzheva, of the collections on the scientific projects in which they participate jointly (ed. Prof. Lipcheva-Prandzheva).

The scientific and applied activities of Assoc. Prof. E. Getova are active, purposeful, practical, and effective in view of the clearly defined and set tasks, which she, as a lecturer with many years of experience, is able to accurately identify. E. Getova's care for her students and her responsibility towards them, her measured insistence on the adoption of good learning practices, and her own positive attitude towards the subject she teaches determine the effectiveness of her teaching approach.

For more than 20 years of scientific research, Elena Getova has clearly outlined her preferred fields of research, which are related to the periodicals of the Bulgarian National Revival. The abundance of source material from newspapers and magazines, their diverse content, and the genre and thematic variety of the materials in them and in the publications themselves create numerous possible interpretative directions in the field of periodicals. The scientific research of Assoc. Prof. Getova is dominated by topics related to the development of Renaissance journalism and periodicals in the second half of the 19th century. Her first monographic study, entitled "Journalistic Languages of the Renaissance. Bulgarian-French Contexts" (2005), placed journalistic language at the center of her scientific interest. Her scientific pursuits subsequently expanded and deepened her insight into the spectrum of topics she had chosen from the thematic diversity offered by the rapidly developing Renaissance periodicals of the 1860s and 1870s. Among the author's favorite Renaissance writers, the

figure of Petko Slaveikov stands out. Petko Slaveikov's multi-genre and thematic presence as an author and editor in the press presents a vivid panorama of Bulgarian Renaissance society. In this sense, even his journalistic work alone could be used to compile a history of the social and cultural life of the Renaissance. The topic "P. R. Slaveykov" provides an opportunity to explore key moments in the entire Renaissance era – from "History of the Slavs and Bulgarians" (Slaveykov made one of the later copies of Paisiy Hilendarski's work), through the educational project of the Bulgarian Renaissance, to the various dynamic socio-political and socio-cultural movements of the Bulgarians. The work of the Renaissance writer is so extensive and diverse that it rightly attracts and retains the scientific interest of E. Getova. E. Getova's research perspective manages to interpret Slaveykov's work in various Bulgarian contexts. The journalist P. R. Slaveykov is a "hero" in two of Assoc. Prof. Getova's academic books – "Political Traces in the Language of the Renaissance" (2018) and "Petko Slaveykov's Journalistic 19th Century" (2022).

I will focus in more detail on the monograph submitted for this competition, entitled "Petko Slaveikov's Journalism in the 19th Century." The book demonstrates the author's ability to piece together a comprehensive narrative of the processes in Bulgarian Renaissance journalism, focusing her research on the place and role of one of its most active participants, Petko Slaveikov. With several representative and other lesser-known materials by the writer, published in Renaissance periodicals and examined in the twelve texts contained in the publication, E. Getova's work enriches our knowledge of one of the most active figures of the Renaissance. Slaveykov is also one of the most studied Bulgarian authors, but E. Getova's analytical reading convinces us of the possibilities for further literary and cultural interpretations of the poet's journalistic work.

E. Getova's book begins by posing the philosophical question of time, of the discrepancy between the precise calendar and the changing event boundaries of a century, of the similar processes observed in Petko Slaveikov's and in the European 19th century. The first part of the book, entitled "The Century, Europe, Journalism," sets out the main problem areas through which the researcher comments on texts from the writer's journalistic experience. The next two parts of the monograph examine the newspaper *Shutosh* and "other journalistic territories.". E. Getova's cultural-historical and literary-critical approach to the issues under study complement and broaden the horizon of analytical insight into the literary work of the poet-publicist, into Renaissance journalism, the peculiarities of the 19th century, the understanding of the concept of time/century, and Petko Slaveikov's public dialogues with Marko Balabanov and Lyuben Karavelov.

The first part of the monographic study focuses on poetic images of time in Renaissance poetry. The emphasis is placed on temporal markers – year, day, moment, hour, season – and their symbolic,

philosophical, and cultural meanings. Elena Getova's research interpretation places time in the context of poetic concepts of the present, in accordance with Judith Schlanger's philosophical model. The work on this topic covers the connection between the individual perception of time and its historical link to key events, cultural references (antiquity, the Bible, mythology), as well as the linguistic and metaphorical means of temporal articulation. The thesis that the concept of "present" in Renaissance poetry is the result of a complex interaction between individual, collective, and cultural interpretations of time is substantiated. Using linguistic, philosophical, and cultural approaches, the work further develops existing theses on the role of time in Renaissance poetics. The study enriches our understanding of the poetic mechanisms through which the Renaissance worldview is constructed, as well as the symbolism of time in the context of national and cultural awakening.

