

## INTELLECTUAL JOURNALISM VS COPY-PASTE JOURNALISM

### ИНТЕЛЛЕКТУАЛЬНАЯ ЖУРНАЛИСТИКА ПРОТИВ ЖУРНАЛИСТИКИ COPY-PASTE

*Valentina D. Mansurova, Doctor of Philosophy, Professor,  
Chair of Theory and Practice of Journalism,  
Faculty of Journalism, Altai State University,  
Barnaul, Russia  
mvd1951@mail.ru*

*Валентина Дмитриевна Мансурова, доктор философских наук,  
профессор, кафедра теории и практики журналистики,  
факультет журналистики,  
Алтайский государственный университет,  
Барнаул, Россия  
mvd1951@mail.ru*

*“Journalism of facts” gives its place to journalism of ideas. The excess of information in global communication systems leads to the necessity for “protocols of access to meanings” of informational messages. Intellectual journalism is the answer to this demand since it has the necessary potential to create a socially important world view and to accept digital technology challenges associated with the production and broadcasting of information in a social medium. “Personological turn” in the field of mass communication is the revival of journalism in a new social status to represent the basic life values of society.*

**Key words:** *crisis of journalism; informational rationality; media person (homo mediatuus); intersubjective communication; ethical standard; is-ought problem (“Hume’s Principle”).*

*«Журналистика факта» уступает место журналистике мысли. Избыток информации в глобальной системе коммуникации порождает потребность в «протоколах доступа к смыслу»*

информационных сообщений. Ответить на эту потребность должна интеллектуальная журналистика. Она обладает необходимым потенциалом создания социально-значимой картины мира, способна ответить на вызовы цифровых технологий создания и транслирования информации в социуме. «Персоналогический поворот» в массовой коммуникации означает возрождение журналистики в новом социальном статусе как выразителя основных жизненных ценностей общества.

**Ключевые слова:** кризис журналистики; информационная рациональность; медийная личность (*homo mediatuus*); интерсубъективная коммуникация; этический стандарт; «принцип Юма».

Blogs, Facebook, and Twitter have become the public stage for information agenda development. Any communicant who does not possess any ideas regarding the standards of professional social network communication is now an outsider. “Journalism of facts,” which is the current trend of the digital media age, begins with the devastating criticism of the social status of journalism. Withdrawal from the stage of media and journalistic “death” is often seen as the next step in the evolution of media systems. One of the International Media Forum 2013 participants said that “Journalism is a set of strictly technical functions: to cover the event in time and to post it to the news feed” (Romendik, 2013). However, demands for analytical information and valuable content refute those statements. An information analysis of main political events forces mass communication theorists and practitioners to turn back to researching journalistic phenomenon in the contemporary media space.

According to Pekka Pekkala, who is a freelance writer, Visiting Scholar at USC Annenberg, and writing a book titled “*How to Keep Journalism Profitable*”, copy-paste journalism will become extinct. “From a journalistic perspective, this is both good and bad news. The bad news is that fewer stories are needed overall as more and more people cut out the middleman and go straight to the source. This means fewer jobs

in traditional media. So if you notice yourself writing the same stories as everyone else, or even worse, using copy-paste more than before, run” (Pekkala, 2013).

The anarchy in covering the Boston terrorist attack by the mass media, for example, led to the conclusion for a radical redesign of print media and journalism overall. USC Annenberg assistant professor Mike Ananni even suggests “silence and timing” tactics to mass media during the time of informational chaos to produce balanced and professional conclusions and statements (Ananni, 2013). Participants of the international digital journalism conference “News: Rewired” propose five online standards and ethics pointers for journalists: Accuracy over speed, Transparency, Adding value, Corrections, Dealing with trolls. (Five Online Standards and Ethics Pointers for Journalists, 2013). Following these pointers can guarantee the delivery of not only social implications but also the meanings of such events to society. “Social media has turned breaking news into a minefield of rumors and false reports, further muddying the waters of truth in a situation that is inherently uncertain” (ibid).

According to researchers, it is the semantic registration of an event that distinguishes journalist writing. The mode of chronicler or screen reporter backs down before the journalist’s role of a social values navigator does. Intellectual journalism is destined to create a “...structural field of forces where intellectual activity goes on” (Collins, 2002).

Intellectual activity in the age of digital media acquires its own new features. Among the discoveries of modern science there are some which are based on classical or, in accordance with M. Weber, on “instrumental rationality” where reality represents the result of thought and empirical experiments. In the 20th century this type of rationality defined by the Modern Project collided with a new type of rationality called “informational”.

