

OPINION

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Professor and Doctor of Science in field 8.4. THEATRE AND FILM ARTS

for the procedure for acquiring the academic degree DOCTOR in the professional field 8.4 THEATRE AND FILM ARTS, with candidate Boris Pintev, doctoral student in Film Studies, Cinema and Television at the Department of CINEMA, ADVERTISING AND SHOW BUSINESS at NBU.

Boris Pintev's dissertation **CREATIVE AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CAMERA OPERATOR IN THE TELEVISION TEAM** fits better into the trend of applied texts that rely on personal experience in order to derive possible theoretical generalizations from practical settings. The dissertation contains 179 pages, including an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, and annexes with interviews with journalists who have professionally covered crises and extraordinary events for Bulgarian national televisions.

The introduction identifies the parameters of the topic, namely, to consider the work of the Bulgarian broadcasters in the context of national and international news and crisis events, proceeding from the premise that "it is the coverage of crisis news, disasters, conflicts and events that is one of the most important and most widely disseminated content both from the TV screen and on the Internet platforms".

Without juxtaposing the work in television to that in cinema, with the clear awareness that the topic is at the crossroads of journalism, Boris Pintev presents and summarizes his knowledge throughout the process - from setting the task, through the difficulties, to finding verified and reliable information, "dressing it up" in footage, to ensure its timely editing, broadcasting, and distribution.

I am not to retell the work chapter by chapter, though I will only briefly summarize the achievements of the doctoral student, which I think are in several directions:

Firstly, the various types of challenges in the work of the operator are well synthesized and considered: organizational, logistical, emotional, physical etc., each of which is documented with specific clear and unambiguous examples, memorable in their brightness.

Also, in an equally detailed manner, the author analyses the types of responsibilities of the camera operator: to the audience, to the "heroes" of television stories, to the members of the filming team, to the profession, to the journalistic guild, to the media organization, etc.

Furthermore, the methodology of this study is mixed – in addition to providing personal observations and practical conclusions, the work imposes pure content analysis, and the main emphasis is placed on the interviews with renown representatives of the professional guild, whom Pintev personally knows and has worked with for years.

Another achievement in my opinion is that the dissertation shows us that the difficulties and deprivations, as well as the quick reactions, are as much a part of everyday life for the TV camera operator covering emergency situations, as is the halo of the one who has seen everything. But what this work also presents is the personal cost of this undoubtedly interesting career path.

Last but not least is the ability of the author to tell his own stories concisely but expressively with specific cases from Turkey, India, Karabakh, Syria, the Western Balkans – all in a way that will be fascinating for the reader, but also instructive for the future professionals who could find themselves in similar situations. The findings of the dissertation are also presented with a sense of humor – for example, the conclusion that the more Pintev's experience grows, the less is the technologies he carries around – nothing superfluous.

The contributions of this dissertation can be formulated as follows:

1. The presentation, summary, and analysis of the work of the film television team as a unified organism in covering crisis situations.
2. The approach used, *Leading by Example*, is based on the individual professional experience of both the doctoral student and leading media practitioners, and on turning a personal example into professional cohesion. Without being innovative in its approach, the experience is always individual and original.
3. The building of the thesis of the interdependence between the comprehensive preparation, observability, and endurance of the operator (seemingly purely personal qualities), and taking quick, clear, and far-sighted decisions under pressure during the coverage of extraordinary news and crisis events that will lead to the successful realization of the television product. Because no matter how prepared the journalist

and the film crew are for the challenges that await them in a certain place, there are always surprises from the reality "on site".

4. The comprehensive categorization, research, and follow-up with concrete examples of the types of challenges faced by Bulgarian film crews in the 21st century when covering breaking news from "hot" points, with an emphasis on the "mediamorphic" (as defined by Fidler) nature of the rapidly developing digital changes.

Another positive quality of the doctoral work, that I would point out, is the good structure of the text, the illustration with abundant photo material, which sometimes speaks more than the description. Links to TV shows have also been added. The specialized literature is correctly quoted. The annexes with the interviews are an integral part of the entire work, although they can also be read separately, given the interestingly selected practitioners and case studies they talk about.

Author's personal qualities

My first impressions of Boris Pintev are from the small screen, and already as a colleague at NBU. I notice the qualities, useful for all students – efficiency and accuracy, respectful and attentive attitude towards those with whom he works.

Conclusion.

I consider the dissertation with its conclusions, theses, examples, and analyses taken in their totality, to be a very useful text. Which justifies my evaluation of the **doctoral work as an independent study with a number of merits and to propose to the members of the academic panel that Boris Pintev be awarded the educational and scientific degree DOCTOR in the professional field 8.4. THEATRE AND FILM ARTS**

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With respect,

Prof. Petya Alexandrova, DSc