

## **OPINION**

**on the scientific works and contributions of DSc Kiril Plamen Kartalov, Associate Professor at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, candidate in the competition for the academic position of professor in professional field 2.3. Philosophy, for the needs of the "Anthropological Studies" department,**

**by Professor DSc Tatiana Batuleva-Kancheva, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS**

### **1. Grounds for preparing the review**

I am a member of the Scientific jury in accordance with Order RD 09-366.1/ 24.09.2025, issued by the Director of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS, Professor DSc Emilia Chengelova, and I am the author of this opinion in accordance with the Decision of the first meeting of the Scientific jury held on 14.10.2025 on a competition for the academic position of professor announced in the State Gazette No. 61/29.09.2024.

### **2. General description of the submitted materials**

Associate Professor DSc Kiril Plamen Kartalov is the only candidate in the competition for the academic position of professor in Professional field 2.3. Philosophy (*Philosophical Anthropology, Vatican Policy during World War II and its Relationship to the Jewish Question*) for the needs of the Anthropological Research Department. The documents submitted are in order and fully comply with the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology. The table required by NACID shows that the candidate not only meets but *significantly exceeds* the minimum national requirements for a professor. The total number of points received is 870 (with 590 required). A comparison with the tables for "Associate Professor" and "Doctor of Science" shows that the data in them *do not match on any indicator*.

### **3. General characteristics of the candidate's scientific, applied scientific, and pedagogical activities**

Associate Professor Kartalov holds a PhD in Politics and Institutions (defended on 16 April 2013 at the *Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore*, Milan) and a Doctor of Science degree in Philosophy (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, 2024). He holds a master's degree in political

science (international politics) from the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano (2000-2007) and has a specialization in economics and international relations.

Kiril Kartalov is an Associate Professor at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology (since 2016). Corresponding member of the Pontifical Committee for Historical Sciences [Pontificio Comitato di Scienze Storiche] since 2012. Assistant Professor of history of international relations and institutions at the Catholic University of Milan (2010–2020) and of political science at the University of Library Science and Information Technologies. Guest lecturer at several universities in Italy, Israel, and elsewhere.

His monograph *La sollecitudine ecclesiale di monsignor Roncalli in Bulgaria (1925-1934)* was awarded in the category "Historical Science" at the 47th edition of the European Premio Acqui Storia award. Most recently, his book *Flowers of the Nations. Pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago* (Ciela, 2024) was awarded a prize by Portal Cultura.

Associate Professor Kartalov's rich pedagogical experience (with courses on the basic principles of diplomacy and conflict resolution; EU foreign policy; traditional religions and counterterrorism; comparative approaches to cultural diplomacy) is complemented by *particularly valuable expert and consulting activities*. He was an advisor to the President of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (2013-2016) and to the Apostolic Nuncio to Bulgaria (2018-2019). He is the author of more than 30 and editor of more than 10 scientific works.

#### **4. Substantive analysis of the candidate's scientific achievements in the publications with which he is applying for the academic position of "Professor"**

In the current competition, Kiril Kartalov participates with one monograph and 17 articles and studies. His scientific interests lie in the field of the history of ideas, the history of diplomacy, and international relations, with an emphasis on cultural and papal diplomacy. His analyses also address the practical projections of the doctrine of the Catholic Church (on peace, justice, solidarity). Of particular importance are the candidate's studies on pilgrimage as an innovative field of research in which the past and the future, the Christian roots of Europe, and contemporary European identity go hand in hand.

*The first research perspective* characteristic of the works presented in the competition focuses on issues related to the Jewish question. Based on an in-depth analysis of materials from

the Vatican archives (see: Kartalov, K., *The Sound of Silence. Pius XII and the Jewish Question in the Light of the Vatican Archives*, 2025), Associate Professor Kartalov arrives at valuable conclusions concerning both the personality of Pope Pius XII and the position of the Holy See towards anti-Semitism in general and the extermination of the Jews in 1942-1943 in particular. The reasons for this position are outlined in several directions: the first, *historical*, is the existence of "three centuries of anti-Semitism," whose impact undermines the spiritual and universal mission of the Church; the second, which the author rightly calls "*paralyzing anti-Bolshevism*" sees Nazi Germany as a "savior" from the Soviet contagion. No less important is the fact that the Holy See views a possible defeat of Germany as a weakening of the position of Catholic communities in Eastern Europe, as well as the temptation to use the anti-Semitism of Christian Europe as a *weapon* in the fight against growing anti-clericalism. Such prejudices, as historically rooted as they are typical of the period, *compromise the objective interpretation* of events. With exceptional attention to detail, Associate Professor Kartalov constructs the complex image of Pope Pius XII, revealing the reasons for his silence, the choices he made, and the direction of his actions. Four additional publications (2, 4, 12, 16) included in this field of research provide further justification for the conclusions formulated.

