

POSITION

by Prof. Dr. Svetlana Stoycheva, NATFIZ "Kr. Sarafov",
on the scientific material provided by chap. assistant professor Nadezhda Angelova Stoyanova, PhD, participant in a competition for the academic position of "associate professor" at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", by professional direction 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian literature - Bulgarian literature from the First World War to present day. Literature for children and adolescents), announced in the State Gazette, issue 24, March 17, 2023.

The documents and materials provided by Nadezhda Stoyanova, the only participant in the "St. Kliment Ohridski" habilitation competition, meet the scientometric requirements under the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Rules for its Implementation and can be considered and evaluated.

The professional biography of Nadezhda Stoyanova for the period 2013-2021, since she was appointed to the position of "principal assistant" at SU, builds the image of a well-rounded scientist with a serious application in the field of history and the theory of literature: with rich research work (two monographs, the first of which is on her dissertation work; 7 studies, over 50 articles and reviews, numerous participations in scientific forums, numerous reviews of exhibitions, films, scientific conferences); management of 6 scientific projects and participation in the team of over 20 projects; active teaching work with developed independent lecture courses on compulsory (2 courses) and elective courses (3), exercises (5 disciplines each); rich compilation and editorial activity; active support of graduates and doctoral students as a scientific supervisor and creator of platforms for their scientific performances. So it is not surprising that she has received prizes and that she has become a frequent media presence on talk and popular science radio and television programmes.

Nadezhda Stoyanova entered the competition with 16 selected works - monographs, studies and articles that cover the specific request of the competition: "Bulgarian literature from the First World War to present day and Literature for children and adolescents". Let me emphasize that a writer who deals simultaneously with the history of Bulgarian literature and with the history of specialized literature such as children's literature is a rare combination. But whoever manages to actually "combine" them, discovers new perspectives on both. Not to

mention that it is methodologically important to think of children's literature in the context of general literary processes, and its authors - in the context of their entire work. Nadezhda Stoyanova is very well aware of this separate existence of the two literatures in Bulgarian literary studies, as well as the separate existence of creativity for children and creativity for adults - especially of writers established in the canon of "great" literature (visible in her article on the creativity for children of Nikolay Kanchev and the analysis of his critical reception).

For Nadezhda Stoyanova, such a double "profiling" is still in the beginning. But I see it as the fruit of the enduring interest in literary enclaves, the border zones between "high" literature and popular, science-fiction, "children's" literature, as well as the search for facts, contexts, authors, issues, and types of the times, which have been unnoticed or insufficiently appreciated by literary criticism. To put it even more succinctly: the attraction and problematization of all liminality.

Such is the study of the little-known journal. "Narstud (1924-1926), ideologically related to Geo Milev's *Flame* and Anton Strashimirov's *Vedrina*, and its conceptual examination as a sideways mirror of the radical changes in the mindsets of our intelligentsia after the September events and of so-called September literature itself.

Such is the attempt to reveal the "secret" in the almost "secret" text of Geo Milev from the magazine "Ankhira" ("The secret. Occult reflections of an uninitiated in the occult") and its interpretation as a new context, both of Geo Milev's aesthetic positions and of the occult charge of the Bulgarian avant-garde (above all, of Bulgarian expressionism).

Such are the so-called "gallery of Bulgarian types in modern times" from Stoyanova's article of the same name. "The 'types', artfully summarised by the phrase 'The Great Unknown' (borrowed from an article by Krustyo Krastev), are drawn from the 'culture of everyday life' of the 1930s and 1940s. The "gallery" itself is filled by specifically named and characterized types (called "new figures") taken from other characteristic articles of the period with a national psychological pretext. As a product of a similar research reflex, I will add here the article "The Inventor and the 'Charm of the Moon'", where the researcher's attention is also drawn to the ambiguous image of the inventor, examined "in the context of the (ironic) reflection of science fiction narratives on the mainstream discourse of progress in the 1930s" (quoted in the article).

Such was the interest shown in Bulgarian air writing in the 1930s (art. "View from above. The genre of *airwriting* in Bulgarian literature"), which, according to Stoyanova, displaced "the idea of Bulgarianness" during the same period. It is curious that, according to the examples, it is women writers who configure the genre.

A surprising research angle was also used in the interpretation of the theme of the orphan in the works of Kalina Malina - not through its traditional "testing" through the literature of sentimentalism or Bulgarian children's literature, but in the context of literature for adults, illuminating it in a completely different way.

The poetry of Nikolay Kanchev and Binyo Ivanov is a challenge for the literary scholar - especially through the "introduction" of their poetry for children. Both with experimental poetics, after the 1980s defined as alternative to the socialist realist canon; both with difficult realizability of their poetry for adults in the censored press; both found a much freer field for poetic expression in children's poetry; and finally - both confronting their researchers with the same case study: how authors of high poetry, not always understandable to the aesthetically unprepared reader, discover their children's reader; what they attract him with; to what extent their language experimentation coincides with a child's natural poetic reflection of the world and the child's natural attitude towards games, including language games. Nadezhda Stoyanova starts from these most difficult questions, trying to meet their work for children with their work for adults in a radically different situation from the time of socialist realism, reasonably moving away from already given answers to our criticism before 1989. I think she is aware of how easy it is not only to break the connection, but also to overexpose it. However, the most important thing has been captured and formulated: the ways of constructing the lyrical worlds for both audiences are identical; both authors realize poetical and not ideological tasks; both introduce their young readers not so much to the social matrix as to the metaphysical nature of art (the end of the article about N. Kanchev).

Stoyanova's approach to the children's poetry of Geo Milev is identical. First, she turns to the texts that did not make it into his only collection of poems for children (the "Children's Life" series, 1913-1914), trying to find the reason for this, and then (or at the same time) she tries to feel Milev's "avant-garde energies" (her expression) in them. He shows a similar research gesture in his article "Dalchev beyond the canon. The case of "Chronicle", choosing for analysis a poem that systematically drops out of any collected editions of the poet, and raising again the question of the author's aesthetic measure and responsibility before literary history.

The monograph "Decorations and grimaces. Fashion and modernity in Bulgarian literature from the 20s and 30s of the 20th century" (2022) has the main weight among the competition materials. Here, the opinion is finally formed that the author has a flexible contextual thinking and is able, by changing contexts and perspectives, to see familiar phenomena in an original way or to activate new fields from the periphery of cultural memory.

The book can be taken as a synthesis and highlight of her searches up to this point. The topic itself is modern and complements the efforts of other modern literary scholars, but here the sought-after multidimensionality stands out. The interrelationships between modernism, modernity and fashion break down the dividing lines between literature and everyday life, high and popular literature - those already mentioned boundaries. In the context of the avant-garde of the 1920s and 1930s, it does not seem so extravagant to delve into popular literature and its clichés, but Nadezhda Stoyanova does it with impressive dedication, precision and bias, which she herself admits in her introduction.

Instead of a summary, I will emphasize the extraordinary inventiveness of ch. assistant professor Nadezhda Stoyanova, PhD, and her ability to truly be inspired by the subjects of her research, and accordingly, to infect the young people around her. This is an addition to the sufficiently fulfilling the conditions to which her candidacy for the academic position of "associate professor" corresponds, which I strongly support.

22.07.2023 Prof. Dr. Svetlana Stoycheva