

REVIEW

from

Prof. Antoaneta Angelova Ancheva D.Sc.

for the dissertation

of

Assoc. Prof. Boyan Krasimirov Manchev Ph.D.

on the subject:

"ART AND POIESIS: PHILOSOPHY OF THE IMAGE AND
PHILOSOPHICAL FIGUROLOGY.

ATTEMPTS IN THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE
THEORY OF ART"

for the acquiring of: the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences"

field of higher education: 8. ARTS

professional direction: 8.1 THEORY OF ARTS

NEW BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY

Department of Fine Arts

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boyan Manchev presents a dissertation on the topic "Art and Poiesis: Philosophy of the Image and Philosophical Figuorology. Attempts at the epistemology of the foundations of the theory of art" for the defense of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences".

Assoc. Dr. Boyan Manchev is known as one of the most respected specialists in the field of philosophy and theory of art. He has managed to build a remarkable scientific reputation both at home and abroad, evidenced by his publications and his participation in notable scientific forums, publications, projects, etc.

The work itself, given its specificity, as defined by the author himself, is structured in three sections, possessing relative autonomy and whose content are the studies "The Other Origin of Art" /« L'autre origine de l'art », 2021/ and the books " Changing the world. For a radical aesthetic” [L’alteration du monde. Pour

une esthétique radicale, 2009 / 2020] and “The New Atanor. Beginnings of Philosophical Fiction” (2020). In the abstract, Assoc. Prof. B. Manchev precisely notes that the dissertation “represents a synthesis of their main points”, which have undergone inevitable development because of the general structure and conceptual integrity of the study. As a result, it is based on them without, however, repeating them.

In addition to the two sections, /as they are called/, comprising of three parts each - respectively six parts, the dissertation contains an introduction, conclusions to the individual parts, a bibliography, an appendix with images to the First Part of the First Section and a reference to the scientific contributions. The total volume of the work is 478 pages.

The Bibliography, as correctly noted, includes the cited or used monographs and contains only a few studies and articles. 410 titles are included, of which 196 are in Cyrillic and 214 are in Latin.

In the “Introduction”, the author clearly and precisely defines the goals, tasks and marks the philosophical and art studies projections that he will follow and defend in the overall study. Thus, already in the introduction - in the idea, in the thoroughness of the scope and the aspiration for multi-layeredness and interdisciplinarity, the specific scientific contribution of the work is embedded.

In fact, the study follows the long-term studies of Assoc.Prof. Dr. B. Manchev in “the field of philosophy and theory of art and cultural history, identifying its main stages and structural moments”. Thus presented, the dissertation appears to be a purposeful and consistent result of stated and enduring interests in the problems of these scientific fields.

What I want to emphasize is that the approach to clarification, analysis and conclusions in the thesis is new to the research community in the context that “The core of the work is the relationship between philosophy and art”. Moreover, in

order to achieve the goal of the research, namely to reveal the "immanent action of philosophical notions and concepts in artistic works, as well as their role in structuring the very idea of art", the author offers a "mirror look", a kind of double optics from philosophy to art and from art to philosophy.

The first section of the dissertation, called "Corpus", includes three studies with relative autonomy and "different modality" which reveal the problem posed. The basis of the first part is the study "L'autre origine de l'art" /"The other origin of art"/, which was published in French and Portuguese in the collective monograph "The Persistence of the Work". It is dedicated to the concepts of poiesis, image and art. Here the focus is on "establishing the modern meaning of the term art in relation to the category of creativity, poiesis, respectively - with the ability to produce images". The historical aspects of the concept of poiesis from Aristotle onwards are traced, with emphasis on its significance in the philosophy and art of the Renaissance. This is not accidental, because as we know, a new type of human relationships and spiritual perception of the world was created during the Renaissance, which was built on humanism, science and art. The latter also define the character of the Italian Renaissance. They are those basic and inseparable components of a complete and harmonious spiritual culture that breaks the dogma and unleashes the human curiosity and daring. The 18th century and the influence of Abbé Bateau and especially Immanuel Kant are indicated as the next "key" moment. Particular attention is paid to the Jena romantics and Novalis in particular. And here B. Manchev expresses a hypothesis that "it is precisely these conceptions that lie at the basis of the modern conception of both art and philosophy". The historical understanding of art in its autonomy is defined as *royaume de la beauté*.

