

## STATEMENT

By Prof. Dr. Sc. Aneta Karageorgieva, Department of Philosophy, Sofia University

on

the competition for occupation of the academic position of "Professor" in the scientific specialty 2.3. Philosophy, announced in the State Gazette, 93, November 26, 2019, with candidate Associate Professor Lilia Gurova

I have the pleasure to review the works and the entire scientific and teaching activities of Lilia Gurova, which are not only rich in content but also make an extremely important contribution to the development of philosophy and cognitive science, of which philosophy is an important part, in Bulgaria and in the English-speaking world.

I will not list all the publications of L. Gurova, only will say that they exceed the number and quality necessary according to the most stringent requirements for scientific achievements. I would especially like to highlight as the main works submitted for the competition the monograph "Explanation, Understanding and Conclusion" Sofia: Ed. of the NBU, 202 pp. ISBN 978-619-233-063-7, 46 articles in English and Bulgarian, most of which were referenced and cited, and 4 studies. It was not particularly difficult for me to formulate my opinion, as I know Assoc. Prof. Gurova's work from the numerous conferences and projects we have participated in, along with the many meetings, discussions, and master's programs that have been undertaken with our joint efforts.

First of all, I want to highlight the monograph Explanation, Understanding and Inference. It is the fruit of at least ten years of conscientious and in-depth work, and is an extremely valuable contribution to the philosophy of science, including cognitive science, in our country. I fully agree with the supranational contributions specified by the author to this book, the main one of which is the highly up-to-date inferentialist conception of the nature of explanation. The latter is illustrated against the backdrop of a thorough authorial reconstruction of the basic understanding of the essence of explanation in the twentieth century, beginning with the classics formed by Hempel and Oppenheim and ending with pragmatic views influenced by developments in the philosophy of language by American philosophers B. van Fraassen and P. Achinstein. In the light of these views, inferentialism seems well defended and presents us with explanation as a narrative that increases our understanding of the phenomena we are interested in. However, how do we know that understanding is increasing? L. Gurova's answer is: by the number of inferences that the corresponding explanation allows for. The more inferences we can make about the behavior

of the phenomena studied (constative and prognostic), the better, more profound, and justified the explanation is. In other words, providing a criterion for distinguishing good from not so good explanations is something extremely valuable to modern philosophy of science, which often resorts to subjective or even subjectivist measures such as simplicity, elegance, beauty, and the like. The book is written in clear and accessible language, which also speaks to the clarity and transparency of the endorsed conceptions. This makes it ideal for teaching aids to students in related disciplines. The author's position is prominent and leaves no doubt as to its originality.

The contributions of L. Gurova in the fields of History and Philosophy of Cognitive Science (Publications 9, 12 and 24), Philosophy of Psychology and Psychiatry (Publications 5, 6 and 13), that defend, using new and original arguments, instrumentalism in psychiatry and explanations based on personality traits in psychology, should also be emphasized. In terms of contributions of national importance, they are equally many-sided: they relate to the history of Bulgarian philosophy, especially the philosophy of mind, to the critique of pseudoscience, especially in the Bulgarian context, and to personal acquaintance and collaboration with some of the most remarkable Bulgarian philosophers such as S. Petrov, A. Gavrilov, without enumerating all and without disappointing anyone. Again, I will emphasize the clear, concise, orderly and accessible language of the publications, which is essential for evaluating them. Finally, note the publication period of the participating publications: 2003 - 2019, which is evidence of admirable productivity.

The studies "Philosophy of Science Meet Cognitive Science", published in a prestigious English collection of essays, and "Basic Topics in Philosophy of Mind," "Natural Kinds," and "Existing and Possible Explanations of the History of Cognitive Science," add, if I may to put it so, an enlightening pathos in the scientific activity of Assoc. Prof. Gurova. These surveys are written with knowledge of the material, starting from clearly stated initial assumptions, and they in good faith reflect the development of the respective areas in the second half of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. In doing so, the applicant for the competition complements the requirements for research excellence with those for teaching excellence.

Many features of Assoc. Prof. Gurova's teaching and project work can be added, and all of them would be more than superlative. I just want to point out my impressions of working together in conferences and other scientific forums. Assoc. Prof. Gurova's talks in these forums are distinguished by their outstanding knowledge of the relevant debate to which they relate, by their crystal-clear own arguments, and by their persuasiveness - logical rather

than textual - of argumentation. It is always a pleasure to discuss any current issue with such a creative thinking philosopher. In addition, Assoc. Prof. Gurova is extremely responsive and dedicated to helping young colleagues achieve the high standards she so adequately meets. She reads carefully and well-meaningly their articles and other papers, gives valuable notes and encourages their development in every way.

All of the above gives me full reasons to vote with a convinced yes for the assignment of the academic position of "Professor" to Assoc. Prof. Lilia Alexandrova Gurova.

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