

OPINION

By Assoc. Prof. Ivaylo Georgiev Dimitrov, PhD (IPhS-BAS)

Regarding the scientific works and contributions of **Yassen Alexiev Andreev**, PhD, a candidate for the academic position of *Associate Professor* in Professional Field 2.3. Philosophy (Ontology) at the *Institute of Philosophy and Sociology – BAS*, within the competition procedure announced in the State Gazette issue 67/04.08.2023, for the needs of the *Ontology and Epistemology* Department

Dr. Yassen Andreev is *Chief Assistant Professor* in the *Ontology and Epistemology* Department at the *Institute of Philosophy and Sociology – BAS*, and he is the only candidate in the competition. I declare that the candidate meets the minimum requirements of BAS and the law (DASRBA) for *Associate Professor*. I have not identified any plagiarism, and I have no joint publications or activities with the candidate that would put me in a conflict of interest. I have no remarks regarding the documents and the competition procedure.

The candidate participates in the competition with 22 studies and articles, significantly exceeding the respective requirements of the *Institute of Philosophy and Sociology – BAS*. All publications are in specialized scientific journals, surpassing the minimum of fifteen required. Among them, 7 (with a minimum of 2) have been published in German, English, and French in scientifically edited foreign or international journals or volumes. Two studies and four articles (two in press) are referenced and indexed in globally renowned scientific databases. The academic reference indicates that over a 20-year period, he has been involved in 16 research projects, with 13 (with a minimum of 2) receiving external funding. He has presented over 30 papers (with a minimum of 5) at national and international scientific forums. Dr. Andreev was a Humboldt Scholar at the universities of Essen-Duisburg (2010 – 2012) and Giessen (2013–2014), a two-time DAAD Scholar (2003 – 2004, 2017), two-time a participant in the Ernst Mach program of BMBWF and once of the OeAD (University of Vienna, 2006, 2013, 2014). His impressive academic biography is complemented by six translations of philosophical texts (jointly with Dr. S. Dimitrov) and significant teaching experience as an Assistant Professor (2002 – 2009) at Sofia University, Faculty of Philosophy.

Although the publications for the competition truly reflect the "divergent" scientific interests of the candidate, the very clear grouping into two thematic categories – one with a phenomenological-ontological focus and the other with a humanitarian-scientific orientation – already attests to a

systematic connection and consistency in his research work. Dr. Andreev's strictly philosophical inquiries unfold towards the powerful epicenter of the relationships between the three major figures of the phenomenological tradition and presence – the founder E. Husserl and arguably his most promising (at least according to his own assessment and considering the future of the phenomenological program) disciples, M. Heidegger and O. Becker.

The earliest of the presented texts, *Phenomenology in Alternative* (2004) and *La phénoménologie au carrefour-1927* (2000), critically examine R. Cristin's analysis, based on the widely held thesis that in the transition from the transcendental-constitutive to the hermeneutic-ontological paradigm within the phenomenological program, there is no continuity concerning Husserl's doctrine of constitutive analysis. The author convincingly demonstrates that despite the break with Husserl and the modern metaphysical tradition centered on the theory of the subject and consciousness, Heidegger not only continues at a deeper philosophical-methodological level but also radicalizes the inherited paradigm of constitutive analysis. This motif unfolds in the study (co-authored with D. Ginev), *Die Mathematische Existenz aus phänomenologischer Sicht* (2008), where the "complex dialogue" between phenomenology and (meta)mathematics is reconstructed critically, and likened to a boxing match also later in the continuation of the text (*Notes on the Dialogue between Phenomenology and Mathematics: Husserl and Becker – 2023*), in press in the prestigious journal *Studia Phaenomenologica*. In fact, it is more accurate to say that the latter study is a detailed and precise continuation of the article *Mathematical Foundations of Husserl's Phenomenology* (2021), where the Bulgarian reader becomes acquainted with the underlying dialogue before Becker steps into the ring for the second round. Heidegger is rightfully attributed responsibility for forgetting the mathematical foundations of phenomenology and distorting the meaning of Husserl's ideal of philosophy as a rigorous science, particularly in the rethinking of the paradigm of constitutive analysis for the purposes of *Dasein* analytics during the hermeneutic-phenomenological transition. As a counterpoint to Heidegger's course, in works entirely focused on Becker (2010, 2023), the author persuasively argues that the connecting thread of the triple dialogue-debate – the doctrine of phenomenological constitutive analysis – sets the reference system for the criteria and modes of mathematical existence.

