

ATTITUDE OF REVIEWER

from

Assoc. Prof. Stoyan Andreas Stavru,

Department of Ethical Studies, ISSK-BAS

on

„TO(WARDS) THE CONCEPTS Τὸ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΝ AND ἡ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ IN THE PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY OF ARISTOTLE“

by **Dimka Ivanova Gicheva-Gocheva**

thesis submitted for the degree of „**Doctor of Science**“

in scientific specialty 2. “Humanities”

professional field 2.3. “Philosophy”

1. Information about the procedure

I was elected as a member of the academic jury awarding the academic degree of Doctor of Sciences on the basis of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), the Regulations for the Application of ADASRB, Rules on the Terms and Conditions for Acquisition of Academic Degrees and Occupation of Academic Positions at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” for the implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philosophy from 02.07.2019; Order of the Rector of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”: RD-38-336/08.07.2019; Decision No.1/22.07.2019 from the first meeting of the academic jury.

The academic jury, at its first meeting on 22.07.2019, assigned to me the task to present a report (attitude of reviewer) on the thesis for the degree of Doctor of Sciences “To(wards) the concepts τὸ δίκαιον and ἡ δικαιοσύνη in the practical philosophy of Aristotle” and on the academic contributions of Dimka Ivanova Gicheva-Gocheva. The report is based on the text of the thesis submitted by the author, the summary of the thesis with a list of publications of the parts of the dissertation, autobiography, list of publications and reference-declaration of compliance with the minimum national requirements.

2. Short biography of the candidate

Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva was born in 1964. She graduated from the Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” with first specialty in Philosophy and second specialty in English language. In 1997 he defended his PhD in History of Philosophy (Ancient Philosophy) on "Teleology in

Aristotle's Philosophy". He is currently an Associate Professor and has extensive teaching experience including main courses such as: Ancient Philosophy, Introduction to Ancient Philosophy and History of Philosophy, as well as the additional courses such as: "Academic Writing," "Philosophy in Antiquity, Middle Ages and the Renaissance," "The Political Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle" and others.

The Statement of Compliance with the Minimum National Requirements presented by Assoc. Prof. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva contains information about 1 monograph, 10 studies and 9 articles, she is an editor and compiler of 3 books. Assoc. Prof. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva is a founding member of the Association for the Development of Classical Education in University, as well as a member of the International Plato Society, of the Southeast European Association for Ancient Philosophy and of the European Association for Institutional Research on Higher Education. Her academic development includes participation in 6 projects (in 4 of which she is a leader). For this activity, Assoc. Prof. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva has 21 noted citations submitted in this procedure.

3. Compliance with the Minimal National Standards for the academic degree of Doctor of Sciences

According to the registration in the National Center for Information and Documentation and the submitted by the Assoc. Prof. Gicheva-Gocheva reference on the fulfilment of the minimum national requirements for the degree of Doctor of Science, Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva meets these requirements.

4. Evaluation of the contents academic achievements of the candidate

I would like to state explicitly the issues that I could not evaluate concerning the dissertation, which are all questions about the quality and accuracy of the translations submitted by the Assoc. Prof. Gicheva-Gocheva, as well as the historical genealogies made by her, based on the original terminology used in the ancient works, analysed into the dissertation.

The dissertation has at its centre two concepts that are linked through idea of freedom (p. 43 of the dissertation):

- the justice, understood as "as a personal virtue, as a quality potentially possessed by every person, but updated or not in different cases and situations", and
- the just, understood "as a relational concept of interpersonal and sometimes interinstitutional relations" (p. 9 of the dissertation).

The concepts are examined through the philosophical views and works of Herodotus, Thucydides, Sophocles, Aristotle and Plato. I would like to dwell on one of these works, which is the translation of Sophocles' *Antigone* presented by Assoc. Prof. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva. Although a philosophical concept, the just shows its practical importance and social stake in the process of law enforcement. In this sense, in spite of its philosophical roots, justice often functions as a legal imperative. Although recent Bulgarian legislation has been "exempt" from cases of explicit reference to the just (more important is the legal order itself), its achievement remains a leading (albeit implicit) goal of any legal act. Achieving this goal is at the heart of the legitimacy not only of the court judgments, but also of the legal rules in general. This is precisely where the just manifests itself and its requirements which go beyond the written laws.

Antigone's irreconcilability with Creon's decision to leave her brother Polynic's body unburied is driven the invocation of the divine order: "Although an enemy who fought against Thebes, Polynic must be buried because the humans do not bother with the corpses of their enemies" (p. 98 of the thesis). Antigone is a personification of the virtue of piety, requiring "the reconciliation of everything in human life with fear and respect for the gods" (p. 98 of the thesis). She opposes the law "by defeating the rational call to obey the will of the ruler and the instinct for self-preservation" (ibid.) to fulfill the commandments of the just, "because in this way she serves the gods and their divine powers" (ibid). The just turns out to be beyond the law, functioning not only as foundation but also as correction of the law itself. Unlike Plato's Socrates, "who grill Euthyphron or Hippias" (p. 100 of the dissertation) showing that there are no answers to fundamental questions concerning human virtues, Antigone is far from a similar theoretical argument, and by his actions he demonstrates the practical feasibility of these virtues: "With his sacrifice, Antigone shows to the Athenians that a man can be good even if he has to lose his life and that a young woman may has a good soul, even when prefers debt to her dead brother over the happiness with her beloved "(p. 100 of the thesis).

Virtue must be "played out" on stage - before the eyes of viewers, who become a society. The victory of the just over the legal can be achieved not only within the specific plot of the theatrical production, but beyond it, on a meta level. If we want the law to be shown to the public, the trial should turn into a theatre. If in the Ancient Greece the theatre was "the most important soldering for the citizens of Athens" where the sacrifices made the "spectators into a real human community" (p. 96 of the dissertation), nowadays these functions can hardly be realized from the open court sessions, where the judges apply the laws to resolve the legal disputes. Justice today is reduced to a technical procedure that is understood only by the experts involved. It remains inaccessible in its internal (procedural) logic to non-lawyers. Thus, the just is made

“legal” to such an extent it can no longer provide the “beyondness” of the law which maintains the legitimacy of the law. The role of the judge is crucial. But just as crucial may be the role of other forms of contemporary art, which could call into question "the legal" when it offers solutions incompatible with virtues.

The research of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva is valuable not only for the philosophers, but also for the contemporary lawyers, on the grounds that the just can be reinvented not only as an engine but also as brake inside the legal. The just - in his (co) relation to the law, and the justice - as the virtue of the "good" lawyer, are concepts whose tracing by Assoc. Prof. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva in the philosophical ideas of Herodotus, Tucidit, Sophocles, Plato and Aristotle, enriches not only philosophy but also the law.

5. Impact of the publications of the candidate

Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva are cited in 21 books and articles – according to reference-declaration of compliance with the minimum national requirements. The citations are in authoritative and peer-reviewed publications and reflect the remarkable presence of Prof. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva in the scientific field in which her main scientific interests are located.

6. Critical commentary on the submitted thesis

The dissertation consists of 6 studies, 2 articles, 2 post-titles, 1 forthcoming publication in English and 1 report submitted by the applicant. Despite the indisputable connection between these texts in the context of the large project, which was carried out by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva, in some cases their separation hinders the reading of the dissertation as a whole. As a recommendation to the dissertation structure, I could make a proposal for an even clearer and more categorical outline of the main thesis whose defence is being carried out in the course of the presentation, as well as a preliminary description of the concrete steps that the thesis will go through. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva's genealogy reveals a number of interesting and important connections between the authors studied ("retrospectively," as she points out: from Aristotle to Plato, Sophocles, Tukidit, and Herodotus). The representation of the thesis could be situated preliminary in a course of the exposition communicated to the reader, which will lead to clearer final definitions of the central concepts for the dissertation: "the justice" and "the just".

7. Personal opinion about the candidate

I have known Assoc. Prof. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva as a colleague with whom I have met in various scientific forums at and outside Sofia University. Her interest in the concept of justice and its interpretation of "the most important thinkers writing in Greek" has always been a key component in the topics she presented and defended. My impression is that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva is a conscientious scholar who systematically achieves his goals and enriches Bulgarian philosophy in a particularly important area of political philosophy, where the topic of just (as a relational concept) is located, as well as the area of practical philosophy, where the question of the justice (as a virtue) is raised.

I have no common publications with Assoc. Prof. Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva.

8. Conclusion

The thesis and the summary submitted by Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva fulfill the requirements of ADASRB and the Regulations for the Application of ADASRB. The available documents invite the conclusion that the candidate exceeds the minimal national standards for the academic degree of Doctor of Sciences. The thesis contributes to the analysis and study of the ideas of justice and fairness in Herodotus, Thucydides, Sophocles, Plato and Aristotle, and it has all the necessary characteristics for awarding the degree of Doctor of Sciences. Therefore I vote for awarding the degree of Doctor of Sciences to Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva.

25.09.2019

Sofia

Signature:

Assoc. Prof. Stoyan Stavru