

To the 90th anniversary of Oleg Dmitrievich Yakimov

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Oleg Dmitrievich Yakimov (November 19, 1934 – June 14, 2019), Doctor of Historical Sciences and Professor, would have celebrated his 90th birthday on November 19, 2024. He was the founder of higher journalism education in Yakutia, a leading scholar of the history of journalism and mass media in Yakutia and Eastern Siberia, and a respected teacher, journalist, editor, public figure, academician of the International Informatization Academy, and Honored Worker of Higher Education of the Russian Federation.

O. D. Yakimov was born on 19 November 1934 in Yakutsk. When he was 4 years old, his family moved to the Mukhtuya village. The first school time with the wartime. His first school years coincided with wartime. Oleg Dmitrievich was only 6 years old by the beginning of the Great Patriotic War. Like all of his peers, he had to go through these difficult and stressful years of deprivation and hardship. He had to become a part of adult life and help adults since childhood. In 1946, Oleg was 12 years old and he was awarded by the medal “For Valorous Labour in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945”. His work with the local Lensk radio started in his teenage years. After graduating the 9th grade, he already worked as correspondent in the local newspaper. It was probably during these years, when he was studying at school, that he decided to become a journalist and did not deviate from his choice. In 1952 he graduated Mukhtuya secondary school (at present Lensk school No. 1) and entered to Philology Department of the Faculty of History and Philology at Irkutsk State University. At the same time, he started to cooperate with the regional “Molodezhka”.

In 1957 he graduated from the university and started working as a correspondent, head of department, editor of the newspaper “Socialist Labour” (“Lensky Communist”) published in the Lensky district. Later he was invited to work as head of department of the newspaper “Socialist Yakutia”. He was chief editor of the newspaper “Socialist Yakutia” from 1970 to 1991 (with a break in 1978-1980 while he was studying at the Academy of Social Sciences of the CPSU Central Committee). He worked in the journalism for a total of 32 years, including 19 years as chief editor of Socialist Yakutia. The main topics of his publications were social and political life, economy and industry. O. D. Yakimov was the head of the Union of Sakha Journalists for 16 years (he was Chairman and Deputy Chairman). In addition, he was a board member of the Soviet Union of Journalists and travelled abroad as the head of official journalist delegations of the USSR.

In 1980 he defended the dissertation for the degree of Candidate of Historical Sciences in Moscow on the theme “Ways to increase the effectiveness of international education of workers by means of the press in the period of developed socialism: (on the experience of the Baikal-Amur Mainline construction in 1974-1980)”, and in 1990 – a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Historical Sciences on the theme “Formation of the multinational press system of autonomous state organisations and development in the conditions of renewal of the Soviet Federation: (on the materials of the Siberian and Far East press of 1917-1990)”.

According to his initiatives and efforts the specialisation “Journalism” was opened at the Faculty of History and Philology of YSU in 1982. This marked the beginning of the training of professional journalistic specialists in Yakutia, including for the mass media in Yakut language and in other languages of the indigenous people of the North. The education programme was a priority in the USSR in at that period of time. The methods for training journalists were used in universities in the autonomous republics of Russia. The first graduation was in 1985. By 1987 the name of the speciality “Journalist” appeared in the graduates’ diplomas. Over 80

journalists were trained for the newspaper editorial offices, periodicals, radio and television in ten years. The specialisation was changed into a speciality in 1992 with the opening of the graduating department. Oleg Dmitrievich worked as Head of the Department of Journalism from 1992 to 2012 and opened the Master's programme "Periodical Press". Over the years the Department of Journalism has established scientific and educational ties with the faculties of journalism of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Voronezh, Omsk, Far East, Irkutsk, Rostov and other universities of the country, as well as with universities of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and other foreign countries. From 2012 until the last days of his life Oleg Dmitrievich worked as a professor of the Department of Journalism, head of the master's degree programme in the profile "Periodical Press", head of the postgraduate programme in the direction 42.06.01 "Mass Media and Information and Library Affairs" of the scientific and educational centre "Media System of the Polyethnic Region in the Conditions of Globalisation".

As a journalist and editor Oleg Dmitrievich understood better than anyone the necessity of training local journalism professionals at Yakutsk State University. He was the first in many respects, for instance, in studying the Yakut press history. Moreover, he initiated a comprehensive study of the mass media of Eastern Siberia. He studied the current state and monitoring of the 'well-being' of the republican and regional mass media and journalistic collectives.

Oleg Dmitrievich made all his efforts and knowledge in the creation and development of higher journalism education in our republic. All his life and activity in the name of journalism. This is a huge selfless labour, which has become the meaning of Oleg Dmitrievich Yakimov's life. He carefully studied the history of the printed word in Yakutia and in the whole of Eastern Siberia. He tried not to miss any significant detail and built own concept. In his recent articles, D. Yakimov presents an analysis of the transformation of the media system in Yakutia in the context of globalisation. He conducted research into the significance of regional mass media in understanding modern trends in ethnic culture, in expanding international relations and strengthening ethnic tolerance, as well as changes in the relationship between new and traditional media. He is the author of the research concept of the place and significance of ethnic media in the broad picture of the polyethnic region's media system.

