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"Etická rozprava o cnosti a dobrokráse : aretologicko–filokalistické reminiscencje", Trnava 2009 : [recenzja]

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Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

Helena Hrehová, *Etická rozprava o cnosti a dobrokráse. Aretologicko-filokalistické Reminiscencje (Ethical debate on virtue and good-beauty. Aretological-filocalistic reminiscences)*, University of Trnava, Trnava 2009, ss. 300.

The author of this important monograph is Head of the Department of Ethics and Moral Philosophy, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, University of Trnava. The main ideas of this book are a very interesting and inspiring contribution to the research of the ethical and moral-philosophical understanding of the relationship of man and virtue. This is an original aretological-filocalistic debate on virtue and good-beauty. According to the author “good-beauty” represents “human qualities that are the result of intellectual-spiritual, volitional-practical activities. They manifest the validity of universal moral and spiritual values. Thanks to the above mentioned abilities, people are able to share and practice humanity. Human attributes then create a basis for an application of the ethos and culture, and forms of socio-political and economic structures depend on them” (p. 18).

Hrehová tries to find such a conceptual basis, which would allow for the realization of an ethical and moral-philosophical analysis of the relationship of man and the virtues focusing on the post-modern man’s crisis of values. For such a conceptual basis our author considers aretology and filocalia. Aretology is a philosophical-ethical discipline and doctrine of virtues and is generally associated with a permanent disposition of human action directed to the good. Virtue is therefore the primary object of ethics.

Filocalia has a moral and spiritual character. It is typical for the Greek-Byzantine and Slavic-Orthodox world, and basically means to love the beauty and good in their integrity, which can also be expressed as a noun: “good-beauty”. Aretology and filocalia are part of a philosophy of life. Everything valuable and beautiful is difficult, because

the transcendental values of truth, good, beauty and love are scattered. "Therefore, in the process of intellectual-volitional dynamism, virtue will play an important role, together with the moral maxims of good and beauty, which must be protected because they are very fragile. The practice of humanity, which mankind has pursued for millennia, would not be complete without an application of ethos and culture, which are dependent on the forms of socio-political and economic structures" (p. 283).

Already in the introduction of its publication the author herself elaborates that the text includes a practical realism of ancient wisdom and experience verified by ages, certifying that harmony and symmetry count with the moral philosophy. Through the cross-section of historical-philosophical understanding of virtue, good and beauty, the author arrives at the notion that: "Virtue, with responsibility for human heritage, gives the people a new hope that in the 21st century the need for ethical obligations will be clarified once again. It should be a voluntary decision of mankind. Only then will we have a chance to realize that wisdom is prudence and beauty is a celebration of life. Virtues have always been and still are the result of a rational understanding of the authentic values and the voluntary efforts of a human will power the harmony of two orders: the natural and the supernatural. The understanding of values is closely related to understanding the value of mankind. Each person is a great value for themselves, a rank in itself. The values are given; we find them in the eternal order of being. They present an objective, creative content that is pointed out by metaphysics, philosophy, theology, ethics, aesthetics and sociology" (p. 10).

In view of these facts, the author believes that virtue is a reasonable and good habit, bringing people to wisdom, perfection and bliss. In her monograph the author tries not only to justify, but also to synthesize the above propositions, and the content of individual chapters conforms to it, too. According to the author, postmodern liberalism, compounded by the hedonistic-utilitarian objectives, practical materialism, individualistic culture and artificial civilization, contributed to the loss of values and virtue, as well as a crisis of faith, hope, humanity and moral

orientation. However, the pursuit of individualistic and material happiness does not satisfy. On the contrary, we see severed relationships, destabilization and the dehumanization of the world, attacking human rights and freedoms.

Sections about aretology and filocalia want to be, according to Hrehová, a synthesis, which results in a possibility of the protection of truth, goodness, beauty, life – values that are living in the service of humanity as a whole. Aretological-filocalistic synthesis in history occurs usually in times of crisis in social relations that accompanied the crisis in the philosophical and ethical, religious, socio-political, cultural, aesthetic, legal and educational areas. The current alarming philosophical-ethical crisis is, according to the author, related to the delays in responding to complicated problems in the world. The problematic situations escalated due to the progressive separation of ‘being’ from ‘existence’.

