

R E V I E W

by

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Member of Scientific Jury - Scientific Council Decision, Protocol 19/16.07.2019;
Order of the Director of ISSK – BAS: ПД - 09 - 526/17.07.2019

concerning

Dissertation for Acquisition of the Scientific Degree
"Doctor of Philosophical Sciences" in the Professional Field 2.3. Philosophy
on the topic:

"The Objective Study of Morality and Contemporary Ethics",
Author: **Emilia Vassil Marinova, Doctor of Philosophy, Associate Professor,**
Department of Ethical Studies, ISSK - BAS

My review includes eight sections and it is in volume according to the requirements of ISSK - BAS for acquisition of scientific degrees competitions. In order to prepare the review I got to know all documents that were provided to me by e-mail: a dissertation; an abstract; a list of publications on the topic; CV; three NCID reports with minimum requirements for: Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Science, Associate Professor; author's self-assessment of the contributions of the Dissertation.

1. Information concerning the competition

I was appointed as an external member of the scientific thesis defense jury on the topic "The Objective Study of Morality and Contemporary Ethics", author assoc. prof. Emilia Vassil Marinova, Ph.D., for acquisition of the scientific degree "Doctor of Philosophical Sciences" on the grounds of art. 4.2.5 of the Working Rules of the SC of ISSK - BAS, Regulations on the Terms and Procedure for Acquisition of Academic Degrees and Occupation of Academic Positions at BAS, Decision of Scientific Council of ISSK - BAS, Protocol N 19/16.07.2019, and Order of the Director of ISSK – BAS /ПД–09–526/17.07.2019. I was assigned as a reviewer of the dissertation at the first meeting of the jury on 24.07.2019.

The thesis was discussed and directed for defense at an extended meeting of the Department of Ethical Studies, ISSK - BAS (Order: ПД-09-465/12.06.2019).

2. Brief biographical information for the applicant

Emilia Marinova was born in 1953. She holds a master's degree in psychology (1976) from M. Lomonosov Moscow State University. She has received her educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Philosophy" (1983) from the Institute of Philosophy - BAS. She has been an associate professor at the same institute since 2000, and now, after its transformation - into the ISSK – BAS.

Scientific-teaching activity of assoc. prof. Dr. Marinova points out one successful doctoral student - a Ph.D. already. She is currently Head of the Department of Ethical Studies, ISSK – BAS. In addition, she is a member of the editorial board of the *Ethical Studies* online journal, and since 2016 - its Editor-in-chief. She was also a member of the editorial board (2005-2012) of the prestigious national journal *Philosophical Alternatives*, as three times she had been a volume responsible editor.

The scientific work of Emilia Marinova also includes:

- Authorship of eighty-one publications: six monographs (1998–2019) - one co-authored; twelve studios (1994-2018) - one in English; sixty-three articles (1980-2018), published by prestigious journals and collections - one in English;
- Authorship of seven Opinions in competitions for the educational and scientific degree "Doctor", two Opinions and one Review for the academic position "Professor", one Review for a monograph;
- Compilation and editing of fifteen collections (alone or co-authored) (1989-2018);
- Participation in nine collective research projects (2006–2019), as she led the six of them (eight have been completed and one is active);
- Participation in twenty-two scientific forums (2004–2019) - many of them were organized or co-organized by her.

3. Implementation of the minimum national requirements for a scientific degree

From the NCID reference for the Doctor of Sciences Degree it is apparent that a total of 350 points is required coming from four sets of indicators - A (50), B (100), D (100), and E (100), respectively. In Emilia Marinova case these indicators and points are as follows:

Indicator A – 50 points - Dissertation for awarding educational and scientific degree "doctor" - “Socio-psychic mechanisms for the moral formation of personality” (1983), Diploma;

Indicator B – 100 points - Dissertation for awarding a scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" - "The Objective Study of Morality and Contemporary Ethics” (1919), reviewed;

Indicator D – a total of 195 points from publications as follows:

5. Published book based on a Dissertation for awarding a scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" - Marinova, E. (2019) Objective Studies of Morality and Contemporary Ethics. V. Tarnovo, Faber, 260 p., ISBN 978-619-00-0976-4 (**1x75=75**);
7. Articles and reports published in non-referenced journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes (**9x10=90**);

9. Studios published in non-referenced journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes (**2x15=30**);

Indicator E - a total of **185 points** from citation as follows:

13. Citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific reviewing (**17x10=170**);

14. Citations or reviews in non-referenced journals with scientific review (**3x5=15**).

The report shows that Emilia Marinova has a **total of 530 points**, i.e. she exceeds the minimum requirements of NCID for the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences".

