

REVIEW

By: Prof. PhD Aleksandar Ivanov Marinov,
Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”, Department of Public Administration,
member of scientific jury, appointed by the Rector of SU „St. Kliment Ohridski”,
Order № PaO 38/236 - 21.05.2019

Regarding: Competition for awarding the Academic Position “Professor” in
Professional Field 3.3. Political Science (Political Systems and Institutions),
announced in Official Journal No. 25 / 26.03.2019

In the competition takes part a sole candidate - Assoc. Prof. Dr.S. Maria Andonova
Pirgova.

1. Assessment of fulfilling requirements for admittance to evaluation

According article 29b of Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA), to the evaluation stage of the procedure are admitted candidates, fulfilling the requirements of article 29, par. 1 and 2 of the Act, this including fulfillment of the minimal national requirements according article 2b, par. 2 and 3. The verification of the file, namely the information regarding the mentioned fulfillment, accepted by the Faculty Commission, responsible for the check-up of the candidates in the competition, proves that Assoc. Prof. DrS Maria Pirgova is in line with the requirements and should be admitted to the evaluation stage of the procedure.

2. General characteristic of the candidate’s work submitted for evaluation

According article 29b, par. 2 of DASRBA, the scientific jury evaluates the candidates for the Academic Position “Professor” on the ground of the achievements, listed in article 29, par. 3: „published monographic study or equivalent works in specialized scientific editions, which does not duplicate papers, submitted in procedures for PhD degree, DrS degree and competition for the academic position AsProf”.

The candidate Assoc. Prof. DrS Maria Pirgova has submitted for participation in the procedure 7 papers, including 1 monographic study and 6 scientific articles (1 as a co-autor). All submitted publications are admitted to evaluation, since none of them duplicates papers submitted in procedures for her PhD degree, DrS degree and for the academic position AsProf.

3. Brief outline of the candidate’s academic career

Maria Pirgova graduated with Master's degree at MSU “M. Lomonosov” in 1977. Later she had specializations in Germany - at the universities of Leipzig (1985/86 – on

modern political systems), Tübingen (1992/93) and Saarbrücken (1996). In 1990 she was awarded the PhD degree for her work on the political approach to the trade unions. Her academic career developed almost entirely at the Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski” – as a specialist (1977-1980), Assistant Professor (1980-1998), and Associate Professor (since 1998). In 2018 she was awarded the DrS degree for her study of convergence policies in the global.

Assoc. Prof. Maria Pirgova was appointed as director of Master Programs at the Department of Political Sciences – “Political technologies and globalization” (2007 – 2013) and “Political Consulting” (since 2013).

Assoc. Prof. Maria Pirgova had important institutional assignments as political adviser of the President of RB on the project of the new Bulgarian Constitution (1990-1991), parliamentary secretary of the government (1993-1994) and director of the National Assembly’s Department for parliamentary studies and analysis (2006-2009).

3. Review of the teaching and pedagogical activity of the candidate

The teaching activity of Assoc. Prof. Maria Pirgova ranges over 39 years at Sofia University “St. Kl. Ohridski”. In addition to her immediate courses at Sofia University “St. Kl. Ohridski”, she has taught at other universities in Bulgaria and has participated, including as a manager, in a number of national and international projects.

At the present Assoc. Prof. M. Pirgova teaches 3 courses in the bachelor degree and 4 courses in the master programs of Sofia University “St. Kl. Ohridski”.

Assoc. Prof. M. Pirgova is also a successful mentor and supervisor. She has supervised three PhD students, all of whom have graduated successfully, many master students, participated in many scientific juries.

4. Evaluation of the scholar and applied contributions of the candidate

The publications proposed by the candidate fully meet the requirements of the competition. In this review I devote special attention to the monographic study “Problematic Fields in Political Science” (PH “St. Kliment Ohridski”, 2018. ISBN 978-954-07-4562-6). which in fact represents a second, revised and completed edition of a former text (“Basics of Political Science” (PH “St. Kliment Ohridski”, 2013. ISBN 978-954-07-3652-5). Both monographic studies have not been used for participation in other competitions.

