

REVIEW

By prof. DSc. Vesselin Petrov (IPS – BAS) for the scientific works of Assoc. Prof. PhD Lilia Alexandrova Gurova, presented for participation in competition for the academic position “Full Professor” in the professional direction 2.3 “Philosophy” for the needs of New Bulgarian University, announced in the State Gazette 93/26.11.2019.

1. General description of the presented documents.

In this competition for the academic position “Full Professor” in the professional direction 2.3 “Philosophy” for the needs of New Bulgarian University, announced in the State Gazette 93/26.11.2019 participates only one applicant – Assoc. Prof. PhD Lilia Alexandrova Gurova (NBU). She has defended a dissertation for PhD in 1988, and from 2001 she is assoc. prof. in philosophy of science (initially in the Institute of Philosophical Investigations at BAS, and from 2003 in the NBU). She is author of more than 115 publications, of which 3 monographies, about 90 articles and big papers, nearly 30 of which are published abroad, and about 25 published informations, reviews, interviews, etc. Among them she participates in this competition with one monograph: Gurova, L. (2019). Explanation, Understanding, and Implication. Sofia, NBU (in Bulgarian); 19 articles and big papers published in international editions, 5 of which are indexed in Web of Science/Scopus; 36 articles and big papers published in Bulgaria in Bulgarian. All of them are published after the receiving of PhD and after the obtaining of the academic position “Assoc. Prof.” in 2003.

2. General characteristics of the scientific, scientific-applied and pedagogical activity of the applicant

Besides the above pointed publicational activity, the applicant Lilia Gurova has participated in 12 international scientific or educational projects as coordinator, and has been the leader of 4 international scientific or educational projects. She has participated with presentations in 25 international conferences, 21 of which after the obtaining of the academic position “Assoc. Prof.” in NBU, and she has been the chief organizer (head of organizing committee) of one international conference in Bulgaria in 2016. She has been invited 12 times as guest-lecturer abroad, 8 of which after 2003. She participated in 5 international scientific organizations and in one in Bulgaria, being in 3 of the international one a member of the Board of Directors. Lilia Gurova was a coordinator of a project in the 5th Framework program of EU “Integration of Central and East European Center for Cognitive Science into the European Cognitive Science Research Area”, 2003-2005 with earned 225 000 Euro. She is member of the Faculty council (from 2005 up to now) and of the Academic council of NBU (from 2013

up to now), being also in different years a member of the academic administration of NBU as Director of a program, acting as chief of a department, vice-chief of a department, and Director of a program council. Lilia Gurova is also a member of the Editorial Board of the international peer-reviewed periodical “Balkan Journal of Philosophy”, published in Bulgaria by BAS, from the very establishment of the journal in 2009 and she has an essential merit for its successful development, which is accepted for indexing in Web of Science since 2015.

3. Educational activity of the applicant

According to the presented inquiry from NBU for the period from 2003/4 to 2018/19 years the applicant Lilia Gurova has on average 3777 hours classroom activities, 1796 hours extracurricular activities, 1965 pages per year publication of educational documents, 920 hours per year for administrative and community service (first of all visiting hours for consultation), as well as 220 units an average work with undergraduate students, graduate students and PhD students. She has also 6 classroom courses and 3 extracurricular courses in English. Her evaluation by the students as satisfaction from the course and the lecturer is excellent. She has participated as a train (Director of a program council) in the training of the academic administration in 2014. She is the author of 15 reviews (10 for bachelor thesis and 5 for master thesis), as well as she has 40 participations in committees for state examines. She was scientific advisor of 4 successfully defended PhD students in the period 2006-2018.

4. Content analysis of scientific achievements of the applicant, characteristics of scientific contributions and critical notions to the presented works

According to me the applicant Lilia Gurova has correctly distinguished her contributions in the publications for the competition in two groups: a) contributions with supranational significance; and b) contributions with national significance. I agree with the pointed by her contributions in these two groups.

