

REVIEW

by Prof. Dr. Nikolay Aretov Aretov,

Professional field 05.04.02. Bulgarian literature

Institute for Literature, BAS

on the academic output for participation in a competition for the academic position of

“Professor” in Professional field 2.1. Philology,

promulgated in State Gazette no. 47 /14.06.2019,

with sole candidate Assoc. Prof. Plamen Ivanov Doinov, Ph.D.

I.

The whole work of assistant professor Plamen Doinov fully correspond, and by most indicators goes beyond the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University for the acquisition of the academic position "professor". The attached documents confirm this.

Assoc. Prof. Plamen Doinov:

- Takes part and leads the scholar's program “The literature of People's Republic of Bulgaria (1946-1990)”, that has several subdivisions. The result is many conferences, published collections of texts and other publications.

- Took part in the international project “100 years diplomatic relations between Poland and Bulgaria - political, social, economic and cultural aspects” and in many other projects.

- Assoc. Prof. Plamen Doinov is a member of the Board of the association Bulgarian Writers and its vice president.

- Assoc. Prof. Plamen Doinov initiated and led the team preparing the bachelor programs “Bulgarian studies” and master program “Literature, book publishing, media”.

- Assoc. Prof. Plamen Doinov prepared master courses in the programs “Creative writing”, “Drama: composition and plot”, “Dramatic situations and dialog”. He also took part in preparing and developing other courses like “Bulgarian literature”, “Oral narration and written text...”, “Bulgarian literature: late 20th and early 21 centuries”, “Bulgarian literature from the socialist era (1944-1989)”, “The craft of the critic”, “Book publishing and print media

in Bulgaria (20th and 21 centuries)”, “Ideology, censorship and auto-censorship (20th and 21 centuries)”. During the period he prepared many texts for four courses in „Moodle HBY”.

- Assoc. Prof. Plamen Doinov is co-founder and moderator of the Reader’s club, the Creative writing’s club in NBU. He is the organizer and leader of the international seminar “The two faces of the writer: Personal cases from East-European literature”, of the national conferences on “A Portrait of My Double” (1966) and “The Women of Warsaw” (1968) by Georgi Markov (2018), etc.

- Assoc. Prof. Plamen Doinov is editor in the newspaper “Literaturen Vestnik”, active critic and publicist.

- Assoc. Prof. Plamen Doinov tutor to 8 bachelor’s and master theses, a participant in many commission, etc.

- In his initiative, several NBU students were trained in “Literaturen Vestnic” and in Prosveta publishing house.

- Assoc. Prof. Plamen Doinov is head of the New Bulgarian literary studies in NBU, a member of the Faculty and Academic council in NBU.

II.

Assoc. Prof. Plamen Doinov applies in the competition with his book *Case Literature. From “Tobacco” to „Wolf Hunt”*. Case Studies in the Literary Field of the Republic of Bulgaria” (Institute for Studies of the Recent Past and Siels, 2017). This is a profound study of seven key events in the literature of HPE (the People’s Republic of Bulgaria, as Pl. Doinov insists to brand this period), based on large documental fundament. The fine analyses that go beyond the strict approach of a literary critic and historian enter the field of cultural and political history. They are preceded by a study, dedicated to the actual in the last decade’s concept of “microhistory”. *Case Literature. From “Tobacco” to „Wolf Hunt”* is among the representative works of the Bulgarian literary scholarship from the last decades. The book carries out the concept, developed by Pl. Doinov on the processes in Bulgarian literature from the period after 1944, a concept that is undoubtedly a contribution in the field and gradually was adopted by numerous scholars, not only these from New Bulgarian University. It is hard for me to pinpoint another similar all-encompassing idea in the Bulgarian literary scholarship in recent times.

Assoc. Prof. Plamen Doinov is among the authors that are widely quoted. In this aspect, the candidate also exceeds the requirements of the law. The provided information refers to 145 registered citations; it is possible that there are more of them.

If I have to enlist some of the Doynov's concrete contributions in his overall work as a literary scholar, let me mention some of them, not arranging them hierarchically or by their importance:

- Promoting the idea about the "alternative canon" (together with Prof. M. Nedelchev and their colleagues from New Bulgarian University), and also the more elaborated periodization of the literature from the period.

- Starting one conceptual analyzing of the Bulgarian literature from the early 21 century.

- Rational scrutinizing the writers' "self-criticism" in public from the period of the People's Republic, also the similar problems of censorship and "purgings" (чистки) from the same time.

- Revision and a new conceptualization of the theory and reality of so-called "Socialist Realism".

- "Reviving" the poet Veselin Tachev (the poet Ivan Tsanev also contributed to this process).

This enlisting could be continued it can also mention the observations on individual authors – from K. Petkanov to B. Hristov.

The overall activity of Pl. Doynov in the field of literature does not exist only on the pages of his author's publications; it carries out in several projects, in which other scholars are drowned. Assoc. Prof. Pl. Doynov is among the most active conference organizers, and manages to promptly materialize the results in collections of texts, that, in their turn, are quoted and enter the university's teachings, not only in NBU.

III.

My information about the teacher's activities of Assoc. Prof. Pl. Doynov is indirect, but I know, that he carries several courses, he also supervised bachelor's and master's theses and at least one PhD student has successfully defended a thesis under his supervision.

IV.

Assoc. Prof. Plamen Doynov is Head of the New Bulgarian Studies Department, a member of NBU's Academic Council and the Faculty Council of the Graduate School. He is also the founder and host of the NBU Reading Club and the NBU Creative Writing Club and regularly takes part in other university's activities.

The Pl. Doynov's social activities deserve the highest rating. Being Vice-Chairman of the Bulgarian Writers Association and editor in the "Literary Newspaper", he organizes poetic

readings and other events; he is also an active member of the Institute for Studies of the Recent Past and member of several literary competitions.

V.

I know Pl. Doynov more than two decades and had the opportunity to observe his development as a poet, literary scholar, and social activist. His public readings as a poet always turn into events and attract a wide audience. I appreciate very much his contributions in these three fields and do have any doubts that he is a perfect university lecturer.

VI.

My overall opinion on Pl. Doynov's activities and contributions as scholar, poet and university lecturer are very high. On some occasions, I have had some remarks or a different perspective on some of his interpretations (I recall one on the differences of the two variations of *Wolf Hunt*), and I have had the opportunity to articulate them publicly. By no means, these differences do not change my overall fully positive attitude towards the work of Doynov as a scholar or towards his poetry.

Conclusion

The entire activity and work of Assoc. Prof. Plamen Ivanov Doinov, Ph.D. in the fields of literary scholarship and university teaching is very fruitful, generates only respect and fully corresponds to the requirements of the law. With conviction, I give a positive assessment of the candidate's academic activity and ask Academic Council at NBU to award him the title of professor.

9 October 2019

Sofia



Prof. Dr. Nikolay Aretov