



## ASSESSMENT<sup>1</sup>

of the academic work submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position of PROFESSOR in the professional field 3.5. Social communication and information science (Multiculturalism and media), announced by SU „St Climent of Ochrid“ in the State Gazette, issue 61 of 2 August 2022

**Reviewer:** Prof. Michael Minkov, PhD

**Candidate:** Associate Professor Svetlozar Kirilov, PhD

### I. Evaluation of the scientific and practical results and contributions of the scientific and educational output submitted for participation in the competition.

The candidate's main publication is a 439-page monograph comparing the specificities and social problems of two marginalized communities: Afro-Americans in the US and Gypsies in Bulgaria. I use the term "Gypsy" purposefully. As the candidate notes in his book, not all inhabitants of the Balkans and Central Europe who are of Indian origin define themselves as "Roma". Some (for instance the "Egyptians" of North Macedonia) categorically reject the terms "Roma" and "Romani" and do not wish to be called that. Others define themselves as Turks, Wallachs, or Bulgarians.

As far as I am aware, this is the first detailed comparison of Afro-American and Gypsy societies. The comparison is extremely important for social science as it sheds light on an important and unresolved question: why do some minorities (for example Jews, Chinese) integrate everywhere, despite the impediments that they encounter, including persecution, whereas others (Afro-Americans, Gypsies) experience difficulties.

Western social science, especially in the United States, follows a political correctness principle, according to which it is unacceptable to explain the social problems of Afro-Americans through theories of their culture, evolutionary theories, such as those of Rushton and associates, Lynn's, Jensen's, and other authors' intelligence theories, etc. Theories of that kind are now published rarely, mostly in marginal journals, such as *Mankind Quarterly*, and (especially Lynn and Rushton's theories) are denounced as racist. The only political acceptable explanation is that all marginalized communities are victims of racism, exploitation, and social inequality, which prevents them from integrating.

In his monograph, the candidate defends a middle ground: the impediments to the integration of Afro-Americans and Gypsies are a product of external factors (racism, discrimination, and poverty) as well as internal ones (their own culture). This is a courageous position, yet presented and argued well, supported with many examples from the author's field work, as well references to statistical data.

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<sup>1</sup> Забележка: Препоръчителен обем на становището – 2-3 стандартни страници.



The candidate has also submitted publications in which he analyzes factors that can disrupt the harmonious co-existence of societies with great ethnic, religious, or racial diversity. Interestingly, he sees parallels between the Quran and the Bible: both texts contain contradictions, and can be used to foster a tolerant attitude toward other religions as well as to generate hate.

The other contributions in the candidate's publications are the theories of different levels of tolerance ("three groups" or "concentric circles"), explaining the dynamics of integration. The author uses the old "us-them" sociological theory and thus resuscitates it for sociology. The theory is widely used in studies of national culture, which are unfortunately nearly unknown in American sociology journals, and are even desk-rejected with the argument that "This is not sociology". The candidate's attempt to build a bridge of sorts between sociology and comparative culturology is commendable, and we should wish him success in further attempts in that field.

The applicant has also submitted publications on film and political science. I abstain from commenting on them due to my lack of expertise.

As a whole, I believe that the candidate approaches well-known scientific problems in new ways, defends or applies new theories (or combines existing theories) to those problems, and offers new analyses and explanations, using new evidence. This is a significant contribution, and it has been achieved single-handedly, since the candidate is the sole author of his publications.

In addition to the theoretical contribution, the candidate's publications could be of practical utility if politicians in the United States and Bulgaria paid more attention to analyses of this kind. Unfortunately, the political correctness principle is extremely strong in the United States, and is spreading throughout the world, at the expense of scientific objectivity. Theories that search for the roots of the problems of underperforming minorities in those minorities for now do not have good prospects of being adopted as a foundation of practical action.

## II. Notes and recommendations

Some of the literature on the Afro-American problems uses the so-called life history strategy theory, according to which disorganized social environments, characterized by high uncertainty and short lifespans, predispose people toward short-term life strategies: early sexual contacts, minimal parental care, a lack of interest in education, and criminal activity aiming at fast material success and social status. This theory is supported by the fact that one observes the same cultural traits in Africa as in Black American society. Therefore, these traits cannot be an outcome of European exploitation as they characterized also tribes (for instance the Kung San) of Southern Africa, which had minimal contacts with the outside world up until 1960.

This theory has been anathemized by American sociology, especially by leading criminology journals (*Criminology*; *British Journal of Criminology* etc.), as it is proposed mostly by evolutionists. However, the theory has lately made its way into top journals, including *Nature Human Behavior*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* and many more. It would be interesting to use this theory to compare Afro-American and Gypsy communities and find out if it



explains why, despite the many similarities, the two communities are also quite different. For example Gypsy criminal behavior rarely includes armed robberies, unlike that of Afro-Americans..

Second recommendation: The candidate's monograph should be translate into English so as to pursue international traction. .

### III. Conclusion

I believe that the candidate, Associate Professor Svetlozar Kirilov Ivanov, satisfies all formal requirements for the academic position of PROFESSOR in the professional field 3.5. Social communication and information science (Multiculturalism and media), and that he has made significant contributions for the development of social science on a global scale. I wholeheartedly propose that he be elected for this academic position.

Date: 20 November 2022

Jury member

Prof. Michael Minkov