The second part of the dissertation - "Philosophical Figurology" is dedicated to the concepts of image, figure and concept. It is based on another book by the author - "The New Atanor. The Beginning of Philosophical Fiction" and poses the

question of "the image as an ontological matrix of the philosophical concept". The creation of "sustainable images and figures", their significance and their importance for the structuring of philosophical language and artistic practice is explored - the image acquires, in the author's words, "the status of an ontogenic agent". The third part is devoted to the concepts of aisthesis, alloiosis and image. The philosophy of the image as an anthropological, cultural and artistic phenomenon is explored. A complex approach is applied and the philosophy of the image is presented in a "synthetic perspective" as a central cultural phenomenon and as a main philosophical and art concept. This problem was set by the author already in his study "The Unimaginable. Attempts at the philosophy of the image", NBU, 2003, as well as in the course of lectures that he leads for more than 20 years at NBU. Thus, in the third part, the question of the origin of the image is raised with the hypothesis of its key role in the contemporary artistic creativity. That is why the problem of the image is one of the main ones in the field of visual studies. It is also a part in a number of theories and approaches in more recent times - the phenomenological line of M. Merleau-Ponty, J.-L. Marion, M.-Zh. Mondzen et al., J. Derrida's philosophical deconstruction, R. Barth's semiotic analysis, etc. In this context, the study is very useful and valuable in the "problem field" of visual studies. These are extremely significant, serious problems, I would say, of fundamental importance, which are at the focal point of philosophy and art theory.

Or, as Assoc. Prof. B. Manchev very accurately summarizes, the first part of the study has an "epistemological-artistic orientation (referring to the epistemological foundations of the very idea of autonomous knowledge of art), the second - epistemological-philosophical, and the third - anthropological-phenomenological, as the ontological horizon – the horizon of general poetics – unites the three phases of the study'.

The second main section of the thesis, called "Developments" is defined as "applied" and contains parts of different studies that have been revised in a way that can contribute to the structuring and integrity of the work. Their task, according to the author, is to present the possibilities of the theoretical positions of the main part of the work, developing them in "specific experimental modalities".

Without having the opportunity to examine in more detail the dissertation work of Assoc. Prof. B. Manchev and to get to know its innovative nature, I will emphasize that this is a thorough study, referring to several problem circles, expanding and enriching scientific territories. In this way, it not only meets and fills the existing known deficit in our science, but also equates to leading trends and directions in contemporary humanitarism and art studies.

I fully agree with the scientific contributions indicated by the author, which I consider to be highly significant. Their significance is determined by the new information, comprehensiveness of the analyzes and relations between the modern research methods and the wide and interdisciplinary scope of the issues under consideration. In the presented dissertation, extremely important qualities such as deep and analytical thought, the ability to build a meaningful and substantive focus against the background of a marked striving for comprehensiveness can be found, and all this combined with the taste and sense of the structure of the text and seen through the prism of the double philosophical and an art critic's point of view.

Therefore, I can confidently state that the dissertation work presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boyan Manchev is a novelty for our science, but at the same time it is not unexpected for him as a researcher - philosopher and art critic. For more than two decades, being a teacher at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", New Bulgarian University, as well as vice-president of the International Philosophical College, Paris, etc., he is not only part of a scientific and artistic environment, but is also

an active participant in this environment in areas such as ontology, philosophy of art, contemporary art. He has given lectures, organized conferences and forums in numerous European and American universities and institutions. In other words, the scientific interests of the researcher Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boyan Manchev have been seriously proven up to this point by his numerous publications and appearances, including on the topic of the dissertation.

The work itself shows high erudition, supported by an interdisciplinary and complex type of thinking, which is his extremely valuable quality. The fact that the research is multidirectional, covering several scientific fields, makes it open to certain interdisciplinary projections and deepens its contributions and value.

The dissertation work, as well as the publications of Associate Professor Manchev, are eloquent proof of his persistent interests in the problematic circles of science and art.

As a conclusion, I will say that the dissertation work represents an innovative and serious study, which has a very high heuristic potential, which introduces new and significant material into scientific circulation, expands theoretical-philosophical and art history territories, and creates interdisciplinary projections. The dissertation student has excellent knowledge, mastery and handling of the material, asserting his position, which is felt throughout the study.

I believe that the presented dissertation work on the topic "Art and poiesis: philosophy of the image and philosophical figuration. Attempts in epistemology of the foundations of the theory of art" for the defense of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" represents an extremely serious and in-depth theoretical study with a marked contribution character.

In view of all the merits and scientific contributions of the dissertation, professional skills, scientific erudition, exceptional precision, originality of the presentation, which in many cases exceed the required scientific criteria, I express

my positive assessment and confidently suggest to the respected members of the scientific jury to award to Prof. Dr. Boyan Krasimirov Manchev, the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in scientific field 8. "Art", professional direction 8.1 Theory of Arts.

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