

OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Veselin Hristov Dafov

on Edmund M. Charlie's dissertation

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on the subject:

**"THE PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERSTANDING OF PSYCHIATRIC
DISORDERS IN LIGHT OF HANS-GEORG GADAMER'S
HERMENEUTICS NOTION OF MENTAL HEALTH"**

for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in philosophy

The dissertation work of Edmond Charley submitted is in a volume of 210 pages (including the Bibliography) and consists of an Introduction, three chapters: 1/ Gadamer's Hermeneutics Notion Of Mental Health, 2/ Mental Health Analysis Using Philosophical Tenets, 3/ Effectiveness Of Gadamer's Hermeneutics Notion Of Mental Health (in the Author's abstract provided in Bulgarian, it is translated, in my opinion, ambiguously); Conclusion, List of Publications and Bibliography.

The presented work is an impressive attempt to reveal the possibilities of philosophy in general, and of Gadamer's hermeneutic method in particular, to influence the attitudes and methods of providing professional help to people suffering from mental illnesses and disorders.

Briefly, as befits to the gender of an academic opinion, let me give some leading assessments for the thesis presented, which itself has an excellently formulated topic of a philosophical nature. The objectives that are set in the work can also be recognized as good enough.

Since I know the text from its presentation of internal defence to the department of "Logic, Ethics, Aesthetics", I allow myself to point out some critical points on which there is still work to be done (admitted the fact it has been taken into account most of the criticisms done during this internal defence, and this is a good sign for an academic integrity of the author) from a philosophical point of view.

For example: although the difference between the terms "client" and "patient" has been explained and the arguments for the use of these terms has been added, the difference in question still needs philosophical consideration. The same applies to the difference in the difference in the terms "disease", "impairments", "dysfunction" and "disease". Although the reason for using these terms is stated, the philosophical (I would say ontological) difference still remains to be cleared.

As a good moment, I can point out the explained difference in the terms "health" and "well-being", which is, perhaps, the leading entry of the philosophical and humanitarian studies in general into the topics arising from medicine.

I find these moments of the dissertation to be very enlightening and fruitful, in which: 1/ specific examples of different approaches and solutions regarding mental disorders are indicated; 2/ examples of disorders and their influence are given; 3/ examples of new approaches to find better control and treatment of these diseases and examples of finding a better solution to control psychoses are given. 4/ the role of *dialogue* (a central idea for counselling practices, but also for Gadamer's hermeneutics) and *conceptual debate* for ensuring well-being and mental health is revealed.

The work continues to need further clarification of the terms and uses of mind, consciousness, soul, in the context of the dissertation.

Regarding the formulated contributions of the dissertation, I accept the First, Second, Third and Fifth as correctly indicated. Regarding Fourth: "My study emphasizes the value of ethical issues in psychiatric practice and research. I call for a more detailed examination of the ethical ramifications of various treatment approaches" - yet I reject this as a contribution to the thesis itself, insofar as this has already been achieved and pointed out repeatedly in the literature on the subject.

In conclusion, I consider the presented dissertation work to be an interesting and significant attempt to understand the role of philosophical dialogue and philosophical understanding of these very significant and important topics of psychology and psychiatry. There are specific innovative proposals and academic intentions related to the topic of the dissertation that give density to what is said in the dissertation.

I remain reserved about the way of quoting and using classical philosophical literature - for example ideas of Hegel, Kant, Heidegger, Ponty, Gadamer, etc. - through their interpretations. This leads to misunderstandings, for which one can take, for example, the interpretation of "Hegel's Concept of Pure Reason", which needs much stronger argumentation.

My attitude is to vote "yes" to the awarding of the scientific and educational degree "Doctor" to colleague Edmund Charley, but I still rely on the defence to clarify the points made by my moments and the critical remarks made.

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