4. Content analysis of the applicant's scientific achievements

I will briefly address the presented dissertation and its scientific potential.

4.1. Description: The volume of the dissertation is 258 pages, structured in: Introduction (10 p.); four chapters (226 p.); Conclusion (5 p.); Remarks (9 p.); Literature (21p.); Summary (2 p.); Contributions (2 p.); List of Publications on the Topic (1 p.). The cited literature includes 301 publications - 60 in Latin; 241 in Cyrillic (Bulgarian, Russian).

The *Abstract* fulfills its function – it covers 31 p. forming eight chapters: Short summary; An Important Clarification; Introduction; Content of the Dissertation; Summary of the Dissertation; Contributions; Publications on the Dissertation Topic; Declaration of Originality.

In "An Important Clarification" the author refines the concepts "objective methods," "objective approach," and "objective studies of morality," and points out that she distinguishes them from "*the empirical*" under the influence of Prof. M. Draganov who sees a conflict in the connection between "*the experiment*" and "*the ethical*". Thus: "*the objective studies of morality* have as their object the world of morality and are conducted by objective means."

Eleven publications on the topic of the dissertation (2005–2019) have been cited - one monograph, two studios, nine articles. The originality of the dissertation is declared - topic, content, scientific achievements. At the same time, it is declared that the dissertation for "Doctor of Philosophical Sciences" is prepared by E. Marinova independently, and it does not repeat the content of the dissertation for "Doctor of Philosophy".

The volume, structure, sources and publications meet the formal criteria for a dissertation for "Doctor of Philosophical Sciences". The same applies to the Abstract.

4.2. Thesis theme: The chosen theme clearly shows what purposes - analysis of the connection between the objective study of morality and the tendencies of contemporary ethics in order to see how objective (empirical, experimental, sociological, psychological, etc.) knowledge fits into ethics but also it contributes to its state. On the one hand, the topic

demonstrates interdisciplinarity - looking for a bridge between different empirical sciences which explore by their objective methods morality - sociology, psychology, social psychology, pedagogy, as well as their attitude toward ethics, as a philosophical science of morality. Although morality is closely linked to "practical philosophy" and is a priority of ethics, when analyzed by various empirical sciences, significant value is added to its overall understanding. On the other hand, the topic shows a deep philosophical orientation - the expectation is to think about concepts, relationships, and reasons, to get beyond visibility, to answer a lot of questions, and to build an overall picture of the sphere under study. Along with that, and as a counterpoint to everything, throughout ceases to become obsolete asking *why (and whether)* ethics needs objective scientific tools.

So I can summarize that the selected topic is interdisciplinary but markedly philosophical and, at the same time, interesting, useful and up-to-date because of its practical orientation, as well as its efforts to fill some research gaps. It is a challenge to the theory and to researchers in various scientific fields but also provides a good opportunity for the author to disclose its own research potential. All this makes the topic suitable for a doctoral thesis.

4.3. Methodology:

As the topic is interdisciplinary, both methods of ethics and methods of psychology, social psychology, and sociology are used. The dissertation actually aims to present some "objective methods" - related to the experimental sciences that study morality. Therefore, the subject of the analysis are the objective studies of morality, and, on the one hand, their possibilities, competences, and the specificity of their methods are sought, and on the other hand - their ethical framework, their relevance to contemporary ethics, and their place in Bulgarian Ethics.

The dissertation is based on the desire to strike a balance between classical methods of ethical analysis and ethical evaluation, from one side, and various experimental methods, which study the moral phenomena of individuals and communities - feelings, thinking, judgments, and behavior, from the other. The methodology used is adequate to achieve the primary goal that the author seeks - to show that objective studies of morality, although atypical of ethics, have a significant place in contemporary ethics - especially in applied ethics and development ethics, as well as in educational policies and practices, related with them. To accomplish this, the author sets out several research tasks connected to *objective studies of morality*: 1) To prove their specificity and capabilities; 2) To outline their ethical framework; 3) To indicate their influence on the Bulgarian ethical tradition; 4) To indicate their influence on applied ethics, development ethics, and social practices.

The achievement of these tasks enables E. Marinova to demonstrate her research skills and competences and to develop the topic in its entirety. The main hypothesis is that moral autonomy and moral heteronomy are complementary in genetic, regulatory and personal terms, and this determines the interconnectedness of morality and the social psyche, as well as the importance which ethical objective studies of morality and their inherent methods have.