In the present content analysis of scientific achievements of the applicant I shall follow this classification, beginning with the publications belonging to the first type of contributions. As the main contribution in this group it should be pointed the inferentialistic analysis of scientific explanation that is made by the applicant. On the first place among the works outlining that contribution is, of course, the monography “*Explanation, Understanding, and Inference*”, Sofia, NBU, 2019 – 202 pages. Its main aim is to argue in favor of the inferentialist view of scientific explanations (the qualities of an explanation depend on the inferences which we are permitted to make) – that aim is achieved successfully. The book has not the aim to suggest author’s own theory of explanation and understanding, though according to Lilia Gurova suppositions on which the suggested analysis of the additional inferential contend is based form

a minimalistic theory that however do not engage with the formulation of sufficient and necessary conditions for the main elements of an explanation. The work consists of three parts: the first one is devoted to the view of Carl Hempel that in a sense initiates of the contemporary investigations of scientific explanations in philosophy of science in the last 70 years. The views of critics of that nomological model of explanation and the suggested their alternatives are also considered. The second part of the work is devoted to the inferentialist analysis of explanation, according to which the qualities of an explanation depend on its epistemic characteristics, but does not accept that the structure of explanation is decisive for its qualities. Lilia Gurova points here the main advantage of the analysis of the inferential contribution in comparison with the analysis of the structure of explanations. The third and last part of monography presents examples of the real history of science, as well as actual methodological discussions demonstrating how explanations extending understanding through the solving by them nontrivial inferences dominate over competitive explanations with a poorer inferential contribution. The work outlines also some tasks for further investigation on the topic, for example, inferentialist analysis of mathematical (especially statistical) explanations and explanational naratives.

Another two publications of Lilia Gurova are devoted also to the inferentialistic approach and the arguing of its advantages over the other approaches: a) Gurova, L. (2017). On some non-trivial implications of the view that good explanations increase our understanding of explained phenomena. *Balkan Journal of Philosophy* 9 (1), 45-52; as well as b) Gurova, L. (2013). Principles Versus Mechanisms in Cognitive Science. In: Karakostas, V., Dieks, D. (Eds.) *EPSA11 Perspectives and Foundational Problems in Philosophy of Science*. Dordrecht: Springer, 393-403. The first of them argues that the value of explanation should be evaluated on the basis of the extra-inferences (constituting the inferential content of the explanation), which that explanation permits. The second publication argues that mechanistic explanations are not the only ones in cognitive science, and that the based on principles explanations sometimes combine with important empirical discoveries and under given conditions are the only available choice.

The next contribution of the applicant is in the field of history of philosophy of cognitive science and concerns rational reconstruction of the debates on the categorization in cognitive science. The following three publications are connected with this contribution (the first of them has an impact rang): Gurova, L. (2014). The Principle Based Explanations Are not Extinct in Cognitive Science: The Case of the Basic Level Effects. *Philosophia Scientiae* 18 (3): 203-214. (SJR: 0,133); Gurova, L. (2013). Thirty years of cognitive studies of categorization: What is

behind the reported progress? In: Pléh, C., Gurova, L., Ropolyi, L. (Eds.). *New Perspectives on the History of Cognitive Science*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 165-174; Gurova, L. (2003). *Philosophy of Science Meets Cognitive Science: the Categorization Debate*. In: *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, vol.236, 141-162. In the first of these publication it is plead for the recovery of the balance between mechanistic explanations and explanatory role of the principles, and in that it is paid attention to the search of explanation of the so called effects of the basic level, which are the most important empirical findings in the history of investigation of categorization. The second of the above publications searches an answer of the questions if investigations on categorization have made significant progress after the time when Gardner with his 1980ties publications has been evaluated very high, and what can be the successful continuation of these investigations. In the third publication Lilia Gurova argues that the three suppositions of the classical view of categorization (that it is a descriptive theory, that the concepts are mental presentations and their claims are about the structure of the conceptual presentations, and that the concepts are presented through a set of individually necessary and commonly sufficient definitive features) are not true for the most of the theories for which the idea of classical view is intended to refer to.

The third contribution belongs to philosophy of psychology and concerns non-causal interpretation of explanations referring to individual characteristics. This contribution can be found in the following two publications of the applicant (both publications have impact factor and impact rang): Gurova, L. (2017). *Are Causal Accounts of Explanation Always Useful? In the Case of Personality Trait Explanations They Are Probably Not*. In: Massimi, M., Romeijn, J.-W., Schurz, G. (Eds.) *EPSA 15 Selected Papers*. Cham: Springer, 167-177; Gurova, L. (2017). *A reason to avoid the causal construal of dispositional explanations*. *Organon F* 24 (4), 438-455. (SJR: 0,337). The first of them points that there are cases in which non-causal explanations work better than the causal ones. It is argued in favor of the ascertainment that causal explanations meet serious empirical and conceptual problems and that non-causal explanations grasp better their explanatory virtues making possible new predictions about the explained phenomenon. The second publication marks that usually those who defend that dispositional explanations are true explanations, construct them as causal explanations. However, there are solid arguments against causal efficacy of dispositions. In some circumstances causal construction of dispositional explanations cannot explain what are valuable these explanations about. That is why causal explanations – at least in some cases – should be avoided.

