

REVIEW

By Anna Nikolova Beshkova, PhD, Assoc. Professor

regarding the materials submitted for participation in the competition

for occupation of academic position **'Associate Professor'**

in Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

in the area of higher education **2. Humanitarian sciences**

in Professional field **2.3. Philosophy**, scientific field **"Logic – non-classical philosophical logic"**

for the needs of the Department of Philosophy within the Faculty of Philosophy and History,
Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski'

In the competition for the academic position 'Associate Professor', announced in State Gazette No 31/12.04.2019 and on the web-site of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' for the needs of the Department of Philosophy within the Faculty of Philosophy and History, Assist. Prof. Valentin Asparuhov, PhD, lecturer in Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' participates as an only one candidate.

By Order No P33-3777/12.08.2019 of the Chancellor of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' I was appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury of the competition for occupation of the academic position **'Associate Professor'** in Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' in Area of Higher Education 2. "Humanitarian science", Professional field 2.3. "Philosophy", Scientific field "Logic – non-classical philosophical logic", **announced for the needs of** the Department of Philosophy within the Faculty of Philosophy and History.

Assist. Prof. Valentin Asparuhov, PhD was the only one participant who applied for the announced competition. The set of materials presented by Valentin Asparuhov in paper format complies with the Rules for the Development of the Academic Staff of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' and includes the following documents:

- An application to the Chancellor;
- Higher education diploma – Master's degree;
- PhD degree diploma;
- An individual plan for teaching activities (2018-19);
- Project work certificates;

- A list of scientific works;
- Articles, papers, monographies;
- An annotation of the materials for participating in the competition and self-evaluations of the contributions;
- A science-metric table with data;
- A declaration of originality and authenticity;

The candidate Valentin Asparuhov included a total of 14 scientific works that can be classified as follows:

Monography:

Synthesis, Apperceptions, Unities. Sofia: *Heterodoxia* Foundation;

Russell: philosophical logic and the problem of the logical form. Sofia;

Papers:

„Transcendental Strata in Russell’s Philosophical Logic“. In: *Critique & Humanism*, Vol. 47, issue 1/2017;

Articles in scientific editions:

„The Subject Matter of Philosophical Logic and Russell’s Contribution for its Elaboration“. In: *Philosophical Readings*;

„What is Philosophical Logic in ‘What is Logic (1912)’“. In: *Values and Valuables Orientations*;

„On the Philosophical Logic in *What is Logic?* (1912)“. In: *Philosophy*, issue 3;

„Old-fashioned Logic“. In: *Culture*, issue 23;

„Subjects, Propositions, Complexes: the hidden transcendentalism in *The Principles of Mathematics*“. In: Beshkova, A., Latinov, E., Polimenov, T. (eds.) *The Logical Tradition. Essays in Honour of Prof. Vitan Stefanov*;

„On What There Isn’t “. In: *Philosophical Alternatives*, issue 2-3;

„Thermonuclear and Other Syntheses“. In: *Καίρός*, E-Journal, issue 2;

„Meinong in the Light of Russell’s Philosophical Logic“. In: *Language & Publicity*, E-Journal, NBU (in print);

„Logical Experience, Logical Imagination, Indefinable Concepts“. In: *Καίρός*, E-Journal, issue 3;

„Kant or Cant(or)“. In: *Philosophy*, issue 3, (in print);

„The Perception of Logical Objects (Russell and Kant)“. In: *Καιρός*, E-Journal, issue 4;

All presented texts are in the field of philosophical logic. Including the presented reference of citations, they **fulfil** in total the quantitative science-metric indicators for occupying an academic position ‘Associate Professor’.

Valentin Asparuhov, PhD is leading researcher in the Philosophy and History Faculty in Plovdiv University. His work, as well is active and successful. He is an Assistant from 2003 to 2006. In 2006 he defends a thesis on topic “Philosophical Logic in the Light of Analytic Tradition. Russell’s Model” on scientific field 05.01.05 “Logic” and gets a position as “Assistant Professor”. He has been lecturing since then in *Philosophical logic, Philosophy, Epistemology, Ontology and History of Philosophy*. He additionally led specialized courses in Master’s Degree programs, mostly in the field of *Philosophical logic* and *Epistemology*. Also, he has been supervising and giving methodological advises for successfully graduated students. He is one of the founders of Philosophical logic seminar (2007) and of “The Student Philosophical seminar” in the Department of Philosophy. He is editor-in-chief on “Kairos” e-journal. At last but not least, I would like to mention, that the courses led by Asparuhov form an interest among students and give them new perspectives for researching topics and problems. Asparuhov attends some scientific projects.

