

## **OPINION**

**for the competition for the academic position "Professor", Professional field 2.3. Philosophy (Ethics; Ethics and Regulations) for the needs of the "Ethical Studies" department, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS, announced in the "State Gazette", no. 92/18.11.2022 by Prof. DSc Tatiana Batuleva, Department "History of Philosophical and Scientific Ideas", Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS**

### **1. Basis for drawing up the opinion**

I participate in the composition of the Scientific Jury for the competition according to Order No. RD 09-23/ 11. 01. 2023, issued by the Director of IFS-BAN, Prof. Dr. Emilia Chengelova, and I am the author of this opinion according to the decision of the first meeting of the Scientific Jury, held on 26.01.2023

### **2. Information and impressions about the candidate**

The only candidate in the competition for a professorship, Associate Professor Dr. Stoyan Andreas Stavrou, presented impeccably prepared documentation. Associate Professor Stavrou is a Doctor of Philosophical Sciences and holds two PhD-s in civil and family law (2009) and modern philosophy (2015). Several specializations include: Administration of Justice, Public Administration, International Law, and Group Dynamic Training. He is the winner of three prestigious awards and honors; he is also bio law and security lecturer; bioethics lecturer; ecopolitics lecturer; medical law and medical futurology lecturer; cyber law lecturer

Stoyan Stavrou is the head of the "Ethical Research" department and head of more than 16 multidisciplinary research projects at the BAS, SU, PU, and NBU. Aimed at analyzing the multidirectional ethics-law relations, they are particularly significant both theoretically and practically and find direct application in teaching several specialties.

Stoyan Stavrou is the founder of the public site "Challenging the Law" and a leading expert in several national studies concerning the legal and philosophical-ethical essence of concepts such as "justice", "non-pecuniary damages," the process of demoralizing non-pecuniary damages,". Editor in the magazines "Philosophical Alternatives", "Ethical Studies", "Challenging the Law". Founder of the Justice Development Foundation.

I have known associate professor Stavrou for many years as a leading participant in authoritative philosophical forums, national and international conferences, theoretical seminars, and scientific projects. The texts presented by him have aroused my attention and sometimes admiration with their multi-layered justification, precise argumentation, and high scientific and linguistic style. I have lasting impressions of his collegial correctness in scholarly communication and his capacity as a member of the BAS General Assembly, the BAS Academic Ethics Committee, and the Public Council at the Ministry of Health.

Stoyan Stavrou is a unique combination of scientist-theoretician and practitioner, possessing

profound expertise in legal theory, medical ethics, modern philosophy, and ecology.

### 3. Characteristics of the candidate's research activity

The only candidate in the competition for a professor in the professional field 2.3. Philosophy (Ethics) in the "Ethical Studies" section meets all the requirements for this position. Sufficient evidence has been provided that the minimum national requirements have been met and even exceeded, as well as those laid down in the Regulations for the Application of the IFS documents. Stoyan Stavrou is a leading participant in over 30 national and international scientific conferences. Proof that the candidate's scientific output is recognizable and appreciated both in our country and in Europe by philosophers, lawyers, psychologists, and public figures is the presented reference for citations (over 300 points).

To participate in the current competition, Stoyan Stavrou submitted one monograph, 10 studies, and 9 articles, grouped thematically in three problem circles dedicated to *legal personality*, *legal capacity*, and ethical problems related to *climate change*.

The monograph "Compensation for non-pecuniary (moral) damages in Bulgaria in the context of the mandatory "civil liability" insurance of motorists" (2020) is the *first comprehensive study* in our country of the ethical content of moral damages, which testifies to the innovative approach successfully chosen by the author: he combines legal-concrete applications with the philosophical-theoretical framework relevant to the concept of "justice". On the one hand, it considers the *moral significance* of new relationships between people. On the other hand, it sets certain *ethical thresholds* that prevent unjustified and unjust enrichment.

