

REVIEW

By: Prof. D.Sc.. Nikola Avreyski, ULSIT.

To: The scientific works of Assoc. Prof. D. Sc. Borislav Nikolov Gradinarov - sole participant in the competition for the occupation of the academic position "PROFESSOR" in the professional field 2. 3. Philosophy (European Studies and Security), announced by the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, State Gazette, issue 89 of November 12, 2019.

1. General description of the materials presented

The candidate has submitted the part of his creative production that relates to the profile of the competition: 2 monographs, 33 articles and studies, the necessary diplomas for the obtained scientific degrees and scientific titles, as well as certificates for his scientific and teaching work, as well as his CV help. The enclosed reference for the fulfillment of the minimum requirements of BAS for the scientific and teaching activity of the candidate for obtaining the academic position of "professor" leaves no doubt that Assoc. Prof. D.Sc.. Borislav Gradinarov has covered all the requirements for participation in the competition.

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

Borislav Gradinarov was born in 1960. He has completed master's degrees in Philosophy and Law at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". His creative development is dominated by his more than 30 years of scientific experience at the Institute of Philosophy and the Institute of Philosophical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, as well as their successor - the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, of which he has been an "associate professor" for more than 13 years. He is a "Candidate of Philosophy" since 1989 and a "Doctor of Science in Philosophy" since 2019. In addition to his scientific work at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, he has taught lectures at the Slavic University, Veliko Turnovo University "St. St. Cyril and Methodius", University of National and World Economy and Burgas Free University. At the same time, he attaches great importance to his scientific and applied work as a legal advisor to the Electronic Media Council (2001/3 and 2007/10), executive director of the non-governmental Balkan Institute for Strategic Risk Forecasting and Management and a member of the Thracian Scientific Institute. He was a member of the Managing Board of BAS (2008 - 2013). He has led three research projects and participated in the implementation of the other two. Associate Professor Gradinarov is the author of 8 monographs, over 100 scientific studies and articles, as well as over 600 political, economic and legal analyzes and articles in the daily and other periodicals. He is the author and editor of 5 collections of scientific articles and materials from scientific conferences, whose main organizer is the Balkan Institute for Strategic Forecasting and Risk Management, which he directs. He participated in scientific forums of BAS, Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski", UNWE, Medical University - Sofia, National Military University "Vasil Levski" University, the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria and others. Some of his publications are in English. He speaks English, Russian and French. In the light of his scientific interests are: social philosophy; the philosophy of politics, law and economics; the general theory of state and law; political economy; political science; ethics; administrative law; media and communication law; the political, economic and legal projections of European integration and European Union law; geopolitics and security (Bulgarian, Balkan, European and global). I underline the basic parameters of the professional realization of Assoc. Prof. D.Sc.. Borislav

Gradinarov to emphasize that it would be an honor for any BAS institute to have a specialist with such an impressive creative biography.

3. Educational activity of the applicant

Associate Professor Gradinarov conducted his lectures on "Introduction to Political Science" and "Methodology of Political Analysis" at the Slavic University (1996-1999), "Local Power and Governance" at the Veliko Turnovo University "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" (1999-2001), "Legal Ethics", "Philosophy and Sociology of the Information Society", "Political Economy of the Information Society", "Media Law" and "Philosophy and Sociology of the Digital Society" in UNWE (2007 to present), "Legal Ethics and Media Law" at Burgas Free University (2009-2019). His published lectures on Media Law (2010) and Legal Ethics (2011) are widely used in student education at various universities, as well as in the practical guidance of the media and case law. Associate Professor Gradinarov was the scientific leader of 4 Masters of Political Economy at UNWE and 2 PhD students at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

4. Analysis of the applicant's scientific achievements

Prof. Gradinarov's research interests have evolved and expanded over time. His scientific issues are relevant, significant and attractive. In view of the competition, the scientific results of its research activities can be conditionally grouped into: monographs; geopolitics and security studies and articles; publications in the field of Europeanism; articles dealing with the connections of philosophy with the private sciences.

