

ATTITUDE OF REVIEWER

By Professor Nikolai Kirilov Mihailov, Ph D., Sofia University “St. Kl. Ohridski”
Member of a scientific jury for the defense of dissertation work of Assoc. Prof. Stoyan
Andreas Stavru, Ph.D. “**MORAL DIMENSIONS OF OWNERSHIP IN THE
ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT (to justify a "proprietary" ecology)**” to acquire the scientific
degree “Doctor of Philosophical Sciences” (Professional
Field 2.3 Philosophy)

1. General information about the competition. I present my opinion in my capacity as a member of the Scientific Jury (external) for awarding the scientific degree "Doctor of Science" in the professional field 2.3. Philosophy, according to Order of the Director of IPS RD 09-514 / 26.10.2020 and the relevant Regulations of BAS and IPS for implementation of the Law and decision of the Scientific Board of IPS from 26.10.2020, as well as according to the decision of the First meeting of The Scientific Jury, 1 / 5.11.2020. According to the relevant requirements, I base my opinion on the scientific materials and evidence presented by the candidate Assoc. Prof. Stoyan Andreas Stavrou, PhD, namely: dissertation on "Moral dimensions of property in an ecological context (to substantiate a "proprietary" ecology) ", a monograph on the topic of the dissertation" Things in the natural state: property and liability for damages in the context of Art. 50”, 5 (five) studies, 3 (three) articles, also on the topic of the dissertation, concerning various aspects of it. According to the registration and the reference submitted by the candidate to NACID for Doctor of Science in the respective field, Assoc. Prof. Stavrou, PhD, meets the minimum national requirements for the scientific degree "Doctor of Science" as the specified and proven minimum number of points significantly exceeds the required. The candidate also successfully meets the other minimum national requirements and thus meets all the conditions for participation in the competition.

2. Content analysis of the scientific achievements of the applicant. As I have already noted, the applicant participates with a significant number of publications, all of which are relevant to the main topic set in the dissertation and cover the issue in many ways and in depth. I would also like to point out that the problem field in which the candidate works is extremely promising for ethical knowledge and research in connection with current and unavoidable problems arising in the attitude of man to "life", "nature", "and environment", and who need scientific-theoretical and practical-applied clarification. The researcher also offers a specific and established in his scientific biography approach - an in-depth study of normativity as a phenomenon in its various manifestations, largely in law, but affecting and treating significant moral aspects, in this case - ownership of nature and its moral dimensions. Ethical considerations are those that, according

to the researcher, make certain but serious changes in the definition of property when it comes to living organisms and natural resources, and this changes its nature - from a power point of view, although limited it becomes a responsibility and obligation. The specific ethical approach proposed by the author, which in my opinion ranks him among the leading researchers in this field, is defined as "ecological" (within ecological ethics, and I must note the author's efforts to accurately describe the content of concepts) - experience to reveal the "values that man protects through the instruments of property" (p. 13 of the Dissertation), on the basis of which the concept of "proprietary ecology" is introduced. The scientific idea in itself has a moral task - "to protect nature in advance" (p. 14 of the Dissertation), and requires a significant theoretical resource that the dissertation has. The main theoretical and methodological apparatus of the research is formulated extremely correctly and has all the necessary attributes to achieve reliable results. The object, the subject, the goals, especially the tasks of the dissertation research are dedicated to a common goal - "the search for "good" (and even "virtuous") property" (p. 16 of the Dissertation) or the one that could meet the duty of modern ecological ethics. In other words, how can the legislative definition of ownership of nature (in general) include moral relevance? In this sense, I support the scientific novelty of the research stated by the dissertation that "currently in our philosophical literature there is no monographic or dissertation work" (p. 17 of the Dissertation), dedicated to such problems. The overall impression of the ambitious task set by Assoc. Prof. Stavrou is for a highly erudite researcher, with high bibliographic awareness of the chosen topic, with an original and scientifically characteristic approach, with proven skills for philosophical-theoretical analysis and a protected ethical concept, relevant to the claimed scientific field of qualification. I accept as a contribution the substantiation of the concept of "proprietary ecology" and the enhanced role of moral regulation in it by outlining various "ecological" restrictions on the ownership of nature and inanimate organisms. Here I want to reflect on the important scientific problem that poses and solves Assoc. Prof. Stavrou. The word "ecology" has perhaps two distinct meanings. One, the predominant one, denotes the biological science associated with the name of Ernst Haeckel, which deals with ecosystems. The second refers to the ecosystems themselves, which are studied mainly by biologists, but in terms of "environment" (elements of the biosphere) are also of interest to religious thinkers (the idea of "Creation") or philosophers (Eco philosophy, such as Arne Ness deep ecology), and other scientists. Often this word is transferred directly to other areas (for example, "media ecology", Marshall McLuhan or Neil Postman), sometimes - not quite apt, but always in view of the impact, the effect on people. Assoc. Prof. Stavrou is familiar with these conceptual distinctions (p. 17 of the Dissertation). For example, the section on

