

Opinion

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on the scientific works for participation in the competition for the academic position of associate professor, in the professional field 2.1 Philology (Classical Languages), announced in State Gazette No. 50/09.06.2023), with candidate Dr. Georgi Gotchev

Dr. Gotchev is the only candidate in the competition in which he participates with a habilitation thesis, two monographs and a serious list of scientific articles and citations. The materials submitted by him meet the minimum national requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor in the professional field 2.1 Philology, as well as the internal requirements of New Bulgarian University.

The monograph *Freedom from the Shadows: Justice and Education in Plato's Dialogues*, which Georgi Gotchev presents as a habilitation thesis, is organized into eight chapters, each one is devoted to a different dialogue of Plato. The choice of these dialogues is motivated by the two main themes of the book, also outlined in the title: justice and education. In his analysis, Gotchev traces the various manifestations of justice, considering it as an individual quality (the "inner disposition and quality" of man), as a social pattern (a "situation of relation between people"), and as a fundamental principle of political life. It is affirmed as the overarching Virtue that is in direct relation to the happiness of the individual and the harmony of the whole. In this context, Dr. Gotchev considers education as a process instrumental to the realization of this virtue, and as part of an ethical epistemology.

The habilitation work carries the academic weight of philosophical analysis, but at the same time the ease of the author's style and language creates an intimate atmosphere that derives from Georgi Gotchev's work as a translator of Plato and will undoubtedly appeal to a wider readership.

For me, the text is also interesting in the context of translation, seen as a concept and a model of understanding culture. I draw attention to this not only because Georgi Gotchev has already established himself as a translator of ancient literature and philosophy who has elegantly managed to transfer the "echo of the original" (W. Benjamin) into new translations into Bulgarian. With the interpretive tools of the modern philologist, he *translates* the two great themes of justice and education in Plato, making them a spiritual and moral reference point and relating them to the major problems and life situations in which we find ourselves today as individuals and as a society. In this I find the main contribution of the work.

Georgi Gotchev's other publications and academic appearances are devoted to issues related to ancient literature and culture. He works on authors he not only knows in the original, but also translates, some of them for the first time into Bulgarian. Such is the translation of the dialogue *Laws*, Plato's longest text, translated together with Assoc. Prof. Nevena Panova. For his translations of Plato's *The Republic* and Aristotle's *Poetics*, Dr. Gotchev was awarded a prize by the Ministry of Culture. However, the Bulgarian research evaluation metrics remains in debt to the translation efforts of these scholars.

Since his arrival at New Bulgarian University, Dr. Gotchev has actively participated in university-wide conferences and seminars and has established himself as one of the leading contributors to the development of Professor Bogdanov's scientific forum. I also highlight Georgi Gotchev's participation in "Medea", a social and artistic project for working with minority children by means of classical philology and sociodrama, which has become a national cultural event.

Since 2020, Dr. Gotchev has been involved in the academic management of New Bulgarian University as Dean of the Faculty of Basic Education and as NBU

coordinator of a work package within the European Reformist University Alliance - ERUA.

The scientific, public, and teaching work of Dr. Georgi Gotchev gives me a reason to highly appreciate his academic activity and I confidently propose his election to the academic position of Associate Professor, in the professional field 2.1 Philology (Classical Languages).

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariana Malinova