The most comprehensive and in-depth study by Assoc. Prof. D.Sc. B. Gradinarov applies for the academic position of "Professor", is a *monographic work "Risk and Anti-Risk Strategies"* with a total volume of 304 pages, published in 2020. The topic of the research is extremely relevant and has long attracted the attention of the foreign scientific community, but remains away from Bulgarian science. In fact, the inclusion of Bulgarian philosophical thought in the lively international debate on the problems of riskology is owed precisely to Assoc. Prof. D.Sc. Gradinarov, who has shown his research interest in it in 2007 in his studies "The Benefits and Risks of the Network Society". A new stage in his research work in this area marks his monographic work "The Power of the Systemic Factor. The Systematic Genesis of Uncertainty in Society" (Sofia, 2019), whose originality and high scientific value I had the opportunity to highlight in a review published in the journal "Geopolitics&Geostrategy". Insofar as risk is closely linked to uncertainty and likelihood, its monograph "Risk and Anti-Risk Strategies" can be seen as its logical continuation and development, made possible by the rich knowledge of its author about the achievements of Western and Eastern scientific literature as well as his research talent.

In the first chapter of the monograph, Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov reveals the roots of the concept of risk and analyzes the evolution of the understanding of what risk is, as well as the approaches to its conception in the analytical literature. Over time, risk has been shown to become a constant companion of individuals, communities, and systems, because it comes in place of a fatal inevitability in a new world in which human decisions and actions are system-forming. Emphasis is placed on globalization, which takes risk to another level - from human risk and risk to society in a risk society and a risk environment that threatens all of humanity already. Attempting to further delve deeper into the nature of risk on this basis, in Chapter Two, Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov offers a new interpretation of this concept. It emphasizes the definition of the present state, which is more accessible than the future, and derives from it an original classification of two intersecting axes - transitivity and/or distributability of risk. Of

great interest is the analysis of the risk-chance opposition, for which a sufficiently comprehensive explanatory theory is still lacking. The problem of risk management is also thoroughly addressed. Moral risk, institutional risk and systemic risk, as well as the triggering event that produces a cascading effect are examined separately. By destroying the particular multilayer of risk and its multidimensional power and analyzing the question of whether it can be mastered by rational reason and by what methods, the author presents a highly innovative chapter three, which is devoted to anti-risk strategies - individual, collective and systemic, built on the grading of the risk ladder, the search for the optimum risk-chance balance, and ways to reduce risks in the efforts for that "colonization of the future" which Anthony Giddens writes about, and to whom the author is justifiably skeptical. Because even the most brilliantly crafted anti-risk strategy can stumble into some small, randomly occurring pebble, the author notes, adding: the art of strategic choice is to leave the door open for the unexpected.

Of the greatest theoretical and practical interest to me is Chapter Four, commenting on the problem of the limits of future predictability in risk management strategies. This is a prerequisite that we need to take into account if we do not want to be unpleasantly surprised by unwanted and adverse but probable events. Particularly valuable is the analysis of absolute and statistical predictability, as well as of deterministic predictability, regarding the possibility of the occurrence of occurring events to make a logically correct and reasoned conclusion about the feasibility of future events and phenomena. Although skeptical about the possibility of making a reasonable assumption about the state of a particular area of social reality at a future time, the author notes that so-called "constructed predictability" puts people, communities, states and interstate entities in an active position. It can be said that Associate Professor Geadinarov's algorithm for optimal strategic choice, which would improve the ratio of risk - chance in favor of chance, opens up new territory for both science and practice. In the increasingly complex world we live in, risk is a constant companion in the lives of all individuals - individual, group, corporate, state and interstate. Managing risks can be the cornerstone of successful strategies, and underestimating them can overthrow human destinies, thriving companies and even entire countries.

The *second monograph* by which Associate Professor Gradinarov participates in the competition is "*Media Law*" (V. Turnovo, 2016). It is not just the second edition of the author's book of the same name since 2010, but a seriously revised and expanded study containing new chapters on the dynamic development of the media in our country, in Europe and in the world over the last decade. Particularly noteworthy in this respect is the section on new Internet-based media that is convincingly presented as a new type of media with previously unknown opportunities to influence not only awareness but also people's actions.