Keeping the “ratio-“ part of the word intact, the new rationality opens up its horizons for all, previously unthinkable, epistemological experiments on reality. The “informational rationality” in its various forms legalized the relativity of knowledge accuracy and the

superiority of subjective properties of cognition. Information in the form of text, digital code or message of various media is capable of expressing an author's personal opinion about the surrounding world. Now it is a tool by which to create new realities in mass communication channels. The communicative system of production, processing and broadcasting of information, which is being developed to its extent in variability, has become the foundation for the creation of media space – new locuses of mankind's existence at the turn of the 21st century.

The phenomenon of the late 20th century: information, as a category to structure all types of motions in nature and society on a content level, is no longer only a message or a signal of change. It has rather evolved into a self-sufficient substance, such as matter and energy. Modern researchers of the virtual reality of computers have established a direct link between information and “matter,” allowing us to speak about the symptoms of yet another “Crealithic revolution” in the social history of mankind. “If Neolithic revolution is about implements, then Crealithic revolution is about substance. Information and equipment have been evolving from tools to living environment of mankind” (Kutyrev, 1998).

Media self-reflection and self-identification has become the ontology of existence for modern society, and an individual with unauthorized access to communication acquires the status of “homo mediatus” (Vartanova, 2009).

The overflow of information changes both the nature of cognition and the social medium self-organization system. Classical Cartesian human cognition with logical deduction and formal reasoning is replaced by “Chance” – the way of a chaotic, non-logical “mosaic” (according to French sociologist A. Moles) with the actualization of existence (Moles A., 1974).

The mass media creates irrational world views distant from mankind's actual existence in the social medium. Empirical knowledge, speculations and metempiric breakthroughs in the understanding of material and the environment of spiritual living become equally important themselves as the material and environment of spiritual living of modern mankind.

The effect of communicative activity exists precisely in the fact that various realities are created at the level of mundane consciousness and a scheme of various modes of mankind's existence and living environment is set up. Existing with media places a person in a situation where he can optionally follow the rules of logic and objectivity concerning the concept of reality reconstruction. His self-expression is a way to show the intellectual triumph over and the manifestation of the limitation of knowledge.

Communication media has become the means of creating behavioral patterns, and schemes for personal lingual and intellectual self-organization. These schemes or sociocultural patterns of everyday life, or reality, happen to be as equally important as the state of material and the environment of spiritual living. Common sense constructs and situates acts as masses of the principle of socialization. New consensus forms of collective interaction emerge, which are based on the transformation of behavioral patterns in a process of informational interaction among individuals.

New social status roles and new social interactions unauthorized by authorities emerge in communicative reality, which can either harmonize or disharmonize the social system. Public sphere dynamics are changing: the communication of individuals is moving into the media sphere localized by interests, activity, hobbies, etc. and making the social medium more fragmented. Key factors and differentiation criteria are ethical (axiological) and cognitive variants of activity, thinking of a "media" person (person within the media), i.e. within informational interaction.

One feature of the global information age is the dominance of the new dynamic ontology of reality. Time and space have become a unified whole, structured by communication. The phenomenon of simultaneity exists in the perception of existence in time, as an event can be reached only through process and as a result of communication. Digital technologies of content production and distribution multiplied this chronotope effect many times by making toposes big and small, or "fragmenting" or "stretching" the time, consequently creating a special

communicative space called by Polish sociologist Zigmund Bauman the “Liquid Modernity” (Bauman, 2008).

Throwing the enormous informational capacity of objects instantly into channels of mass communication leads to drastic changes in the basic dynamics of communication. The logical hierarchy of knowledge has been replaced by a discrete nonlinear hierarchy based on an intuitive association of concepts and images. Familiar to the eyes, texts are being excluded more and more from the communication process. Those texts created a logical and organized thinking process, which resulted in some form of algorithm to deal with perceived reality. There exist new forms of audiovisual and hypertext computer communication, instead of just print texts. Mankind has entered the age of dominance by communication devices, which has its limitations concerning the balance of senses and emotions for the perception of reality. Sound, color, and even smell have become the elements of a world view recreated by mass communication. Texts and illustrations are accompanied by earlier unessential accidental features like variety of font typefaces and colors, which increase the level of semantic and esthetic perception. Paralinguistic means play a more important part in the process of text creation than before. With the development of information technology, forms concerning the reflection of reality become more and more diverse, and correlation between content and formal structures of recreated images and schemes become more complicated.

