

## STATEMENT

by Prof. Lilia Alexandrova Gurova, New Bulgarian University

on the scientific publications submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in Philosophy, announced in DV No. 97 / 13.11.2020,

with candidate Assistant Professor Hristo Petrov Gyoshev, PhD.

### **I. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of New Bulgarian University**

The candidate in this competition, Assistant Professor Hristo Petrov Gyoshev, meets the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 2.3. Philosophy, formulated in the Regulations for application of the *Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria* (ZRASRB), as well as the requirements of New Bulgarian University, formulated in the *Decree for the Development of the Academic Staff of NBU*. According to most indicators, the individual results of Dr. Gyoshev exceed the minimum national requirements and the requirements of NBU.

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

In the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the professional field 2.3. Philosophy Hristo Gyoshev participates with a monograph (*Identity and Normativity. A Study on the Philosophical Reductionism of Derek Parfit*. Sofia: NBU Publishing House, 2013) and 17 other publications (6 papers and 11 studies), of which 3 in English. I will focus mainly on the presented habilitation thesis - monograph, because in it, in my opinion, are best and most fully demonstrated the main achievements of the candidate in this competition and his qualities as a researcher.

The monographic work presented by Dr. Hristo Gyoshev has 264 pages and contains an Introduction, 23 chapters and a Bibliography of 127 titles, 112 of them in English.

The book traces the development of conceptions of personal identity since Locke, with an emphasis on those conceptions that accept the so-called psychological criterion of identity. To these conceptions belongs the philosophical reductionism of Derek Parfit, to which the main part

of the presented work is dedicated. Hristo Gyoshev very well explicates the logic that leads Parfit to a modified version of the classical psychological criterion and by virtue of which he reaches the counterintuitive (for many) conclusion that "identity is not important for survival." Gyoshev pays special attention to the normative implications of this counter-intuitive conclusion and their possible role in the construction of a future secular ethics, which he also defines as "rational altruism".

Among the many merits of this book, I would bring to the fore the well-explained logic of the development of the concepts of personal identity, which have adopted the psychological criterion of identity. No explanation is spared needed to understand the important transitions in this development. The thought experiments that Derek Parfit uses not only as arguments, but also as exploratory tools that allow him to reach conclusions that the simple induction from the available experience would not allow him to make, are correctly presented and analyzed. Against the background of the strong logical reconstruction, the critical part of the analysis proposed by Gyoshev remains somewhat in the shadows. The criticism is presented "piecemeal", for example, it is not clear whether the shortcomings of the individual elements of Parfit's otherwise rather streamlined ethical conception are not offset by any of its general advantages. In my opinion, the author's proposal for "improving" Parfit's reductionism by incorporating the notion of autonomy into it remains insufficiently well protected. In general, the book would gain a lot from a separate final chapter, which summarizes the main conclusions of the study - both evaluative of the ideas of Parfit, and proposing improvements to his conception.

Three of the 8 citations of Hristo Gyoshev's publications, which he points out in his self-assessment (they are all in Bulgarian editions) are of his monograph "*Identity and Normativity*", which shows that this text is recognizable in the Bulgarian philosophical community, although in my opinion, it deserves far more attention.

In this section, dedicated to the research activities of the candidate, I would like to mention as well the participation of Hristo Gyoshev in two research projects funded by the National Science Research Fund: "*Challenges to Representative Democracy Today*" and "*What do words mean in Bulgaria? In search of an integrated philosophical and sociological approach to language*".

### **III. Teaching activities**

I have no immediate impressions of Hristo Gyoshev as a teacher, but the excellent students' assessment (4.68 with a maximum grade of 5) speaks for itself about his abilities in this area. The range of disciplines, which he teaches is also impressive: "Basic Philosophical Concepts", "Hegel's Philosophy", "Philosophy of Morality", "Practical Logic" and others. It is worth noting his active

participation in the development of the master's program "Social Entrepreneurship".

#### **IV. Administrative and public activities**

Since joining NBU in 2006, Hristo Gyoshev has been actively involved in administrative work. From 2006 to 2012 he was the director of the bachelor's program "Philosophy", and since 2017 he has been the Head of the department "Philosophy and Sociology". I would especially like to mention his participation in the organization (together with Prof. H. Todorov and Prof. D. Vatsov) of two university seminars: "*Truths and Values*" (2015) and "*Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics*" (2016), which managed to attract a wide audience of teachers and students from different departments.

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

I have known Hristo Gyoshev for almost 10 years. My impressions of him are mainly from joint participations in university seminars, doctoral schools and conferences. My leading impression is of an active, engaged participation in these scientific forums, which is neither self-serving nor aimed at self-promotion, as is often observed at public events of this type.

#### **VI. Opinions, recommendations and notes on the activity and achievements of the candidate**

I have expressed my assessment of the candidate's achievements in research and other activities in the previous sections of this statement. The main recommendation I would make to Hristo Gyoshev is to make targeted efforts for active integration into the international philosophical community through participation in international conferences, publications in international journals and involvement in international research networks and projects. The topics that Hristo Gyoshev is working on allow for such integration. The competence demonstrated by him in the publications with which he participates in this competition (and especially in the monographic work) shows not only that such integration is possible, but also that it is necessary if the goal is to reach a wider competent audience and receive accordingly the professional recognition which he deserves.

**Conclusion:** Assistant Professor Hristo Petrov Gyoshev meets the minimum national requirements and the requirements of NBU for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 2.3. Philosophy. Based on this and the results he has achieved

in research and teaching, I strongly recommend that Dr. Gyoshev be admitted to election by the Academic Council of New Bulgarian University.

**Date:** February 22, 2021.

**Signature** .....

/Prof. Dr. Lilia Gurova/