

## OPINION

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stella Konstantinova Angova, UNWE, Department of Media and Public Communications,

Specialist in "Organization and management outside the field of material production" (online media)

**RE:** Competition for a professor in field 1.2. Pedagogy (Media pedagogy)

### 1. Information about the competition

The competition was announced in the State Gazette, issue 27 of 28.07.2020.

### 2. Brief information about the candidates in the competition

Assoc. Danail Danov is the only candidate in the current competition for a professor in the field.

The candidate has three master's degrees: in Turkic Studies, acquired at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski", (1988), in Society and Politics from the Central European University in Prague (1992) and in History and Politics from SOAS, University of London, UK (1994).

Danail Danov has a PhD in Pedagogy, Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski" (2011). He is also Doctor of Science (D. Litt.) resulting from a successful defense of a dissertation on "Media Literacy: Genesis, Rethinking Experience, Challenges and Prospects" (2019).

He has several postgraduate specializations - at the National Academy of Radio and Television of the Netherlands (2002) and at the Fulbright Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange. (2011).

Danail Danov's biography and overall experience also prove his solid media competence and qualification. He has worked as an editor, Deputy-Chairman of the Board of Directors, CEO and Acting Director-General of the Bulgarian National Radio; Editor-in-Chief, Head of News and Current Affairs Programs and Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Radio Express, release-producer at BBC

World Services; Media Program Coordinator at the Open Society Foundation; Program Director of the Media Development Center, Sofia etc. In terms of his academic experience, he has successfully proven himself as a lecturer and researcher in the field of media pedagogy and media literacy.

### 3. Brief description of the presented academic production/ publications

The candidate has a high number of academic publications of serious quality. He has joined this competition with the monograph "Digitalization and Education - Innovation, Creativity, Interculturality" (Sofia University Press, 2020, ISBN 978-954-07) – his major habilitation work, as well as with book “Media Literacy: Experience Reconsidered”. The latter is presented as an additional monograph (IMS, 2020, ISBN 978-954-07-4912-9). Along with that he offers 12 other publications, including a study, book-chapters and articles. The entire scientific publication and expert activity of the candidate demonstrates a definite interest in the topic of media pedagogy and media literacy. Moreover, Danail Danov adds new dimensions in the entire understanding of the term “media literacy” which he views not only in the popular context of “set of competences related to application of digital tools” but also as an educational approach based on critical thinking, as well a drive towards higher civic activism, both key prerequisites for the upward personal and social development.

This reconsidered understanding of media literacy has received recognition from leading representatives of the Bulgarian Media Literacy Coalition, as well as on behalf of experts of the European Viewers Interests Association, and other academic representatives.

In the monograph "Media Literacy – Experience Reconsidered" Danail Danov offers a working sustainable model of media literacy training program, consistent with the specifics of the Bulgarian educational, media and social environment.

The idea for the sustainable model was further developed in the study "European Media Coach Initiative as a tool for the development of media literacy in Bulgaria."

The monograph "Digitalization and Education - Innovation, Creativity and Interculturalism" focuses on the impact of technology on modern educational practices. An important thesis that Danov successfully defends in this monograph is that the lack of media literacy training today bears major social problems in the future. He has very correctly formulated the key ideas related to the application of working practices in education, which contribute to the formation of skills and competencies of a new type needed for modern societies in the XXI century.

I will not make a further comment on each of the publications, Danov has submitted for this competition, but would rather resume that the documents and academic works offered for the competition show his serious contribution to the development of media literacy at both national and European level. His texts go beyond the narrow confines of a scientific field and offer an interdisciplinary approach - he makes a connection between pedagogy, theory of mass communication, sociology, psychology, methodology, media studies, ethics, and IT. The value of the works comes mainly from the fact, that along with presented theoretical point of view, they offer a high number of practical and applied elements of value.

Danov's professional biography includes a number of project activities. He is a key expert in the international projects European Media Coach Initiative and European Safe Online Initiative. In all the seven projects, mentioned in the competition documentation the central theme is the applicability of media pedagogy, in particular - the creation of training programs and the organization of practical training in media literacy through innovative techniques.

As a researcher and lecturer, he is recognized by foreign educational institutions. Proof of this are the numerous cases he has been invited as a speaker and/or visiting lecturer, including those done at Instituto Universitario de Lisboa (Lisbon, Portugal, 2019), Kazakh National University Al-

Farabi, (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 2019), Joao Pessoa University, Paraiba (Brazil, 2019) and many others.

Danov's overall professional profile is systematically built around media pedagogy and media literacy. He has established himself as both a theorist and a practitioner, which is an important symbiosis in modern education. His work is highly appreciated by academics, experts, organizations, schools and students in Bulgaria and abroad.

His publications interpret important topics in the field of education - media competencies - critical thinking - civil society. He is not just an academic observer - his business card (of an educator, journalist and media expert) allows him to offer guidelines for integrating media knowledge and tools into the educational process to prevent "disabling inferiority to the future".

All this gives me reason to declare my firm opinion in support of the candidate and hence, I will vote in favor of choosing Assoc. Prof. Danail Danov a professor in a professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Media pedagogy).

Sofia, 10/29/2020

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stella Angova