

FOOD FOR THOUGHT IN THE 'BREAD AND CIRCUSES' DOCUMENTARY

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Abstract: *The article presents an empirical study testing experimentally to what extent good documentary films can serve as a tool for influencing deeply rooted beliefs and attitudes towards the Roma. The study is based on a rare experiment involving students and a series of discussions with teachers that fit into the theory and tradition of deliberation for internal and external change. The main conclusion is that the strong professional message of the cinema makes a positive shift in the attitudes towards the equal integration of the Roma. The film "Bread and Circuses" from director Jackie Stoev provides an example how negative attitudes of young people towards one of the most stigmatized groups in Bulgarian society can be overturned.*

Keywords: ethnic prejudice; changing stereotypes; impact of art.

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Contribution:

Boyan Zahariev – Abstract, Introduction, Theoretical background, Data Processing, Results & Discussion, Conclusions

Ilko Yordanov – Design of the experiment, Field work, Data processing and Charts, Results & Discussion, Conclusions

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The analysis in the article is based on an experiment conducted with 193 high school students from schools in Sofia. The students were shown the film "Bread and Circuses" by director Jackie Stoev. Students were invited to fill in a questionnaire before and after the screening. Before the lights in the cinema go out, 74% of high school students did not hide having rather negative associations for the Roma. After the end of the tape, however, the share of those with negative attitudes was almost twice lower - 39%. The most significant change occurred in extreme assessments of the Roma - a fivefold decrease from 10% at the beginning to 2% at the end of the experiment. While until the beginning of the screening some 17% of high school students had rather positive associations for the Roma, after the last frame of the film the percentage of students with positive associations was almost three times higher - 47%.

Having in mind legitimate reservations one might have about the sincerity of the participants in such an experiment and the robustness of the recorded result, it should be noted that a change of this magnitude can hardly be achieved in such a short time with other methods.

The study potentially opens new approaches to effectively overcome ethnic prejudice and to cultivate tolerance among students, teachers and the general public.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The survey is part of the development of applied deliberation research in Bulgaria, which is still limited. It provides opportunity to track changes in attitudes not only in the totality of respondents but also at the individual level, while maintaining the anonymity of the respondents. The survey opens a chance for a more in-depth and accurate study of the overall effect on attitudes towards Roma, regardless of the direction of change. Our main goal is to understand to what extent the combination of deliberation techniques with the use of works of art (the film "Bread and Circuses" by director Jackie Stoev) can be applied in the teaching of tolerance in school. To pursue

this goal, the survey among students was followed by a series of 5 discussions with teachers from different cities, accompanied by a presentation and discussion of both the results achieved with the students and the film itself.

Our deliberative experiment falls into the broad category of research that assesses the impact of art - in our case, a documentary - on positive change to more tolerant attitudes. Jackie Stoev's film presents life in the Roma neighborhood "Iztok (East)" in the southern Bulgarian town of Kyustendil through the daily routine of the young entrepreneur Bobby, who sells bread, plays music and has a small cable TV that serves the population in the neighborhood. Bobby takes the film's authors through different places in the neighborhood, and during the journey they meet people with different exciting destinies. The whole plot is a mosaic of short stories with a total duration of less than 1 hour.

The total duration of the experiment, which included high school students in Sofia, is about 2 hours and includes filling in questionnaires at the "entrance" and "exit" and a screening.

There are two types of questions in our survey - one is well researched and part of a widely used methodology, and the other is experimental. The core of the questionnaire is composed of questions intended to measure social distance. These are questions asking about the extent to which respondents agree to have closer relations with members of different minorities in a variety of situations, such as working together or having their children attend the same schools. This group of questions has been tested many times in Bulgaria in nationally representative samples of the population aged 16 and over. The size of the samples in these studies does not allow focusing observations on the age group of 16-19 olds, which is presented in the present study; but in general the set of questions measuring social distance is validated in Bulgaria. Previous surveys show high levels of understanding of the questions, responsiveness and stable results over time that are linked in a theoretically consistent way with other variables.

The remaining questions in the survey were selected by the authors based on their expert experience of working with various groups of participants in the process of Roma integration - both supporters of individual policies and their opponents. Questions include statements that can be accepted or rejected to varying degrees and refer either to fundamental rights or to various debatable ideas for implementing specific integration measures or policies. Special emphasis is placed on questions and statements in close connection with the plot of the film such as the role of the media, segregation etc., which allows a comparative analysis of the strength of the film's impact in terms of attitudes and positions on topics directly related to Roma integration; some questions are more removed from the plot, but focus on significant challenges to Roma inclusion. None of the groups of questions aims to achieve comprehensiveness on the topic, our goal was to select issues covering different areas of public life, which are known to provoke mixed reactions or contain references to specific prejudices against the Roma.

The tools and procedures for conducting the deliberation experiment were tested in the week before the actual study with a group of 10 young people from Sofi aged 14-17; all of them participants in an artistic workshop. Following the analysis of the test, procedural improvements were introduced encouraging responsiveness such as announcing an earlier time for gathering the participants, holding a raffle and providing internet access for digital filling of questionnaires while ensuring anonymity). Regarding the content of the incoming and outgoing questionnaires, no need for changes was found.

The study was conducted with the permission and assistance of the educational inspectorate of Sofia and in partnership with the 'House of Cinema'. The study was conducted in the form of an interactive exercise for high

school students from 8 metropolitan schools. The sample of schools was made on a convenience basis, in view of the proximity of the school to the place of the experiment. The diverse profile of the schools is evidenced by their classification in the following groups¹: 2 schools in each of groups 4, 5 and 6, 1 school in group 7 and one school that is a private high school.

The total number of students participating in the study was 193, of which 191 completed questionnaires at the entrance, 167 completed questionnaires at the exit, and 2 participants completed a questionnaire only at the exit. The analysis of the effect of the screening of the film "Bread and Circuses" was made on the basis of 165 cards with matching codes at the "entrance" and the "exit". The time for filling in the entrance questionnaire has a median of 9:14 min. The time for filling in the exit questionnaire was twice as short - with a median value of 4:49 min.

The majority of participants in the study were girls - 64%. The share of boys was a little over 1/3. Among the respondents, representatives of ethnic minorities were exceptions. One of the students in the study was a child from a mixed marriage, and 3 did not identify themselves.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS ACCORDING THEIR
ETHNIC SELF-DETERMINATION (PERCENTAGE)

Ethnicity	%
Bulgarian	96%
Not shown	2%
Other	1%
Mixed (Bulgarian and other)	1%

The survey was based on an anonymous questionnaire at the 'entrance' and 'exit' with a randomly-drawn matching code, as the questionnaires were filled in independently by the high school students from participating

¹ This grouping of schools is determined by the Order No ПД09-1072/10.08.2016 of the minister of education. Grouping is on a scale from 1 to 7, a smaller number corresponding to lower academic achievement of students.

schools. Students were notified in advance of the form of the event: a screening and an interactive exercise, for which they were asked to bring mobile phones or tablets if possible.

The majority of students completed the application and participated in completing the questionnaires with their personal means of mobile communication (138 students (72%) of those who completed the survey at the entrance and 113 students (68%) of those who completed the survey at the exit). For the other high school students, the organizers had provided an opportunity to fill in an identical printed version of the questionnaire, which was used by 28% of the students at the entrance and 32% of the students at the exit of the deliberation study.

Evaluation of the answers with free associations was done in a panel of writers and philologists, which used a lists of all words and expressions associated by participants with Roma. For this purpose, a five-point scale was used, in which strongly negative associations were coded as - 2, and strongly positive associations by 2. The scale was applied consistently to all individual associative units.

RESULTS

The methodology used within the experiment is akin to **deliberation**, although in many respects it differs from its most common forms. As a method from the toolset of political and social sciences, deliberation was first applied in the Anglo-Saxon democracies (Great Britain, the United States and Australia). It was initially seen as an alternative to the US primary elections. In the 1980s and 1990s, James Fishkin, a professor at the University of Texas, in a series of works developed a generalized deliberation theory based on various deliberative experiments (Fishkin, 1993); (Luskin & Fishkin, 1999).

At its core, the deliberation method is a combination of two applied research tools: a focus group fed with information of the high-

est possible quality and a representative sociological survey. The key question answered by deliberation is what would be the attitudes and positions of the social group represented in the deliberation format if they were optimally informed and discussed (I. Yordanov, 2001: 3). The main product of the deliberative form of consultation is the difference in the positions held and the attitudes expressed **before and after** the informed public debates. The aim is to have better informed and more competent citizens, as well as to popularize the results.

In other words, the method is “a combination of **direct democracy** based on **statistical representation**, **pluralism** and **autonomy** of opinion, a high degree of **awareness** and **independence** in the formation of civic positions” (Hristov, 2001: 24).

Among the first applications of the deliberation model in Bulgaria were the Youth Deliberative Forum with the participation of candidates in the 2001 presidential elections, organized by the Druzhiba-Sofia Association in May 2006 focusing on city planning and the development plan of Sofia with the participation of the National Ombudsman, the chief architect of Sofia, the mayor of one of the Sofia districts, experts from the local administration in the region, representatives of NGOs and a sample of 100 citizens (Yordanov, 2006). Another early example was the National Debate “Policies to the Roma in Bulgaria” with a sample of 255 citizens, whose attitudes towards the Roma discussions aim to change.

All the above forms of application of the deliberation method are based on direct interaction of politicians and experts with the participants in the deliberation.

Among the first applications of the deliberation model in Bulgaria were the Youth Deliberation Forum with the participation of candidates in the 2001 presidential elections²; a referendum focusing on city planning and the development plan of Sofia organized by the Druzhiba-Sofia Association in May 2006 with

² Hristov, S. (2001) ‘The deliberative model and deliberative for a in Bulgaria’, in. Yordanov, I. et al., ‘Youth Deliberative Forum - Presidential Elections 2001’, National Student Association of Political Science, Sofia.

the participation of the National Ombudsman, the chief architect of Sofia, the mayor of one of the Sofia districts, experts from the local administration in the region, representatives of NGOs and a sample of 100 citizens (Yordanov, 2006). Another early example was the National Debate “Policies to the Roma in Bulgaria” with a sample of 255 citizens, whose attitudes towards the Roma discussions aim to change³.

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SPONTANEOUS ASSESSMENT OF THE MOVIE

Three out of four viewers say they like the film, and every third viewer liked it a lot. Only about 14% did not like the tape, and another 9% were hesitant. Given that a sig-

nificant majority of students did not hide their negative attitudes towards the Roma before the screening, the high proportions of those who liked the film, featuring the lives of people from a Roma community, testify to the quality of the film.

The merits of the work have been appreciated in a number of prestigious film festivals. The movie was included in the selection of the 18th Sofia Film Fest⁴ and received the director's award at the Golden Rhyton Festival.⁵

Obviously liking a film in itself cannot be expected to lead to an automatic change in sustainably formed attitudes. Rather, the screening can be expected to be an invitation to reflection and a possible change in attitudes. However, the following analysis of the impact of the 55-minute message shows a clear trace of a positive impact of the film in supporting integration and respect for Roma rights. Works of art, in contrast to purely rational arguments, can influence the affective side of prejudice,

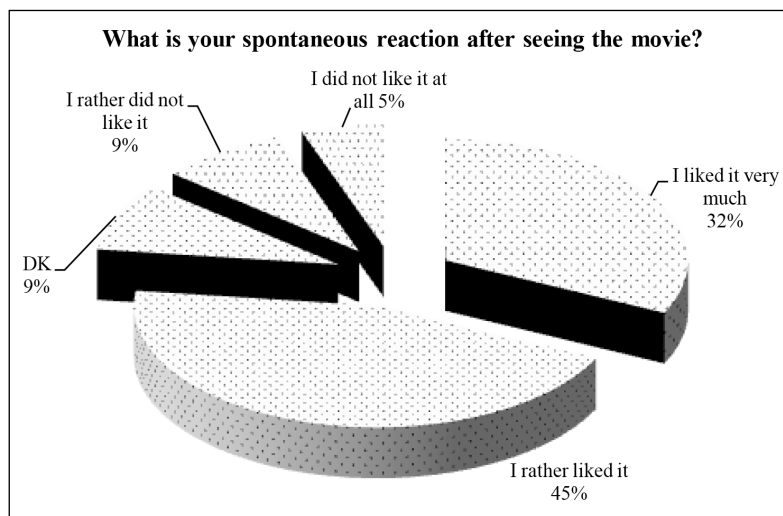


FIGURE 1. SPONTANEOUS ASSESSMENT OF THE MOVIE

³ National debate /Deliberative Poll®, organized in Bulgaria on the topic „Policies concerning the Roma“, with a representative sample of 255 participants, implemented by Alpha Research, the Center for Liberal Strategies, Bulgarian National TV and Open Society Institute – Sofia in April 2007 г. (Deliberative Polling is a trade mark of James Fishkin. All revenues from the use of the trade mark are spent on research).

⁴ Unrivalled Jackie Johnny and Charlie with new premiere at Sofia Film Fest, January 2016, <https://siff.bg/bg/articles/novini-za-filmi/unikalnite-dzheki-dzhoni-i-charli-s-nova-premiera-na-sofiya-film-fest>.

⁵ Golden Rhyton. Bulgarian documentary and animated film festival, 2013, <http://www.zlatenriton.bg/>.

which can exist independently of rational positions: affect is also more difficult to assess, especially in dynamic terms. In our study we had a special module for registering free associations, which was intended to capture some changes in affective prejudices. In the next two sections we first present the changes in the positions taken by participants (rational component) and in the concepts with which they associate the Roma (affective component).

CHANGING ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTEGRATION OF THE ROMA

In this section, we look at the main changes that deliberation is interested in. Those are changes in the willingness to support certain measures and policies, which are supposed to contain a mainly rational component and in this sense are subject to argument. In this case, we examine whether changes in support for certain policies may depend on more indirect influences with artistic means, which, apart from reason, have access to aesthetic and other affective perceptions.

After the screening we observed a significant change in 28% of high school students in at least half of the positions related to the

rights and integration of the Roma. For another 60% of participating young people, there was also a change in attitudes, influenced by the film, though not so significant. Only 12% had changed absolutely nothing in their basic positions regarding Roma rights.

The screening contributed to shifting the weight of the scales in favor of more active public action for Roma integration. The average score changes from rather skeptical (4.23) to rather encouraging active integration measures (3.76) on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 means 'it is extremely important for society to promote Roma integration' while 7 means 'it is not at all important for the society to promote the integration of the Roma'; 4 is the center of the scale reflecting hesitation whether society should be more active in terms of integration or not. Although the change is only within half a point, it is important to note that it reverses the balance of attitudes in favor of more proactive action for Roma integration.

Within a summary question concerning the need to promote the integration of Roma, we find a significant change in attitudes from an average score of 4.23 to an average score of 3.76 on a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means 'it is extremely important for society to promote

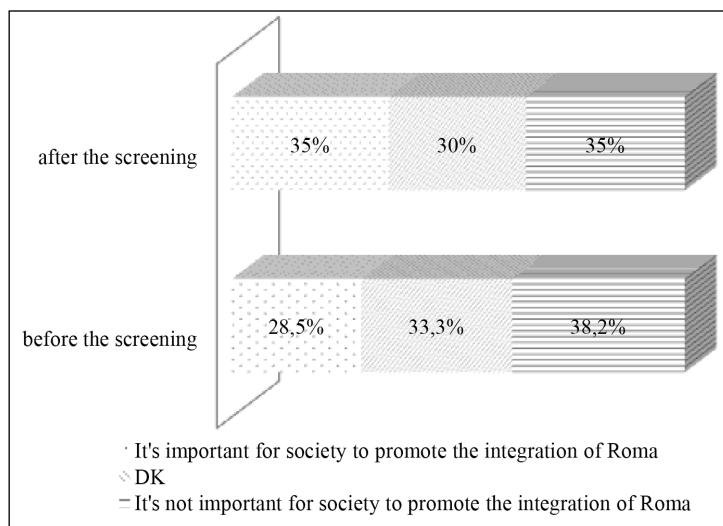


FIGURE 2. ASSESSING WHETHER IT IS IMPORTANT FOR SOCIETY TO PROMOTE THE INTEGRATION OF THE ROMA

Roma integration', and 7 means 'it is not at all important for society to promote Roma integration'. The average score passes through the middle of the scale (4), which means that an important transition has taken place.