The monograph focuses on another little-studied aspect of the cultural history of the Renaissance—the role of the humorous press as an expression of sociocultural identity and public legitimacy. The thesis that the appearance and graphic design of early humorous newspapers were not accidental, but consciously constructed strategies for cultural visibility and influence is defended. An interdisciplinary analysis combining media theory, visual analysis, and cultural history is applied. Based on specific examples, existing views on the role of the press during the Renaissance are further developed and enriched, emphasizing the specific role of humorous publications. In its second and third parts, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of the Bulgarian press as a cultural and political factor and reveals how humor serves as a tool for legitimizing new social norms and participants in the public arena.

The analysis, conclusions, and overall structure of the monographic study clearly show that the contributions are the personal work of the candidate. The text shows no signs of mechanical compilation and demonstrates original thinking and an innovative approach to the material.

At various stages of her academic career, Assoc. Prof. Elena Getova has focused her attention on central issues and authors who are regarded as "landmarks" in the Bulgarian literary process (Yordan Yovkov, Elin Pelin). From the point of view of expanding comparative analyses between Bulgarian and French literature, the research interpretation of Assoc. Prof. Getova in her publications on Elin Pelin's cycle of short stories "Under the Monastery Vine" is interesting. By examining motifs, structures, and narrative strategies, the author builds on existing assumptions about the influence of French literature on Bulgarian classics. The analysis introduces an innovative perspective into the study of influences and transformations in Bulgarian literature through a specific intercultural example (the connection between A. France and E. Pelin). It complements the research interest in Bulgarian literary studies towards other literary pairs (e.g., Vazov and Hugo, or Yavorov and

Verlaine). E. Getova's thesis that "Under the Monastery Vine" is not a passive imitative gesture, but an active cultural and creative adaptation, is developed and defended through precise intertextual analysis. A contemporary intertextual methodology is applied, with an emphasis on transformations rather than static influence, which is one of the modern trends in literary studies. The study offers a well-founded and argued reading of the influence of the Western European model on Bulgarian short stories from the beginning of the 20th century.

CONCLUSION

1. The research activity of Assoc. Prof. Elena Getova is distinguished by its systematic approach, well-argued reasoning, and personal contribution, both in the choice of research topics and in the interpretations. Her work reveals a high level of theoretical preparation, as well as the author's pursuit of an independent line of research.
2. Some of the publications have been printed in peer-reviewed publications of academic prestige.
3. In her teaching and scientific-applied work, Assoc. Prof. Elena Getova demonstrates commitment to various levels of the real educational process and successfully participates in the "teacher-student" communication situation.
4. The list of citations required in the competition documents contains the necessary number and prestige of citations in publications referenced and indexed in world-renowned scientific information databases, as well as in monographs and collective volumes with scientific reviews.
5. The monograph under review and Elena Getova's other studies presented in this competition confirm her profile as a scholar in the field of humanities. The extensive argumentation and solidly supported conclusions characteristic of her research approach, with which she defends her scientific theses, are impressive.

The documents and materials submitted by Assoc. Prof. Elena Slavova Getova meet all requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the LDASRB, and the relevant Regulations of Paisii Hilendarski University.

The candidate in the competition, Elena Getova, has submitted a significant number of scientific papers published after the materials used in the defense of her doctoral thesis and after the competition for the position of associate professor. The candidate's work contains original scientific

and applied contributions. The scientific and teaching qualifications of Assoc. Prof. Elena Getova are beyond doubt. The results achieved by Elena Slavova Getova in her teaching and research activities fully comply with the minimum national requirements adopted in connection with the Regulations of Plovdiv University for the application of the ZRASRB.

After reviewing the materials and scientific papers submitted for the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied, and applied contributions they contain, I am confident in giving my positive assessment and recommend that the esteemed Scientific Jury prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philology for the election of Elena Slavova Getova to the academic position of "professor" at PU in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian Literature – Renaissance Literature).

July 27, 2025

Reviewer:

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nikoleta Patova)