

OPINION

by Assoc. prof. Veselina Hristova Slavova, MU "Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov", Varna
for The Ph.D. Thesis "Ontology of consultative reason" by Daniel Aleksandrov Ivanov
(in 2.3. Philosophy, doctoral program in "Ontology")

Supervisor:

Prof. Dr. Veselin Hristov Dafov

Daniel Ivanov's dissertation has a volume of 291 pages. Its structure includes an introduction, five chapters, a conclusion and a bibliography. A total of 216 Bulgarian and foreign language sources are listed.

The certificate attached to the documentation certifies that the doctoral student meets the minimum national requirements for acquiring the Ph.D degree. The similarity report prepared by the scientific supervisor Prof. Dr. V. Dafov and Daniel Ivanov's declaration of originality and credibility prove the absence of plagiarism.

The purpose of this work is to achieve "knowledge of the idea of counseling" (p. 8) through "subject ontology". The interest in this problem is the result of the knowledge and experience in accumulated in the field of philosophical counseling by the doctoral student. In this sense, the biographical line, followed in the introduction and in the remaining parts of the text, corresponds to the idea of "ontological engagement" (p. 5) of the consultant and the researcher of the situation in which the consulting takes place, and fits in appropriately with the theoretical research.

The author's thesis is that in order to carry out philosophical counseling, it is necessary to master "consultative reason" that is, to achieve and overcome the "selfishness" of the individual participant in a problematic situation, to remove the differences of the participating subjects and to reach an aware ontological togetherness.

The wording of the title corresponds to the purpose set by the author and the defended thesis. "Ontology of consultative reason" represents the interweaving of subject positions and established cognitive strategies, supplemented by the idea of knowledge as such, which has overcome the two extremes - that of subjective closure in one's own questions, or that of expert opinion based on knowledge from individual scientific fields. The experience of the Ph.D.

student in the field of philosophical work with children becomes the starting point for the philosophizing of the counseling situation.

The first chapter, named "Counseling practices", is 86 pages long and consists of three parts. The linguistic meaning of the term, as well as various counseling practices with an emphasis on philosophical counseling - its historical development and definition - are explored.

Based on specific situations from the author's experience, philosophical counseling is defined as a search for an answer to non-standard questions, requiring a complex approach, going beyond separate knowledge, exploring the idea of learning, reasonableness, knowledge, teaching as such, through the eyes of the subject as questioning, seeking, ignorant.

In places, comprehensiveness dominates at the expense of philosophizing the problem, but this does not reduce the value of the text.

The second chapter, "Ontology of consultative reason" bears the same title as the dissertation. This is also the title of the fourth part of this chapter. I believe that if these repetitions were avoided, the text would benefit from accentuating and nuanced sub-issues.

Two of the parts describe through texts by Plato and Kant the idea and realization of the consultative philosophical situation. It is interesting to introduce and discuss the concept of "self-care", which the consultant must realize as a commitment and responsibility to himself and others he will consult. The thesis about the inapplicability of Kant's philosophy to consulting activity also deserves attention. This idea could be further developed to enrich the text with an opposition between a purely philosophical approach to problems and a real-life one. Questions like these can be discussed: "Can everyone consult? Why is Kant's philosophy inapplicable to a life situation?"

The third chapter "Consultative actuality and subjectivity care" is in a volume of 64 pages, it is composed of 7 parts.

This chapter arrives at the general statement about "the failure of existential philosophy as a projectized way to transcend actuality, to go beyond the concrete, to reveal and to reach the universality behind the choice, even as a concrete universality." (p. 181) This general conclusion requires better argumentation as it otherwise appears insufficiently motivated inasmuch only a part of the correspondence of only one representative of existential philosophy is examined. Next, philosophical counseling is compared with other types (medical, psychological) and the conclusion is drawn that "only philosophical counseling could know and would have access to its

own becoming of a consultative practice" (p. 184); "Philosophical counseling has its basis in universality and thus works with the integrity of human subjectivity" (p. 297).

The last two parts ("Projectizations" and "Annex (interviews and presentations)") are shorter in volume, but this is because they have the character of appendices supplementing the theoretical preceding chapters.

The abstract of the Ph.D. Thesis has a volume of 58 pages and was prepared according to the requirements and follows the structure of the thesis. The author has correctly identified his contributions. A list of publications (6) and participation in scientific forums with reports (10) exceeding the required minimum is presented.

In conclusion, I think that the problem chosen by Daniel Ivanov is extremely relevant. Practical experience in the field of "Philosophy for Children" enables the author to examine specific situations and, based on this, to make proposals for improving the norms of counseling practice. The text has a very good structure and balance between the chapters. A deep research interest is demonstrated, combined with a fluency in philosophical terminology, as well as a good work with the literature. My recommendation is to avoid long passages with citations of literary sources and normative documents, as well as self-citation.

It is commendable to consider the contribution of Bulgarian philosophers to the introduction and development of this type of consulting practice, so important for the development of Bulgarian education.

CONCLUSION: The Ph.D. Thesis "Ontology of consultative reason" by Daniel Ivanov meets all the requirements for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in professional direction 2.3. Philosophy (Ontology). As a member of the Scientific Jury, I will vote to award this degree.

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Assoc. prof. Veselina Slavova