

THE ANNIVERSARY OF A SIGNIFICANT ACADEMIC INSTITUTION

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Abstract: The text is a review of the activity of the Institute for Bulgarian Philosophical Culture (IBPC) up to now and its publication - the “The Bulgarian Philosophical Review”, prepared on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Institute. It dwells on the statute and mission of IBPC. The main characteristics of our website have been presented as well as the publications of the academic institution and its journal. The results of “The Philosophical 20th Century in Bulgaria” research project have been reported in brief. The forums and events held with the participation of IBPC as well as other initiatives have been described. The sources of funding of the IBPC and its publication and the main problems they face have been pointed out.

Keywords: Institute for Bulgarian Philosophical Culture, Bulgarian Philosophical Review

In early June 2026 a celebration was held at “St. Kliment Ohridski” University of Sofia on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the Institute for Bulgarian Philosophical Culture (IBFC) and its theoretical organ “Bulgarian Philosophical Review”. During the event the previous activities of the non-governmental academic organization established in the spring of 2011 by a group of Bulgarian philosophers working in various academic institutions in the country namely Prof. Nina Dimitrova, Prof. Ventseslav Koulov, Prof. Atanas Stamatov, Prof. Dobrin Todorov, Prof. Hristo P. Todorov, Assoc. Prof. Iassen Zahariev and Assoc. Prof. Hristo Stoev were presented. Subsequently Dr. Bisera Koleva (2012), Prof. Nonka Bogomilova (2024) and Assoc. Prof. Vasil Vidinski (2026) joined the Institute. The officially declared mission of the IBFC is to work “for the research, popularization, stimulation and development of philosophical science and the Bulgarian philosophical culture, as well as to support secondary and higher education in the field of philosophy”.

One of the first tasks of the IBFC was the creation of its website (philosophybg.com). Each of its sections contains information on a specific element of the country’s

philosophical publicity: “portraits” of the most prominent representatives of modern Bulgarian philosophical culture, the state of the academic community by institutions and interests, the defended dissertation theses and philosophers’ habilitations. The existing institutions for realization (educational and research) and the professional organizations of which Bulgarian philosophers are members are presented there. Data have been provided on the profiled philosophical education, on the supported traditional scientific forums, on the published specialized theoretical publications, on the published philosophical books in this country, on upcoming events organized by representatives of the philosophical community as well as on the implemented and ongoing research projects involving members of the IBFC.

The IBFC website features the publications of the “Seminar 333” Philosophical Library which includes short texts characteristic of the development of philosophical culture and commentaries on them. They are addressed both to readers already interested in philosophy and to those who are just entering its labyrinths. The selection and volume of texts make the library particularly useful for teaching philosophical disciplines in secondary and higher schools in our country.

The preparation of the first issue of its theoretical publication – the “Bulgarian Philosophical Review” – began immediately after the establishment of the IBFC. During the first ten years of its existence, its editor-in-chief was Atanas Stamatov and after him this position was taken over by Iassen Zahariev. The main task of the publication is to capture and convey the image of the professional life of academic philosophers in this country; to embed the results achieved by them in the national culture by making them available not only for those directly involved in philosophy but also to the wider cultural community. The journal is published in one issue annually after the end of the previous calendar year.

The main sections in the “Bulgarian Philosophical Review” are: *Studies* which contain texts on the topic of the respective issue; *Archive* including articles from the past of the national philosophical culture relevant to the topic of the issue; *Philosophical Perspectives* – a section free of content-disciplinary and genre-stylistic restrictions including texts with a philosophical content; *Criticism and Bibliography* – offers a review of the philosophical literature published in this country during the calendar year; *Philosophical Publicity* – features the socio-cultural life of the Bulgarian philosophers (theoretical forums, defenses of dissertation theses, habilitations, anniversaries, events, etc.). Individual issues of the journal also include situational columns: “Text with Comment”, “Anniversary”, “In memoriam”, etc. The topics on the pages of the “Bulgarian Philosophical Review” are diverse. Its issues are dedicated to prominent figures (Dimitar Mihalchev, Ivan Georgov), *individual disciplines* (philosophy of history, aesthetics, ethics, philosophical anthropology), *specific problems* (philosophical language, philosophical education, essayism, psychoanalysis), *ideological trends* (Marxism) in the Bulgarian philosophical culture. In some issues *classical philosophical* (freedom) and *current socio-cultural* (coronavirus, trust) topics

are considered the main ones. For the first 15 years of its existence nearly 280 texts of various types: studies, articles, reviews, surveys, opinions, book excerpts, bibliography, interviews, poetry, etc, have been published in the journal. So far texts by nearly 140 people mostly professional philosophers with high academic status but also by authors with other profiles: sociologists, teachers, writers, psychoanalysts, priests, politicians, lawyers, journalists have been published in the journal. It is available in several central Sofia bookstores, is deposited in the library network of higher education institutions, research institutions and regional libraries in the country. It is included in the *National Reference List of Bulgarian Scientific Publications* indexed by ERIH Plus and figures in the EBSCO electronic database.

