

OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Nadia Georgieva Boyadjieva, Doctor of Juridical Sciences in the field of higher education 3.6. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.6.

Law, doctoral program "International Law and International Relations"

member of the scientific jury in the procedure for the defense of a doctoral thesis on the topic:

" PROROGATION OF INTERNATIONAL JURISDICTION "

for the acquisition of an educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in

Field of higher education: 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences

Professional field: 3.6 Law

Doctoral Program: "Private International Law"

Author: Kristian Plamenov Raychev

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimitar Dekov

1. Presentation of the procedure and the doctoral candidate.

I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury by Order No. 21-982/12.05.2023 of the Rector of the "Paisii Hilendarski" University of Plovdiv in connection with the procedure for the defense of the doctoral thesis of Kristian Plamenov Raychev - a regular form PhD student at the Civil Law Sciences Department at the Faculty of Law of the "Paisii Hilendarski" University of Plovdiv. PhD student Raychev was enrolled as a regular doctoral student after successfully passing the qualifying exam, effective from 01.03.2019, and was officially dismissed with the right to defend the thesis, effective from 01.03.2022. He submitted his completed doctoral thesis to his supervisor on 20.02.2023 and successfully underwent an internal discussion at a Meeting of the Department Council of the Civil Law Sciences Department held on 03.04.2023. All required documents, the doctoral thesis, and the abstract were submitted within the legal timeframe. During his studies, PhD student Raychev successfully completed all activities in accordance with the individual curriculum, as well as the minimum national requirements according to Article 2b of Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) for the scientific field 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.6 Law.

2. Presentation of the doctoral thesis.

At the outset, I must emphasize the unquestionable relevance of the chosen topic. The arguments supporting this statement can be found in several directions. Firstly, the doctoral thesis presented by Kristian Raychev for evaluation is relevant because it represents an in-depth scientific study of the important issues related to the choice of an internationally competent court, particularly the various methods available to individuals and legal entities to submit their disputes to the jurisdiction of a specific state. Secondly, the analysis is based on relevant legal provisions, including international legal sources, sources from European Union law, and the Bulgarian Private International Law Code, as well as the related case law. Thirdly, the increasing use of prorogation agreements in international civil and commercial transactions, aiming to achieve predictability and certainty in private relationships with an international element, contributes to the relevance of this work.

The structure of the presented doctoral thesis (with a total length of 219 standard typewritten pages) includes: table of contents, introduction, four chapters, conclusion (spanning 200 pages), bibliography with used literature and sources, and the required declaration. Due to the limitations of this opinion's length, I will provide a brief description of the work and highlight its merits and contributions.

In the introduction, the author indicates the relevance of the problem addressed in the doctoral thesis, the extent of its scientific development, and defines the aim and objectives of the research. The issues of international jurisdiction prorogation are among the main priorities in the EU and are directly involved in the development of international relations as a whole. The dynamics within the European legal framework are the reason for the increasing processes of integration among EU member states in the field of international civil procedure, particularly regarding the options for selecting a competent court in a member state.

In the dissertation, Mr. Raychev has demonstrated a deep understanding of the discussed issues. The contemporary advancements in the field of prorogation of international jurisdiction have been thoroughly examined. The analysis is accompanied by accurate independent conclusions by the author. The chosen structure, where the individual chapters are interconnected and subordinate to the

main goal of the dissertation and the tasks set for their resolution, contributes to the overall positive impression of the work. The author's conclusions and findings are clearly derived from the scientific problems discussed in each respective chapter. The dissertation references a total of 85 sources, including Bulgarian and foreign monographs, textbooks, articles, publications of the European Union, and the practice of the Court of Justice of the European Union and the Supreme Court of the United States. The work includes 247 footnotes. The diverse sources and literature used by Mr. Raychev attest to the rich theoretical and practical scientific foundation of the dissertation.

The above leads me to conclude that the author possesses the necessary knowledge in the researched subject matter and demonstrates the ability to creatively interpret scientific achievements in the field.

3. Evaluation of the Contributions of the Dissertation.

The accomplishment of the tasks set in the dissertation requires in-depth knowledge in the field of both private international law and specifically in the field of international civil procedure, which Mr. Raychev undoubtedly possesses.

The chosen topic is interesting and relevant. The dissertation work contains scientific and applied contributions that contribute to the broader doctrinal development of the institution of prorogation of international jurisdiction. At the same time, they serve as a starting point for practicing lawyers when assessing the validity of concluded agreements on the choice of a competent court. The contributions encompass elements of novelty and hold significance for the advancement of the science. The mentioned merits and contributions are the author's achievements. This conclusion is also based on the presented publications (4 in total) on the topic of the dissertation, which indicate Mr. Raychev's enduring interest in the chosen subject. The abstract (30 pages in length) meets the requirements and provides an accurate representation of the dissertation.

My critical remarks are related to the observed imbalance in the volume of individual chapters. This may be due to the doctoral candidate's chosen approach to organize the work based on the legal sphere from which the commented normative source originates, rather than on a unified concept of prorogation of international

jurisdiction. The work attempts to clarify the adopted approach, but I believe that in future publication of the work, which I hope for, this issue should be addressed. I recommend that the author continue his research in this field.

4. Conclusion

Based on the above, I have grounds to confidently provide my positive evaluation of the conducted research and propose to the respected members of the scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" to Kristian Plamenov Raychev in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, professional direction 3.6. Law, doctoral program "Private International Law".

June 10, 2023

Prepared by: _____

/Prof. Nadia Boyadjieva, D.Sc./