The other significant and new section of the book is dedicated to media security. This is one aspect of the media that has only recently begun to emerge in the world of analytical literature in view of the new threats of the 21st century - terrorism, the incitement of ethnic and religious conflicts, the use of mass manipulative techniques to influence public opinion, the revelations of the WikiLeaks site, Australian citizen Julian Assange (since 2010), and former US Secretary of State Edward Snowden (since 2013) for mass wiretaps on communications networks. The new media were seen in an unexpected light. The author defines the conditions under which the media play a constructive role in maintaining social stability, outlining the boundaries, forms, stylistics and positions of the "fourth power", beyond which it begins to have a destabilizing effect on the social system. Media security is rightly considered in connection with communication, information and IT security as well as an element of national security. In the rest of the monographic survey, a definition of media

regulation and a classification of the various forms of media financing are proposed, regulation and case law are examined. The dynamic development of media law over the last decade, the introduction of numerous new national, community and international regulations - a process of constant renegotiation of the regulatory framework of the media - is revealed. Particularly significant in theory and in practical terms are the analyzes of lively media issues debated in the international community - deregulation or correction, one or many media regulators, the role of public and commercial media, sponsorship in media activity, regulation of the digital media environment, experience to put the Internet under control of a power center, the anonymous word, the publication of classified information, the protection of copyright in telecommunications and the media, and more. Attention was also paid to the serious distortions caused by media concentration and the opacity of media ownership. Considered in its entirety, the monograph "Media Law" contains a number of innovations in science and meets the highest requirements for applying scientific excellence in higher education, regulatory authorities and practitioners in the field of media law. Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov's contribution to the consolidation of media law as a relatively new branch of law, which is still seeking its place in legal science, is indisputable.

Most of the studies and articles presented by Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov in the competition relate to *security* issues in its various dimensions. The most significant scientific contribution in this regard is to look at security, not in itself, but in direct relation to its opposition - insecurity. The author emphasizes the benefits of transforming the information society into a network one, but calls for a "healthy dose of prudence" as it creates new risks - identity crisis, erosion of the nation-state, opportunities for total personality control, etc. reproduces uncertainty. Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov analyzes the uncertainty itself through the concepts of uncertainty and unexpectedness and argues that the security zones in the modern world are the exception rather than the rule, and on this basis argues that the real problem is not security, but uncertainty. "It is high time we realized that our world was submerged in an ocean of insecurity, in which periods or places of safety are small islands that can be swallowed up at any moment," the author concludes. Awareness of this innovative thesis is very important not only for science but also for practice, because it implies that the development of anti-risk strategies should not be based on fraudulent self-suggestion, that it is possible to achieve absolute certainty, but in search of methods, scenarios and attitudes to respond in the face of uncertainty.

Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov is one of those Bulgarian scholars who are more sensitive to a thorough study of the dichotomy of security - insecurity in the countries of capital, especially in "post-totalitarian capitalism of Eastern European species". The thesis is that, despite its achievements in many fields, contemporary societies fail in one of the most important ones - the mechanism that generates justice. Of particular interest is the author's interpretation of inequality, viewed as an ethical, legal, economic and political category, as something natural, but with the potential beyond transgressing small inequalities to large and hidden inequalities manifest, as well as generating social tension. Other aspects of internal security have also been analyzed, assessing the effects of poverty and the rejection of the idea of an unconditional basic income, the restriction of the right to communication, the conversion of money into speculative machinations, the privatization of common goods, unethical methods and unfair practices of corporations, the impact of ethnic clashes and religious conflicts on social and political stability.

The geopolitical analyzes of Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov, to which he has shown increasing interest in recent years, are worth noting. Important issues of global security are assessed in the article "War and its Future". The author's innovative interpretations concern, in

particular, the new forms of war in the 21st century, its privatization and commercialization, its dehumanization through the use of weapons with artificial intelligence elements, and the deletion of the differences between legal and illegal, fair and unjust, ethical and unethical, heroic and shameful.