So far, the Institute's associates have held a number of *public events* jointly with other institutions and organizations: a "Word and Image" exhibition dedicated to the multifaceted work of Prof. Tsocho Boyadzhiev and on the occasion of his sixtieth anniversary (October 2011); a "round table" on the "Bulgarian Philosophy in Virtual Space" (December 2011) in which lecturers from various higher education institutions as well as associates of the Institute of Philosophy at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences participated; a jubilee session on "Ivan Georgov and Bulgarian Philosophical Culture" dedicated to the 150th birth anniversary of Prof. Dr. Ivan Georgov (1862 – 1936) (November 2012); presentation of issue 4 of the "Bulgarian Philosophical Review" on "Philosophical Education" which published the results of a national sociological survey on the views of non-philosophy students regarding the university teaching of philosophical disciplines (March 2015); presentation of the books entitled "Philosophical Heritage" by Dr. Spas Spassov (1957 – 2015) (June 2019) and "Philosophical Reflections" by Assoc. Prof. Hristo Stoev (1973 – 2022) (January 2023).

The publishing activity of the IBFC began in 2012 with the publication of the "Ethical Writings" volume by Prof. Ivan Georgov in the *Sources* series. Then the "Philosophical Writings" volume by Acad. Ivan Gyuzelev (2016), "Notes on Logic" (2017) and a collection of "Ethical Writings" (2025) by Prof. Dimitar Mihalchev, the "German Classical Philosophy" lecture notes by Prof. Ivan S. Stefanov (2026) were published in these series. All books contain commentaries prepared by IBFC associates. The publication of works by IBFC members also began in the *Studies* series in 2012. "Studies on Bulgarian Philosophical Culture" by Dobrin Todorov was published first. Then the monograph "Philosophy as a Problem in the Bulgarian Literature of the 20th Century" by Ventseslav Koulov (2013), the bibliographical study "Philosophical Literature in the Bulgarian Language Published in Bulgaria during the "Long 20th Century" /Bibliography 1878 – 2013/" (2014) by Dobrin Todorov; the collections "Spaces of Identity – Reflections on the Bulgarian Philosophical Culture" by Nina Dimitrova (2019), "Philosophical Reflections" by Hristo Stoev (2022) and "On the Bulgarian Philosophical Culture" by Atanas Stamatov (2023); the third volume of the collective monograph "The Philosophical 20th Century in Bulgaria – Faces of Modern Bulgarian Philosophical Culture" in two parts: "From the Renaissance to the Mid-20th

Century” (2020) and “After the Mid-20th Century” (2022) were published in these series.

Work on the “The Philosophical 20th Century in Bulgaria” research project which began even before the establishment of the IBFC was completed in 2022. This project was aimed at comprehending the development of modern Bulgarian philosophical culture from several perspectives and by different methodological means. The first part of the study was dedicated to philosophical publicity understood not only as a condition and means for the life of philosophy in our country but also as its face as a segment of national culture. The results of this stage of the study were included in a special volume with the main title being the name of the entire project and the subtitle – “philosophical publicity” published in 2008. The philosophical delineation of the *dialogical fields* in the national philosophical culture itself in view of the fundamental themes for the European philosophical discourse is the subject of the second part of the study which examines the development of the ideological and philosophical segment of our national culture during the specified period. The results of this stage of the research were published in 2009 in the “Criticism and Humanism” journal. The third stage of the project entitled “*Faces of Modern Bulgarian Philosophical Culture*” focuses on the authors who largely shape the native philosophical life and form the philosophical canon in the modern Bulgarian culture. About 30 individual “portraits” feature the creators and some of the leading figures in Bulgarian philosophical culture from the Renaissance to the end of the 20th century.

The activities of the IBFC are financed through several sources: annual membership fees and personal donations of its members; donations of private individuals; income from sales of the IBFC publications in this country and of articles in the “Bulgarian Philosophical Review” journal through the CEEOL electronic library. The printing of the issues of the “Bulgarian Philosophical Review” journal and the publication of books from the “Sources” series is financed by IBFC’s own funds. The publication of the books of the IBFC members in the “Research” series is carried out with the funds of their authors.

The IBFC also encounters quite a few problems in its activities: gradual aging of the Institute’s staff; difficulty in attracting voluntary collaborators for its initiatives; insufficient efficient promotion of the IBFC’s activities among the philosophical and academic community as well as among the general public; lack of financial support from state institutions and sporadic support from individuals which limits the opportunities for a more active work; lack of its own material resources making it difficult to demonstrate a greater initiative.

IBFC is already an established and prominent research institution contributing to the development of philosophical research in contemporary Bulgaria. It will become clear in the coming years whether it will enter a new stage of its development or will gradually fade away. The realization of the first option needs the support of both its current and future collaborators.

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