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Abstract

I am not trying to present a full concept of professional ethics of an academic. I would like to focus on philosophical and ethical reflection of the specific area of an academic work in Slovakia. Almost two hundred years ago, the Slovak enlightenment philosopher Ján Feješ (1764 - 1823) responded to the situation of his era and he stated that a reviewer must, in the given area, be even better educated than the author himself. A different example can be found in Honoré de Balzac's great novel *Lost Illusions* where he also described journalistic practice of the first half of the 19th century. Part of the novel was based on his own experience with acrimonious critique. The situation concerning, for example academic reviewing in Slovakia in the present day is, possibly in some instances, even more critical than Feješ or Balzac suggested. This no longer concerns the quality of papers and book of essays but the number of works published; and evaluation of academics is partly dependant on whether they have published in a reviewed or a non-reviewed book, indexed journals, worldly known publishers, etc. There has to be a just requirement placed on critical reviews, as Feješ and others cautioned, and that is that they should not be informative reviews only for the sake of someone getting a reviewed work but truly critical reviews from people qualified in the given area of academic subjects and the aim of which should not lie in settling scores or expressing personal preferences but a constructive view of the issue. The problem in Slovak academic community (especially in humanities and social sciences), however, lies in the fact that critical reviews are not considered a challenge for discussion or polemics but are shifted to the personal level including settling scores with the critical reviewer. Quoting and referencing is another problematic area in Slovak academic life, which, in the present period, has almost become a fetish, as it is a criterion of qualification enhancement and evaluation of academics. That is why quotations and references are artificially made for colleagues, friends and acquaintances, or even already published works are faked to contain quotes and references for the needs of future qualification enhancement. To summarise, I would like to propose three aims which could become a part of professional ethics of the academics (in Slovakia).

Keywords: academic ethics, Feješ, Balzac, Kánský, Slovakia

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