

Book Review

Ionuț - Bogdan BERCEANU

Page | 138

Ioan Alexandru, 2019, *Despre sacralitatea justiției/About the Sacredness of Justice*,
Bucharest: the Publishing House of the Romanian Academy

Ioan Alexandru is emeritus professor of Administrative Law and European Administrative Law at the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Faculty of Public Administration from Bucharest, the founder of the school which forms specialists in public administration, and a public law scholar with a particular expertise in administrative law of the European Union. He is also one of the first academics who acted and introduced the administrative sciences in the Romanian university curriculum - which provided an interdisciplinary approach on public administration, underlining that for an exhaustive understating of the administrative system, students and researchers must go further than the classical juridical view on the public administration and to analyse the system in an interdisciplinary perspective, taking into consideration other sciences like public management, economy or sociology.

The book reviewed in this paper “Despre sacralitatea justiției/About the Sacredness of Justice” represents a first edition and it is published in 2019 in the Romanian language, with a preface in English and in French made by Romanian Academy member Alexandru Surdu.

This book represents, as the author himself underlines in the Foreword, a different contribution on the approach of studies regarding the public administration and justice from the European countries. The work provides an analysis on the Justice issue from a philosophical point of view, underlining the way in which the moral conduct of the judges should be the most important pillar in their activity of finding the truth and delivering justice.

This work addresses not only to professors and students, specialists, and practitioners in the area of public and administrative law, but also to persons or researchers from other areas of interest,



who want to have an understanding about the reform and the modernization of the law system, in which the justice should be competent and stable.

The book is structured into five chapters, with an Introduction, Foreword and an Afterword Postface. It is important to underline that the end of the book contains also a rich Bibliography, in which, the author, included references from the Bible in which there are citations regarding some key words for the work, such as: justice, conscience, truth, judges and judgement.

The first chapter – *Reflections on the State of Justice*, analyses the situation of the justice in the context of the public opinion of politization and corruption, two of the main problems the system is facing. Here, the author underlines that the politization of justice in reality reflects the state and relations of the political power and judicial power, between all the political elite, whether they are in power or in opposition. An important reflection is that the judicial body it is divided by the judicial professional associations, which in many cases are related with their political views. An argument sustaining these views is that, in the last years a growing number of judges expressed in the press their point of view regarding the laws they should interpret and apply. Here, the author underlines the importance of distinguishing the statute of the judge from that of the prosecutor-who is part of the Public Ministry, because the mission to deliver justice was separate from the executive power. The reform of justice is, in the author's vision, the result of making the institutions and structures work, and not only being limited to their creation through norms.

Laws, Moral and Legal Consciousness – represents the 2nd chapter of this book and, from the very beginning, the author underlines the lack of the secular foundation of law and the fact that, in his opinion, the power of norms is not the given by them as such, but by God who makes his presence among persons. The concepts of morals and consciousness are analysed, which are considered to be the bases of the norms of cohabitation, behaviour and individual conduct. Thus, the author concludes that any evolution of legal systems in the world of today can change the real nature of things and cannot change the fundamental principles of natural law.

The 3rd chapter – *About the sacred and the profane*, underlines that from the very beginning humans wanted to explain the difference between the two concepts. One of the oldest researchers in this field was Philon from Alexandria (n. 25 BC - d. 50 AD) which develops the approach



between the *sacred* and the *profane* starting from the Old Testament, which makes the distinction between pure and impure. The chapter represents the liaison with the main research objective of the work- the sacredness of justice, thus, the author analyses modern man – a religious, and states that the sacred is native and cannot be ignored, neither by the religious man who is dominated by the sacred, whether he wants to admit it or not. Page | 140

The 4th chapter – *Sacralizing and desacralizing justice*, the author explains that sacred and sacredness have a wide meaning, they refer not only to religion, but also to the *divine*, as it is in the example given, in the Romanian language. The chapter also presents a valuable literature review regarding the desacralization of justice. Robert Muchembled is quoted, who makes a classification of the periods in which the justice was secularized; and Xavier Rousseau who bring again into discussion the relationship between justice, power and sacred, and the modernization of the juridical function in the context of the French Revolution.

The last chapter of the book express in the title a rhetoric question of the author – *whether it is non-scientific to believe in the sacredness of the justice*. The author states here that the recent research discoveries confirm the victory of the creationism in confronting with evolutionism, supporting in this regard the theory of the sacredness of justice. Also, this sacredness consists, as demonstrated by the vast documentation of the chapter, in finding the truth and sharing the justice on Earth. Justice is also, in the author perspective a quality of the soul, the first among the others which define the social human beings.

An important fact underlined, as a conclusion by the author in the *Afterword*, is that justice as an interest defender is neither a prejudice nor a fiction of authority, it is inherent in the social condition it stems from the very nature of things and it is sacred because it is “essentially divine, hyperphysical, ultra- rational and above all the observations and conclusions of the spirit.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bogdan Berceanu, PhD, Lecturer at the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Faculty of Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania.

Email: bogdan.berceanu@administratiepublica.eu