“indigenous peoples and the idea of cultural conditioning (or more cultural property)” (p. 45 of the Dissertation) examines the “spiritualistic” connection of this population with the land (and even the ecosystem) it inhabits. (In the sense of traditional possession) - how people relate to it, how to perceive / think about it, how they define different places as sacred, significant, etc. and where property is "only a part" (p. 46 of the Dissertation) of the whole interaction with nature. "The moral significance of human behavior will be determined by its attitude to the preservation of ecological integrity," wrote the dissertation, referring to the ideas of Aldo Leopold and introducing ethical sensitivity to the general regulation of relations with nature.

In theory, I distinguish two approaches to "protecting nature / the environment" in the context of "protecting ourselves" (p. 22 of the Dissertation). One is the philosophy of environmentalism (preservation and efficiency, preservation and restoration, for example if cars pollute, catalysts / filters are needed for them), which does not deny growth in every aspect, but offers a reformist or adaptive scenario for human material development because of nature. For example, with compensation for some excessive use (car stickers, Eco taxes, any consumption restrictions, etc.). The other, ecological ethics or the ethical approach to these problems in general, involves answering various questions, such as how to justify perhaps new cultural and moral norms that reveal a different human attitude, not so anthropocentric, that carries enough theoretical and practical significance for the formation of a completely new moral consciousness as a basis for a general normativeness, including in law. In my opinion, this approach has serious philosophical dimensions and Assoc. Prof. Stavrou successfully shows this not only in his dissertation, but also in the attached publications on the topic. I fully support the normative approach preferred by the author, despite the endless modern temptations of anti-normativism. Like any other normative ethic, environmental ethics cannot but include the evaluation, approval or disapproval of certain models or ways of doing things, does not offer norms and standards and does not affirm or defend values or ways of behaving to save people's lives, but also of other elements of the biosphere and the environment. E.g. in the article “Property rights and the right to use nature - distinction and ratio we read the following lines: “The new ecological approach to environmental protection leads to a change in the very concept of property rights... as an opportunity for responsible use of natural resources ” (p .45). In other words, the significance of nature for our consciousness should also have a legal aspect, which is based on a moral principle. A river, for example (again following the examples of Assoc. Prof. Stavrou) is important for people as an object of attention and responsibility, when this is enshrined in legal provisions for appropriate action in case of violation of the norms. This also

applies to air, soil, sea, rivers and the problem of wastewater, especially in the complex situation in which Bulgaria finds itself in terms of environmental protection. The central concept through which the author defends his theses - that of property - its various aspects, classifications, varieties, various "theoretical models and evolving concepts" (p. 45 of the Dissertation) successfully reveals in addition to the exceptional awareness of Assoc. Prof. Stavrou in various theories and scientific hypotheses, but also contributes to a significant enrichment of ethical knowledge in our country, as well as suggests a huge field for application in practice. I fully accept as author's contribution the formulation of the concept of defensive and integrative property, they describe a reliable and working model for "possession" of nature, based on ethical prerequisites.