Other important aspects of international security are addressed in the article "Russia's Return to the Global Geopolitical Game". The vulnerabilities of the "molds of customary Western political analysts" and "Cold War Stereotypes", which still have a bearing on relations between the West and Russia, are revealed. Attempts by military dictatorship, economic whip and generous funding of Russian opposition NGOs to obediently qualify the Russian Federation are qualified as "counterproductive" (moreover, the same assessment was made by French President Emmanuel Macron before the next Munich Security Conference in 2020). It is shown how ignorance of Russia and inadequate measures against it lead to the opposite of the expected effect - a firm opposition to the dual policy of the West, consolidation of Russian society, restoration of self-confidence to a global superpower and turning Russia into an indispensable factor in solving the most important world problems.

The geopolitical analyzes of Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov on the Balkans are also interesting. Modern multiethnic states in the region are seen as complex systemic entities in which intolerant minorities have the potential to impose their values on the majority. Attention is drawn to the limited opportunities for extra-systemic pressure from unstressed civilian movements in the Balkans. The "turning points" in the evolution of the Balkan system are also revealed, when not so significant events seem to change the direction of development.

Special geopolitical analysis Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov also focuses on "Risks to Bulgaria in the 21st Century", in which the geopolitical struggle between the USA and Russia, the danger of ethnic conflicts and the uncertainty of the processes in the European Union are among the major risks. It has been emphasized that the policy of bracketing not on national but foreign interests, makes Bulgaria "vulnerable and highly dependent on external factors".

Geopolitical in nature are also articles by Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov in the field of *Europeanism*. In them he manages to get the most up-to-date and widely discussed issues not only in the EU and to say his new word. From his pen came one of the first in our country analyzes of the emerging power since the beginning of the 21st century, national populism, playing with the fears of Europeans and offering easy solutions to complex social problems. In another analysis, the author shows how the migrant crisis and the EU's inadequate response made national populism in some countries an alternative to the political status quo and even questioned European anti-fascist immunity.

The subject of special analysis by Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov is another pressing issue - Brexit and its effect on the European integration project. Innovative in this article is the proposed new reading of the so-so-controversial sovereignty problem discussed over the decades. It is convincingly justified that when Contracting States freely and voluntarily renounce parts of their national sovereignty in order to obtain other advantages which they cannot afford, sovereignty is not lost and Member States do not share but supplement their sovereignty.

Among the most interesting analyzes by Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov is the article "Geopolitical Challenges to the European Union". It is based on a critical recapitulation of its present: the EU no longer has the ideological, economic and geopolitical comfort of the late twentieth and early twentieth first centuries; it has reached its cultural and religious limit; is in danger of losing its civilization initiative; "The critical half-life seems imminent." The author sees the major external challenges to the EU in Turkey, Russia, and especially the United States, as European leaders "easily yield to influence and obediently become executors of

geopolitical scenarios alien to the EU's interests." The author's message is that the "European integration model must be rethought" in order to limit opposition between Member States, protect external borders, and be able to proactively engage with partners, including the United States and opponents. "If the current model of EU construction and governance is maintained, its collapse is not only possible but also almost inevitable," the author is convinced. On two of these challenges - Russia (discussed above) and Turkey, Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov devotes separate geopolitical analyzes. In his article "The Problems and Ambitions of the Turkish Tiger", he analyzes the profound changes in Turkish society and, in contrast to the prevailing Western literature, that secular society in Turkey is a fact and even that it has no alternative, shows how large-scale reformist Ataturk's case failed to transform Turkish culture and identity. This gave the author much more insight into the reasons for the rise of Islamism in Turkey since the 1980s, and especially for the legitimization of political Islamism by Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party. This uncompromising analysis of present-day Turkey gives rise to Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov's firm conclusion that if one day it is allowed into a United Europe, "it will be the end of the EU."

The rest of the articles presented in the competition are devoted to the connection of *philosophy with the private sciences*. Separate publications analyze the relationship between philosophy and law, ethics, history, political economy, medicine and science. They are dictated by the author's conviction that if he wants to preserve his authority and prestige, philosophy cannot neglect the particular needs of the private sciences. He himself sets a good example of such justifiable and permanent concern.

5. Co-authorship in collective publications

The participant in the competition did not submit his participation in collective publications, which is evidence of an affinity for individual scientific creativity.

