

Report on Master Thesis by Professor Eva Eckert

Student:	Ivana Djikanovic, IEPS
Title of the thesis:	Ideas of Hedonism and Stoicism implemented in today's world of Economy and Politics

The M.A. thesis of Ivana Djikanović is a narrative explanation of basic social forces of hedonism and stoicism that found expression in ancient Greek philosophies and were addressed in one form or another in various economic theories. The thesis is based in summarizing and explaining what has long been established and produces no novel recommendation of any economic substance. The two hypotheses chosen for her study are: *"The self- interest and passions are the main leaders of capitalist society, and Hedonistic paradox: the pure hedonistic happiness cannot be found in material wealth"* (p. 9). However in my opinion, the aim of the thesis as articulated by the author (i.e., *to draw attention to the main philosophical issues... [so that] we can learn how to use them for the future challenges of humanity*) is too ambitious, broadly conceived and unspecific and thus out of reach of the author and her M.A. thesis.

The author was expected, I assume, to apply what she has learned through the historical lessons of philosophers and modern economists to problems of a particular world economy such as Montenegro (the country is briefly mentioned in a conclusive paragraph). In my opinion, the author missed the opportunity of applying the conclusions that she reached by reviewing the philosophies and teachings to a particular situation, state economy or social structure that is now in the process of change. In my opinion, the author's summary and recommendation would be substantiated if applied to a relevant social context rather than remaining too general.

The author uses qualitative analysis and inspects no real data, situations or case studies (sorry that she did not apply her theoretical analysis to a case study – e.g. to mentioned Montenegro). However, she seems to have read a plethora of relevant authors and applied their propositions and conclusions to the recommendations she made. Here reading and summary of the economic theories and philosophical concepts is correct and, if it were not for the disturbingly inconsistent English syntax, would offer a coherent and valuable analysis.

In the Introduction section I miss clarity in terminological usage: for instance the terms such as *capitalism, economy and reality* are applied ad hoc. Throughout the work I object to the use of words such as *people* in place of appropriate references and empty meaning verbs (*make, take* etc.) in place of descriptive ones. In general, the author uses professional terminology correctly in sections where she quotes particular authors (and such quotes represent the essence of the thesis) but uses them loosely in sections that aim to reflect her own thinking and analysis throughout the thesis. The thesis consists mostly of rehearsed concepts, summaries of teachings and historical commentaries that are all interesting, relevant and cannot be argued with.

The work would benefit from proof-reading since inconsistently built sentences and incorrectly built words take away from the line of the author's reasoning. The prose of the thesis is unbalanced; sections written in an informal vernacular are interlaced with formal scholarly prose. In most places the author acknowledges the source of her tables and figures, in others I suspect that sentences are directly or indirectly taken from elsewhere without the credit being given (usage of English clearly points to that).

Based on the above comments I recommend the grade of C (dobře).

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