

OPINION
by Prof. Kolyo Videv Koev, DSc

Regarding: the materials submitted for participation in the competition
for the academic position of "associate professor"
at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski",
in the field of higher education 2. Humanities,
professional field 2.3 Philosophy (Formal and Practical Logic)

In the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor, announced in State Gazette No. 96 of 11 November 2025 and on the website of the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski", for the Department of Philosophy at the Faculty of History and Philosophy, the sole/participating candidate is Chief Assistant Professor Dr Martina Stoilova Mineva-Nikolova of the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of History and Philosophy, University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski".

General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

By Order No. ПД-22-37 of 09.01.2026 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU), I was appointed as a member of the scientific jury for the competition for the academic position of "associate professor" at PU in the area of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.3 Philosophy (Formal and Practical Logic), announced for the needs of the Department of Philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy and History. Only one candidate has submitted documents for participation in the announced competition: Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Martina Stoilova Mineva-Nikolova from the Department of Philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy and History, University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski".

The paper-based set of documents submitted by Martina Stoilova Mineva-Nikolova complies with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The candidate, Chief Assistant Professor Dr Martina Stoilova Mineva-Nikolova, has submitted a total of 15 scholarly publications: 2 monographs, 11 studies (2 of them in English, published in special issues of the journal *Sociological Problems*), and 2 articles. The author reports 15 citations of these publications. The citations are mainly in the journal *Sociological Problems* (indexed and abstracted in ProQuest/Sociological Abstracts, CEEOL, EBSCO, and ERIH PLUS) and in *Heterodoxy*, where articles are accepted following peer review.

A brief overview of the works submitted for review can be outlined as follows:

1. *The general problem area* in which these works are situated can be described as the field of practical logic, whose core consists in situated linguistic interactions, with an emphasis on the dependence of logical work on the temporal structures of practice;

2. *Their specific focus* is directed towards everyday language use (everyday categorizations, everyday quantifications, indexical practices, etc.), which reveals an important praxeological cross-section providing access to *various forms of social vulnerability* – a topic that occupies a privileged place in the research agenda of the candidate’s wider scholarly community;

3. *The majority of these publications* concentrate on the *points of intersection between formal and practical logic* in the context of what M. Mineva terms “groundbreaking practices”, *bringing to the fore a multidimensional analysis of non-deductive inferential operations* such as abduction, induction, and transduction. These praxeological figures, in their full theoretical articulation, are examined most extensively in the habilitation thesis *Groundbreakings. Abduction, Infuction, Transduction in the Logic of Practice*, published as a monograph by Iztok-Zapad Publishing House (2025), which is why my analysis will focus generally on this work.

Prior to this, however, I shall briefly outline the candidate’s project involvement and teaching activity, since they highlight important aspects of her scholarly profile.

Since 2019, following Martina Mineva’s appointment as Chief Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, she has participated in seven collective and individual research projects (in some of which she has served as project leader). The theoretical outcomes of this project work are reflected primarily in publications 2.2, 2.7 and 3.1 from the submitted list of publications (here I do not include the habilitation thesis and the works that build on the issues developed therein, as they will be discussed separately). I would like to single out in particular the project “‘There Is No One to Turn To’ – Socio-Analytical Dimensions of Vulnerability”, which very clearly demonstrates both Dr Mineva’s integration of her own praxeological problematics (in this case linked to Harvey Sacks’s Conversation Analysis) into one of the key fields of socio-analytical work at the Department of Sociology and Human Sciences, and her ability to engage and inspire students and doctoral candidates in her teaching. I have first-hand impressions of the development of this project, as at that time I was a lecturer in the Department of Sociology and

Human Sciences at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, which actively supported the project.

As regards the candidate's teaching activity, it may be noted that, since 2019, she has been teaching eight core courses in bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programmes, in which she shapes her work in logic in line with her own research interests. Among these, I would particularly highlight the courses Logic and Critical and Creative Thinking in the master's programme, as well as the doctoral course Endogenous Logic of Discovery and Innovation Practices.

Assessment of the main contributions

Henceforth, I will focus primarily on Martina Mineva's habilitation thesis *Groundbreakings. Abduction, Induction, Transduction in the Logic of Practice* (Iztok-Zapad Publishing House, Sofia, 2025), which I shall examine through the most significant contributions that, in my view, it contains.

The first point I would like to emphasize is the apt choice of the focus of the study. At one point towards the end of the book, Mineva refers to groundbreaking practices as "an ecstatic moment of the logical" (p. 237), and this designation aptly brings out the *event-like* character of the logical procedures of "non-deductive inference in science", around which the study is organized, and points to a "non-formalizable residue" within this field of inquiry that nevertheless remains amenable to *logical* analysis. The title of the monograph foregrounds the elements that enter into a complex interplay with one another in order to bring about the aforementioned eventfulness.