*The second research perspective* (presented in works numbered 3, 5, 9, 11, 16) focuses on *papal diplomacy* and its various aspects, both historically and in terms of its current objectives. Kartalov justifies *a new approach to researching* the specifics of papal diplomacy, its historical evolution, and ways of fitting it into the imperatives of the contemporary geopolitical context. Its multidirectional, variable, and contextually conditioned dynamics for building intercultural dialogue and real religious freedom have been proven. The candidate has given his interpretation of Monsignor Angelo Roncalli's reading of Pope John XXIII's encyclical and his vision of peace based on justice, mercy, and human solidarity (see: Kartalov, K. *Diplomazia Pontificia*), in which the image of the other is perceived not as an enemy but as a neighbor.

Associate Professor Kartalov makes a successful attempt at a new approach to the study of papal diplomacy and its goal: a transition from coexistence in uncertainty and risk to an *inclusive community and authentic human solidarity*. A definition of the concept of "papal diplomacy" and its historical evolution is proposed. Special emphasis is placed on the geopolitical events on the Balkan Peninsula and the visit of Pope John Paul II to Bulgaria in

2002 (Kartalov, K. *La visita apostolica di Giovanni Paolo II in Bulgaria (May 23-26, 2002)*). Associate Professor Kartalov gives his interpretation of the currently relevant theory of "just war," its goals, means, and justifications.

*The contributory nature* of the results achieved by DSc Kiril Kartalov is beyond doubt. The contributions are accurately presented in the author's report and testify to *objective self-reflection*. My overall conclusion is that the 18 publications presented by Associate Professor Kartalov are *more than sufficient* for him to occupy the academic position of "Professor" at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

### **5. Reflection of the candidate's scientific publications in Bulgarian and foreign literature**

Associate Professor Kartalov's works have been published by renowned scientific publishers and magazines in world-famous databases. The citations and reviews of his scientific works significantly exceed the required minimum of 120 points. He is a leader and participant in large-scale research projects and 43 international scientific forums. Associate Professor Kartalov has an impressive number of participations in significant international projects: further evidence that the results of his scientific research work are receiving *real recognition* in Bulgaria and especially abroad.

### **6. Critical comments on the presented works**

I have no critical comments on the content of the works presented by Associate Professor Kartalov. Their content and the literature used in them demonstrate the candidate's *high level of competence* in the subject areas studied. In terms of their design, his monographs published in Italian and Bulgarian are true works of art. My recommendation is that he continue his work in the chosen field of research, in which impartial analysis, on the one hand, and personal involvement and inspiration, on the other, build the image of a *cultural mediator* whose active philosophy contributes to the construction and preservation of the cultural and spiritual identity of European civilization.

### **7. Personal impressions of the candidate**

My personal impressions of Associate Professor Kartalov are of a deeply erudite, highly responsible, hard-working, conscientious, and extremely precise person when working with documents, whose works, which have already earned a worthy place, are highly regarded in Europe and around the world. His works are distinguished by a *complex methodology that organically combines different fields of knowledge* such as philosophy, anthropology, history of ideas, and geopolitical analysis. Associate Professor Kartalov is not only a scholar but also a *committed intellectual* (in the sense of Edgar Morin), applying a transdisciplinary approach without which the global challenges facing humanity would not find a solution.

## **8. Conclusion**

Taking into account the works presented by Associate Professor Kartalov, their contributions, their high scientific and social significance and relevance, **I will confidently vote for Kiril Plamen Kartalov to be elected professor in Professionsl Field 2.3. Philosophy**, and I call on the members of the esteemed Scientific Jury to support this decision.

November 8, 2025

Professor Tatyana Batuleva, DSc