

A LIFE ENTIRELY DEVOTED TO SCIENCE

Eighty years for society are only an instant of the historic process, but for an individual person this is a sufficiently long period of time, when these years have been entirely devoted to science.

An encyclopedic personality of versatile interests, of an exclusive professionalism and sense of responsibility and duty, hard working and work-thirsty to the full extent of these notions, a man of a keen sense for social justice, demanding from himself and from the people around him - this is how those who know him, keep in their hearts the impression of him as a researcher and explorer, a teacher, a citizen and a man.

54 years of academic service, 54 years of research activity, 54 years devoted to teaching and training of hundreds and thousands of scientific staff, disciples and followers - not many people can claim such a creative biography.

Nikola Grigorov Popov was born on January 8, 1922 in the village of Filipovtzi near Sofia. He graduated from Sofia University, majoring in agronomy in 1948 and was immediately nominated an assistant, later in 1955 an assistant professor, and professor in 1965. Since 1989 he has been an Academician. He became Doctor of Economic Sciences in 1964. He headed for a long time the chair of Political Economy at Sofia University "Kliment Ohridsky (1972 - 1988). He was a vice rector of the University (1961 - 1966), and rector (president) (1989 - 1991).

Academician Popov was the director of the Institute of Economics and Management of the Rural Economy in Sofia and headed a division of the State Planning Committee (1952 - 1953).

His activity runs through different stages of development of our country. Withstanding the ups and downs of time and the opinion of some persons and institutions, Dr. N. Popov won recognition as a leading and respected economist. He was instrumental in rendering an original contribution to the development of the Bulgarian economic science.

Among the numerous scientific works of Academician N. Popov we can point out: "The agrarian relations under socialism" (1976); "Economic competition" (1989); "Contemporary capitalist agrarian relations. The social fate of the contemporary farmer" (1994); "The Chinese economic miracle" (1995); "The world economy is being reshaped"; "Will the yellow race conquer the world" (1999) and many others.

Under his scientific editorship fundamental scientific investigations appeared: "The economy of Bulgaria" - six volumes (1969 - 1980); "Methodological issues of the political economy" - five volumes (1986 - 1989); "Productivity of labor and the standard of living" - two volumes (1981 - 1982) etc.

"The contemporary capitalist agrarian relations" draws a wide and profound panoramic picture of the agrarian relations in the world. The necessary conditions of the separation of the land have been analyzed - the land as an object of usage and management from the land as an object of property. The objective laws of the evolution of capitalism in the rural economy are formulated, also are the changes in the forms of the leasing relations, which create opportunities for the development of agricultural produce. The social differentiation in land ownership and cattle breeding in the developed capitalist and developing countries, as well as the role of concentration of farming machines in the rural economy are revealed. A special attention was given to the concentration and specialization of the produce in the sector. The competition in the international agrarian sector has been under study as well as the issues of overcoming the state subsidizing of agricultural produce existing in many countries, the issues of liberalization of international

trade in agricultural goods. A special attention was paid to the social fate of the contemporary farmer.

The conclusions and recommendations advanced by Academician Popov gain a particular significance in the context of overcoming the problems facing the Bulgarian rural economy, which is a traditional and important sector of the national economy.

"The Chinese economic miracle" is a study dedicated to "the presentation of such an economic giant as the Chinese People's republic is", written in the spirit of the best traditions of the Bulgarian socioeconomic thought. As the author himself notes the analysis of the new system of economic management in China is notable for its "exclusively great complexity". The new system both as a model and differentiation in the forms of its establishment in the sectors of economic activity and in territorial aspect... is not entirely relevant to what is known from practice so far.

This peculiar, unique road was chosen by the countries of the Asia-Pacific zone, forming the fourth economic center of the world. Some of them have gained remarkable socioeconomic achievements, which have become an example to follow for other peoples and countries.

Academician Popov has analyzed the difficulties in finding the way of economic progress: the political and economic situation in the world; the necessity of using transitional economic models and forms; overcoming the policy of the "great leap" and the theory of "support from our own forces", of the pattern and dogma in search of the path of transition from dogmatico-administrative to a market orientation of the economy.

A stress was laid on the interaction between the market mechanism and the state regulation; on the adoption of policy of openness; the necessity of joining the world economy is given a sound foundation by means of creation of free economic zones; on intensive development of foreign trade relations and international tourism; on attracting foreign investments, etc.

Academician Popov devotes many pages to the economic progress of the Chinese People's Republic, the almost unabated high pace of economic development in a continuous upward trend for several decades; structural reconstruction within the motion of accelerated economic development in view of searching for suitable niche in the international division of labor (textile industry, electronics, toys etc.); undertaking measures for rapid modernization of the country; formation of new social image of the Chinese society; turning the country into the greatest economic power of the XXI Century.

China's experience as well as the experience of other Asian countries is having been approbated for several decades could be educational and beneficial to our country, which has been putting into practice the transition from centralized economy to market economy for the last 12 years.

Academician Popov is an internationally recognized scientist and researcher with broad and intense international contacts, and creative contribution promoting the prestige of the Bulgarian economic science abroad.

Even today he is in pursuit of ambitious research assignments (he prepares an interesting book under the conditional title "Capital against capitalism") and also takes an active part in The Bulgarian-Chinese Friendship Society, The Slav society etc.

The 80th anniversary of Academician Nikola Popov is a good occasion for his disciples and followers to express their veneration, deep respect and high esteem of his life-achievements and to wish him sincerely good health, personal happiness and successful implementation of his creative ideas and intentions.

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