Assoc. Prof. M. Pirgova is author – except of the two above mentioned monographic studies - of multiple book chapters, articles and other publications, amongst which 6 articles are presented in this competition. Among this broad field, the following important ideas and results seem to me of particular significance, both theoretically and in applied context. It should be mentioned that Maria Pirgova’s ideas have been cited by a lot of researchers in the field – the registered citations amount to 49, including 10 in works published in foreign language abroad.

There are at least three interrelated conceptual areas proving the ability of the candidate to

ask and answer complex theoretical questions, following a very sound logic of descending from general to more specific explanations.

First. The effort to provide structural framework of the leading problematic fields of political research by the means of combining historical and logical approaches. On this ground the author offers a possible set of interrelated concepts, describing political processes. It looks very hard to reject the idea that building the problematic structure of a given scholar discipline represents an worthy and challenging endeavor, guiding both research and teaching in the field. Probably one of the reasons for the existing gaps in the explanation of the political phenomena in Bulgaria is exactly the lack of a clear problematic structure and the chaotic use of basic concepts. From this point of view the candidate has chosen an important and topical subject-matter of a delineated, monographic study and has followed it in a exhausted and consistent way. Of course, the proposed by the author approach to building the structure of the main problematic fields of political study is by no means the only possible and raises some questions and objections. But this is the case of every true scientific research.

Second. Applying the above mentioned structural framework of the leading problematic fields of political research, Assoc. Prof. M. Pirgova offers an original interpretation of the study of globalization, stressing the important role of political science. The author is stating that from theoretical and pragmatic point of view it's possible to relate the political approach to modern contributions of other social sciences and more – to the approaches of physics, biology and other natural sciences, offering their own perspective towards the globalization processes. Some possibilities are offered for building a comprehensive structure and typology criteria of approaches, applied to globalization - historic analogy, modernist approach, economics approach, informational approaches etc., but exposing the specific role of the political approach.

Third. Stepping out of the structural framework of the leading problematic fields of political research and the interpretation of the study of globalization, Assoc. Prof. M. Pirgova addresses an extremely important and relatively understudied field of national ideal and national interest in the globalization context. It's important to note the idea of the author, that national ideal today continues to express the striving to peace and wellbeing of the national community, despite the challenges that nation-state is facing. In our age the fulfillment of this ideal depends largely on the participation in supranational organizations. In my opinion a key role plays the author's assumption that "national interest manifests itself more and more in the form of opportunities and conditions for the participation of the national community through its representatives in the decision-making that forms the general interest of the supranational community and are in harmony with the interest of the national state-community".

5. Evaluation of the personal contribution and authorship

The scholar texts and corresponding contributions are with no doubt personal work of the candidate Maria Pirgova. I accept entirely the self-assessment of the contributions.

6. Critical remarks and recommendations

My only critical remark relates to the insufficiently clear argumentation of the interconnection and continuity between the two monographic studies. From my point of view the author has not entirely explore the possibility to outline the next step already made – namely, the application of her approach to the political aspects of globalization. Conclusions, presented in the end of each chapter of the second monographic study, contribute in this direction, but might be more comprehensive. Saying this, I do underline that the act of submitting a second, reedited and completed edition of a monographic study for a competition does not violate the rules of the procedure (in case it has not been submitted for participation in other competitions and procedures). In any case, it does not change the monographic nature of the study, as we all know from the international practice in our field (there are multiple very well known studies undergone 5, 8 or even ten re-editions and still cited as best examples of monographic study). Despite this, a better definition of the subject-matter evolution in the two monographic studies of the candidate would contribute to a better theoretical and pragmatic application of author’s ideas.

CONCLUSION

The scholar production and contributions of Assoc. Prof. DrS Pirgova are entirely in line with the requirements of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) and other corresponding regulations. The qualification of the candidate is solid and well proven.

These results give me compelling reasons to propose to the honorable scientific jury to vote unanimously for the awarding of the academic position “Professor” in the professional field 3.3. Political Science to Associate Professor Maria Andonova Pirgova.

07.08. 2019 г.

Prepared and signed by:

(prof. PhD Aleksandar Marinov)