The representation of the human existence is even more complicated; iconic and symbolic systems are not only limited to epistemological and rational ways of reality comprehension. An immediate translation of information from one sign model to another is possible only with the help of a constantly updated “database” responsible for matching the semantic and sociocultural fields of communicants. The “media” person finds himself in a situation of cognitive dissonance caused by a borderless communication space and physical limitation in time for its exploration. Updating a personal “database” is an intellectually intensive and time-consuming process, but since the “media” person himself is a part of

the “database” for other communicants, it is necessary to perform such updates for successive informational interaction.

The digitalization of information flows causes the occurrence of neo-figurativeness in the subjective communication space: change of subject-object relationships, appearance of “Media Elite” and “New Pooors”, who have limited access to premium-class digital products (according to researches of RUNET – Russian segment of the Internet). It is also possible to believe that the emergence of individual consciousness, being the only indisputable human property, has become the subjective prerequisite for neo-figurativeness. Individualistic values are considered to be at the core of the European civilization development.

The cognitive, normative, and axiological representation of reality is unconceivable outside of communication or dialog with the world. According to modern scientists, alongside with the existence of possibility and existence of “here and now,” the concept of co-operation, co-existence, and dependence of the existence of “the others” takes the leading position. Communicative reality as a means of media self-identification of a human being is “... first of all, the reality of intersubjective communication” (Arshinov, Laitman, Svirsky, 2007).

In a mass communication multidimensional world, where reality is created and reconstructed, all subjects alternately play the same roles: creators, virtual witnesses or virtual users. The relationship of roles may differ according to the way schematic reality is developed or self-evolved: from passive observation to interactive participation in real events. The position of each individual in the process of communicative interaction turns out to be the subject and object simultaneously, while the energy of personal intention is dissolved in anonymity and impersonality of the created meanings. On the one hand, communicants should be of great importance in the act of self-expression, but on the other hand, “the presentation” itself, without its author’s name, is more important.

Anonymity, impersonality, and virtuality are drastically enhanced in the world of information technology. Individual and socio-collective aspects of interaction are in constant contradiction with each other. The dominance

of the social and the collective immediately elicits an individual response by message. All subjects of communicative interaction, i.e. individuals, collective entities (art groups, associations of various legal and social status), and social institutions (print media, broadcasting corporations and media holdings) are forced to constantly bill themselves as unique and different from the others, thus breaking similarities and anonymity

While mass communication is the “meeting place” for various cognitive paradigms and objectives, cultures and ethical values give birth to a special sociocultural phenomenon – a virtual reality that is more important and more accessible for communicants than their living environment. Signs and information, text and hypertext, and “simulacra” of culture that mediate social processes become real in virtual reality. Actual reality with real people and situations is no longer the only initial object and subject of reflection for communication media. Signs, symbols, and images accumulated by human experience prove to be self-sufficient for the reconstruction of an imaginary virtual reality.

The main point of the ontological paradox is in the fact that this imaginary virtual reality has become a tool and a means of change for the general society and every member of the society. Objects with enormous information capacity, such as periodicals with millions of copies, multi-channel broadcast media, and global computer networks led to the recognition of virtuality as a full-fledged ontology. The reality concerning the substance of relations and not of things characterizes, in the first place, the sociocultural space of mass communication. Relationships of people, intricacies of opinions and views, even the image of the real world become the new reality. The “media” person has found himself immersed in the “animate” human-like space of images, behavior patterns, and values where signs of the material world and material relations compete with each other. And the person himself, being free in his media self-fulfillment, has been turned into a product with its price and its additional value for someone else.

Journalists of the digital age work in conditions of severe market, ideological and sociocultural competition. Their choice of personal com-

municative strategy is not dictated only by their material considerations and ambitions. The dichotomies of “social-individual” and “moral-material” have the potential production and reconstruction of social meanings in the field of specialized, socially important journalism.

Multimedia and convergence of information production technologies present a dilemma for journalists: what is more important – mastering technical skills or skills of analysis and evaluation? Under conditions of information, competition is necessary to perform all of the work in accordance with the moral and ethical standards of the profession.

