



OPINION

on the submitted works for participation in a competition for the academic position of ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR in professional field 3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Theory and history of the Advertisement), announced by Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in State Journal, issue 55 from June, 28th , 2024

Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Diana Petkova, PhD

Candidate : Chief Assist. Prof. Nikola Vangelov, PhD

I. Evaluation of the scientific and practical results and contributions of the scientific and educational production submitted for participation in the competition

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Nikola Vangelov is the only candidate who has submitted documents for participation in the competition for Associate Professor in 3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Theory and History of Advertising). Dr. Vangelov has a master's degree in business administration and strategic management. He has defended his doctoral thesis on the topic: "Marketing communications in social networks - communicative and semiotic aspects". Since 2016 he has been Chief Assistant Professor in the Chair "Communication, Public Relations and Advertisement" of the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". Dr. Vangelov participates in the competition with a habilitation thesis - a monograph, two other monographs that are not a habilitation thesis, a published book based on a doctoral thesis, papers referenced in SCOPUS, as well as with papers published in Bulgarian and foreign non-referenced editions.

The habilitation thesis proposed by Dr. Vangelov is on a topic that has not been sufficiently developed in Bulgaria until this moment. In the social sciences few studies conducted on socialist advertising have covered only partial aspects of the problem. Thus, one of the main advantages of the present study is that it is innovative and focuses on a scientific field that has not yet been sufficiently developed in the Bulgarian science. The reason for this is probably the lack of historical distance from the studied period, a fact that makes it difficult to objectively evaluate the studied phenomena and events. Dr. Vangelov manages to achieve objectivity without judging, denying, or propagandizing socialist ideology, something that has often proved difficult for most of the researchers.

A definition of advertising during the time of socialism is proposed, taking into account both the Bulgarian (and socialist) understanding of advertising in that period, as well as the viewpoints of Western researchers. In the monograph Dr. Vangelov outlines his own working classification of print advertisement according to various criteria, such as appeals, the type of advertising, its purpose, etc. One of the main theses of the monograph is that advertising appeals during socialism in Bulgaria are rational, on the opposition of the emotional appeals of the West. This statement is also confirmed by the own empirical research. A special contribution for me is the second chapter, which contains an empirical study of print advertisement from the socialist period. The quantitative parameters of print advertising in four main periods are proposed and summarized, with impressive huge sample and



precision of its classification. The third chapter focuses on the qualitative analysis of print advertising, tracing the evolution of the content and methods of advertising communication. Once again, I would like to emphasize the precision and correctness of the conducted empirical research, as well as the in-depth qualitative research. The empirical research is based on over 7,000 newspaper and magazine issues and almost 30,000 advertisements. This fact demonstrates the enormous scope of the research and the significance of the collected data for the historical period of socialism.

II. Notes and recommendations

I have no objections, but rather some questions and recommendations. In the habilitation thesis, one of the most important principles of socialist advertisement is the association with the party. On page 56 it is pointed out that the main function of socialist advertisement is to build socialist values. To what extent is print advertising successful in accomplishing this task? And what are the specific relationships between propaganda and advertisement? In the evolution of advertisement in the era of socialism, does it manage to emancipate itself at least to some extent from propaganda, or does it remain subordinated to it until the end? My recommendation is that Dr. Vangelov in his next studies should do an equally thorough analysis of the evolution of advertisement in Bulgaria since 1989 until nowadays.

III. Conclusion

The presented scientific works for participation in the competition have a number of scientific and practical merits. The thesis fills important gaps in the research and knowledge of print advertisement during the socialist era. The minimum national requirements under Article 2b of ЗПАСРБ for scientific area 3.5 Public Communications and Information Sciences have been met. For all these reasons, I give a positive assessment for the awarding of the academic position Associate Professor to Dr. Nikola Vangelov.

Jury member:

Assoc. Prof. Diana Petkova

Date: 10.10.2024