Another contribution of the applicant belongs to philosophy of psychiatry and concerns

rational reconstruction of the debates on the so called “exception at heavy loss”. This contribution is developed in the following publication with impact factor: Gurova, L. (2013). ‘Understanding it makes it normal’: is it a reasoning fallacy or not? *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice* 19, 524-527 . (IF: 1,508). This publication suggests an analysis of what is hidden behind the two opposing widespread assertions about “the understanding of what makes it normal”, i.e. if we accept or not that psychiatric diagnoses depend on the context. It is argued that the supposition of context dependence of the diagnoses is not irrational.

There are two moments in the contributions of the applicant with national only significance. First, contributions to the history of philosophy in Bulgaria. These are publications on some separate aspects of philosophy and on the place of some popular Bulgarian philosophers of the nearest past, such as Dimiter Michalchev, Sava Petrov, Aristotle Gavrilov, Azarya Policarov, Ivanka Apostolova, in philosophy in Bulgaria. This is realized in the following publications of the applicant: Гурова, Л. (2013). Две предизвикателства пред желаещите да възродят ремкеанската философска програма. *Философски алтернативи* 2/2013, 110-117; Гурова, Л. (2012). За Поликаров в и извън България. *Философски алтернативи* 2/2012, 111-117; Гурова, Л. (2010). Незавършените проекти на Сава Петров. В: Стефанов, А., Гурова, Л., Апостолов, А. (Ред.) *Теоретичните конструкти във философска интерпретация (двадесет години по-късно)*. София: ИК „Св. Иван Рилски”, 32-42; Гурова, Л. (2009). Философската психология на Димитър Михалчев. *Философски алтернативи*, бр. 3, 19-24; Гурова, Л. (2008). Какво разкрива и какво скрива понятието стил на мислене. В: Стефанов, А., Гурова, Л., Апостолов, А., Тодоров, Хр. (Ред.) *Стил на мислене. В памет на проф. Иванка Апостолова*. София: ИК „Св. Иван Рилски”, 67-74; Гурова, Л., Цацов, Д. (2004). Българската дискусия за природата на съзнанието. *Философски алтернативи*, бр. 1-2, 3-5; Гурова, Л. (2004). Размишления по повод последната книга на Аристотел Гаврилов “Материалистическата диалектика и субективният идеализъм. Поглед към философията на Дж. Беркли”. *Философски алтернативи*, бр.1-2, 19-32.

The above pointed publications are written in connection with some anniversary of some of the above philosophers, but nevertheless they contribute to the development of the history of philosophy in Bulgaria, because the works of these Bulgarian philosophers is not investigated systematically or it is investigated not enough.

Second, contribution to the topic of pseudo-science and scientific wars. Here belong papers about scientific wars, the affair “Socal”, anti-evolutionist doctrine of the “intelligent design”, the attempts for “scientific” investigation of some paranormal phenomena. All these

is investigated in the following publications: Гурова, Л. (2016). Интелигентният дизайн: какво той е и какво не е и как обикновен непрофесионализъм компрометиращ родната философия (и наука). *Философски алтернативи*, 4/2016, 115-125; Гурова, Л. (2014). Аферата „Сокал“, 18 години по-късно. Проблеми на постмодерността 4 (2), 110-120; Гурова, Л. (2012). Синдромът на Дон Кихот. *Философски алтернативи* 5/2012, 154-158; Гурова, Л. (2011). Случаят „Сокал“ в България – кой какво (не) видя в него. В: Стоянова, Ю., Кючуков, Хр. (Ред.) *Психология и лингвистика. Сборник статии в чест на проф. Енчо Герганов*. София: Просвета, 339-351; . Гурова, Л. (2006). Кой и как представяше науката на процеса в Доувър, Пенсилвания, 2005. *Списание на БАН*, бр.2, 56-60; Гурова, Л. (2005). Наука и псевдонаука – проблеми на демаркацията. *Списание на БАН*, бр.2, 14-18.

Besides the above pointed publications according to the contributions suggested in the above classification by the applicant herself, Lilia Gurova applies also with more than 30 publications presented in her list of publications under the numbers: [11], [14], [15], [16], [17], [18], [19], [20], [21], [22], [23], [30], [31], [32], [34], [37], [43], [44], [46], [47], [48], [49], [50], [51], [52], [54], [55], [56], [57], [58], [60], [61], [64], [65], [66], [67], [68]. Any one of these publications has its own contribution though these contributions are not comparable by their large scale as the above described two categories of contributions. That is why I will not describe these contributions here.