The reversal of attitudes is due to the changed opinion by 3 percentage points in favor of integration measures among students who initially hesitated or did not have an opinion and students who before the screening thought that it was not important for society to promote the integration of the Roma. The film appears to have led to a greater or lesser change in the position on this issue in the majority of students (53%). Among those who had changed their opinion, the majority were more inclined to accept that it is important for our society to promote Roma integration: almost 60% shifted their opinion in this direction while the remaining 40% became more inclined to think that it is not important for society to promote Roma integration.

Changes with a balance towards giving more rights and opportunities to the Roma are also observed in the block of issues related to proposals for specific measures and policies.

Of particular interest is the change of position on one of the most radical restrictions on Roma rights – the segregationist practice of enclosing ghettos with walls. Although it could not eradicate the belief of some students that the separation of Roma neighbourhoods is acceptable, the film managed to reverse the result of a potential vote on the subject. Before the screening, support for this extreme measure dominated – those who are willing to accept or tolerate it were about 2/3 – while after the screening, students rejected it with a majority of 52%. Reversing a majority is an extremely significant result, although it is the only one of its kind among the other proposals that refer to positive policies in support Roma integration.

TABLE 2
CHANGES IN THE POSITION OF THE PARTICIPANTS AFTER THE SCREENING DEPENDING ON
THE DIRECTION OF CHANGE

Questions concerning the rights of Roma and opportunities for inclusion	No change	Allowing for MORE rights and opportunities for Roma	Allowing for LESS rights and opportunities for Roma
Establish organizations and associations for preservation and development of their culture	63%	27%	10%
Learn their language in public schools	79%	14%	7%
Education in schools in all subjects should be in the native language of students	84%	13%	3%
Have their MPs in the National Assembly	74%	22%	4%
Have their own political parties	77%	19%	4%
Have their own TVs	57%	40%	3%
Have programs in their own language on national television	75%	21%	5%
Should 'Roma neighborhoods' be fenced off or not?	68%	27%	5%
Do you agree with the following statement: „It is good to have more Roma police officers“?	62%	27%	12%
Do you agree with the following statement: „It is good to have more Roma teachers“?	65%	26%	9%
Do you agree with the following statement: „It is good to have more Roma journalists“?	57%	33%	10%

Prior to the screening, high school students shared a clear disagreement with a number of statements regarding the integration and equal participation of Roma in various spheres of public life such as the media, politics and culture.

For example, the majority of respondents do not accept the Roma to create organizations and associations for the preservation and development of their culture (52%), and 63% do not agree with the statement 'It is good to have more Roma – journalists'. After the last frame of the film, the students sharing such attitudes decreased significantly to a minority of 42% and 49% respectively.

Although a majority opposed to having Roma in key positions remained after the screening, the number of young people who do not agree to have more Roma teachers, police officers and MPs decreased significantly.

Among the most significant changes in the position of high-school students before and after the screening was the increased tendency to accept the opportunity to have more Roma journalists. It is very likely that this position was indeed influenced by the content of the film "Bread and Circuses", where most of the featured story is the work of two local journalists from the 'East' Roma neighborhood.

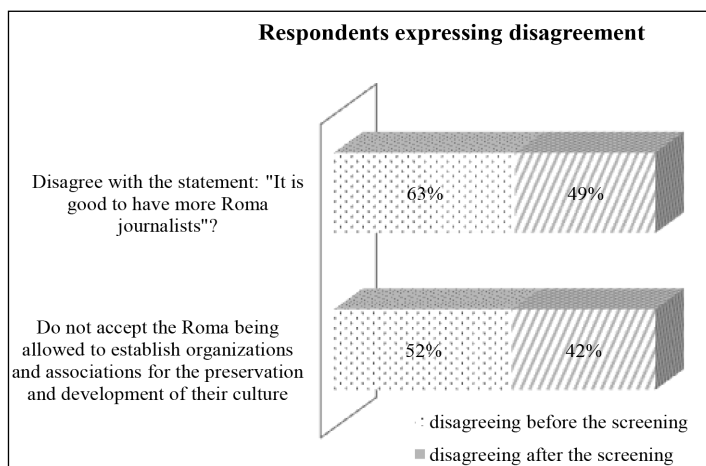


FIGURE 3. CHANGES IN AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS RELATED TO THE INTEGRATION OF THE ROMA

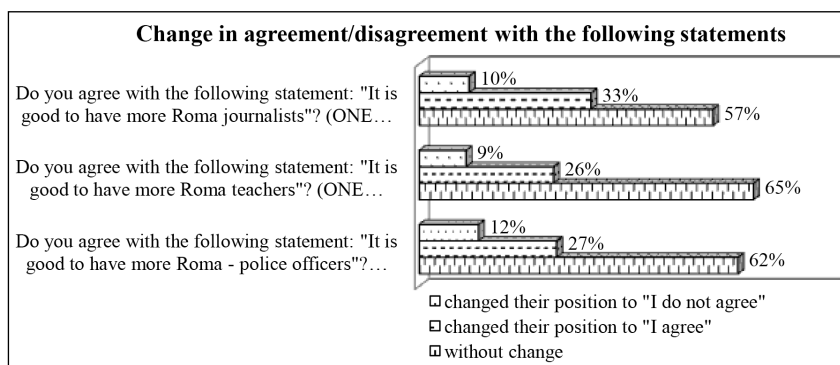


FIGURE 4. CHANGE IN (DIS) AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT THE INTEGRATION OF THE ROMA

The reversal of attitudes on this issue resulted from an increase of 1/3 of those who agreed to accept the need of more Roma journalists, with only 10% who have changed their position to disagree.

Even before the screening, less than half of high school students from upper classes (43%) agreed to seal Roma from society with walls. However, this share decreased significantly after the screening to 1/3: and students who categorically did not accept the erection of walls were now more than half (52%).

On the whole, with regard to all the positions tested in the survey related to Roma integration and equality, a significant share of high-school students changed their overall attitude. Approximately 1 in 5 participants (22%) remained unchanged after the screening.

In summary among those who changed their attitude – 128 out of 165 students – 77% expressed a greater tendency to accept Roma integration and equality after the screening, while 23% changed their position in the opposite direction.

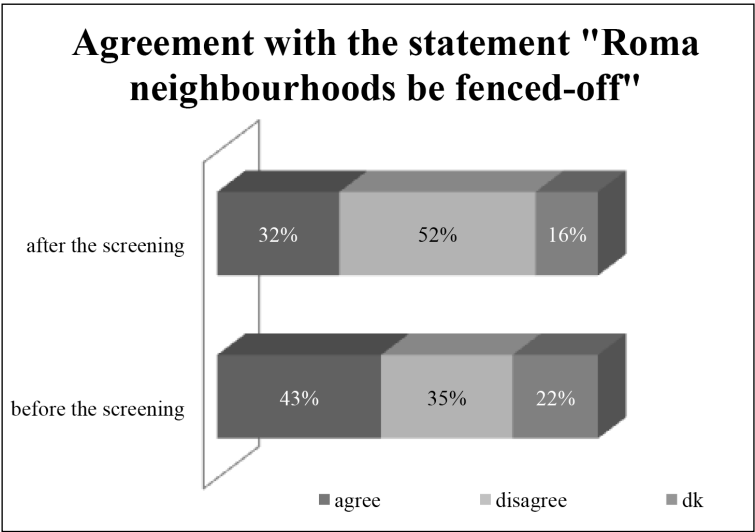


FIGURE 5. CHANGE IN ACCEPTANCE FOR FENCING-OFF ROMA NEIGHBOR HOODS

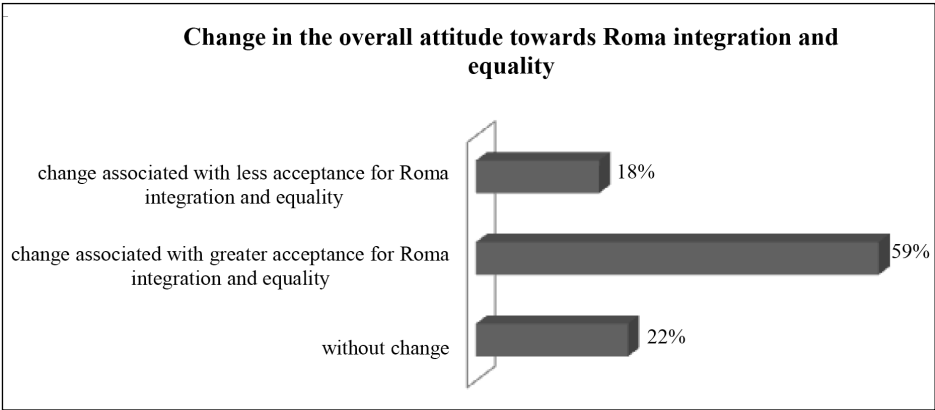


FIGURE 6. CHANGE IN THE OVERALL ATTITUDE TOWARDS ROMA INTEGRATION AND EQUALITY



FIGURE 7. CHANGE IN ATTITUDES TOWARDS ROMA INTEGRATION AND EQUALITY

CHANGE IN SOCIAL DISTANCE AND FREE ASSOCIATION

In this section, we analyze the impact of the film on variables that – being tied to responses related to personal attitudes and willingness to communicate, rather than to the more abstract categories of public choice operating in politics – have a strong affective component. We consider changes in social distances and in free associations, attributing characteristic features to the Roma.

A review of social distancing from the Roma registered before the screening shows that the starting position is very unfavorable. In all studied areas of coexistence (individual and institutional), solid majorities did not want to have a relationship with Roma. The closer (friendly, personal) relations we are talking

about, the more widespread is the reluctance to establish any contact with Roma. After the screening of the film, the social distances decreased, and the most significant result from a practical point of view was achieved in the readiness to accept Roma in the school where own children are enrolled. After the screening support for Roma enrollment in the same school equaled opposition: a rare case of parity in the whole list of observed variables, almost all of which retain majorities, holding an unfavorable position towards the Roma. However, readiness to accept Roma in the same school for most respondents does not involve readiness to accept Roma in their children's class, which means that in the host school there would be support from Bulgarian students for the so-called in-school segregation – the practice of separating students

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS DEPENDING ON THEIR READINESS TO HAVE TIES OF RELATIONSHIP WITH ROMA IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS (SO-CALLED SOCIAL DISTANCES)

	Agreeing before the screening	Disagreeing before the screening	Agreeing after the screening	Disagreeing after the screening
Roma being enrolled in your children's school	33%	67%	50%	50%
Roma being your children's classmates	15%	85%	22%	78%
Your best friend marrying a Roma	10%	90%	17%	83%
Roma visiting your home	12%	88%	18%	82%
Roma living in your neighborhood	13%	87%	20%	80%

from one school on ethnic grounds in different classes.

