

Statement

for the academic works of Dr. Tsvetelin Angelov, submitted for the competition for Associate Professor in 2.3. Philosophy (Philosophy of Religion) in the Department of Religion and Worldview, IFS-BAS, announced in the *State Gazette*, issue 58, 9 July 2024.

The only candidate for the competition-Chief Asst. Dr. Tsvetelin Angelov-presents an impressive set of works both in terms of quantity and content. Apart from the monograph *Philosophical Dimensions of the Problem of the Divine Absolute*. ISBN - 978-954-392-420pp., the candidate submits more than 10 studies and articles, most of them published in the last five years, and contributing to the overall positive view of his philosophical production and research potential.

The aforementioned monograph, which is a habilitation work, develops the theme of the Divine Absolute in Georg Hegel's overall system, relating it to Immanuel Kant's transcendentalist approach to philosophy, as well as to significant and relevant ideas from the history of philosophy. The author sets out to convince the unwary reader that it is legitimate to discuss the question of the Divine Absolute and religion in general with philosophical, specifically, logical argumentation. By "logical" in the book is meant not formal reasoning schematism, but the speculative rational inferences, which grasps the concrete unity of opposites as well as the sublation of contradictions in something third-in their truth.

Dr. Angelov provides an original explicative survey of the three traditional proofs of God's existence, showing the justificatory role of the ontological proof over the teleological and cosmological proofs, which consider God's existence from other perspectives but circle back to the ontological proof, appearing to be its

"modal self-objectivations." Thus conceived, the unity of the three proofs allows the Divine Absolute to be considered not only ontologically, but epistemologically and logically, and in the case of the Christian religion, historically.

The author unfolds an extremely skillful and spot-on "micrologic" through the prism of intellectual intuition, manifested in Spinoza's philosophy as *Amor Dei Intellectualis*. It turns out that this is not a one-time act, which is why Dr. Angelov traces in detail and argument how the intuitive grasping of God in speculative reason passes through four levels. At the first level-*vita purgativa*-"God is purged of psychologisms, sensualisms, anthropomorphisms, images, and subjectivism," which is achieved thanks to Kant's "ethical theology." It then takes on the *vita illuminativa*, represented in Hegel's speculative philosophy of religion, where the Absolute, is objectified in the finite spirit, the latter manifesting itself as a moment of the Absolute in the succession of the subjective, objective and Absolute spirit. This is followed by the *vita contemplativa*, which the author illustrates through Hegel's theses on art, religion, and philosophy as degrees of knowledge of God-through, respectively, the beautiful as appearance, through faith, love, and reverence, and finally in the concrete concept as truth-concrete and absolute truth, i.e., actual truth. Finally, we move on, to the *vita unitiva*, which the author defines as the Divine substance—*causa sui* in Spinoza, and in Hegel as "the self-manifestation of the Absolute/der Absolute in the Absolute/das Absolute." It follows from further explanations that the Absolute/das Absolute is in fact "the Absolute Idea comprising a subjective-objective-Absolute Spirit whereby the Absolute Idea, in its dialectical self-explication, includes everything as its own immanent moment in its self-determination."

Here it seems to me that it is necessary to specify that it would be closer to the sense invested by Hegel to assert that the manifestations of spirit are not

immanently included in the Absolute Idea, but rather that it circularly returns to itself in them after its self-alienation in nature. Such a clarification, I think, is consistent with the author's understanding of Hegel's speculative sublation of the distinction between the divine and the "other," whereby the distinction itself is transcended.

Several central theses defended by the candidate in his studies and articles are also worth mentioning. In interpreting the relation between the ideas of reason in Kant's conception, Dr. Angelov emphasizes that the theological transcendental idea grounds the cosmological idea, and furthermore becomes a meta-idea in relation to the psychological and cosmological ones, "not derived from knowledge and thinking, nor from objectivity or subjectivity." The radical thesis that Kantian philosophy is possible only on the assumption of the existence of God, which is necessary as a transcendental ideal and regulative principle, and also as a postulate in practical philosophy, is to be congratulated. The second bold thesis concerning Kant's ethical conception is that reason is fideistic and faith rational, because "postulates as 'presuppositions with necessary practical significance' are free and at the same time necessary". This claim is expanded further to the view that "Christian fideistic principles are at the same time logically and rationally sound". For me, in the spirit of Kant's philosophy are the candidate's other radical theses, according to which Christian ethics stands above the "heteronomous-autonomous" opposition, and the categorical imperative can be interpreted as "an unconditional demand on the part of the will of a supreme and perfect moral lawgiver," which means that moral duties could be seen as commands of God.

In conclusion, I would like to note that the applicant meets the national requirements under the LDASRB, the requirements of BAS and the FSI. I have found no plagiarism. I have no conflict of interest. I consider the presented works

as a significant and original contribution to the field of "philosophy of religion" and I will vote with conviction for the election of Chief Asst. Dr. Tsvetelin Angelov as Associate Professor in 2.3. Philosophy (Philosophy of Religion) in the Department of Religion and Worldview, IFS-BAS.

20.10.2024

Prepared the opinion:

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