4.4. Structure of the dissertation: the main content is organized into four chapters: 1. Objective Studies of Morality and the Psychology of Morality (24 p.); 2. Objective Studies of Morality and Their Ethical Framework (54 p.); 3. Objective Studies of Morality and Bulgarian Ethics (70 p.); 4. Morality and the Social Psyche (45 p.). The separate chapters are relatively balanced with each other and with respect to the whole thesis. They follow the internal logic and consistency of the study to reach certain conclusions. The main hypotheses and arguments are clearly formulated and proved. The tasks thus set out have been achieved.

Most interesting to me are the first and last chapters.

4.5. Conclusion: The dissertation shows the author's ability to work independently and purposefully in the study and comprehension of theory and empirics, to interpret different sources, to compare arguments, to express her own positions, to systematize. I am convinced that it has all the merits of being protected publicly and that Emilia Marinova will do it convincingly because she has delved deep into the issues, which is also evident from the total of eleven publications made on the topic of the dissertation - monographs, studios, articles.

4.6. Questions: Like any current scientific work, the dissertation gave rise to many reflections and questions in my mind. No wonder this topic raises more questions than answers - not only for readers but also for the author.

I will confine myself to three questions:

- 1) *What are the reasons for the statement (p. 209): "Today the refrain is "no morals" and it is very difficult for public opinion to be convinced that there is morality in politics, in medicine, in business, in the legal system, in ecology, and in every area of social life"? Is there a way out of this and where to look?*
- 2) *Can we count "backwards impact" of ethics for promoting morality in society and what "technologies" are possible, if so?*
- 3) *How does the author view the role of moral authorities and do they have a place today?*

5. Impact of the applicant's scientific publications in the literature

In her CV assoc. prof. Marinova cited a list of seventy-two citations of her works, as well as a list of five citations of a compilation. There are ten published reviews on her scientific work (1999–2019). This shows that she is a recognizable and well-known author in philosophical circles in the country.

The citations cited above in relation to the minimum NCID requirements for the Doctor of Science degree indicate that the requirements are met and also that the author's scientific publications are well reflected in the literature.

6. Critical remarks by the reviewer on the submitted works

I agree with the assessment of the contribution nature of the thesis made by the author in the Abstract, in the Thesis, and in a separate document. Both theoretical and applied contributions, as well, deserve attention. I hope they are a good starting point for future work in the study of morality and attempt to stimulate it in practice.

I appreciate E. Marinova's literary awareness in the field of the study of morality from different perspectives, as well as her research impartiality. I have no principal objections to the submitted papers and to the dissertation. Certainly I do not accept all theses, and I have many questions, comments, disagreements, but all of them are explanatory and perfectly acceptable as philosophical doubts and discussions.

In a good collegial tone, I think that the dissertation needs an editing to avoid some gaps. The text gives the impression of a certain fragmentation, despite the author's desire to constantly return to the main thread of the research. There is also a lack of a more precise definition of the concepts used, which would contribute to scientific clarity. I also have comments on the graphic layout of the text - the unsuccessful combination of different fonts and styles, the inaccurate use of spaces, distances and fields, the poor arrangement of titles and subtitles in the Table of Contents, as well as in the alphabetical order of the literature. I also think that in some places the language is too emotional and even pathetic, which is an advantage for many genres, but not for a dissertation, where a more rigorous and precise scientific language is preferred.

7. Personal impressions of the applicant

I have known Emilia Marinova for over twenty years. I have been following her scientific, publishing, editorial, publishing, and organizing activities for a long time. We have participated in scientific conferences exchanging thoughts and ideas. Together we have organized three national conferences on ethics, as well as the publication of collections of finalized reports. She is well impressed by her broad interests, awareness, energy and skills in organizing scientific events, and publishing. I must also point out her great efforts to build and strengthen the only independent ethics department in the country - the one that she currently directs at the ISSK - BAS. I appreciate the positive overall performance of Assoc. Prof.

Marinova and gladly cooperate with her. She always takes her commitments seriously and responsibly.

8. Conclusion

I believe that the dissertation has the merits of scientific research, and Emilia Marinova shows undoubted philosophical and psychological knowledge, originality, skills for analysis. In general, I positively appreciate the choice of the topic of the dissertation, the efforts made in the study and comprehension of the literature and the approved opinions on the subject, the expression of personal position and own interpretations, the connections made among different disciplines and their research methods. In addition, the necessary number of publications and citations were presented and all formal and substantive requirements for the award of the scientific degree were fulfilled.

I convincingly vote to be awarded the scientific degree "Doctor of Philosophical Sciences" in the professional field 2.3. Philosophy to Emilia Marinova.

Sofia
10.09.2019.

Signature:.....
(Prof. Dr. Valentina Dramalieva)