Review
of the academic output for participation in a competition for the position of Professor in the professional field 2.1. Philology (Theory and History of Literature) at New Bulgarian University, announced in the *State Gazette*, № 65 / 17.07. 2026.

1. Information about the competition

The competition for the selection of professor in the professional field 2.1. Philology (Theory and History of Literature) at New Bulgarian University was announced via a publication in the *State Gazette*, № 65, 17.07. 2026. The procedure complies with the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. The documentation has been prepared comprehensively and correctly, in full adherence to all applicable standards.

2. Information about the candidate

One candidate applied for the announced competition: Assoc. Prof. Maurice Name Fadel, D.Sc. The candidate is a faculty member at New Bulgarian University, within the Department of Modern Bulgarian Studies. He defended his doctoral dissertation, titled „History and Interpretation in the Views of Paul de Man“ at the Institute for Literature of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in 2002. Ten years later, he earned the higher academic degree of „Doctor of Sciences“ (D.Sc.) at New Bulgarian University, following the defense of a dissertation titled „Detectives, Intelligence Agents, and the Cold War: Crime and Spy Fiction in a Comparative Perspective“.

Maurice Fadel possesses an extensive bibliography. He is the author of the monographs „Paul de Man: Experiments with the Impossible“ (2002), „The Animal as a Literary Provocation: The 'Animalistic' Works of Emiliyan Stanev“ (2010), and „Detectives, Intelligence Agents, and the Cold War: Crime and Spy Fiction in a Comparative Perspective“ (2022).

The candidate has also served as an editor or compiler (either independently or as part of a team) for numerous publications, including the collections „On the Way to Heidegger“ (2010), „History of the Literature of the People's Republic of Bulgaria: Models and Practices“ (2022), „Experiment and Memory: Georgi Markovski“ (2024), and „The Freedom of Ukraine“ (2026). Furthermore, he edited the second edition of Miroslav Yanakiev's

„Bulgarian Versification“ (2023) and the anthology „Writers of the University“ (2024).

To these research findings, one must add the observation that Moris Fadel is actively engaged in academic life, both in Bulgaria and abroad. He is an active member of the core research team for the project „Literature of the People's Republic of Bulgaria (1946–1990)“. He is a member of the Society for the Study of Modernism in France, as well as the „Dr. Krastyo Krastev“ School of Literary History at New Bulgarian University (NBU). For years, he has served on the editorial board of „Universitetski Dnevnik“ („University Diary“), the NBU newspaper. Since 2020, he has headed the Department of Modern Bulgarian Studies. His name frequently appears on juries for national literary awards and in reviews of new books released on the market. This reflects the comprehensive presence of an academic researcher and active literary critic within the contemporary cultural sphere.

3. Description of academic texts and Academic contributions of the habilitation text

For the competition, Maurice Fadel has submitted a published habilitation (professorial) work – „The Broken Frame: The Destabilization of Representation in Literature“ (2025) – supplemented by approximately 20 articles and studies published in Bulgarian and international collections and periodicals; some of these are indexed in global databases, while others have undergone peer review and abstracting.

The professorial work spans 220 pages. It comprises an introduction followed by 17 articles and studies focused on authors and works from both Bulgarian and world literature – works that, at first glance, appear to lack any chronological or other obvious sequential connection. Yet, this is merely a first impression. With this book, Maurice Fadel once again presents a different facet of his work, diverging from the themes of his previous inquiries. While traces of his earlier research – such as his monographs on the animal-themed literature of Emiliyan Stanev and the spy novels of the People's Republic of Bulgaria – can still be discerned in certain sections, he now takes a more radical approach. He interrogates the illusion of representation, re-examines „that within language which is not language“, explores the materiality of linguistic reality, and investigates everything that challenges traditional literary theory. However, Maurice Fadel does not merely drift through abstract realms; rather, he engages in close readings of Bagryana, Akhmatova, Pushkin, Al. Gerov, Penyo Penev, J. Littell, Liliev, Dalchev... He puts theory into practice – that is, he continuously tests it through the reading of specific works – thereby

affirming the otherwise self-evident credo that literary studies exist because of and for the sake of literature, rather than in an attempt to be something else. To put it aphoristically, the scholar demonstrates how to engage in *theory after the end of theory*.

Although composed of 17 distinct literary-critical texts, the book „The Broken Frame" reflects an aspiration toward broader conceptual thinking. Everything within it revolves around pivotal questions: Is literary theory dead, given that literature itself seems no longer capable of representing anything? Are the signs used to signify literary works so thoroughly „dead" that, if we wish to „revive" them, we must abandon theory altogether and confine ourselves strictly to the realm of description – to narrating a work and speaking about it?

Maurice Fadel chooses an approach that is honest – not toward theory, nor toward history, but toward literature itself. Consequently, he engages with theory in such a way that, at a certain point, he senses it bending under the pressure of history. In this book – precisely through this fraught encounter between *theory* and *history* – he seeks to rehabilitate the craft of interpreting literary works by incorporating a range of literary-historical approaches into his theoretical toolkit.

His focus on poetics, or on the style of individual authors, proves exceptionally productive, as it entails a heightened interest in reading these works within their specific contexts. The analysis of the works becomes more compelling because it relies not merely on „close reading", but also on drawing in texts and figures that formed part of the authors' environment at the time. Thus, the „soul" in Yavorov's work serves both as a constitutive image of a broader Symbolist poetics and as an emblematic representation of his own literary and theatrical persona. In a similar vein, literature concerning communist leaders – or the poetry of Penyo Penev, or the explorations found in the lyrical works of Alexander Gerov and Nikolay Liliev – engage with language in distinct ways: sometimes by situating utopia within the very fabric of daily life (as in Penev's work); sometimes by transforming old age into a phase where childhood is constantly reclaimed from the future (in Gerov's case); or, in the case of Liliev, by discovering a point of convergence between religion, music, and irony. The conceptual outcome is almost invariably the same: modernist literature emerges from a series of ruptures between reality and representation – specifically, at the point where direct signification loses its established mechanism, allowing the literary text to guide the reader (or interpreter) toward unexpected vistas of meaning.

Herein lies one of the book's key contributions: it reveals the latent potential within familiar works to spark new theoretical propositions. Whether

one seeks to reinterpret the symbolism of Yavorov or Liliev, to rediscover the late modernism (or early postmodernism) of Konstantin Pavlov, or to examine the linguistic deconstruction of „objecthood“ in the work of Atanas Dalchev – Morris Fadel's book offers a range of possibilities, all grounded in concrete, detailed analysis. Before us lies a work that serves as a kind of „handbook“ for addressing the theoretical shortcomings in the understanding of classic works of Bulgarian and foreign modernism, within the context of a profound crisis of representation. Ultimately, it offers a collection of excellent proposals for revitalizing the interpretive approach of any contemporary literary scholar.

4. Academic and teaching activity

Over the years, the candidate has engaged in significant research and teaching activities. He has presented papers at more than ten international and dozens of national conferences. Both individually and as part of a research team, he has organized several national and international academic forums. His works have been cited by dozens of Bulgarian researchers and reviewed in literary periodicals.

He has served as the academic supervisor for two doctoral candidates who successfully defended their dissertations, as well as for 13 undergraduate and graduate students (bachelor's and master's levels). He was directly involved in the development of the bachelor's and master's degree programs in Bulgarian Studies at the New Bulgarian University (NBU). The average score from student evaluations for Morris Fadel over the last ten teaching semesters is 5.59 (on a scale where 6 is the maximum).

5. Conclusion

Based on all the points mentioned above, I propose that Morris Name Fadel be appointed as a professor within the framework of the competition for professional field 2.1, Philology (Theory and History of Literature), at New Bulgarian University in the *State Gazette*, № 65, 17.07.2026. His research and scholarly contributions, as well as his multifaceted work in the field of literary studies, support this recommendation.

12.11.2026 **Prof. D. Sc. Plamen Doynov**