

OPINION

Regarding:

the competition for the academic position “Associate Professor”, announced in State Gazette, issue 106 of 15.12.2020, Professional Field 2.3 Philosophy (Philosophy of Politics), for the needs of the Department of Social Theories, Strategies, and Prognoses;

the candidate: Blagovesta Ilieva Nikolova

By: Professor DSc Emilia Vasil Marinova, member of the Scientific Jury appointed by Order № ПД 09-109/17.02.2021 of the Director of IPS at BAS

The competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor”, announced in State Gazette, issue 106 of 15.12.2020, Professional Field 2.3 Philosophy (Philosophy of Politics), for the needs of the Department of Social Theories, Strategies, and Prognoses, has only one candidate: Blagovesta Ilieva Nikolova.

Blagovesta Ilieva Nikolova holds a PhD in Philosophy, Diploma 000278, issued on 08.10.2013. She is chief assistant professor at the Department of Social Theories, Strategies, and Prognoses, BAS, since 01. 12. 2013. I received, in electronic format, a set of application documents containing: 1) a professional autobiography; 2) a PhD diploma, 3) a list of scientific works, based on which Dr. Blagovesta Ilieva Nikolova is competing, 4) references of citations, 5) an author’s report on scholarly contributions contained in the publications with which she is competing; 6) Reports on conducted projects and expertise activities, 7) a

diploma, 8) national requirements (for the position of “associate professor”), 9) national requirements (for the position of “chief assistant professor”), 10) an application.

Blagovesta Ilieva Nikolova is competing with a total of 15 publications; these include: 1 monograph; 5 articles in journals with ISI impact factor and/or SJR ranking (listed 1 – 5 in document 09, p. 2), 9 articles and reports published in non-peer-reviewed journals with scientific reviewing, or published in edited collective volumes (publications 2 – 10 of document 09, p. 3). A list of 26 citations of articles authored by the candidate has been submitted. There is also a list of the candidate’s participations, with papers read, in international forums (6 participations) and participations, with papers read, in international summer/winter schools and seminars (3 participations). The candidate has taken part in projects and has performed expert activity. In 2017, she received an encouragement award for young scientists in the field of the humane and social sciences (the Pythagoras Annual Science Award). The prevalent part of the candidate’s activities is research, as made evident by the presented publications and citations.

The author’s report reflects conscientiously the contributive aspects of the submitted works and gives some idea of the candidate’s self-evaluation. Two submitted tables show that the candidate meets the national requirements for the positions of chief assistant professor and associate professor.

All scientific activities have been adequately presented in the documentation, which is properly structured according to the requirements. The texts presented are original. In brief, all the formal requirements of the ADAS are met.

The submitted publications cover a wide range, including: management of the innovation process, ethics of project activity (European research projects), the risk of instrumentalization of projects; modern knowledge-based societies; the connection between science fiction and prognostication (verisimilitude); “wild card” analysis in

prognostication; generation analysis in prognostication – the potential of normative prognostication as a means for including the perspectives of young people in the course of decision-making and as a form of long-term commitment to the future; the construction of “youth” as a generalized subject with supposedly shared interests; trends in modern economic prognostication; the prognosticating functions of the social sciences; migration streams, the place of the Balkans and Bulgaria in the context of global transborder movement of people: factors influencing the intensity and direction of migrant movement; a critical analysis of prevailing prognostic discourses; the condition of European border control, etc.

The analysis is organized around the concepts of risk and security, prognostication, innovations. The ethical aspect is strongly present and highlighted, and the author’s growing interest in this perspective over the years is evident. Indicative in this respect is the submitted monograph, published in 2019 by an authoritative British publishing house (The RRI Challenge: Responsibilization in a State of Tension with Market Regulation. Innovation and Responsibility Set, Volume 3, ISTE & Wiley: London, UK and Hoboken, NJ; ISBN : 978-1-78630-142-0). The analysis in this work is organized around the concept of “responsible investigations and innovations” (RII) and the implementation of the concept into European institutions as a possible approach to dealing with the social and ethical risks involved in innovation. The author’s report indicates that the place of RII is defined within the general evolution of the institutional integration of various forms of ethical “surveillance” on research activities funded by the European Union. The achievements and shortcomings of this process have been indicated. RII is viewed as a possible way of reviving certain ethical messages of the past. The monograph is a successful illustration of the entry of ethics into decision-making and the use of ethics in overcoming growth risks and the risks involved in choosing long-term strategies for

politics, the economy, social activity, etc. Ethics is becoming a substantial factor of social progress thanks to the development of its “political functions” and its inscription in social practices. Going in this direction, the works of D. Goulet, Des Gasper, K. Bayertz, and others, analyze the new role of ethics in mastering social and technological risk. These studies establish the broad ethical context of processes taking place in modern risk society. Specially emphasized is the presence of ethics in the process of innovation and related research and development activities, the use of ethics in dealing with environmental problems, migration trends, etc. Dr. Nikolova’s stand is modern, creative, and adequate with respect to the current trends in science and management of innovation.

Although the requirements stipulated by ADAS for holding the position of associate professor do not include participation in scientific projects and expert activity, Dr. Blagovesta Ilieva Nikolova has documented such activities. This gives a fuller picture of her efforts and ambitions to work within an academic environment. She is a recognizable figure in this environment, as evidenced by the citations from respected scientific journals. The candidate’s broad interests, mirrored in the submitted works, her participation in international research teams, her specialization in 2015-2017 at the University of Namur, Belgium, are a serious indication of her place in the field of philosophical research.

To conclude, I am convinced Dr. Blagovesta Ilieva Nikolova possesses the necessary qualities to hold the academic position of Associate Professor. I give a positive evaluation of her scientific-research activities. I believe the works, with which she is competing for the position of Associate Professor, are original and deal with significant philosophical and ethical problems.

I firmly vote that Dr. Blagovesta Ilieva Nikolova be awarded the position of Associate Professor at IPS at BAS under Professional Field 2.3 Philosophy (Philosophy of Politics), for the needs of the Department of Social Theories, Strategies, and Prognoses.

08. 04. 2021

Signature:

Emilia Marinova