



REVIEW

of the submitted papers in the competition for the academic position of PROFESSOR in professional field 3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Journalistic Editing), published by the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia, in SG, issue No. 22 of 16 March 2021

Reviewer: Professor, Doctor of Philosophy Valery Stoilov Stefanov

Applicant: Associate Professor Doctor Efrem Efremov Karanfilov



I. Summarized information on the applicant (Scientific research, lecturer's experience and academic work)

Associate Professor Efrem Efremov is a lecturer with the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication (FJMC). He has many years of experience as a journalist. He has been a lecturer and assistant professor in the subject of "Theory and Practice of Editing". Efremov has been an associate professor since 2004. He has been the head of the Department of Printing and Book Publishing, and the deputy dean of the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication (FJMC). Currently is the Head of the Department of Press Journalism and Book Publishing. A doctor of journalism since 2001.

The author of five monographic studies - Sports Journalism, 1999; Masonic Ideas in the Work of Dimo Koerchev and Yordan Badev, 2002; Journalistic Editing, 2005; Legal Aspects of Journalistic Editing, 2019; Sports in the Media World. Editorial Challenges, 2020.

II. Specifics of the applicant's scientific and applied work.

The applicant has presented in the competition eight scientific works - two monographs, two studies and four articles. They deal with different issues, yet they could fit into the scope of the competition. They have also impressed me with their interdisciplinary approach.

The monograph "Legal Aspects of Journalistic Editing" was published in 2019. The study deals with important aspects of media publicity, considered at the crossroads delineated by individual rights, moral norms and punitive legal regulations. Not infrequently, the rights of the individual come into conflict with the norms of the community, and it is that thin red line that deserves the reflection of the researcher.

The process of journalistic editing is a complex act, mapping all outlined aspects. It is here that rights are asserted, yet at the same time norms have to be observed to protect the authors, as well as the respective media from different types of failure and different scopes of sanctions.

The author has made a careful reading and comparison of the legal regulations in Bulgaria and in different EU countries. Specific decisions of the European Court of Human Rights have also been drawn upon in order to rationalize and point out those moral boundaries in public speech that should not be ignored or crossed. While defending the thesis of decriminalizing the criminal acts of "insult" and "defamation", at the same time the author does not overlook the necessity of observing a code of ethics. It is in this direction that valuable recommendations for public speech are made, not just to guard against mistakes and actions, but to lay the grounds for a mature behaviour that combines respect for rights with respect for the honour and dignity of every person.

Well conceptualized and composed, the monograph has a clear practical orientation and could act as a tool for building the foundations of a more balanced and fair media environment in Bulgaria. I highly appreciate this work insofar as it provides insight into the specific focus of the author's interests and his ability to promote socially relevant ethical standards in journalistic work.



The monograph „Sports in the Media World. Editorial Challenges was published in 2020. It examines sport as a complex social phenomenon that has an extremely powerful impact in shaping mass consciousness, building key value guidelines and group identifications. It is the field of sport that acts as a social outlet, a space for diverse collective emotions. Sport is not innocent, various demons lurk in it, frauds and criminal interests intertwine. Market regulations are at work, but also painful conjunctures and fatal strategies. Efremov knows the spheres of professional sport very well and this has allowed him to unfold the issues in a broad anthropological perspective.

Media has the important role of creating images of sporting events, of sporting heroes. They narrate 'historic' sporting clashes on a daily and dramatic basis and influence vast audiences. It is precisely these abilities that influence, that produce hypnotic effects, that impose the need for compliance with certain professional standards and ethical norms. Sport is not only the "spectacle", the supplement to the "bread" for the masses, it has important educational functions, especially in a world powerfully fixed in competitions, rankings, victories, hierarchies, prizes.

