

OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Antoniya Velkova-Gaidarzhieva,

member of the Academic Committee for the announced competition for the academic position of PROFESSOR in the field of Higher Education Area 2. Humanities,

professional field 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian Literature – National Revival Literature),

announced by Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" and published in the State Gazette, Issue 31, April 11, 2025.

1. Information about the competition.

For the announced competition for one PROFESSOR at the Faculty of Philology of Plovdiv University, Department of Bulgarian Literature and Literary Theory, only one candidate submitted documents: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Slavova Getova, lecturer in the same department. All required documents under the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Rules for the Development of the Academic Staff of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" were submitted within the deadline. No violations were found.

2. Information about the candidate.

Since 1999, Elena Getova has followed her academic path as a professional literary historian and university lecturer in National Revival literature, children's literature, and post-Liberation literature, progressing through the academic ranks of Assistant, Senior Assistant, Chief Assistant, and, since 2006, Associate Professor with her habilitation work "The Handwriting of the Road. 19th Century, Travel, Writing". In 2005 she obtained a PhD degree after defending her dissertation "Journalistic Languages of the National Revival. Bulgarian-French Contexts".

With over one hundred published articles, studies, reviews, and translations in reputable scientific journals, as well as six books, she has established herself as one of the in-depth researchers of National Revival literature, especially through the prism of its journalistic manifestations and prominent civic-public voices, as well as through less illuminated perspectives on the legacy of modern Bulgarian classics, such as Y. Yovkov and his masterpiece "Evenings in the Antimovo Inn".

As a lecturer in Bulgarian language and literature at the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Strasbourg, France, Assoc. Prof. Getova has produced joint publications with students there, a fact indicative of her dedicated work as a promoter of Bulgarian literature and culture abroad.

Over the years, the candidate has served as editor-in-chief of Proceedings of the Faculty of Philology, a member of the editorial board of Slavic Dialogues (a faculty journal), and compiler and editor of several nationally representative academic collections. Between 2006–2025, 23 citations of her works have been recorded. Of course, the true measure of the value and academic "convertibility" of

scientific works lies not in numbers alone, but in who cites them and in what contexts. The list of citations clearly shows that Getova's literary-historical observations and concepts are used by representatives of different academic generations.

Also noteworthy is her active participation in research projects – she has been a member or leader of more than 10 university-wide, national, and international projects; organizer of national and international scientific forums. Her participation in nearly 30 conferences, her translations and reviews of scientific monographs and collections, as well as her long-standing role as Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Philology and her active efforts to raise the Faculty's prestige, testify to her perseverance and consistency in academia.

3. Description of the scientific works.

For the competition, the candidate submitted a monographic book "Petko-Slaveykov's Journalistic 19th Century", consisting of three conceptually interconnected sections, as well as twenty articles and studies published in peer-reviewed and indexed scientific journals or in edited collective volumes.

Her books on Ivan Bogorov and Yordan Yovkov (not included in this competition) engage the reader through analytical-interpretive perspectives and inventive research optics in the intriguing modern worlds constructed at different moments in the development of Bulgarian artistic and journalistic visionary discourse – the world-creating language of the Bulgarian National Revival as well as of modern Bulgarian classics.

The articles and studies submitted for the current competition testify to a wide thematic and problematic range of professional interests, as well as to the variety of theoretical and methodological "tools" used in analysis and interpretation – from the images of time in Revival poetry to humor as one of the registers of journalistic language; from bibliographic strategies for structuring a thesis to textual analysis, comparative readings, cultural studies perspectives, and literary sociology.

(Here I would like to share the following conviction: for a colleague in the humanities to embark on a habilitation procedure, they must already have created a "name," a recognizable public image primarily through their publications. To claim the title of "Associate Professor" or "Professor," it is necessary to present more than one monograph and a dozen or so articles and studies whose theses, concepts, and insights have circulated in the scientific network and professional community – not formally or out of collegial courtesy, but because they are genuinely relevant. Unfortunately, in recent years we have witnessed the rise of a host of habilitated lecturers whose writings remain unread due to intentionally small print runs, and whose names remain anonymous, except when associated with careerist positions or lobbying interests unrelated to academic autonomy. I say this also with the hope that the 'multiplication' of such pseudo-scholars will eventually cease. Happily, the case of Assoc. Prof. Elena Slavova Getova is not of this kind.)

4. Scientific contributions. Remarks.

I first met Elena Getova more than two decades ago at one of the most prestigious forums dedicated to the world-renowned Bulgarian writer Yordan Yovkov in Dobrich. I was impressed by her original insights, and later we occasionally corresponded, mainly on literary-historical perspectives concerning National Revival literature and the cultural legacy of one of the most respected Bulgarian intellectuals of the 1920s–30s, Vasil Pundev.

Starting with her dissertation "Journalistic Languages of the National Revival. Bulgarian-French Contexts" (2005), with a strong comparative focus, Getova went on to establish the thematic and conceptual construct of the "road" in her habilitation work for Associate Professor, "The Handwriting of the Road. 19th Century, Travel, Writing" (2006), and developed her path as a researcher engaged with a wide range of topics, developmental lines, genre transformations, and personal presences in the literary-historical corpus.

This path led to books such as "Inventing Modern Worlds in the 19th Century. Ivan Bogorov" (2009), "Yovkov's Inscriptions. Contexts, Divinations, and Journeys in 'Evenings in the Antimovo Inn'" (2009), "Political Traces in the Language of the National Revival" (2018), among others.

The monograph submitted for the current competition, "Petko-Slaveykov's Journalistic 19th Century", examines the characteristic features of historical processes that shaped Bulgarian National Revival journalism and its most prominent representatives. An initial focus is the categorical and terminological clarification of the concept of the "century" in its chronological dimensions and philosophical conceptualizations in Bulgarian and European humanities.

Most importantly, the author outlines the "physiognomy" of the Bulgarian 19th century through the journalistic ideas, images, worlds, and languages produced by the National Revival press. The comparative approach remains central to the study, demonstrating the specific value-laden, visionary, historical-cultural, and philosophical-reflective nature of the Bulgarian 19th century. Among the notable contributions of Assoc. Prof. Getova are:

A consistent, multilayered analysis of National Revival journalism as a cultural phenomenon, social practice, and language of modernization.

The identification of the journalistic 19th century as a distinct interpretative framework for understanding Bulgarian Revival literature and public thought.

A comparative methodology that situates Bulgarian journalism within broader European intellectual and cultural contexts.

Detailed readings of Petko R. Slaveykov's journalistic work that reveal its civic, linguistic, and philosophical dimensions beyond the traditional literary-historical canon.

5. Conclusion.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Slavova Getova is a proven literary historian and a dedicated university lecturer whose research combines erudition, methodological innovation, and respect for the Bulgarian cultural heritage. Her monographs and numerous studies have contributed to expanding the horizons of National Revival literary and journalistic studies, offering new interpretative models and comparative perspectives.

Having reviewed the submitted works, I am convinced that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Slavova Getova fully meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski," and the criteria for the academic position of Professor in the field of 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian Literature – National Revival Literature).

I unreservedly propose that she be elected to the academic position of PROFESSOR.

24. 07. 2025

Prof. Dr. Antoniya Velkova-Gaidarzhieva