In this meticulously reconstructed dialogical context, which serves as a triple foundation for the phenomenological program, Dr. Andreev's research on both the central and the foundational ontological problem of Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology, posited with its question of being (*Seinsfrage*), undoubtedly holds a distinctive place. The originality in the author's position I see in his attempt to reformulate the problem in such a way that a necessity becomes apparent: before delving into the

substantive question of the essence and meaning of being (in itself), to pose formally and thoroughly clarify the preliminary question: *What is the very meaning of die Seinsfrage at all?* Considering my own research interests and experience, I would highlight the equally impressive and inspiring study *The Practical Subject as an Objective End* (2015). In this study, Heidegger's critical – but simultaneously bringing him closer to its object – analysis of the key concepts of Kant's practical philosophy, namely *moral personality* and *moral consciousness*, is reconstructed as directed towards its characteristic constructivism in the search for a pragmatist alternative. Here, the critical rethinking (including the translation) of conceptual constructs such as *action*, *(re)action/effect*, *activity*, *object*, *thing*, and so on, seems to me crucial for the future of fruitful dialogues-debates in the arena of critical metaphysics, hermeneutic ontology and phenomenology.

I have no objections to the contributory aspects in the candidate's self-assessment, and I find them entirely realistic, albeit modestly presented. On a critical note, I would only highlight the emphasized (in *Mathematical Foundations*, 2021, p. 75) as "Kantian (at the very least, Kantian-inspired) move" of early Husserl in his consistently psychologistic interpretation of mathematical concepts for natural numbers through the lens of the fundamental concept of modern philosophy of the subject – the notion of *representation*. Numerous influential studies (e.g., by W. Carl and I. Kern) trace the roots of psychologism in the foundation of phenomenology not only to the overtly psychologistic interpretations (Fries and Herbart) of Kant but also to leading neo-Kantian schools, thus ultimately reaching the powerful influence of Hegel which made unnecessary the traditional philosophizing through concepts of representational faculties and/or forces; and going further back, it extends through Fichte to the failed attempt of Reinhold for a new theory of *Vorstellungsvermögen*. Therefore, the question arises whether the term *Vorstellung* has indeed become a "concept without a path," causing the greatest harm to contemporary philosophy due to its "desperately ambiguous and confusing to the point of opacity" usage (*ibid.*, p. 77). In any case, Dr. Andreev is correct that attributing a deeply "Kantian orientation" to Husserl's uncritical acceptance (influenced by Leibniz) of the concept of representation, with its problematic "ambiguity," reveals a certain deficit in its adequate critical metaphysical understanding and its meaning does indeed require "careful clarification" (*ibid.*). Fortunately, this clarification is already present in his study for *Studia Phaenomenologica* (Notes, 2023), where the exposition of Frege's criticism against the reductionist psychologistic interpretation of representation in Husserl seeks its sources of influence only back to his teachers Brentano and Stumpf, without a Kantian trace.

Conclusion: Regardless of the critical remarks, the unquestionably high research achievements

of the candidate provide sufficient grounds for me to confidently vote in favor of awarding the academic position of *Associate Professor* to Dr. **Yassen Alexiev Andreev** in the professional field 2.3. Philosophy (Ontology) for the needs of the *Ontology and Epistemology* Department at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

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