

OPINION

On the dissertation work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva,
entitled “**To(wards) the concepts τὸ δίκαιον and ἡ δικαιοσύνη
in the practical philosophy of Aristotle**”

Offered for the acquisition of the degree Doctor of Sciences in the professional
field Philosophy (Ethics - History of Ethics)

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Antoaneta Nikolova,
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All necessary materials are presented and organised correctly. All conditions and requirements for acquisition of the scientific degree “Doctor of Sciences” are fulfilled, in accordance with the Law, the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of Sofia University “St. Kl. Ohridski”.

The proposed dissertation work for the award of the scientific degree “Doctor of Sciences” does not repeat the topic and the content of the work presented for acquiring the educational and scientific degree “doctor”.

Dissertation details:

The dissertation comprises 338 pages, larger than the standard ones, corresponding to 346 pages. It consists of an introduction, three main chapters, divided into parts and subparts, a conclusion, a bibliography, and online resources. The bibliography includes 445 titles in Bulgarian, Russian, German, French, English, Ancient Greek and Latin, as well as 20 Internet sources.

Content of dissertation:

In the introduction, Assoc. Prof. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva very correctly, clearly and comprehensively presents the reasons for writing the dissertation and the state of the art of the discussed topic. She also argues the relevance of the work and clarifies the main thematic circles that the research adheres to.

There are three thematic circles in the dissertation: (i) analysing the conceptualisation of the virtues, especially of *justice*, which Aristotle inherited and adopted from some of the most important thinkers, who have written before him in Greek; (ii) analysing how Aristotle rethought the adopted ideas from previous thinkers through his own original concepts; (iii) clarifying the specifics and scope of the concepts *τὸ δίκαιον* and *ἡ δικαιοσύνη*.

In the first two chapters of the dissertation, an in-depth and thorough study of the thinking layers that preceded Aristotle's ideas is made.

Chapter One, “*Just and justice according to the historiographers and the perfect Attic tragedy*”, examines profoundly within three complementary parts the views on *just* and *justice* according to the works of Herodotus and Thucydides, as well as the understanding of *justice from beyond* according to Sophocles’ *Antigone*.

The second chapter, “*Just and justice – from Plato to Aristotle*” also consists of three parts. The first one presents attempts to determine *just* and *justice* and their ontological consideration in Plato’s *Republic*. The second one discusses the personification of the virtues in the *Persian story-paradigm*, told by Socrates in the *Alcibiades*. The third one explains the development of Plato’s and Aristotle’s thinking on the issue of state and political regulations.

After the precise analysis of the layers upon which Aristotle’s vision is built, in the third chapter, the author examines the conceptualisation of *τὸ δίκαιον* and *ἡ δικαιοσύνη* within *Corpus Aristotelicum*. This chapter also consists of three interrelated parts. The first one is devoted to the concept and understanding of

just, the second one – to *justice*, and the third part presents and discusses the use of these two terms through translation and commentary on one of Aristotle's most popular works, *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Finally, a convincing conclusion is drawn, in which the author places her work in the context of contemporary Bulgarian and foreign studies as well as in the context of our own existence – both as individuals and as parts of larger communities.

The dissertation has qualities that are very difficult to be simultaneously achieved. On the one hand, this is an in-depth study performed with exceptional precision, masterful grinding and detailing of nuances, meticulous definition of concepts. On the other hand, this is a wide-scope study that allows the place of every detail in the whole to be determined, parallels and informed conclusions to be drawn. This simultaneous breadth and depth, intertwined in a sophisticated and harmonious triple structure, combined with a trinity of topics and a binary of the basic concepts, is impressive. The combination of scientific objectivity and argumentation and the delicate but unambiguously expressed human position of the author, which reveals the relevance of ancient ideas today, are also remarkable.

Conscientiousness, scientific honesty, dedication, devotion and passion – these are the qualities that characterise Dimka Gicheva's work.

Contributions

I fully accept the contributions formulated by the author. In addition, I would like to point out the originality of both the topic and the approach to it. Comprehensive and competent interpretations of all original texts, as well as a thorough clarification of the meanings of concepts and their interrelations, are also undoubtedly a contribution.

Publications and summary

The author's publications and participations in national and international scholar forums meet the requirements for number and representativeness.

The summary is in line with the dissertation text and presents it correctly and comprehensively.

Conclusion

The dissertation is an original, meaningful, and rich in ideas and conclusions research whose undoubted merits would be an honour for any scholar community.

I will confidently vote "Yes" and propose to the distinguished scholar jury to award Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva with the degree Doctor of Sciences in the professional field Philosophy (Ethics - History of Ethics).

24. 09. 2019

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Antoaneta Nikolova:

Sofia