At the same time, the title itself contains a certain tension, insofar as its central concept, "groundbreakings", is, from the very beginning (p. 17), conjugated with "innovations" (in Schumpeter's sense), although, according to the author, it is to be understood more broadly than economic innovations, namely as referring to events that generate new ideas, practices that revolutionize the relevant paradigm, or practices that expand an existing pattern. In other words, in this context "groundbreakings" (rather in the sense of scientific discoveries) are positioned between Kuhn's scientific revolutions and Schumpeterian innovations. Unfortunately, the monograph does not offer a more extensive comparative analysis of

“groundbreakings” and “innovations”, which would have helped to clarify the aforementioned “broader sense”, as well as the possible transitions between them.

When stating that the focus of the study is well chosen, I also have in mind its extension towards *Charles Peirce’s pragmatist logic*, inasmuch as Peirce himself is, as the author notes, critical both of “the limitations of strict formal-logical approaches” and of approaches concerned with “the logic of the completed research report” (Norwood Russell Hanson), while nonetheless maintaining a “fundamentally logical” perspective on the problem of scientific discovery.

Thirdly, this focus also incorporates the case of Johannes Kepler’s discovery, which Mineva appropriately adopts from Peirce, although she ultimately analyses it on a different level, from the standpoint of the logic of practice that she herself develops.

The detailed analysis in Part I of the concepts of abduction and induction (Peirce and Hanson) and of transduction (Bibler) delineates significant new boundaries between the basic operations of non-deductive inference, which take shape in the process of paradigm renewal under the pressure of accumulated contradictions (ultimately, of anomaly understood as a pre-predicative contradiction). The analysis brings to the fore, on the one hand, expansions of these boundaries through the introduction of so-called *inductive* (quantitative) and *abductive-inductive* (qualitative-quantitative) *quanta*, and, on the other hand, an expansion of the boundaries of the paradigm itself by means of the *abductive quantum*, defined as “a unit of new quality in a newly derived pattern, which opens up the pattern itself indefinitely to being followed through analogisation in inductive inference” (Abstract, p. 2).

The latter concept is particularly important because it raises the issue of the exogenous functioning of non-deductive inferences “through the question of the possibilities of moving from *intrasubjectivity* to *intersubjectivity*, and hence to universal validity” (p. 60). In the course of the analyses in Part One, contributions thus emerge such as the non-Peircean (though elaborated by means of Peirce) idea of an “abductive quantum”, as well as the inclusion, within the circle of non-deductive logical inferences, of traductions as “a characteristic of revolutionary practices ... brought about by the synthesis of a cluster of anomalies” (Abstract, p. 3). The more substantial result of this analysis, however, is *the identification of the necessity to move beyond pragmatist boundaries towards a praxeological field*, and the argument

put forward in support of this move. This takes us to the specific methodological prism through which the author conducts her analysis.

In the “battle” for the “edges of analysis”, to use Mineva’s own metaphor for her main methodological efforts in Part Two, she takes an unexpected yet fruitful step by reconstructing the 1929 Davos debate between Martin Heidegger and Ernst Cassirer on Kant’s legacy (with a focus on the problematization of transcendental imagination), in order to pose the question of the so-called “non-formalizable residue”. It is from this residue that the “praxeological analyses of non-classically conceived *a priori* syntheses in non-deductive inference” set out, in contrast to the classical formal-logical position which assumes the “unrestricted formalization” of the forms of non-deductive inference.

In Mineva’s words, this is also a path toward a distinctive “extension of formal-logical analysis by means of a non-classical intentional analysis in the study of non-deductive inferences” (pp. 143–144). An important move on the author’s part here is the emphasis on Cassirer’s rehabilitation of Kant’s productive capacity of imagination through what Cassirer calls *forma formans*, which Mineva, however, reinterprets as “a will to form in a non-Cassirerian and non-Kantian sense.” From the perspective of groundbreaking practices, *forma formans* is thus conceived “as an [unpre-given] will to form and, thereby, as a will to achieve an isomorphism between the forms of reason and sensibility” (p. 150).

In this context, the issue of the “exogeneous functioning” of the logic of practice naturally arises, along with the transition from the *intrasubjective* to the *intersubjective* existence of scientific discoveries - namely, “the way in which thought forms, arising along different intentional trajectories and without a predetermined egological form, can prove valid and comprehensible to multiple transcendental subjects” (Abstract, p. 3). To address this question, M. Mineva contributes to D. Deyanov’s thesis on the “transcendental third” as a condition for transcendental intersubjectivity by examining the discoverer’s synthesis of the transcendental third (in Kepler’s case, *homo astronomicus*) as a “possibility for homomorphism” - that is, the recognition as valid of precisely those thought forms that emerge along diverse intentional routes and without a predetermined egological form. *Homomorphism*, by contrast, emerges as a *practical-logical achievement* that establishes the unforeseen general validity and objectivity of the derived forms, rather than postulating their innate universality. The successful “battle for the edges of analysis”—that is, for

constructing an effective methodological core—demands skillful engagement with perspectives drawn from traditions alien to formal logic, above all: Husserl’s phenomenology, Heidegger’s philosophical hermeneutics, Garfinkel’s ethnomethodology and Sacks’s conversation analysis, Jeff Coulter’s endogenous logic of practice, Ernst Cassirer’s philosophy, and Bourdieu’s socio-analysis. Martina Mineva not only fully harnesses the potential these offer for developing a logic of practice, but also adapts them to the specificities of her own inquiry. But something else must be noted here—something rarely acknowledged in Bulgarian academic practice: the *excellent command and virtuoso deployment of Bulgarian authors* who contributed to the “non-classical interpretation” of these thinkers (some of whom were mentioned in the Opinion). In this way, Mineva *aligns seamlessly with a living tradition* while distinctly foregrounding her own contribution within that framework.

