

OPINION  
FOR DISSERTATION WORK

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Topic: THE INFLUENCE OF GROUP ATTITUDE ON LIFE PERSPECTIVES FOR  
YOUNG PEOPLE OF BULGARIAN AND ROMA ORIGIN

Scientific adviser: Maya Grekova, professor, doctor of sociological sciences

Scientific field: Social, economic and legal sciences

Professional field: 3.1. Sociology, anthropology, cultural sciences

Faculty: Philosophy

Department: Sociology

Jury member: Tanya Nedelcheva, Professor, Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Institute  
of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Reason: This review has been prepared in pursuance of an Order of the Rector of Sofia  
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The dissertation consists of an introduction, six parts, a conclusion, a bibliography and three appendices in a volume of 426 standard pages. The literature used is 179 titles, of which 68 in Bulgarian and 111 in English, German, Russian and Hungarian. There are 3 publications on the topic in Bulgarian.

The text is well structured. The internal logical layer is decomposed into separate elements adequately and proportionately, according to their semantic meaning. Empirical sociological research with a critical self-awareness of the horizon of its validity has been conducted professionally. The optimal architecture of the development has been found - plastically and logically it is moved from abstract theoretical to concrete empirical research levels and a balance has been achieved.

1. The dissertation examines the influence of belonging to a minority or majority group on the way in which young people in adolescence and early adulthood build their individual projects for life. In this sense, it is an attempt to analyze a wide range of issues, at the center of which are: the importance of belonging to a community for the formation of life strategies of young people, the change of intergenerational and gender relations; broadening the ideas of several generations of young people about what they can and want to become; the dependence of future "images" for themselves on the economic status, the educational level, the specifics of their relations with representatives of both their own community and the majority, etc.

The content of the first and second parts is devoted mainly to theoretical-methodological and historical topics for the Roma youth community. Although they have an introductory character and create the impression of excessive emphasis on side issues, there are especially valuable theoretical and methodological analyzes related to the ideas of Loic Wakan.

From the third part begins the specific study. Here are the main contributions, insofar as the research attention is focused on the Roma community in the "Fakulteta" district and in particular on the influence of belonging to a minority or majority group on the way young people in adolescence and early adulthood build their individual life projects.

## 2. The advantages of development:

A. A professional attempt has been made to study the specifics of life projects for the future of the youth subgroups of two ethnic communities in Bulgarian society in the twenties of the XXI century - Roma and Bulgarian. The doctoral student focused on four main phenomena - the experience of stigma, fatalism, group affiliation, positive and negative experiences in contact with representatives of their own and other ethnic groups in the Bulgarian and Roma youth. Significant theoretical and practical value of the development is that it is a result of monitoring the relevant socio-psychological changes in 2002 and 2017. It is in this

context that the life prospects of these young people and their dependence on ethnicity, the experience of stigma are analyzed. and fatalism, the importance of positive and negative experiences in contact with representatives of one's own and the other ethnic group, as well as the impact of community values on individual life plans.

B. Information from included observation and data from an empirical sociological study of young people from the Roma community in the "Faculty" district found the presence of internal heterogeneity in the Roma community and a tendency to return to patriarchal values and self-determination of young people in the context of patriarchy. .

C. The development successfully verifies the main hypotheses, namely: first, belonging to the Bulgarian or Roma ethnic group has a significant impact on the formation of specific life goals and the experience of stigma, ethnic values, fatalism, positive and negative intra- and intergroup experience; secondly, the defining role of education changes the planning of the future and in particular - the degrees of completed education form sub-groups among the young people from the "Fakulteta" district, who differ in the planning of their future.

D. An important point in the development is the finding that the boundaries of the Roma community are more permeable, which leads to much more differentiated behavior among young people in the formation of their life goals. The disintegration of the community of Roma youth from the "Fakulteta" district into two main groups is presented - young people with secondary education and women. In general, the percentage of those who challenge traditional norms about the power of the older generation is increasing.

E. The various "fluctuations" in the still dominant conservative attitude among Roma youth are outlined, because the values carried by the community are much more decisive for the formation of the life goals of young Roma than those of society, which is a result of increasing poverty and marginalization of a large part of the Roma. It is for this reason that a larger share of young people, born, raised and living in the "Faculty" district, do not have the feeling that the planning and realization of the desired goals in life depends on themselves.

F. The analyzes have a theoretical and methodological potential to serve as a model for the study of social transformations and in particular the reliefs of marginalized groups in an urban context. In this regard, the value of the structured questionnaire cannot be overlooked.

G. Due to its specific research nature, the development can serve to build effective policies in the work on the integration of young Roma.

### 3. And disagreements:

A. The content of the first and second parts is too extensive and can be the basis for separate work. In my opinion, the work deserves publication as a monograph, but in order to

highlight the main research achievements, it is necessary to significantly reduce the first and second parts to the volume of an extended introduction.

B. The mentioned contributions, apart from not being well formulated, do not adequately reflect the rich content of the development, outlining significant social and community trajectories of the Bulgarian and Roma youth in the formation of their life strategies. For example, I would point to the defense of the thesis that it is not so much ethnicity that influences the development of life plans as belonging to a minority, especially to a ghettoized, forcibly ostracized minority.

4. In response to the legislator's request to determine the nature of the scientific contributions in the dissertation, I claim that they are "enrichment of existing knowledge".

5. The abstract accurately reflects the content of the dissertation.

Conclusion: Based on these important achievements, I propose to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to unanimously award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in Sociology in the professional field 3.1. Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences of Radostina Borisova Antonova.

April 25, 2021

Signature:  
(T. Nedelcheva)