

## **OPINION**

**by assoc. prof. Maurice Grinberg, PhD**  
**Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology, New Bulgarian University**

on the submitted materials for application for the academic position Professor in the higher education field 2. Humanities, professional field 2.3. Philosophy, as made public in the State journal no. 93/26.11.2019 with only candidate **assoc. prof. Lilia Gurova, PhD**

### **I. Assessment of the compliance with the national minimal requirements**

The information about publications and other activities presented by assoc. prof. Lilia Gurova according to the requirements of NACID shows that she meets the minimum national requirements specified in Art. 2b of the ZRASRB for occupying the position of professor in the professional field 2.3. Philosophy. It should be noted that the candidate has far more than the required number of points in some groups of indicators.

### **II. Research and results**

The data presented by the applicant shows intensive and fruitful research activity for nearly 30 years. As a representative of another scientific field, I am impressed by the breadth and depth of the issues that have been studied. As a representative of two scientific fields - physics and cognitive science, I believe that the presented scientific papers are of interest to specialists in disciplines other than philosophy.

The publications abroad as well as the citations from foreign authors make a very good impression.

The main part of the presented materials is the monograph by Lilia Gurova entitled "Explanation, Understanding, and Conclusion" (Gurova, 2019). It addresses a central important problem in science, namely the issue of explanations and their relation to understanding and knowledge.

What makes a very good impression is the clear and systematic discussion of existing views and theories which prepares well the presentation of the contribution part of the book. A large part of the book is a serious and deep historiographical study of the problems under consideration, which is a significant contribution by itself.

The book builds on Hempel's nomological model which serves to further introduce new ideas including those suggested by the author.

The author presents her inferential model and applies it to particular problems in various scientific fields. In such studies, it would be good to find and present cases that do not confirm the inferential model. Is it in any case valid? In my opinion, the question remains about the differences between knowledge, understanding and explanation, as well as making conclusions based on explanations. Such a question would require a separate study.

I was also impressed by the presentation and analysis of examples of explanations from different fields such as biology, physics and psychology, presented in groups of types of explanations.

## **II. Teaching and teaching activities**

Lilia Gurova's teaching activity exceeds in volume all the requirements of NBU. Apart from the formal data, from personal impressions as a colleague of hers in the Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology, I can say that she has an extremely responsible attitude to the teaching process, and especially to students from various levels of education.

She is responsible for the PhD students in the department and her work helps them to organize all their activities in order to meet and report the requirements for successful PhD completion – from elaborating timetables to detailed feedback for the submitted drafts of their dissertations.

Based on the experience from the joint courses we teach, I have no doubts about her professionalism and human attitude towards the students.

## **III. Administrative and community service**

From the information presented for the competition and from my personal impressions since 1999, I can confidently say that Lilia Gurova was extremely active in the administrative and social activities of the Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology and the University.

Her activity was related to various positions she held as deputy department head, program director, and program board director. She has been the major driver behind the successful accreditation of the programs run by the department. She is a long-time member of the NBU Academic Council.

#### **IV. Opinions, recommendations and notes on the applicant's activities and achievements**

The main contribution to the research activity of associate professor Lilia Gurova is the formulation and "application" of the so-called. inferential approach presented in her monograph. It is applied to several types of explanations from specific science fields and the author suggests how it can be further applied in practice. In this context, I think it would be interesting to make a comparison with the way researchers in the scientific fields considered understand the concepts of knowledge, understanding, explanations and conclusions.

In my view, as a representative of some of these areas, these concepts are inextricably linked, and considering them as separate requires a serious argumentation. To a large extent, they are the subject of research in cognitive science, and it would be interesting to compare the relevant concepts in the approach proposed and their understanding in cognitive science (for example, in the style of experimental philosophy).

The monograph presented provides a good basis for future research and upgrading. The very clear presentation showing deep understanding the presented problems provides a good basis for that. This is also the intention of the author, as she writes in the book's afterword, to engender discussion and future research.

The question of the relationship of inference and explanation is also interesting. In many cases, the conclusions made in the research process subsequently become part of the explanation.

Is the wrong explanation which allows many detailed conclusions better than the correct one, which leads to few possible conclusions?

Despite the questions and comments presented above, I accept the contributions formulated by the applicant.

In conclusion, based on the above, I fully believe that the materials presented by assoc. prof. Lilia Gurova in the competition for the academic position of professor in the higher education field: 2. Humanities, professional field 2.3. Philosophy, fully meet the requirements, which is why I strongly support her application.

03/26/2020

Signature:

/assoc. prof. Maurice Greenberg/