The publication consists of thirteen chapters, which offer the reader a comprehensive picture of the compiled subject. The first chapter, *Aretology and Filocalia – Fruit of Dominance beyond the Passions*, analyzes the crisis of the modern world and aretological-filocalistic humanity and simultaneously formulates a universal significance of the aretological-filocalistic teaching for ethics. From the position of ethics and moral philosophy, the author then interprets the problem of faith, spirituality and freedom of mankind in the world. “Man becomes free – says the author – not when he is alone, but when he discovers himself and his place in the community with others. Faith and spirituality are the forces opening the human eye to see Meta-realities, transcendental sensory perception. And these are the facts people should realize, because it is not true that what is presented to us by modern technology as possible may be beneficial at all costs” (p. 31).

Hrehová also points out that the technical civilization requires people to constantly accelerate in their activities, to the extent that they become slaves of production and profit. This style is also evident in philosophy. She clearly explains and demonstrates her arguments with selectively chosen arguments and reflections of selected thinkers. Their

concepts, taking into account the wisdom offer plenty of excellent lessons from the field of aretology and filocalia today, which may be the beginning of new promising starting points. At the end of the first chapter the author formulates her belief that “aretological-filocalistic teaching is the fruit of moral maturity of the virtuous people who have searched for wisdom and found it. Virtue is, in this sense, the intellectual-volitional dynamism. Any person seeking to adapt in the virtuous economy leads to moral and spiritual maturity and the entire integrity of his being” (p. 33).

The second chapter, *Virtue, Goodness and Beauty in Greek Philosophy*, is devoted to the comparison of Socratic understanding of virtue and goodness, the Platonic idea of good and virtue, and Aristotle’s understanding of good and virtue within his practical philosophy. The third chapter entitled *Hellenic Philosophy of Virtue* focuses on the analysis of the terms virtue, good and happiness by Epicurus, stoicism and teaching of Zenon, M. T. Cicero, L. A. Seneca and Marcus Aurelius. The fourth chapter reflects on *The Virtues and Understanding of Good in Hebrew ethics*. The author also puts an emphasis on virtue and good as wisdom (in Hebrew *hākmāh – chokma*), based on an analysis of the human will and the will of God in the Old Testament and also the problem of justice as the virtue of religious values of Israel.

Chapter five, *The Stability of Virtues and Good-Beauty in Christian Ethics*, is dedicated to the value of happiness as a reward for virtue and implementation of good-beauty. In this part, the author analyzes virtue in the ethics of St. Paul and the importance of virtues in post-apostolic times. In the sixth chapter, *Virtue, Good and Beauty in the Early-Medieval Christian Ethics*, the author focuses on the virtue of the doctrine and the *Rule* of St. Basil the Great, the analysis of moral virtues and creative ideas of Gregory of Nazianzus, virtues in the conceptions of St. John Damascus, St. Augustine, St. Benedict of Nursie and Boethius.

The seventh chapter, *Virtue and Good in the Context of the High middle Ages* discusses the concept of virtue in the context of two schools: Franciscan and Dominican and focuses primarily on under-

standing the virtuous economics of Thomas Aquinas. Chapter eight, *Modern Virtues (Humanism, the Renaissance and Rationalism)*, is devoted to the analysis of virtues in modern times, focusing on the concept of the three giants of modern times: Nicolas Machiavelli and Machiavellianism, the philosophy of René Descartes and the ethics of Baruch Spinoza.

In the ninth chapter, *Modern Ideas of English Empirics and Politics*, the author pursued the problem of “practicality” in the philosophy of F. Bacon, the problem of “knowledge, power and social contract” in the works of T. Hobbes, the problem of “practical purpose” in J. Locke and the problem of “morality” in D. Hume. The tenth chapter, *The Virtues in Ethics of Enlightenment and Early Romanticism*, continues in the historical research of understanding the virtues in philosophy of J. J. Rousseau in connection to his naturalism, as well as virtue in Kant’s *Metaphysics of morals*.