Ethical questions regarding the new boundaries of subjects and their inviolability are traced based on an analysis of the difference between the biological and digital "format" of memory ("Our memory is our fortress: biological and digital memory in a battle for the subject!"); the links between ethics and legal personality regulations; the legal significance of the living human body ("The "beginning" of the human body and pregnancy"); ethical and legal standards related to the robot and artificial intelligence ("The robot - the new "Other" in the interstices of the law").

In the way, literature has been proposed *originally different* from the dogmatics of the legal doctrine approach to the regulations of legal personality ("The Last Judgment over the text in law (two "literary" vectors to the good judge and the successful prosecutor)"), referring to two different approaches to the profession of judges and that of prosecutors. Through analysis of the contradictions in their narratives are sought-after contents that often remain unwritten in legal decisions.

The second cycle, dedicated to the *ethics of freedom and regulations of capacity*, brings out the criteria for the legal relevance of the will of man as an expression of his release. It analyzes the relationship between prohibition and identity, the tools to respect the authentic will of people with disabilities. A legal regime, an ethical alternative to incarceration, is proposed, enabling persons with mental disabilities to retain their personal identity. Here, pathos is expanding the limits of agency.

The third cycle focuses on the ethical issues related to climate change, the loss of biological

diversity, and the need to create new frameworks in which the notions of community, property, and freedom are redefined in a broader ecological context.

#### **4. Scientific contributions:**

The author's reference for the contributions is reliable and correct. Without being exhaustive, I would summarize them as follows:

First, with his works and practical activity, with his reassuring presence in the scientific and public debate, Stoyan Stavrou contributes to the *enrichment of the field of ethical philosophy*. To no less extent, it contributes to *updating legal science and its normative documents* in accordance with the new realities that have occurred and are occurring. It builds its approach to analyzing concrete cases, proposing solutions, creating interdisciplinary fields, and modeling new concepts.

Secondly, the monograph proposed for participation in the competition is our country's first comprehensive study of moral (non-property) damages, which testifies to the *innovative approach* successfully chosen by the author. This is the basis for the conclusions drawn by Associate Professor Stavrou regarding the "ethics-law" interaction and the transformation of justice into a tool for calculating compensation. The monograph initially combined the specialized legal approach to the issues of moral damages with the theoretical-philosophical dimensions concerning the concept of justice.

Third, the candidate's ability to take on and *respond promptly to challenges* that new technologies pose to ethics as a regulator of human relations is precious. Thus, it enriches the ethical debate about the 'otherness' of the robot and artificial intelligence by proposing regulations for legally relevant interactions.

Fourth, it sets both the legal and ethical parameters of the protection of the so-called "digital assets", also related to the concept of digital memory and the expansion of the morally significant boundaries of the human person in the digital environment.

Fifth, a particularly significant contribution; he proposes *concrete legal mechanisms* and regulatory instruments to be implemented in actual legislation. Excellent knowledge of international standards, theoretical sources, and the national situation contributes to this.

Sixth, it always retains *ethical dominance*. Example: the proposal for a legal regime, an alternative to injunction, enabling the elderly and persons with mental disabilities to maintain their personal identity (as a possible extension of legal capacity, which has a precise ethical dimension).

I have no comments. My recommendation is to continue working in this valuable and socially necessary direction.

#### **5. Conclusion**

In the works of DSc, Dr, Dr. Stavru, there are original scientific and applied contributions that received national and international recognition. His publications are distinguished by a critical look at the analyzed concepts, exceptional erudition, a bright authorial presence, multifaceted awareness, a skill for innovative interpretation, and a combination of rationality and imagination.

I find it completely justified to give a positive assessment and vote for the Scientific Jury to prepare a proposal to the Scientific Council of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS, **for the election of Stoyan Andreas Stavrou to the academic position of "professor"** at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology - BAS in Professional field Philosophy (Ethics) for the needs of the "Ethical Studies" department.

Prof. DSc Tatiana Batuleva

February 24, 2023.