My only critical note to the applicant is that in the basic monography among her publications applied for the competition “Explanation, Understanding, and Inference” there is no summary in English or in some other Western language – fact which makes difficult its reading and comprehension of the basic results in it by Western philosophers who are specialists in that field, and in this way the monography is “closed” so to say only for Bulgarian readers, and the author is depriving herself of the possibility for authoritative international discussion of the defended by her theses and conclusions.

5. Explication of the contribution of the applicant in collective publications

Lilia Gurova participates mainly in the competition with publications in which she is the only author. There are only 4 exceptions: Гурова, Л., Цацов, Д. (2004). Българската дискусия за природата на съзнанието. *Философски алтернативи*, бр. 1-2, 3-5; Gurova, L., Shahbazyan, L., Petkov, G. (2015). Understanding Hostile Attributional Bias: Dodge’s Model Revisited. In: Stoyanov, D. (Ed.) *Towards a New Philosophy of Mental Health*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 193-206; Shahbazyan, L., Petkov, G., Gurova, L. (2014) Analogical transfer of intentions. *Proc. of 36th Annual Cognitive Science Conference*. 23-26

July, Quebec City, Canada: 2907-2912; Gurova, L., Pléh, C. (2013). Existing and would-be accounts of the history of cognitive science: An introduction. In: Pléh, C., Gurova, L., Ropolyi, L. (Eds.). *New Perspectives on the History of Cognitive Science*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1-34.

In regard to the second and third of these four publications Lilia Gurova is the leading author in one of the cases, and respectively, the main idea in the paper belongs to her; in the other case her contribution is in methodology of investigation realized by her PhD student. In the first of the above publications the idea is argued that Dimiter Michalchev did not influence essentially on Aristotle Gavrilov's thinking. The argumentation is developed mainly by Lilia Gurova, and the co-author Dimiter Tsatsov has only added and corrected the text. Finally, in the last of the above papers, the main contribution belongs to the co-author; the contribution of Lilia Gurova here is mainly in the first part of that large publication, where the existing approaches to the history of cognitive science and the weak places of every one of these approaches are presented and commented.

6. Reflection of scientific publications of the applicant in Bulgarian and foreign literature

Lilia Gurova has 10 quotations and reviews in scientific editions that are refereed and indexed in the world data bases of scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes for the period 2006-2019. Besides, she has 28 quotations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review and 26 quotations and reviews in non-reviewed journal with scientific review.

7. Personal impressions from the applicant

I know personally Lilia Gurova since the years of her Doctoral dissertation in the Institute of Philosophy at BAS, i.e. since 1980ties. My personal impression of her is excellent as an enormously capable researcher in the area of philosophy of science – now one of the leading specialist in Bulgaria in this field. During the years she has evolved in her scientific development namely in that direction, and according to me the decisive features for that are her industriousness and diligence, as well as the important role had her specializations abroad and her travelling every year for participation in international forums, due to which she has now a large number of contacts with leading specialists from abroad, world famous names, in philosophy of science. I have thought for a long time that she possesses all necessary data to be a professor and only her pedantry and self-criticism have stopped her not to hurry in her growing up though she is superior over a number of other our scientists according to the requirements to be full professor. In addition to that I would point to her personal characteristics as honesty,

justice, readiness to help when necessary – all these are features that have a great importance for the molding and successful realization of a scientist, for which Bulgarian science as a whole has so great need.

I have no collective publications with Lilia Gurova.

8. Motivated conclusion

First of all, I would like to stress that the applicant Lilia Gurova not only covers the minimal requirements according the Law of academic positions (extended with specific requirements of NBU), but also far exceeds them: for the indicator 1 she has 50 score (the requirement is 50), for indicator 3 she has 100 score (the requirement is 100), for indicators from 4 to 11 she has 643 score (the requirement is 200), for indicators from 12 to 14 she has 560 score (the requirement is 100), for indicators from 15 to 22 she has 580 score (the requirement is 100), for indicators from 23 to 35 she has 110 score (the requirement is 70), for indicators from 36 to 42 she has 90 score (the requirement is 70), and for indicators from 43 to 50 she has 90 score (the requirement is 70).

On the basis of these data and of all said up to here in this review I entirely convincingly conclude that the applicant for the academic position “Full Professor” in philosophy definitely responds to all necessary requirements and even exceeds a number of them. That is why I vote “for” that: the scientific jury to offer to the Academic council of NBU to vote for the appointment of Lilia Alexandrova Gurova for the academic position of “Full Professor” in NBU, direction 2.3 Philosophy. I also call the other members of the scientific jury to do the same.

Sofia, 22.03.2020.

Prof. DSc. Vesselin Petrov: