

UDK:929Старделов, Г.

IN MEMORIAM

LIFE AND WORK DEDICATED TO AESTHETICS AND CULTURE

Academician Georgi STARDELOV (August 28, 1930 - January 11, 2021)

Death is a relentless fact that silently contradicts us and warns us to be silent because words are never enough to express our sorrow for the one who is no longer with us with his body, but death, at the same time, causes us to speak, because at the beginning of everything is the word and because the word is at the end - he is the alpha and omega of our entire culture and civilization. And exactly to the word and the thought, to the logos from which everything starts and to which everything ends in the end, in fact, the life and work of academician Georgi Stardelov were entirely dedicated, because he, as a philosopher and aesthetician, as a philosopher of culture and literary a critic, as a top hermeneutist, found the meaning of his tireless scientific and social activity precisely in his words, in their meanings, and in their activity.

As a student of Academician Stardelov who was a mentor of both my master's and doctoral dissertation, but also as his assistant in the curricula of Aesthetics and Philosophy of Culture, and now as a professor whose work I continue in the "Aesthetic Laboratory" of the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje, at the same desk where he sat in the past and gave his vehement lectures, I had the wonderful opportunity to learn directly from the sources of his inexhaustible knowledge fully related to the fields of aesthetics, philosophy of culture and literary and artistic criticism. Our conversations about the phenomena of art, and especially of literature, were constant and productive, and in them, I learned new things until the last moments of his life.

But, on this sad occasion, we should also remember some important bio-bibliographic data related to the life and work of academician Georgi Stardelov. From them, even when they are only listed exhaustively, it is clear that Stardelov has been fully embedded in the Macedonian philosophy and aesthetics, more precisely, he has become an integral and indispensable part of the overall Macedonian culture and history.

Academician Georgi Stardelov (Gevgelija, 28 August 1930 - Skopje, 11 January 2021) was a philosopher, esthetician, essayist, literary critic, anthologist, theorist, and historian of culture. He graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy at the Department of Philosophy at the University of Belgrade (1953) and received a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Skopje (1965). He resided for one year in 1970 in Munich, West Germany, as a fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung. He was a professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje (1966-1995), and its dean (1975-1977), the first dean of interdisciplinary studies in journalism (1977-1981), president of the Philosophical Society of Mac-

edonia and Yugoslavia, president of the Writers' Association of Macedonia and President of the Macedonian PEN Center. He was an honorary member of the Society of Artists of the Spanish Royal Academy and a full member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts. He was also a visiting professor at several Yugoslav, European and American universities. He was elected a corresponding member of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1986, and a full member since 1991. In the period 2000-2004, he was vice president, and in 2008-2011 its president. He has been the Head of the Lexicography Center at the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts since its establishment in 2000. He was the founder and head (since 1993) of one of the most comprehensive and significant humanistic and interdisciplinary macro projects of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts "History of Culture of Macedonia". He has won several domestic and foreign awards and recognitions. He was the author of more than 40 important books in the field of aesthetics, history of aesthetics, and essays and also the author of many poetic and prose anthologies. He translated and edited numerous major philosophical works and authors. He has achieved the most significant results in the field of application of philosophical hermeneutics in the analysis of literary and artistic phenomena. In his hermeneutics Stardelov always starts from the original work and its aesthetic experience – a golden key to the interpretation of the phenomenon of art.

His most important works are: *Essays* (1958); *The Modern and Modernism* (1962); *Worlds* (1969); *Antaeus in Search of Soil* (1971); *Age of Controversy* (1977); *Between Literature and Life* (1981); *Experimentum Macedonicum* (1983); *Weary Avant-garde* (1985); *Introduction to Future* (1986); *Experiences* (1987); *Portraits and Profiles* (1987); *The Breaking of Strength* (1990); *Summa Aestheticae* (1991); *Antaeus Touches the Soil* (1993); *Ten* (1994); *Kerubin's Tribe* (1995); *Grandeurs* (1997); *Nonbeing* (2000); *Temptations of the Aesthetic Mind* (2003); *Balkan Aesthetics an Other Aesthetics* (2004); *Angelus Novus* (2004); *Night Gardener* (2006); *Heavenly steward* (2008); *Do You Hear, Cain's people?* (2010); *Words. Ephemeris* (2011); *Summa aestheticae I – South Slavic aesthetics*; *Summa aestheticae II – Balkan aesthetics an other aesthetics*; *Summa aestheticae III – History of European aesthetics of the XX century* (2015); *The Epoch of Blazhe Koneski* (2018); *Critique of the demoralized mind* (2018); *Birth of tragedy* (2020); *Macedonian Poetry Constellation* (2020).

