



REVIEW

by Prof. Dr. Teodora Petrova, Department of Medical Sciences, FZHMK-SU, professor of "3.5.
Public Communications and Information Sciences

for a dissertation on the topic: "Strategic aspects of the media images of the Bulgarian chief
prosecutors (2006-2020)".

of Borislav Radoslavov Georgiev,

for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "doctor" 3.5. Public Communications and
Information Sciences (Media and Communications – Image in Strategic Communications),

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The dissertation work submitted for defense is clearly titled, and its title contains the subject of research of this work. The doctoral student presents a text examining the strategic aspects of the media images of three Bulgarian chief prosecutors Boris Velchev, Sotir Tsatsarov and Ivan Geshev. The dissertation has a total volume of 408 pages, 3 tables and 16 figures are included, which complement the research content. The volume and structure meet the requirements of this type of development.

Borislav Georgiev researches the media images of the Bulgarian chief prosecutors in a long period of time - from 2006 to 2020, a period covering almost 15 years, by tracking, describing and analyzing publications in major Bulgarian publications - websites and printed publications such as "Mediapool" , "Dnevnik", "Capital", "Club Z", "Now", "Free Europe", "Deutsche Welle", "Frognews", "Anticorruption Fund", PIK and the newspaper "Trud", writing about specific and emblematic cases, related to the judicial system and the prosecution. Media images of the chief prosecutors during this period were investigated through a qualitative analysis of publications, and the author's empirical research included an analysis of an online survey with 603 respondents and 15 in-depth and interviews with specialists and opinion leaders in their field, divided into three



groups: magistrates and lawyers; media-political and forensic-criminal experts; journalists. The specified period covers the mandates of the chief prosecutors Boris Velchev, Sotir Tsatsarov and Ivan Geshev. Thus, the selected period is a long enough time to see similarities and differences in the construction of the media images of the three, to trace, as far as possible, the influence of these publications on the public. The research is built on major media and legal cases (case studies) from the mandates of each of the three Attorney Generals. Emblematic cases have been selected for research, which are the subject of media publications, of media appearances of the three, but cases that outline the media presence and media images of the three chief prosecutors, but in some way are emblematic of the research period 2006-2020. for the mandate of each of the chief prosecutors Boris Velchev, Sotir Tsatsarov and Ivan Geshev, and have an impact on the perception of the judiciary in society / these are cases such as the so-called "Black Beauty". "CUM-gate", "КТВ" and "Desislava Ivancheva", etc./ The work examines, on the one hand, the construction of media images through propaganda journalistic techniques and techniques, and on the other, the tools and manipulations /in a positive or negative direction/, used by public relations specialists and image makers in building or destabilizing the constructed image of the Number One of the State Prosecution. The concept of "image - formation, development, essence and characteristics" was traced, analyzing specific publications and practices. Therefore, the doctoral student wrote that: "the subject of the study is the manipulative characteristics and media projections of the image in the context of the public images of the main accusers and the impact on the public." The carefully collected and analyzed material from this 15 years of research outlines the image reconstructed by the media of the three attorney generals, and an attempt is made "to form a strategic framework of expert proposals for changes regarding the place of the figure of the attorney general and the overall work of the state prosecution, aimed at quality and effective judicial reform," says the doctoral student, and I agree with him when defining the goals of his research. I accept the author's defined "main research problem is the interrelationship between the goals of manipulation techniques in shaping public image and their effects on the positioning of the media images of the chief prosecutors (2006-2020) in the context of studies bipolar model of media coverage".



The relevance of the study can be outlined in several directions: First - investigation of the image of three chief prosecutors through key cases for their mandates and the influence of media publications first on the image of the "Chief Prosecutor of the State" - the chief prosecutor, and second - on public attitudes. I believe that the text of the dissertation is a contribution in this direction, as the research refers to the image of three chief prosecutors of our time. There are studies in different directions, but they are partial, and as far as I know, the comparative character for such a long period is missing. The study seeks to "identify the techniques used in the creation of the specific media images of three Bulgarian chief prosecutors (2006-2020)", and I believe that this has been done successfully. I must also say that the presented research corresponds to the scientific specialty for acquiring the Doctor PhD thesis . Borislav Radoslavov Georgiev has successfully completed training at the department, having fulfilled the requirements of the department for the period of study as a full-time doctoral student. In today's context of the development of events in our country, studies of this kind have their place in tracing the connections between politics - prosecutor's office - judiciary - media - public opinion. Second, the approaches and tools used in propaganda campaigns are searched and characterized, starting with examples from history to examples from the present day. There was a period when the term "propaganda" was replaced by others due to connotations with our past, but I find its use here appropriate. Its use helps in the analysis of media publications and in the examination of practices characteristic of the digital environment - practices of political trolls today and the specific characteristics of propaganda. This text is a systematic attempt to analyze propaganda techniques and techniques in Bulgaria, collecting and systematizing publications of scholars, published archival documents, photographs, and legal documents. Media publications on certain cases have been studied and systematized, interrelationships between the individual components - judiciary - representatives of the judiciary / in this case chief prosecutors of the Republic of Bulgaria/, media publications, influence of media publications, media projections of the image of the figure of the main figure have been sought prosecutor, to what, as a result, will be the judicial reform in our country. This is how one of the goals of this work was achieved - "to identify the tricks used in the creation of the specific media images of three Bulgarian chief prosecutors" and trace their influence on public attitudes against the background of the larger conversation about judicial reform in Bulgaria. The author traces



processes and practices with proven influence between them, but also on our society in general in certain years, and therefore I will quote the American political scientist Harold Lasswell /1927/ says that "propaganda, in the broadest sense of the word, is a technique for influencing human action by manipulating the facts presented' and 'controlling opinion through meaningful symbols, or to be more specific and less precise, through stories, rumours, reports, photographs and other forms of social communication' .

Thirdly, I find this research relevant and relevant, because journalistic techniques and image techniques have been sought, which are not new, but they have been studied in practices and case studies that are part of our modern times today, and this contributes to their delineation of characteristics, and this is even more significant and relevant when it comes to the judiciary in our country during the period 2006-2020.

The object of the research, according to the doctoral student, are publications on "nodal cases (case studies), emblematic of the studied media images of the chief prosecutors (2006-2020) Boris Velchev, Sotir Tsatsarov and Ivan Geshev". An attempt was made to describe techniques and tricks of the propaganda toolkit, manipulative tricks from the field of journalism and public relations. The goals of the research, according to the doctoral student, are ten, and he has listed them in the text of the dissertation and the abstract. I would advise him to think about whether he can meaningfully combine some of them. In the research, a systematic approach of studying the individual case studies was adopted. Publications by the critical media were studied, the sites "Mediapool", "Dnevnik", "Capital", "Club Z", "Sega", "Free Europe", "Deutsche Welle", "Frognews", "Anti-Corruption Fund" were studied. concrete and emblematic case studies. From the position of uncritical media, according to the author, the emphasis is placed on the website PIK and the newspaper Trud. An archive has been selected for analysis and as applications - publications, online publications and posts. The array is voluminous and this collection can be considered as an author's contribution to the study and to little-known materials from the studied period.

In the Introduction of the presented work, in accordance with the requirements for a similar type of text, a description of the structure of the text is made, the rationale for choosing the topic, the



relevance and significance of the research is included, the purpose and tasks of the research, hypotheses and expected results are described, the doctoral student cites famous Bulgarian and foreign authors. In the first chapter of the work, an overview of theoretical concepts was made, published documents were studied, which served for a comparative analysis between the instruments used in Bulgaria in a period of 15 years.

The dissertation, in my opinion, meets the formal requirements for a dissertation for the educational and scientific degree of "PhD". The dissertation is systematized in three chapters, introduction, conclusion and bibliography. The PhD student has attached a reference for basic scientific and applied scientific contributions, which I accept. Also attached is a list of author publications, many more author publications than required. The dissertation and the author's abstract fully meet the requirements for awarding the ONS "Doctor". I must also say that the structure of the study follows the internal logic of the text, and the chapters represent thematically separated parts of the work, outlining the main thematic fields. The dissertation has a total volume of 408 pages, including 3 tables and 16 figures supplementing the study.

The first chapter presents the manipulative aspects of the image, characteristics of the Bulgarian folk psychology "as a basis for easier penetration of the manipulation", the role of freedom of speech, media regulation, the influence of the cases lost for the state by the state prosecution in the European Court of Human Rights the man in Strasbourg, on the remarks to the state about the lack of control of the chief prosecutor. I accept the goals and objectives of the dissertation work defined by the author, as well as the described hypotheses that the doctoral student formulates and works on in the dissertation work.

In the second chapter, an attempt is made to "see" the history of the state prosecution, the media image of the chief prosecutor in the researched period as a "person-institution", and a study of a bipolar model of coverage of the prosecution and directed chief prosecutors of key cases (case studies) such as "CUM-gate", "You chose it", "The two khakis", the case of "Krasyo Cherniya", the arrest of Desislava Ivancheva, etc. The monographs of the chief prosecutor Boris Velchev were analyzed, in which the question of the political situation and the judicial power was put for consideration. Media images, aspects and projections of these images are tracked.



The third chapter is devoted to a quantitative and qualitative study of the media images of Boris Velchev, Sotir Tsatsarov and Ivan Geshev. / The first is aimed at a quantitative survey of a representative sample of public opinion on the media images of the chief prosecutors (2006-2020) through a questionnaire filled out by 603 respondents Online survey on public perceptions of the media images of the Bulgarian chief prosecutors (2006-2020) and a qualitative study of expert opinions regarding the media images of Boris Velchev, Sotir Tsatsarov and Ivan Geshev by means of in-depth interviews with 15 specialists, divided into three groups (magistrates and lawyers; media-political and judicial criminal experts; journalists). The bibliography of the dissertation includes sources in Bulgarian, English, Russian and French. The first appendix contains 15 in-depth interviews with experts, the second appendix includes questions from an online survey of 603 respondents. At the end of the dissertation are the formulated scientific and scientific-applied contributions contained in the dissertation development. I find them completely legitimately outlined and relevant, as a result of the studies and analyzes made in the dissertation work. I also think that, as the doctoral student notes, the conclusions of the current dissertation work can serve for future research, as well as for researchers from various fields of media and communications, image makers, rightists and sociologists. The PhD student clarifies and works with concepts such as: "media image" and "media manipulation", "censorship", "image", "public perception" and others, tries to make proposals and provide solutions to long-term problems in the judiciary and media coverage of the figure of the chief prosecutor and the presence of the prosecutor's office in media.

The abstract is designed entirely in accordance with the requirements of ŽRASRB and the requirements of the SU, it reflects the content of the dissertation work.

Notes and recommendations:

Any text can be improved and edited. This text as well, but I have no particular objections to its overall structure and general content, clarification and use of concepts basic to the text, the use of sources and their citation. I find the systematization, analysis and summaries relevant to the text, and the research methods used are appropriate / analytical-synthetic model, analysis of cases (case-studies) and content analysis, quantitative research of a representative part of public opinion through an online questionnaire, including 603 respondents , a qualitative study of the topic through



in-depth interviews with 15 specialists and opinion leaders in their field, divided into three groups: magistrates and lawyers; media-political and forensic-criminal experts; journalists. The text is readable, written in good professional language, remarkable bibliographical accuracy in the description of publications and materials, dates of mention of events from public life and the historiography of the cases mentioned. It may be useful to media professionals, public relations professionals and lawyers if it is edited and published.

Conclusion

The submitted dissertation both in form and content meets the requirements, has the qualities of a dissertation, includes own research, which apparently has results. The work presented is an original scientific study, the text is relevant to the topic, the doctoral student has formulated scientific and scientific-applied transferences from his research, and I, in my capacity as a reviewer, propose to the respected scientific jury to award Borislav Radoslavov Georgiev ONS "Doctor" in a professional direction 3.5. "Public Communications and Information Sciences" on the doctoral program "Media and Communications - Image in Strategic Communications", as I myself will vote for this positively.

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