

OPINION

for

Ivan Georgiev Kolev, participant in the competition for the academic position *Professor* in professional field 2.3. Philosophy (scientific specialty *Philosophical anthropology, Philosophy of art, Metaphysics*), announced for the needs

of the Faculty of Philosophy of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

in the State Gazette, No. 67 of 04.08.2023,

by Prof. Nina Dimitrova, DSc.,

Institute of philosophy and sociology – BAS

Associate Professor Ivan Kolev is the only candidate in the announced competition for a professorship. The competition procedure has been correctly followed, the submitted documents are complete and in order.

Ivan Kolev is a doctor of philosophy (the topic of the dissertation defended in 2011 was "Being and possibility. An attempt at existential anthropology"), associate professor at the Department of Philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy of Sofia University since 2013 and its current head.

Associate Professor Kolev has over thirty author contributions in the creation of textbooks and teaching aids (anthologies), as well as special merits in organizing and conducting national and international olympiads in philosophy. He has presented a reference for 37 participations in scientific forums, as well as in four scientific research projects. He is the supervisor of two successfully defended doctoral students.

Ivan Kolev has provided a list of all his publications, including five monographic works and 26 articles and studies in scientific journals and collections. The candidate fulfills the minimum national requirements for obtaining the academic title "Professor".

In the current competition, Ivan Kolev participated with two monographs and 9 articles. The first one I will look at here – "Καρδιά. Philosophy of Feelings' ("East-West", 2023), is devoted to the philosophical interpretation of feelings, to the assertion

of the legitimate presence of *the faculty of feeling* in philosophy/philosophical anthropology – *a faculty* inferable from no other and irreducible to any other autonomous human abilities.

As the title makes clear, the author's desire is to substantiate a philosophy of feelings – the attempt undertaken is a continuation of previous efforts in this area, but with the ambition to fit into the new, fifth stage in the development of philosophical anthropology. This stage is called cardiac, for him the heart – the organ of all feelings, is the main concept, a symbol of the autonomous life of feelings (compared by Boris Vysheslavtsev to the center of a circle from which an infinite number of radii emanate ("The meaning of the heart in philosophy and in religion", 1931)).

To show the special logic of feelings, Ivan Kolev embarks on a historical *journey* through the eras of ancient Greek philosophy and the Bible, early Christianity, Latin patristics and the Latin Middle Ages, followed by the New European era and finally modernity.

The results of this journey are laid out in more than two-thirds of the book – the historical analysis of philosophical theories of feelings is detailed and thorough, made from a phenomenological perspective as central to the overall study. The innovation of this enterprise in a national context should also be noted. But no less important as a merit of the work is the initial attitude with which it was created – an attitude of categorical opposition to any attempt to dehumanize the person, against attitudes of reductionism, reducing the wealth of feelings, emotions, affects and moods only to "behavioral reactions", as is quite aptly stated in the Conclusion of the book.

After the historical part and the detailed explanation of the conclusions from it (in the chapter devoted to *metaphysics and anthropology of feelings*), comes the turn of the own – original, author's – development of *a phenomenology of feelings*. Indeed, this section of the book, which I believe constitutes the main contribution of the study (not to underestimate the analysis made of the taxonomy and phenomenology of feelings by philosophers of special merit on the subject), is disproportionately shorter than the previous parts, a circumstance which to some extent, I explain myself with the fact that before us is the first attempt in Bulgarian philosophical literature to find the

internal logic of the ability to feel (related to the hierarchy of values) and it is undoubtedly subject to further development, including as a prerequisite for further studies by other authors. From the point of view of philosophical anthropology, in our country there are studies on individual feelings – on *fear* (Velko Makedonski, Valeri Dinev), *love* (Kiril Vasilev), *envy* (Asen Kartalov), etc. But the present comprehensive, synthetic study of feelings (under the "rubrics": feelings of being, feelings of self, and feelings of others) is pioneering; the studies of feelings as a whole carried out so far in our country (Nikola Alexiev, 1907; Raina Stancheva, 1939) are experimental-psychological, i.e. from the metric side, if I use Ivan Kolev's assessment.

A special impression in Ivan Kolev's book is left by the constant striving for clarity of the main terms introduced (including with images, metaphors, descriptions), supported by the comparative analysis of their various translations into the main European languages. This characteristic is also inherent in the other monograph – "Art as a phenomenal being. Deduction of Categories" ('East-West', 2023), which aims to 'propose a method by which to derive the categories by which art is defined' (p. 5).

Opposing the reduction of art to the work of art, the author considers it as a constituted semantic whole, in which only one pole is occupied by this work, and in the other are placed the various figures of the world of art: author, spectator, patron, collector, curator, connoisseur, critic, historian, typologist, theoretician, esthetician, metaphysician – figures to whom special attention is paid and as a result of whose insightful analysis an original definition of art is formulated at the end of the work.

The nine articles included in the documents for participation in this procedure have been published in indexed editions as well as in thematic collections.

In conclusion: bearing in mind the versatile scientific activity of Ivan Georgiev Kolev, which meets the criteria for occupying the academic position requested by him, as a member of the scientific jury for the current competition, I fully support his candidacy and propose to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Sofia University University "St. Kliment Ohridski" to choose him as a "professor" in a

professional direction 2.3. Philosophy (scientific specialty *Philosophical Anthropology, Philosophy of Art, Metaphysics*).

1. 11. 2023

Signature: