

Opinion

Concerning the Procedure for the Academic Position

"Associate Professor" in Professional field 2.1. Philology (Classical Languages)

by Associate Professor Moris Fadel,

New Bulgarian University

Dr. Georgi Gotchev's habilitation thesis "Freedom from the Shadows: Justice and Education in Plato's Dialogues" (published by New Bulgarian University Press, Sofia, 2023) is an interdisciplinary study, positioned on the border between two fields: philology and philosophy. One of the serious achievements of the study is that it manages to balance very well between these fields: it lacks the usual hierarchical relation of the philosophical discourse to the literature and the language; also, it lacks the compensatory desire of literary and linguistic discourse to challenge philosophy's claims to supremacy.

The habilitation thesis uses one of the most successful weapons of philology: the careful, insightful reading of both the original and its possible translations. The dialogues of Plato, with which the study is concerned, are read with utmost concentration, with knowledge of their linguistic, historical and philosophical context.

Usually justice is thought in relation to the society and the politics. However, Dr. Gotchev unexpectedly puts it in relation to the education. Plato's innovative conception of justice not as originating in the social existence of people, but as an "inner force" in man, as part of his own world, finds an analogue in education, which is precisely the work of the "inner" in us, the subject's influence on himself according to a certain pattern.

One of the significant contributions of the habilitation thesis is its reasoned objection to the use of Plato's works (especially "The Republic") by totalitarian and autocratic regimes, a fact that is unfortunately still relevant today in some of the new versions of this type of political governance. Dr. Gotchev sees Plato's dialogues as dramaturgical in their form, i.e., as allowing for the clash of different positions in which there is no always and necessarily a dominant point of view and a resolution of the contradictions at the end of the work.

I confidently recommend to the esteemed scientific jury to propose to the Academic Council of New Bulgarian University to elect Dr. Georgi Gotchev to the academic position of „Associate Professor“ in the professional field 2.1. Philosophy (Classical Languages).

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Assoc. Prof. Moris Fadel