

OPINION

By Assoc. Prof. **Vladislav Dinkov Gospodinov**, PhD

(Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, Faculty of Pedagogy)

Internal member of the scientific jury, appointed
by order No. RD 38-234/10.05.2023 of the Rector of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski"

on the documents and materials
on the competition for the **academic position "associate professor"**,
announced in the "State Gazette", no. 24 of 17.03.2023 in
Field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences
Professional direction 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of Education)
For the needs of the Faculty of Educational Science and Arts
at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski"

Date, time and place of the second meeting of the scientific jury:
07/07/2023, 1:00 PM, Hall 213 A, FESA

1. Contest details

In the competition for one place for the academic position "associate professor", announced in its own full-time position for the needs of FESA at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" in the Field of higher education 1. Pedagogical Sciences, Professional Direction 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of education), assistant professor Alexander Ivanov Ranev, PhD, is the only candidate. The procedure for the competition, announced in the "State Gazette", no. 24 of 17.03.2023, is conducted according to the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Rules for the Terms and Procedures for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski". The review of the documentation gives reason to assess that there have been no violations of the procedure in the announced competition and that all legally required documents are available.

2. Basic CV-information about the candidate

From the review of the candidate's CV, the consistency with which he has formed and developed in theoretical and practical-applied terms as a specialist for more than 20 years in the field of the current competition makes a strong impression. Alexander Ranev studied "Pedagogy" in the period 1998-2002 at the Faculty of Pedagogy, and in the period 2003-2005 he studied the master's program "Educational Management" at the same faculty. After that, he also

became a full-time doctoral student there and in 2010 defended his doctoral dissertation on the topic "The teacher as class management" in the scientific specialty 05.07.01 "Theory of education and didactics". As a PhD-student he leads seminars on "Introduction in to the specialty" in the specialty "Nonformal Education", "Social Pedagogy" in the specialty "Social Activities", etc. In January 2011, after winning a competition, he was appointed as an assistant in the Department of Social Pedagogy and Social Affairs of the Faculty of Primary and Preschool Pedagogy (today FESA) at Sofia University, where in November 2011 he was appointed as assistant professor. In parallel, the candidate engages in special pedagogy, educational and educational work for children with hearing disabilities and psychological, educational, socio-pedagogical support of youth at risk through the non-governmental sector, mainly through Protected Housing Together (2010-2021).

3. Educational and teaching work of the candidate

At the moment Alexander Ranev, PhD has developed almost all the curricula (some of which are co-authored), on which he leads lectures and/or exercises in the "Bachelor" degree in the "Social Pedagogy" specialty, but also in the "Speech Therapy" specialties, "Special Pedagogy", Preschool and primary school pedagogy, "Physical Education and Sports", "Music", "Fine Art" etc. at FESA, as well as at the Faculty of Pedagogy of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", in the specialty "Social Activities", etc. Leads lectures in 8 master's programs at FESA. He is responsible for organizing and conducting the practical training (hospitalization, current and pre-graduate social-pedagogical practices) of the students in the "Social Pedagogy" specialty. He has developed and participates in programs for postgraduate qualification in Social Pedagogy at FESA. For the last 15 years he has conducted about 30 trainings on positive approaches and physical intervention for working with children with emotional and behavioral difficulties. In the period 2012-2022 he participated in 14 research projects, in 13 of them as a member, and one project he led.

The above-described teaching-teaching workload and scientific-research activity of assistant professor Alexander Ranev convincingly confirms the candidate's skills to organize and conduct them at a professional level, with a serious workload of about 940 hours of classroom employment on average over the last 5 years.

4. Scientific production

For participation in the competition for the academic position "associate professor" assistant professor Alexander Ranev, PhD presents a total of 14

publications, of which 12 are independent, 2 are co-authored. Of these, one published habilitation thesis – a monograph, one published monograph that is not presented as a habilitation thesis, three studies, one a published chapter (co-authored) of a collective monograph, and 9 articles, of which four have been published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information, and another four articles have been published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes.