The overall impression of the presented materials is for a successfully defended thesis by the applicant, for the moral limitations on the concept of property: when it refers to nature - on living organisms, on non-human life forms, on inanimate nature ("aesthetic" property) or inviolability), also to offer a valid model of the relationship between man and nature through the ecological context of the life-property relationship for the possession and management of natural resources. Although I have already noted this, I would like to reiterate the exceptional bibliographic and literary awareness of the author of the dissertation research. There is no significant theory or author, both Bulgarian and foreign in the field of scientific interest, which are not only mentioned, but also described in detail and analyzed in depth by the candidate. The selection of authors and themes is completely relevant to the topic and the positions that the candidate seeks to defend, for example the reference to T. Adorno in the part dedicated to natural beauty or landscape, the detailed analysis of some of the ideas of Hans Jonas, a relatively little known philosopher and ethicist in our country, despite the wonderful translations into Bulgarian, the analysis of the state of biological diversity, the main indicator for the preservation of the biosphere and human responsibility for it (although rather biological, Elizabeth's book would be useful here Colbert ("The Sixth Extinction")), as well as the extensive and multifaceted exposition of Bruno Latour's texts and an analysis of his ideas for the "Gaia hypothesis" ("The image of Gaia remains a metaphor", p. 109) in the context of the dissertation, reflections on the importance of the benefits of nature (ecosystem goods and services that maintain the ecological integrity of nature and their relationship to property) and in many others that expand and significantly enrich the existing knowledge in this interdisciplinary scientific field. This observation applies with particular force to the normative framework of the studied concepts, especially that of "property" - laws, regulations, regulations, both national and

international, without whose knowledge in detail, which confidently demonstrates the candidate, is not possible. The successful completion of the tasks set in the research (“Property regulations are a specific network of tools through which people interact with nature”, p. 252 of the Dissertation). An important author's contribution in this regard are the proposed various solutions and regulatory tools that can be applied in the current legislation for the practical achievement of the goals of the "proprietary" ecology, i.e. such, based on different types of property, "thought" ethically and analyzed, developed and convincingly argued by Assoc. Prof. Stavrou. The dissertation ends with the formulation of specific practical tools for achieving significant results for the practice ("specific legal mechanisms", p. 298, but with moral and environmental dimensions) with the help of the so-called. "Proprietary ecology".

3. General notes on the dissertation and publications and Conclusion. The presented dissertation work, as well as the additional publications and requisites on the defense meet all the formal and, in my opinion, substantive requirements for obtaining the scientific degree "Doctor". The abstract covers the conditions for abstracting a scientific work - detailed and consistent and informs the reader about the content and main ideas of the author, the structure of the dissertation, scientific methodology, contributions and more. The presented publications deepen the impressions of systematic and in-depth research on the topic of scientific interest of Assoc. Prof. Stavrou. One of the main vectors of the overall work of the author is with a strong ethical charge - offering a variant of regulation in which nature is not fixed in resources and things, but focuses on the idea of "free" nature and natural movement of its parts and components unlike the verse on Tyutchev here ideas are protected logically and consistently. This approach expands the scope of traditional ethical philosophy and justifies a different approach to the positive treatment of environmental conditions by original modeling of the concept of property not only in the interest of man, which in my opinion is a very serious and significant scientific contribution. I stand in solidarity with the author's self-assessment, I believe that it accurately reflects the content of the scientific achievements of the dissertation. I do not have any serious critical remarks, my only recommendation is this well-thought-out and structured, but still significant volume of the exposition to observe the precision of the concepts used. For example, the term "bioecology" is found in several places in the dissertation research. Each biological system (biocenosis) exchanges substances and energy with the external environment, ie. with inanimate nature (biotope), there is no way to separate the two. Without the inseparable unity of living and non-living (abiotic factors), life and its organization are impossible. Ecology as a biological science studies living systems and to speak about “bio

ecology”, is if to formulate the concept of "biobotany" or "biogenetics". But this is a clarification rather than a critical remark.

The contributions of Assoc. Prof. Stavrou as an in-depth and serious researcher in the interdisciplinary field of scientific knowledge, his innovative approach to topics, his indisputable qualities to formulate and argue original own concepts, his deep theoretical erudition in various fields of research, his extremely high bibliographic competence in Bulgarian and foreign scientific literature, his high publishing activity, as well as his scientific achievements in formulating, analyzing and arguing new hypotheses, which have direct significance for important areas of practice, **gives me reason to vote "YES"** about the the scientific degree " Doctor of Science” by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyan Andreas Stavrou.

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