Associative prejudices are sometimes defined as implicit or hidden, as opposed to explicit or overt prejudices. Explicit prejudices can be formulated in the form of statements that are subject to argumentation, while implicit, associative prejudices usually cannot. In addition, associative prejudices are largely automated and less susceptible to self-control (Paula, Bertram & Victoria, 2008).

The analysis of the answers containing free associations confirms that before the screening there was a predominantly negative perception of the Roma. Their description tends to be moderately negative (-0.9 on a scale from 0 to -2, where 0 is a neutral and - 2 is an extremely negative qualification). After the screening, descriptions changed, becoming rather positive, although very close to the neutral perception (0.2 on a scale from 0 to 2, where 0 means ‘neutral’ and 2 is a strongly positive qualification). The change in the score is about 1/5 in a positive direction on a five-point scale

(from - 2 (strongly negative associations) to + 2 (strongly positive associations).

Before the screening, 74% of students had rather negative associations with Roma. After the end of the film, the share of students with negative associations was almost twice lower - 39%, with the most significant change occurring in the extreme assessments of the Roma – the share of such assessments decreased from 10% to 2%. Before the screening, only 17% of high school students had rather positive associations for Roma. After the end of the tape, their share was almost three times higher – 47%. Neutral ratings also rose – from 9% before the lights went out in the cinema – to 13% after the last frame of the film.

In 2/3 of the students the associations have changed in a positive direction, ie if they have been mostly negative – they have either softened or become neutral or mostly positive. In 22% there was no change to more positive or more negative associations for the Roma, and in 11% there was rather deterioration in the perception of the Roma.

Таблица 4
DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS DEPENDING ON THE TYPE OF SUBJECTIVE ASSESSMENTS MEASURED THROUGH FREE ASSOCIATIONS AT THE BEGINNING AND AT THE END OF THE EXPERIMENT (PERCENTAGE)

Subjective assessment	Before the screening	After the screening
Negative	74%	39%
Neutral	9%	13%
Positive	17%	47%

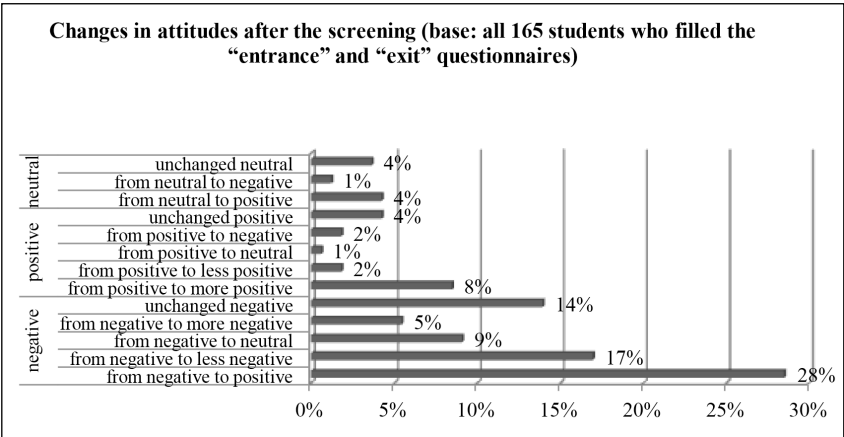


FIGURE 8. DIRECTION OF CHANGE IN ATTITUDES AFTER THE SCREENING

The most significant change is registered in relation to the **initially negative attitudes**. A total of 74% improved their attitudes towards Roma after seeing the film, with 39% turning their negative attitudes into positive ones, another 12% moving from negative to neutral, while 23 % have softened their negative attitude, although they have kept it. In this group, only 7% have hardened their negative perceptions, and another 1/5 have kept them unchanged.

The answers to the open questions of respondents displaying negative attitudes at the entrance show either changes or uncertainty at the end: there are many strikethroughs and corrections, as well as intentionally omitted answers. To a large extent this can be interpreted as a signal of a positive change in their initially negative attitudes towards Roma integration and rights. A change they themselves may not yet be ready to acknowledge.

Not surprisingly in the group of students **with initially positive attitudes** there is an increase in positive attitudes towards Roma

in 50% of students, 25% have maintained their positive associations at the same level, another 11% have maintained a positive attitude, although slightly reduced, and only 15% changed a little their position from positive to negative or neutral.

In the group of those who **initially expressed a neutral attitude** towards the Roma, the share of students who changed it to a positive one was the highest (47%), followed by those who kept their initial attitudes unchanged (40%) and only among 13% the initial neutral attitude has become negative.

Table 5 includes free-text comments from some of the respondents who chose to write something extra – both before and after the film. The shared positions illustrate some of the aspects of the impact of the movie “Bread and Circuses” described above expressed by participants in their own words. The comments, moreover, suggest possible explanations for change in the framework of existing theories of ethnic stereotypes and prejudices. In the statements given in the table, one can