Associate professor Efremov considers "editorial challenges" precisely in that broader axiological and social context. Editing is about mastering certain rules to construct messages, to secure impacts. But it is also understood as a complex activity in which images of people and events are created and certain attitudes and socially significant values are modelled. Hence the multifaceted requirements toward journalism and the media engaged in this field. It is a matter of accumulating heterogeneous types of competences - starting from language culture and genre literacy, through the concern for the correctness of information, to a wide range of narrowly profiled competences. The sports journalist is not considered a 'home-grown aficionado', but a 'professional communicator', who is committed to explaining truly complex phenomena and their implications. Like any good book committed to values, this one builds an ideal horizon of competencies and behaviours worth making the journey.

I highly appreciate this book, it is one of the few in-depth Bulgarian explorations in the field of sports, sports journalism and the system of mass suggestion.

The studies "On decriminalization of "insult" and "defamation" in media content" and "The jurisprudence of the Bulgarian courts in civil and criminal cases of insult and defamation brought against the media" were published in 2019. Their issues and subjects are related to the monograph "Legal aspects of journalistic editing".

The first study examines the always controversial measure of sanctions which most correctly corresponds to the specificity of committed offence and to the public interest. A number of international instruments are examined to support the conclusion that heavy sanctioning regimes have a negative impact on the freedom of speech, develop self-censoring reflexes, destroy reputations and careers, etc.



The second study analyses specific practices in relation to various moral and judicial cases subject to Bulgarian litigation. The pleading again is about striking a balance that secures the right to expression and the protection of the personal dignity of every citizen. The principle of freedom of speech does not grant amnesty to the aggression, lies and verbal brutality, characterising a large part of the Bulgarian media. Getting to know the legislative base and the specific court practices is understood by the author as a regulatory factor, as a barrier that discourages a certain type of verbal behaviour or incorrect policies in the presentation of information.

The articles, submitted in the competition study different issues.

The article "Freemasonry" of 2002 deals with a problem seemingly peripheral to the scope of this competition. Its legitimate consideration in this case could be based on an understanding of the need for a broad competence that a journalist must possess in various areas of life. Freemasonry is a curious, fascinating subject that has been accumulating a great deal of prejudice and speculations. Efremov's paper introduces the Masonic issues in a proper and competent way, the ethics of the Masonic fraternity, its goals and values.

The article "Law and Journalistic Editing," 2018, deals with issues already addressed - the right to expression, the rights of the individual, the responsibilities of journalism... The balance precisely found between allegations and facts is seen again as a reliable factor for correct behaviour and for a journalistic job well done.

"Adaptive Models of Online Media, 2019 is a review of the book Media & Web Design. Culture and Functionality of Online Communication" by Professor V. Valkanova. The book has been praised highly for the breadth of its subject matter - the possibilities of online media, the role of design, the strategies for impact, the pathways to effectiveness.

The article "Standards And Dynamics In Sports Websites Online Editing", 2019, also deals with the problems of editing in the online environment, with the handling of ready-made editing algorithms to resemble the dynamics of information flows. It has a clear practical orientation and is addressed to the issue of the good training of journalists.

In principle I estimate highly the scientific work of Associate Professor Efremov. It demonstrates focus and consistency of interest and a clear commitment to professional and ethical standards in this sensitive area of public life.

III. Main contributions in the applicant's scientific, applied and lecturing activities

Associate Professor Efremov has considered important issues in areas where journalism, ethics, law and sociology meet. He has based his conclusions not on general scenarios and abstract appeals, but on an extensive collection of carefully researched facts. All of the above make his research scientifically significant, applicable and authoritative.



IV. Notes and recommendations

This is why I would recommend that Associate Professor Efremov continue his efforts and expand his work in the direction of interdisciplinary research that suits his style of scientific work. To me the research in the article „Sports in the Media World. Editorial Challenges“ outlines best this interesting and promising trend.

V. Conclusion

Based on careful reading and evaluation of the presented scientific work and the qualities of the applicant, I hereby give my positive assessment and recommend Associate Professor, Dr. Efrem Efremov Karanfilov to be nominated for the academic position of PROFESSOR in the professional field of 3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Journalistic Editing), published by the Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski.

Date: 18 June 2021

Reviewer:

Reviewer: Professor, Doctor of Philosophy Valery Stoilov Stefanov