The eleventh chapter, *German virtues in classical philosophy*, is a reflection on virtue in Hegelian-Schelling idealism, in Feuerbach-Marxist leftism and materialism, in utilitarianism, in evolutionism and Schopenhauer’s pessimistic thinking, and in volitional titanism of F. Nietzsche. In the twelfth chapter, *The Virtues in Ethics of the 20th Century*, the author analysis: Scheler’s understanding of the virtues; Hartman’s understanding of the world of being and the world of values; Maritain’s concept of social virtues and Jankélévitch’s concept of the virtues of forgiveness.

In the last thirteenth chapter, *The Virtues in the Context of 21st Century*, Hrehová analyses virtue in the context of the 21st century from the perspective of John Paul II. She further develops critical views on the problem of loss of virtue in the ideas of A. MacIntyre, on A. Comte’s understanding of the so-called “Great virtues” and on a Christian understanding of faith, hope and love in the teachings of pope Benedict XVI.

In conclusion, the author of this monograph formulates her understanding of virtue in the space of postmodernism. Postmodern mankind has a huge amount of possibilities available to it, however, para-

doxically, it does not understand the need for virtue, preferring instead adventure and discovery anywhere, as if to ward off signs of boredom, stereotypes and rootlessness. Mankind wants change and constant novelty, but virtue requires one to be anchored in their values, grounded in good, patience, perseverance and the courage to move forward in their self-integration.

Virtuous behavior has always anticipated and also anticipates hard work, because everything valuable postulates the effort. Without this understanding, one not only stagnates as an individual person, but also relational-social structures do not develop. Even in the 21st century, we need virtuous people, people of the light because there is too much of darkness and chaos in the world. The criteria of the virtuous life of good-beauty are the instructions on how to help the people of our time in a delicate process of proper moral distinctions, how to achieve humbleness and faith in one who seeks the meaning of their own activities, but also limits its own possibilities.

Hrehová provides a brief summary of the achievements of her moral-philosophical and ethical debate on virtue and good-beauty in relation to the objectives of this monograph, which was to remind us of important things such as the fact that one does not live as if separated from the world, nor as one who is from the world. Search for truth, wisdom, good, beauty, love represents a certain ethical universalism, which assumes a deep awakening and a daily conversion towards friendship with all creatures.

From our perspective, the monograph deals with very current ethical-moral and philosophical issues and virtues of mankind's relationship with a focus on the crisis of values in today's world. It looks for the answers to the following questions: Who or what causes a change in orientation to the goal? Are they just people, or even ideas and things? How do we attend an awakening and the uncertainty and distraction in the field of values? The book is a beneficial and timely contribution to current efforts to search for the resources that might help to eliminate irresponsibility in the social and political spheres.

“Humanity – says Hrehová – should not slacken its efforts to seek the truth, do good, strive for beauty, see and recognize values, free itself from shallowness, which hinders responsibility and accountability. It is the only way to stabilize the balance between man-consumer and nature. Philosophy together with ethics has the responsibility to draw people’s attention to the values and to clarify what is valuable to their lives and social relationships” (p. 18).

The monograph is written very clearly and legibly, even it assumes the reader to have a certain philosophical competence. It puts forward many new suggestions, motivation and views on the ethical-moral and philosophical understanding of mankind and the need for values and virtue. At the same time, it also urges readers to think about the given problems and what is important to get rid of proven traditional opinions. In this respect, it may also serve as an excellent guide in teaching ethics and moral philosophy.

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Teresa Zawajska, *Od epistemologii do historiozofii. Poglądy filozoficzne Wojciecha Dzierduszyckiego*, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2011, ss. 354.

Książkę Teresy Zawajskiej: *Od epistemologii do historiozofii. Poglądy filozoficzne Wojciecha Dzierduszyckiego* ze względu na przedmiot badań (poglądy filozoficzne polskiego filozofa) zaliczyć należy do historii filozofii polskiej. Historycznofilozoficzny charakter pracy wyraża się już w jej strukturze. Rozprawa składa się ze *Wstępu*, trzech rozdziałów, *Zakończenia* oraz streszczenia. Ponadto zawiera *Indeks osobowy* i *Bibliografię*, w której autorka wyróżnia: teksty źródłowe, obejmujące filozoficzne i społeczno-kulturowe publikacje Dzierduszyckiego, opracowania – współczesne Dzierduszyckiemu recenzje i omówienia jego prac, oraz późniejsze omówienia jego życia i poglądów, a także opracowania ogólne. Recenzowana książka wnosi oryginalny