Asparuhov’s works show his constant interest to Philosophical logic formation, especially to Russell’s analysis upon basic logical categories from *The Principles of Mathematics* to *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*. I would like to highlight his perfect knowing on Russell’s logical heritage, which also includes unpublished manuscripts. It is interesting to see that the author often makes non co-related logical views between analytical tradition and alternative ones. Regarding this way, he claims that Russell would be known as transcendental logician. The hidden layers which Asparuhov carefully research, show that Russell in his practice denied the idea for an active subject, but keeps the real conditions of possibility on propositions, logical form and conclusions. That is way he can be classified as non-classical transcendental logician.

The main text offered for a review is *Synthesis, Apperceptions, Unities (Notes in the field of philosophical logic)*. An object of consideration is “the transcendental layers” in Russell’s ideas

on philosophical logic. An attempt like this is completely interesting and it is a challenge for each “orthodoxal” explorer. The method which is used is mostly based on practicing the analysis then its clearly shown limitations. In the *Introduction*, the author claims that “we bet in Russell against himself, just to know something for as through him” (2019: 21). In that way the aims of the book can be divided as follows: 1) historical and philosophical task on authentic understanding on Russell’s heritage versus dominant interpretation on his logic in the analytical tradition; 2) building project for a new non-classical transcendental logic.

Firstly, Asparuhov presents “the decompositional analysis” and the problem for the unity of propositions. He makes a distinction between “logical constants” and “logical forms” and the last ones are considered like real objects of the philosophical logic. Some details are carefully and ably shown by Russell’s analytical practice after that. The main problems are related to the hipostasing of the logical form and the impossibility to explain the unity of propositions. Based on this Asparuhov gets to a conclusion that a hidden transcendental component in analysis subsist. In that way he formulates and states a new opposite interpretation of the Russell’s philosophical logic. According to him, it fits into the tradition of the classical philosophical modernity, but it deviates, too because it does not admit an active transcendental subject.

Secondly, the monograph aims to outline the borders and essence on philosophical logic from the end of XIX to the first quarter of XX century. The author shows how the connection between ontological and epistemological of Russell’s ideas for logic, leads to difficulties in its forming. After careful consideration of the unpublished manuscripts since 1904 and 1912 Asparuhov claims that Russell anticipate Wittgenstein’s ideas and, in that sense, transcendental motives in the understanding of the logical forms might be found among Russell’s works. Questioning the essence of the logical propositions, the author claims that they are synthetical a priori and their epistemological origin can be found in the capacity of the imagination. The following conclusion is that Russell traces the limits of a new non-classical transcendental logic.

The presented reference of citations, show that Asparuhov is quoted in 16 scientific publications, three of them in rewired journals. Most quotations have been made by his students which means that his teaching is active and successful. All works quotations of the candidate are sensible and show his influence upon Bulgarian scientific community. I would like to express my

personal positive opinion about the significance of Asparuhov's works in the field of Russell's philosophical logic.

Asparuhov's contributions follow the way of elucidation of "transcendental traces" in the philosophical logic of Russell. However, opposing Kant, these traces are idiosyncratic form of non-classical transcendentalism. Such an interpretation is new not only for the Bulgarian but for the philosophical literature at all.

In my opinion, the book is an independent researching where brave hypothesis and interesting interpretations subsist. Undisputable erudition of the candidate is visible in the offered scientific works for the competition, his splendid style in writing, as well as his creative way of thinking.

A lot of hidden hypothesis and arguments can be found in the offered text. I propose the author to explicit and give clearer and exact definitions on the main concepts which he uses and precisely on the "non-classical transcendental logic" in his further publications.

I would like to say, before giving my final statement, that I am familiar with Valentin Asparuhov's work being participants in a lot of logical seminars organized by Institute for Critical and Social Studies and I know him like an earnest, innovative and devoted on his scientific work.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I want to point out that the papers and texts submitted by Valentin Asparuhov, PhD, meet the requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act and on the ground of this I firmly give my positive assessment and recommend to the Scientific Jury to vote for awarding Valentin Asparuhov the academic position 'Associate Professor' in Professional field 2.3. "Philosophy", Scientific field "Logic – non-classical philosophical logic" in "Paisii Hilendarski" University of Plovdiv.

Sofia,
11.09.2019 г.

Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Anna Beshkova, PhD