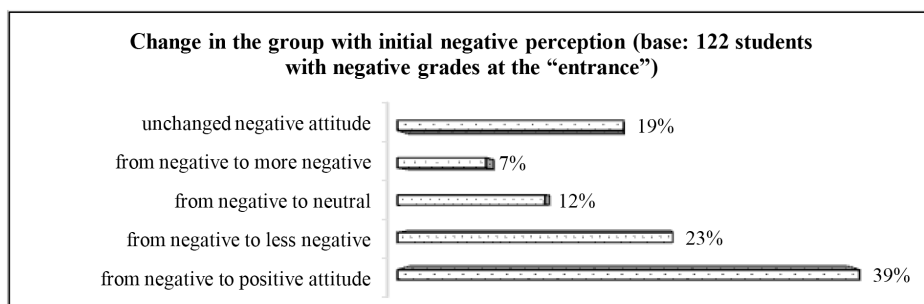


FIGURE 9. CHANGE IN THE GROUP WITH INITIALLY NEGATIVE ATTITUDE

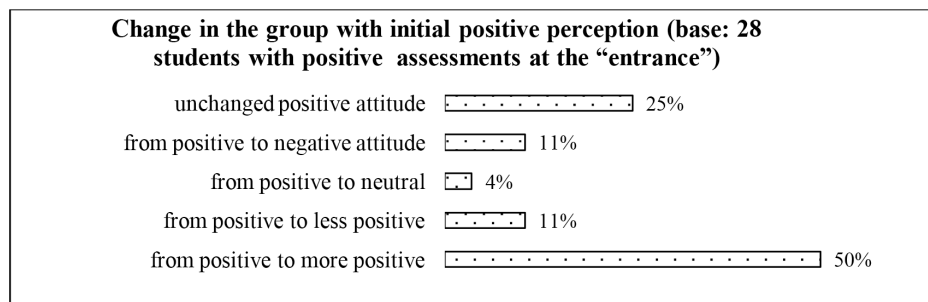


FIGURE 10. CHANGE IN THE GROUP WITH INITIALLY POSITIVE ATTITUDE

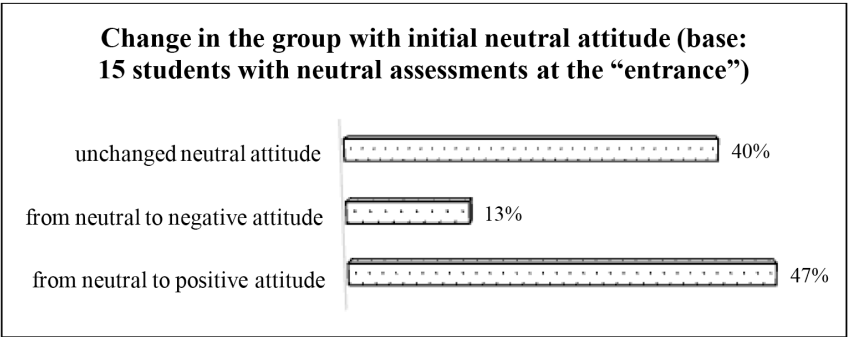


FIGURE 11. CHANGE IN THE GROUP WITH INITIALLY NEUTRAL ATTITUDE

TABLE 5
TYPICAL COMMENTS BY PARTICIPANTS IN THE EXPERIMENT ILLUSTRATING THE CHANGE
THAT HAPPENED IN THEIR ATTITUDES

■ Before the movie	□ After the movie
We cannot integrate someone who does not want to integrate!	That’s them. A whole ghetto, I saw a deserving minority, that’s my opinion. Great production of the film, I liked the technical part.
Your questionnaire is weird, sort of.	It is good to show that there are Roma and Roma. Not everything is under a common denominator.
Why are half of the questions related to the Roma?	After the film, I changed my opinion about the Roma. Sometimes they are better people than the Bulgarians.
First, the fact that not all Roma or Arabs are bad, does not mean that all are; but most are.	As in the movie, there are decent Roma like the man with the bus - Bobby.
About the Roma. They are people, no matter where they come from or what they are called. Bulgarians are no different: they also steal, curse, destroy and kill. Bulgaria is for the Bulgarians and there are too many Bulgarian savages. Those who do not intend to harm the state are welcome.	There is a big difference between man and man.
I think that the Roma are as many people as the Bulgarians and everyone else. They also have problems and need the same things as everyone else. There may be many capable people among the Roma, but we are too busy discriminating them to notice that.	The Roma are people like everyone else. They should not be underestimated, despite certain negative examples. They should not be placed under a common denominator. There are many smart and capable people among them, but they are forced to face discrimination. Bulgarian society does not look beyond its own nose. Everyone deserves JUSTICE. The film really moved me so thank you for showing the reality to unsuspecting citizens.

easily recognize strategies for downplaying the received information and the emotional messages of the film – the positive characters are marked as exceptions, which still create some cognitive tension with the “rule”. Students also use what is sometimes called an actuarial approach to stereotypes and prejudices (Schauer, 2003). They assess whether the characteristics in question are strongly or poorly represented in the community they generalize, and on this basis they tend to problematize their own assessments and observations. There can be various nuances in the definition of what is meant by “strong” or “weak” representation: the characteristic can be required to dominate, to be found in most members of the community or just be encountered more often than in other groups. Some students distinguish between stereotypes about the group as a whole and stereotypes directed at a specific member – a difference that is specifically marked in theoretical research (Kite, 2016). They understand that the transfer of a stereotype to a particular individual always carries significant risks of error or unfair treatment, even if some stereotypes are generally statistically correct.

Other comments clearly support the strength of messages based on universal characteristics (“Roma are people like anyone else”), on which many tolerance training programs rely. It can also be seen that the ability to differentiate between people belonging to the same group on the basis of multidimensional characteristics (“there are Roma and Roma”) helps to overcome stereotypes. High school children already have the necessary cognitive resources to perform fine multidimensional classifications. The question is how with appropriate incentives this ability can be directed to the problematization of stereotypes and prejudices. Obviously, documentary cinema provides such an opportunity.