The third part of the monograph flows naturally as a continuation of the first two, turning attention to the genesis of the “Kepler case” and, above all, to the unfolding of its “theoretical swing”—or, more precisely, to the transition from Kepler’s singular discovery to the formulation of the laws of planetary motion. Here, the emphasis again falls on eventhood—not as a homogeneous, protracted “now,” but as Heidegger’s ecstatic “Moment,” conceived as a “long authentic present” (in Sv. Sūbeva’s interpretation). M. Mineva concludes: “It turns out that precisely in this moment of abductive inference (wherein an abductive quantum emerges, along with a transcendental third) the groundbreaker’s theoretical swing begins to unfold” (pp. 242–243).

I would distinguish *three categories* encompassing the contributions I have outlined:

1. Substantiation of key tenets in a *new field of inquiry*;
2. Formulation of a *new theory*;
3. *Development of analytical tools* for further work in the aforementioned field.

I unconditionally endorse the candidate’s self-assessment of these contributions and affirm that they stem from her personal efforts

Critical Remarks and recommendations:

I hope to have already demonstrated the heuristic value of the work under review and the avenues it opens for exploration in other domains. Precisely in this regard, it

provokes questions and invites scrutiny of its more contentious points. Lacking space here for a detailed examination of certain challenges in Martina Mineva's analysis, I will highlight just two.

The first pertains to potentially extending the analysis to the comparison—noted at the outset of the Opinion—between “groundbreakings” and “innovations” (in Schumpeter's sense), so as to better substantiate the “broader sense of ‘groundbreakings.’” This seems all the more apposite given Schumpeter's own distinction: a “discovery” may or may not hold potential for economic application, whereas “innovation” invariably constitutes a successful economic exploitation thereof. I would further suggest comparing the “exogenous” operation of groundbreaking practices with that of Schumpeterian innovations (for him, this raises the issue of the economic impact of imitations and diffusion, which invariably exceeds that of the original renewal). Schumpeter addresses this question in *Theory of Economic Development* (and his business-cycle theory), inquiring into the conditions under which “new combinations” emerge “discontinuously... or in swarms.” My query here is whether M. Mineva envisions opportunities for such an extension, and which elements of her analysis best afford it. On pp. 19–20 of *Groundbreakings*, she proposes an analogy between the innovator's “theoretical swing” and a potential “entrepreneurial swing” as one such avenue - but I remain unconvinced that it resolves the issues Schumpeter raises.

My second remark concerns one of the decisive groundbreaking features—the ecstatic “Moment” (*Augenblick*), or the “long authentic present.” This feature merits further analysis, notably in light of Bernhard Waldenfels's responsive phenomenology. I ask whether the intrasubjective occurrence of the “groundbreaking” is constituted solely by an *active, protentional* opening onto possibilities, or whether we must also account for an antecedent moment in which the transcendental ego is *affected by the “alien”* and recognizes it precisely *as alien prior to any signification or attribution of meaning to it as “this” or “that.”* Put otherwise, to cite Waldenfels, the alien “challenges us and puts our own possibilities into question, even before we get involved in a questioning, in striving for knowledge, and in a will to know.” This very moment, I contend, warrants focused scrutiny because it bears directly on the synthesis of the “transcendental third.”

Conclusion

The documents and materials submitted by Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Martina Stoilova Mineva-Nikolova comply with the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the LDASRB, and the pertinent Regulations of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific papers published after the materials used in the defence of the PhD thesis and the acquisition of the scientific position of Chief Assistant. These works feature original scientific and applied contributions, with a representative portion published in journals and proceedings indexed in international databases. The candidate's theoretical developments exhibit practical applicability, some being directly oriented toward pedagogical activities. Dr. Martina Mineva's scientific and teaching qualifications are indisputable. The results achieved by Chief Assistant Mineva in her teaching and research activities fully comply with the minimum national requirements and the additional stipulations of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski", adopted in connection with the University's Regulations for the Implementation of the LDASRB. The results achieved by Chief Assistant Mineva in her teaching and research activities fully comply with the minimum national requirements and the additional stipulations of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski", adopted in connection with the University's Regulations for the Implementation of the LDASRB.

Having reviewed the materials and scientific works submitted for the competition, and in light of an analysis of their significance and the scientific, applied-scientific, and practical contributions contained therein, I deem it warranted to offer my positive evaluation. I therefore recommend that the Scientific Jury prepare a report proposing to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philosophy and History the election of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Martina Stoilova Mineva-Nikolova to the academic position of associate professor at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" in: field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.3. Philosophy (Formal and Practical Logic).

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