Freedom of speech and scope of “written and unwritten” law bring into focus the necessity of abidance by the rules of professional conduct on information highways. Contemporary information technology along with the development of social communication enhance a thousand fold the “publicity syndrome” of any statement. Interactivity provides opportunities to expand the scope of a topical issue and to involve “the masses” in solving the high-profile issues. However, such co-operation in mass media brings to public attention even the flow of “draft” sketches of communicative acts not intended to be seen by the public. “Public intimacy” (in accordance with the Russian State Humanitarian University professor M. Krongaus) becomes the global means of self-presentation and self-expression existing far from constructive public dialogue.

Social dynamism along with the escalation of social diversity forces journalists to provide not just public self-reflection, but to raise that self-reflection to an objectified social outcome. New approaches to the culture of communicative self-regulation are required.

The redesign of journalism requires a drastic “personological turn” in the balance of power among personal spheres. Specifically, it is necessary to get back the monopoly of professionals who are concerned with the strategy of socially important information distribution. Concerned by “catastrophes of informational interaction of consciousnesses” theorist and ideologist of the information society, M. Castels, proposes a search for “protocols of meanings” which are “... independent of general practice communication bridges between personified hypertexts” (Castells,

2007). Only professional journalists are qualified enough to provide full access to the “protocols of meanings”.

This truth is confirmed by the resulting scandal caused by publications regarding the U.S. National Security Agency’s espionage activities. Classified information from Edward Snowden has been delivered with an aspect of social importance to uphold human rights by “The Guardian” journalist Glenn Greenwald. This journalist’s standing has become the hot topic for serious political debates in parliaments and governments all over the world. Alongside with the statements about “retirement” or even “death” of journalism, there are a lot of other statements and evaluations concerning the role of journalism. Jeff Jarvis in his post “All journalism is advocacy (or it isn’t)” wrote: “The god term of journalism – the be-all and end-all, the term without which the enterprise fails to make sense, is the public” (Jarvis, 2013). The qualities and strengths of journalistic work are especially highlighted: “In so doing, Greenwald and the Guardian exhibited the highest value of journalism: intellectual honesty” (ibid).

Information provided by journalists is indeed a unique cultural and semiotic construct, which produces and distributes the socially important meaning of events. Authors of these messages do not merely reconstruct the fragments of reality; they make interpretations and form the points of social importance. Media events are presented in the light of personal perception by journalists, emotionally colored and with intellectual appeal. Such texts are highly demanded by the public because they are more than just facts. They are an interpretation of facts within the specific frame of reference and values.

“I believe that the future of journalism will be focused towards more individual and less corporative features and characteristics”, writes Jordi Corominas i Julián in “Revista de Letras” (Corominas, 2013).

While getting a massive overall education in the school of western technologies of democracy and tolerance, it is useful to follow the traditions of Russian journalism. The ontologically significant tradition of Russian perception of the outer world is panethism: “... highlighting the moral evaluation of people and their actions, evaluation of

events which include social and political ones” (Emelyanov, Novikov, 1995).

Truth without good deeds and justice is not considered the truth. Information itself is not that important in the process of cognition, as it happens to be for any educated person of the western countries (i.e. not Russian). The revelation of the meaning is more important because you should not simply know something, but also understand and be knowledgeable.

For example, the editor of the *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (“*The Independent Newspaper*”) K. Remchukov in his article “*Horizontal People*” speculates on the bitter truth concerning the young, modern intellectuals of Russia and difficulties of social growth for businessmen (Remchukov, 2013). The lack of social mobility, the inability of climbing up the social and career ladder, is revealed as a stage of social drama. According to the author, the solution of this problem is in the social activity of people willing to cross the “horizontal of despair” and their ways of “vertical climb”.

In accordance with the traditions of Russian journalism, public text always has heuristic functions with an urge for contemplation. It should be filled to its maximum with documentary and artistic images and be based on a synthesis of symbolic forms and a means of expression. A text should have heuristic capabilities of expression, conveying the meaning alongside the capabilities of the joint discovery of the meaning during the dialogue process between communicants. As it is stated by M. Bakhtin, understanding the meaning “... should be at the exit of the text, at the borderline of texts, in a venture of a dialogue with a nontextual author of the text, with the endless cultural context” (Bakhtin, 1972).

The journalist’s procedure of reality reproduction always has a sociocultural and ethnopsychological component of interpretation, ethical and moral statements that contain knowledge. Communicative and sociocultural aspects of adequacy and credibility are bound to take into consideration cultural and historical forms of people’s mentality and rootedness in the traditions or transitiveness of moral values and norms. As never before the intellectual work of journalists should implement the

methodological idea called “the Hume’s principle” – a “logical banning to produce a judgment of obligation from a judgment of fact”.

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