DISCUSSION

Our experiment expands the concept of “awareness” in deliberation by offering a combination of informational and emotional messages based on a work of cinematography

of high artistic value. In this way, both the cognitive and the emotional component of the attitude are intensively influenced.

The main conclusion we can draw is that a film like “Bread and Circuses” probably provides just the right degree of closeness so that we can get to know someone as a person, beyond stereotypes. At the same time, cinema, unlike personal communication, does not make people close to the point where labeling and group affiliation do not matter. So in this case, the necessary degree of social “convergence” and change of perspective seems to be taking place, which lets us discuss stereotypes and attitudes towards a whole minority group, without making the conversation too personal or related to own experience, which is always subjective and fragmentary.

The film “Bread and Circuses” describes a Roma neighborhood and presents the main characters in a way that challenges some established stereotypes. The main short-term effect is very positive and encouraging in terms of the possibility of using art – cinema in particular – within tolerance training programs at school. It also seems important to use appropriate materials to help students in grasping the meaning and broader relevance of works of art and to stimulate individual reflection and group discussions.

The belief that disadvantage stems from wrong attitudes, low intelligence or lack of cultural capital is strongly prevalent in models of forming negative group stereotypes (Blommaert & Verschueren 1998). Therefore, the presentation of the living conditions, everyday life and the struggle for survival of many people from the ghetto, who with ingenuity and entrepreneurship fight for survival and a better life, creates a dense and impactful picture, putting stereotypes to test.

The positive change in the attitude towards Roma integration is primarily due to the changes in the positions of the students who liked the film. And since they are the vast majority – 127 or more than 5.5 times more than those who did not like the work (23), their assessment is crucial to the overall change we registered.

Among the viewers who did not like the film, there is a minimal change in the atti-

tude towards Roma rights: for them there is minimal positive balance change in favor of greater respect for Roma rights – 59% vs. 41%, while among those who liked the film the same ratio is 4 to 1.

While among those who liked the film, the share of those who consider it important for our society to promote Roma integration grew from 30% to 39%, thus forming a dominant group outnumbering the group with negative attitudes and those who cannot judge, for those who did not like the film, the change was in exactly the opposite direction: among them, those who take a negative position increased from 30% before the screening to 43% after the end of the tape.

Art has an impact on attitudes in itself, without further intervention, but clearer results can be expected if the impact of art is complemented by other forms of cultivating tolerance. Possible options include discussions in a more or less structured form, filling in feedback forms, various reflection tools that can be intended for sharing or personal use. Many of the listed techniques are most often applied with students, as the educational environment allows the use of structured programs and learning methods for a longer period of time. It is a common assumption that tolerance can be developed in young people of school age. For this purpose, there are curricula and textbooks that rely on individual exercises, group discussions, role-playing games, sharing personal experiences, storytelling and other methods (Cartasev, 2006). As mentioned (Furin, 2009: 32), some training programs place special emphasis on the use of works of art in discussion sessions with teachers and students – a popular practice in efforts to cultivate tolerance and deal with radical youth groups united around hatred and violence.

The overall effect of the screening – experience and grasping the meaning of the film – is clearly positive, far beyond what we would expect from a one-time exposure lasting just over the normal duration of a single school lesson. Evaluations of the effects of much longer and more structured programs in other countries and settings sometimes show

a more modest result. The positive effect of “Bread and Circuses” was further registered against the background of very strong negative attitudes captured by our survey before the screening.

Some participants in the experiment maintained their negative attitudes and did not show any sign that the film may have influenced them. Cognitive theories of stereotyping describe the phenomenon that sometimes the provision of information that contradicts the stereotype leads to various reactions of non-acceptance – neglect, forgetting or distortion. What challenges prejudices and stereotypes is usually simply ignored, distorted so as not to contradict them or simply forgotten (Stangor, 2009: 9-11). So our result cannot be considered surprising and easily fits into this theoretical framework.

The study – as can be expected on the basis of existing understandings of the emergence and nourishment of prejudice, mainly within the theory of social learning – also registers a strengthening of negative attitudes towards the Roma, accompanied by a defensive stiffening of the position on policies aimed at the integration of the Roma. One possible explanation for why such a seemingly surprising effect may also occur is that participating in formats that in some way put pressure on established stereotypes may provoke an immediate rejection reaction associated with a pronounced consolidation of one's own position. Some research suggests that detecting and becoming aware of prejudice can trigger an immediate reaction of anger and opposition (Levi & Hughes 2009), probably also motivated by guilt. It is uncertain whether this immediate spontaneous reaction is persistent or disappears after leaving the situation that caused it. It is possible that this reaction was provoked by the clear context of the questionnaire - requesting feedback with a probable expectation that it would be positive. Students prone to such defensive reactions would probably feel better, at least in the beginning, when being allowed to make sense of their experiences in private without sharing them. Such an assessment is impossible to make in a one-off mass experiment, but is fully applicable in

the context of the relationship between teachers and their students.

After the experiment we held 5 discussions of the results of the screening with teachers from different cities in the country. The discussions were accompanied by a screening of the film itself. The film had a similar effect on teachers as it did on students. We observed the same types of reactions as among students – from positive change, through ignoring the messages, to conspicuous hardening of stereotypical opinions and even reactions of ‘insult’ that such a film was made at all. Positive feedback and the direction of change towards more tolerance were clearly observed among teachers, although we do not have a quantitative assessment for this. Our general impression is that in every school there can be suitable teachers who would conduct more or less structured tolerance training within a single subject or in the form of topics embedded in other subjects.

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