In all these Stardelov's texts and studies as a key thread runs the idea of his full commitment, to the last moment of his life, to work on his manuscripts, to work on the interpretation of literature, especially Macedonian, to work on his aesthetic studies of art and for its immediate experience and importance for the essence of man.

Also, one cannot but emphasize the fact that Stardelov as a philosopher is deeply versed in the German philosophical and aesthetic tradition, because he often stayed in Germany and in the seventies of the last century, as already mentioned, became a scholarship holder of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Stiftung), which is joined by a large number of scientists from the

natural sciences and humanities from around the world with over fifty Nobel Prize winners. Probably because of this linguistic, philosophical, and cultural Stardelov's connection with the German philosophy and culture, he naturally delves into hermeneutics which, although as teaching derived from Biblical exegesis, finds its strongest application within German Romanticism, and through Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) and Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) and in the context of German philosophy from the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century. This connection of Stardelov with hermeneutics is directly evidenced by one of his recollections of the meeting with the grandiose figure of twentieth-century philosophy Martin Heidegger, who also influences the aforementioned Hans-Georg Gadamer who becomes Heidegger's assistant and who is also, as a hermeneutic, one of the most important philosophers of our time.

The influence of Gadamer's hermeneutic ideas on Stardelov is undeniable, but he deepens them, especially when it comes to the application of the hermeneutic method and approach to the analysis of poetic work. Therefore, it can be said with certainty that Stardelov using the hermeneutic approach accomplishes top achievements in the analysis of the poetry of the first and second post-war generation of Macedonian poets, especially when it comes to the overall poetry of Blazhe Koneski, Slavko Janevski, Aco Shopov, Mateja Matevski, and Ante Popovski, for whose poetic works Stardelov also writes extensive monographs. Thus, highly appreciating their work, he, in fact, stands in defense of both the Macedonian language and the Macedonian literature and culture.

The scientific, cultural, and educational mission of Academician Georgi Stardelov was based on his own vast knowledge and the desire to transfer that knowledge enlighteningly to both the knowledgeable and the less knowledgeable, in order not to forget the past and to have an awareness that nothing starts with us and that nothing ends with us. In that direction, Stardelov created his three-volume fascinating work "Summa Aestheticae" dedicated to South Slavic, Balkan and European aesthetics. In that direction was his work on the capital macro-project of MASA "History of the Culture of Macedonia", a project that began to be realized in the last century (1993) and whose 28 published volumes are an introduction to the new phase of the project that will need in the years that followed to experience its completion, unfortunately, now without his *spiritus movens*, academician Georgi Stardelov.

In fact, the work of academician Georgi Stardelov not only follows and values it but also directly participates in the development of Macedonian culture, especially in terms of its philosophical thinking in this "age of contradictions", in which we all live. On the other hand, the great love for literature necessarily forms the point of intersection between literature and philosophy. The place where academician Georgi Stardelov most directly achieves the touch and overlap, of course, is the aesthetics or philosophy of art – the philosophical discipline to which Georgi Stardelov fully dedicates himself.

Stardelov was a man with vast knowledge of the world and Macedonian culture and literature. He was a man who knew how to translate all that knowledge into wonderful lectures, sermons, texts, and monographic studies. With his death, his family, but also all of us, lost a whole, huge and important pivotal library that moves, our philosophy and aesthetics lost their most important representative, and the Macedonian culture lost the man who was completely dedicated to it – interpreting and defending it, both with its activity and with its work.

Ivan Djeperoski