

OPINION

by Prof. Mira Nikolaeva Markova, PhD

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

according to the procedure for the defense of a dissertation on the topic "Feeding the young: trajectories of taste " for obtaining the scientific degree "DOCTOR OF SCIENCES"

Field 2. Social, business and legal sciences. Professional direction 3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural sciences

With author: Associate Professor PhD Evgenia Krasteva- Blagoeva

New Bulgarian University

1. Procedure details

I am preparing this opinion in my capacity as a member of the scientific jury, determined by Order No. 3-PK-309/22.07.2024. The documentation for the procedure complies with the Rules for the Terms and Conditions for the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and the Regulations for the implementation of the ZRASRB. When familiarizing myself with the scientific production of Assoc. Prof. Evgenia Krasteva- Blagoeva, PhD, I did not find any plagiarism in the sense of ZRASRB. The provided tables with the scientometric indicators certify that the candidate fully meets the requirements for obtaining the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences". The abstract in the amount of 27 pages fully meets the requirements for this type of documentary summaries of the main scientific work.

2. Data on the candidate's professional development

Evgenia Krasteva- Blagoeva graduated in History from the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" with a Master's degree and specialization in Ethnology. She obtained the doctorate degree at the Ethnographic Institute with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, where from 1999 to 2003 she was an research assistant. In the period 2003-2008 she was the chief assistant in the Department of Anthropology at the NBU. Since 2008, she has held the academic position of "docent" at the same university. Evgenia Blagoeva builds herself as a researcher

purposefully and motivated. Today she is an established name in science, with values and innovative developments.

3. Description of the candidate's scientific works and contributions

The thesis submitted for defense " Feeding the young: trajectories of taste " has as its object the nutrition and nutrition culture of young people in a broad anthropological and cultural context, looking for its essence, problems and significance in the post-socialist era. The subject of the research covers the possibilities for interpretation and analysis of the trajectories of taste in the post-socialist Bulgarian society. I find the topic relevant, insofar as a new view is offered on the functionality and symbolic load of the culture of eating for young people. The dissertation has a total volume of 269 pages and consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography and two appendices.

The dissertation offered to our attention fulfills the set goal as the formulated tasks are fulfilled. A review of the existing literature interpretations of young people's nutrition as a cultural phenomenon with particular social significance was made. A sufficiently representative source base has been collected and systematized. Innovative is the qualitative analysis of the data, which leads to the proposal of typological models for theoretical understanding of the processes. The collective image of the youth consumer is outlined, in the context of the collective identity refracted through the analyzed group. A formal, stylistic and symbolic analysis of the collected material was carried out, and the main sustainable images and themes in the culture of eating and lifestyle of young people were brought out. A comparative analysis of the prevalence, frequency and regional characteristics of the identified patterns was made. A cultural and anthropological interpretation of the functional and symbolic characteristics of the studied phenomenon is proposed.

Culinary trajectories are analyzed on a broad source basis. The visualization of food preferences shapes the youth diet, conceived and analyzed by the author as a cultural phenomenon.

Eating is analyzed in the context of the anthropology of consumption, influenced by fashion, the media, but also by stereotypical attitudes and environmental conditions. Evgenia Blagoeva introduces a new methodological framework that could be followed as a model for future studies in the field of the researched issues.

The imposition of youth values as the basis of the youth food diet puts at the center of Evgenia Blagoeva's research precisely the different nutritional cultural models of the youth. The researched processes shape the collision of old-new, traditional-modern, collective-individual through the trajectories of taste.

An interesting and contributing point in the essay is the sought-after relationship between young people and identity, broken through food choices, forming specific cultural circles, which in our modern times build a special cultural reality. Here I would also like to pay attention to the language of the dissertation, which is undoubtedly another of its merits, but also shows the erudition of Assoc. Prof. Evgenia Blagoeva.

I find that the proposed text fully meets the requirements for obtaining the scientific degree "Doctor of Science". This is a mature work that shines a new light on elements of consumer culture, food culture, modern food rituals and everyday practices of young people. The formation of peculiar cultural networks through eating is shown, which shape and strengthen collective identity models.

Assoc. Prof. Evgenia Blagoeva handles the information precisely. She shows respect for those who wrote before her on the researched problems and has an excellent knowledge of the scientific literature. The exact statement is impressive, which shows confidence in the advocated scientific theses.

Analyzing the overall scientific activity of Assoc. Prof. Evgenia Krasteva-Blagoeva and considering the indisputable merits of the proposed monographic composition, I will confidently vote positively for the awarding of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in professional direction 3. 1 Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences, from the field of knowledge 3. Social, business and legal sciences.

Sofia, 13. 10. 2024

Prof. Mira Markova