One of the most important aspects of his scientific work is the fact that he was the first person who fully researched and described the origin of social and political newspapers and magazines in Russian and Yakut languages. He compared this process with the appearing of printed word among the peoples of Siberia and North America. The importance of the local intellectuals' in the development of the press was given by O.D. Yakimov. It is about prominent personalities including V. V. Nikiforov–Kyulyumnur, N. E. Afanasyev, E. M. Egasov, P. A. Afanasyev, R. I. Orosin, A. I. Sofronov–Alampa, A. P. Ryazansky and others.

The fundamental research "Sketches of the History of Yakutia Press. Vol.1: From the formation of preconditions for the emergence of the press to February 1917", "Sketches of the history of the press of Yakutia. Vol. 2: From February 1917 to the collapse of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union", "The Press of the National Regions of Siberia and the Far East. From the emergence to the present day", "Yakutia's press on the scales of time", etc. Books, textbooks and manuals written by Professor O. D. Yakimov are used in the education programme of university students in Russia and abroad. The ideas expressed in these works have been developed in his reports at the scientific conferences in Russia, as well as in the USA, England, Germany, Korea, Cuba, Mongolia, Poland, and Czechoslovakia.

He first researched the life and activities of M. Z. Vinokurov. M. Z. Vinokurov was a prominent bibliophile and bibliographer, a scholar of Russian America, who emigrated from Russia and worked at the Library of Congress. By 1985 he published a book "Man from nothingness" about M. Z. Vinokurov. Therefore, O. D. Yakimov contributed to the return of the undeservedly forgotten and repressed Sakha people's names. His research significantly advanced the understanding of the Orthodox Church's role in the development of writing and printing in Yakutia, notably through his study of St. Innocent (Veniaminov), an important educator

in Siberia and North America. The diary entries “Journals of Priest Ioann Veniaminov” were published.

The research topics of O. D. Yakimov were wide ranging. Besides the mentioned works, the pioneer papers are his works dedicated to the “Memories” of N. E. Afanasyev, as well as the significance of Governor I. I. Kraft in shaping the public mood in Yakutsk, the national press and ethno-culture, the journalism of P. A. Oyunsky and M. K. Ammosov, the formation of the press in the languages of the indigenous peoples of the North.

He tried to recreate a unified history of the development and transformation of the press system of Eastern Siberia and the Far East. The second part of the monograph “The Periodical Press of Eastern Siberia and its Transformations”, which was his last scientific work, which he completed in autumn 2018 was published after his death, at the end of 2020. The first part of the monograph was published in 2014. This fundamental work in two parts covers the period from the second half of the 19th century to the first decade of the 21st century. It can be called an encyclopaedic study dedicated to the history of the press of all regions of Eastern Siberia. The work analyses the formation of not only the preconditions for the origin and formation of the press, but also the entire spiritual life of a huge geographical and civilisational space – the Eastern Siberia. The value of the book is also in the fact that it presents a complete picture of the development of printing in national languages. Based on the study of all aspects of the functioning of the press, the author emphasises in the final part of the book an essential idea: “...Today it is important that in the Russian Federation every nation and nationality, however minor it may be, should have periodicals in its native language”.

O. D. Yakimov is the author of 14 books on the problems of journalism in Yakutia, Siberia and the Far East, 137 scientific articles, more than 20 of which have been published abroad.

In his last year, he worked on a collection of documents on press and journalism history of the USSR, Eastern Siberia and Yakutia. It is difficult to describe in a short article exactly what Professor O. D. Yakimov has accomplished throughout his scientific, creative, organisational, teaching and methodological activities. The memory of him is still with us. His works are kept with us, and the future generations of journalists and media academics will continue to use and learn lessons.

He was awarded the titles “Honoured Worker of Higher Education of the Russian Federation”, “Honoured Worker of Culture of the Yakut ASSR”, Excellent Pressman of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). He was awarded the title of laureate of the republican prize “For Contribution to the Development of Journalism in Yakutia”, the Orders of the Red Banner of Labour and the Badge of Honour, state awards of the Mongolian People’s Republic, the badges “For Merit to Russian Journalism” and “Civic Valour”, international gold medal “For Outstanding Contribution to World Humanism”, badges of honour “Veteran of Professional Education of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)”, “For Merit in Science”, Certificate of Honour of the State Assembly (Il Tumen) of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). He was voted in four times as a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Yakut ASSR.

On his 85th birthday, 19 November 2019, a memorial auditorium named after him was opened in the Main Building of M.K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University. It preserves his personal belongings and part of the archive gifted to the department by Oleg Dmitrievich’s family. This classroom has special significance for higher journalism education not only as a memory of Oleg Dmitrievich Yakimov, but also as a symbol of the continuing of his work. It is a study of the press and mass media system of our region and Eastern Siberia.

In the year of his 90th anniversary, a commemoration evening was held in the Press House, and the “Yakimov Readings” scientific and practical conference was organised.

The entire multifaceted activity of Professor O. D. Yakimov, dedicated his whole life to serving journalism and the press of Yakutia, the university and science. His unique part in the formation and development of the Department of Journalism and the Faculty of Philology will never be forgotten by his countless students and followers.