6. Reflection of the candidate's scientific publications in our and foreign literature

The submitted materials show that the candidate's scientific works have been cited over 50 times in various scientific publications, including in English and German-language scientific literature. Among the quoted works of Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov are the corresponding member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Vasil Prodanov, Professors Nikolay Slatinski, Boyan Durankev, Iskra Baeva, Evgeni Kalinova, Margarita Pesheva and other leading Bulgarian scientists in their field. For the applicant's monographs, 7 reviews have been published in various scientific peer-reviewed journals. A review of the citations shows that the applicant is clearly identifiable and well received by the scientific community.

7. Critical notes on the submitted works of the applicant

A careful look at the extensive by volume, variety and content of scientific production of Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov cannot fail to raise separate notes. His monograph on risk gives the impression of excessive skepticism about the possibility of making a reasonable assumption about the state of a particular area of social reality at a future time - Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov confirms that this is not a useless activity. The monograph on the media neglects the essential question of the media falling into the hands of foreigners. The role of the press in the United Kingdom, which for the most part for many years was in the hands of Australian media tycoon Rupert Murdoch and his Canadian rival Conrad Black, is well known. This influenced the British voter in shaping his choice for or against staying in the European Union. What happened in the UK should serve as a warning to all of Europe, given that the controlling stake in Euronews and 80% of European media is in the hands of non-Europeans.

It seems to me that publications in European poetry weigh on critical appraisals of the EU, which is obviously influenced by the priority use of Anglo-Saxon literature. I would like to emphasize that these remarks are but a collegial look from the side and do not call into question the indisputable merits, original character and essential scientific and applied scientific contributions of the applicant's scientific production.

8. Personal impressions of the applicant

I have known the work of Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov for a long time, but I have had direct personal impressions of his work from five years ago, when I was part of a relatively permanent but growing staff of scientists, university professors, diplomats, military experts and other specialists who periodically debate at scientific forums on current issues in Bulgaria, the Balkans, Europe and the world. The main organizer of all these forums was Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov in his capacity as Executive Director of the Balkan Institute for Strategic Forecasting and Risk Management. Due to his tireless efforts, he commits them to the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the Faculty of History, the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski", as well as a number of reputable non-governmental organizations such as the Institute of Economics and International Relations, the Bulgarian Geopolitical Society, the Union of Bulgarian Journalists, the Communication and Culture Foundation, the Bulgarian Diplomatic Society and others. All this large-scale organizing work for conducting scientific conferences, publishing their materials in collections of scientific papers and solemn presentation to the scientific and cultural community has been endorsed by Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov as a leading researcher in the field of security, European studies and philosophical understanding of the world, in we live.

9. Conclusion

Taken in its entirety, the scientific output presented by Assoc. B. Gradinarov is an original contribution to the development of Bulgarian philosophical thought, to the study of the problems of national, regional and international security, as well as to the European integration process. The author demonstrates a wealth of literary awareness, skills in applying modern research approaches and the free use of appropriate methodological techniques. The sources and scientific publications used have been carefully analyzed, critically analyzed, the controversial interpretations of a number of issues correctly identified, and their own point of view substantiated, which gave new evidence to his research. The storytelling is captivated in lively and figurative language. In addition to his impressive scientific work, Assoc. Prof. Gradinarov was also sought as a lecturer from prestigious Bulgarian universities and as a respected media expert by the national regulatory authority. I must also add to his active civic participation in the part of non-governmental organizations that have a tangible presence in the research space.

All this gives me confidence that we have in the person of the applicant a leading academic and respected university lecturer who fully meets the requirements of Art. 29 of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria, Art. 60 of the Rules for its implementation and the additional requirements of Art. 5, 6, 41 and 42 of the relevant Regulations of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology for the occupation of the academic position of "Professor". Therefore, without any hesitation, and with conviction, I will vote in the scientific jury Assoc. Prof. D.Sc.. Borislav Nikolov Gradinarov to take the academic position of "Professor" at the Institute of Philosophy

and Sociology at BAS in the professional field 2. 3. Philosophy (European Studies and Security).

March 5, 2020 / Sofia

Reviewer:.....

(Prof. D.Sc. Nikola Avreyski)