For the habilitation thesis, the candidate presents "Positive education and behavioral change. Working with children challenging behaviour". Sofia, University Publishing House "St. Kliment Ohridski", 2022. ISBN: 978-954-07-5565-6. In it, Alexander Ranev examines a significant and current problem, at a high theoretical level, and together with this, with many concretely realized opportunities for application in the field. There is an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion, as well as a list of sources and appendices. In the first chapter, the author presents the main characteristics of challenging behavior in children and the essence of positive-oriented education in the context of opportunities to deal with problematic behavior in children. The second chapter is devoted to the factors of challenging behavior, which are mainly presented through the prism of individual structures of personality, social and environment. Based on what is presented in the two chapters, the professional profile of the educator working with children with challenging behavior is outlined. The fourth chapter is related to a practical-applied research that was implemented in the field. Two main methods were used – case work and focus groups. The total volume of the monograph is 216 pages (main text 159 pages; there are 8 appendices), using 121 sources, of which 61 are in Latin.

In the monograph "Peter Dunov on education". Sofia. East-West Publishing House, 2017. p. 162, ISBN 978-610-01-0142-0 concerns a phenomenon whose beginning is a century ago, the result of the efforts of Petar Danov – the Master and his followers, which is almost half a century outside the official state ideology and matrix for education. And in this sense, it also deserves popularization and design in modern conditions, because it is completely in tune with modern personal and social needs. In the text, the author makes a comprehensive presentation of solar pedagogy. In eight parts (in addition to the introduction, conclusion and sources), key moments of Solar pedagogy are consistently and logically presented, which is extremely humane-oriented and its core has a very clear focus on the education of humane-spiritual values. Its essence is clarified, including by defining the main concepts,

including on the basis of statements related to the structure of the world and man. Its main principles and methods are presented, as well as the profile of the specialist who should apply them. Alexander Ranev not only presents the performances and achievements of Solar pedagogy, but also outlines its main projections in the modern stage of development and the challenges it faces in the future.

The rest of the author's publications reflect current and significant points of view, a large part of which were also presented at scientific forums (in addition to being published afterwards), in the following several directions: various aspects of solar pedagogy, management of people and environments, socio-pedagogical, educational work and mediation with children and youth with problematic behavior. The candidate is also a co-author of two teaching aids dedicated to working with children.

There are 6 citations of texts by Al. Ranev in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes, as well as 9 citations in peer-reviewed monographs and collective volumes and one citation in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals.

The presented scientific works from assistant professor Alexander Ranev, PhD for participation in the announced competition are in sufficient number and corresponding to the scientific standards, but more importantly – in general, they correspond in terms of content with the scientific field of the competition.

5. Scientific contributions

According to the above-mentioned main directions in the candidate's theoretical and practical activity, the contributions could be outlined as follows:

A practical-applied model has been developed and tested from a scientific point of view for the implementation of a positive approach in education, which is both concrete and at the same time comprehensive.

A clear demarcation of children with emotional disorders and challenging behavior from those with special educational needs is argued.

Various manifestations of the work toolkit for the implementation of positive education have been improved, such as e.g. Functional Assessment Form, Support Plan, etc.

From the standpoint of science, the Solar pedagogy is presented in its entirety, at the same time through its modern projections, with a good balance between tradition and new realities, including the professionalization of non-formal education.

A comparative analysis of Solar with Waldorf pedagogy and Montessori pedagogy was made.

The synergy of social services through the prism of non-formal education is presented in an interesting way, with a focus on educational interactions with adults.

The inclusion of educational goals in mediation with children and youth is argued.

The author demonstrates a high theoretical level with the extremely high applicability of the theoretical propositions he reaches in the field.

6. Conclusion

Based on the above, it should be noted that the candidate demonstrates high professionalism. The quality of the research output, the teaching activity and all accompanying activities, reflected in the documentation presented by Assistant Professor Alexander Ivanov Ranev, PhD for the purposes of the competition, meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Terms and Conditions for Occupying Academic Positions at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" and related normative documents.

All this gives a solid reason to express a **positive vote** in the scientific jury (formed by Order of the Rector of SU with No. RD 38-234/10.05.2023) *regarding the election of assistant professor Alexander Ivanov Ranev, PhD for the academic position "ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR" in the Field of Higher Education 1. Pedagogical Sciences, Professional Direction 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of Education) for the needs of the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts at the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".*

Sofia,

Author of the opinion:

21.06.2023

/Assoc. Prof. Vladislav Gospodinov, PhD/