Mechanisms of communication between the mass media and the civil society (ethical aspects, for example, traditional Australian media)

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Abstract: The article raises the problem of place and role of ethics in political communication on the example of the traditional media of Australia. The article considers different approaches to the study of this problem, the role and possibilities of situational ethics in the activities of the mass media.

Key words: mass media, political mobilization, ethics, communication, traditional media, Australia.

Ethical aspects of political - communicative functions of media, i.e., identifying the values and principles operating in the media, and study of special cases is the focus of interest in my paper. So far we focus on the special political functions of the media, and specifically, political mobilization aimed at organizing different kinds of events stimulating the activism of the population in various spheres of society. The empirical material on which we will illustrate their views and the findings, will be the traditional Australian media. This choice is dictated by
two circumstances: the high correlation between the key problems of traditional Australian media and the subject of our study, substrate and novelty of empirical material. Besides, the Australian study of traditional media in the specified view gives the opportunity to identify additional areas of study, the activities of mass media, to show how the ethical dimensions of political communication, the media can intensify the processes of social integration and disintegration in civil society.

Media coverage of the events is equally, and in the public interests and in the interests of individuals, the ideological leaders, political and community leaders. But where is the line that separates the possible from the impossible, of what can be expressed in the word, and what is better not to talk? This eternal problem is often raised in discussions about the media coverage of wars, disasters or crimes. For example, the case of German comedian Beerman that led to the fact that "For the poem "Abusive criticism", dedicated to the Turkish President, German satirist could face trial". This suggests that the tasks of mobilization, implemented media, can be in conflict with certain moral norms of the society.

For a member of the society the invasion of privacy might look like unethical behavior, regardless of the status of the individual, whose private life has been violated. And for a journalist this kind of invasion is often is well founded, as any particular case is secondary to the more General right of the society to be informed. This moment creates a contradiction between the task of the media to shape public arena for free debate and the right for protection of private life. "The society of the XXI century reveals itself as a society of transparency. The latter becomes a necessity, covering all social processes and leading to their profound change. Society transparency collective network giant is covered with skin. Here everything is subject to the principle or legibility, or visibility. Nothing can be hidden." [Kukartseva 2013:152]. Can a society require a knowledge of information

1 Телеведущий Бемерман взят под охрану полиции // http://в-деталях.рф/%D1%8D%D1%80%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%B0%D0%BD-%D0%BD-%D0%B1%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BC%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%BD-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B7%D0%BB%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%82-%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%BB%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BB%D1%81/328623/ (дата обращения - 12 04 2016)
on issues that the authorities deliberately and legally silent? The American media researcher Everett Dennis argues, for example, that the public's right to know is a journalistic invention that emerged in the 1950-ies, when reporters the United States became more and more to interfere with the bureaucrats standing between the media and government information. [Dennis, Everette E., and Jon Vanden Heuvel 1990:17]. The movement for freedom of information (for Informational Freedom advocates, FOIA) in the United States, fighting for the right to knowledge in the public sphere. Demands for greater government transparency and better access to public readings and the government's decisions, is necessary and justified. They strengthen the role of the media and focus on maintaining awareness of the citizens.

Outstanding researcher of the problems of the development of mass media Professor Henry Mayer called this paradox "the Outlook of Janus, two faces of which are metaphors of the two imperatives of the media, successfully conduct business and to inform the public about what is happening in the world and in the country 2. Journalists have a professional duty and obligations to the editors, the responsibilities of news consumers, the community in which they work. At the same time they have a moral duty to ourselves, as individual members of the same society. Many difficulties in making ethical decisions on reporting in the media arise precisely in connection with the diversity of responsibilities and loyalty of a journalist. Every journalist actually replaces the functions of three people: an employee, a professional and an ordinary person. Such circumstances give rise to a situation of moral choice decisions. "There are, in basis, only three different paths or approaches to make moral decisions. Namely: (1) legalistic; (2) Antinomians opposite legalistic – that is, rejecting any laws and principles, and (3) situational»3. "There are, in basis, only three different paths or approaches to make moral decisions. Namely: (1) legalistic; (2) Antinomians opposite legalistic – that is,

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rejecting any laws and principles, and (3) situational⁴. In combined situational ethics teleological ("ends justify the means) and deontological (duties that we must perform, regardless of the consequences of our actions) ethical maxims. This gives the specified ethics some flexibility, but it supplies a formidable challenge. Consider some of them for example the traditional Australian media.

In Australia, where the key feature of traditional media is that they are highly concentrated in the hands of private owners, the history of the movement to the purity of the ideal of the mechanisms of political communication, as long as little success.

In 1944. at the Federal conference of the Australian journalists Association (AJA) was enacted Uniform code of ethics of journalism, consisting of 8 sections, and acting today. However, from the beginning he received the most negative responses from media moguls. For example, Rupert Henderson, at that time General Director of the newspaper the Sydney Morning Herald, voiced the opinion, deeply rooted in the minds of the managers of most of the Australian media today: "maintaining ethical standards is the work of their readers" [John Hurst, Sally A. White 1994: 272].

In 1975, the Ministry of the Australian media proposed for journalists and the General public, a document proposing the establishment of the Australian press Council, which would dedeal with complaints against journalists. Association of Australian journalists even before, since its 1955 Federal conference, supported the idea of this kind of self-regulation. There have been proposals for the creation of a press Council based on the model of the British press Council, in some States, but that a government document inspired the Australian Newspapers Council to establish The Australian press Council in 1976. [John Hurst, Sally A. White 1994: 275].

The press Council released an act establishing two main principles, activities of journalists in Australia.: freedom of the press is a right of the public to be informed, but entails obligations towards the people. In addition, the press Council outlined 11 main provisions of the journalistic ethics, which includes such maxims as to the accuracy, truthfulness, fairness and impartiality, with which reporters and journalists had to be guided in their judgments. At the beginning of 1993. Federation of television stations in Australia was developed by the professional practices applicable to television news and current events. There were issues of fairness, accuracy, impartiality and sensitivity in relation to the private lives of citizens and the need to have a sense of style. [John Hurst, Sally A. White 1994: 279].

However, since then little has changed. Today in Australia the criticism of traditional media in the context of our reflection is done on the following three key areas. First, high concentration level in the country of ownership in the media, which reduces the diversity of news and narrowing of views. The share of the holding company (Fairfax Holdings Ltd (Cary Packer) and the Corporation News Corp (Rupert Murdoch), accounted for 85% of sales of all Newspapers in Australia. The oldest newspaper, the Sydney Herald (The Sydney Herald), belongs to "John Fairfax" and is the newspaper of the "ruling elite" and all who consider themselves the elite. Its daily circulation in the 3.5-million metropolis is 400 thousand copies. One of the most widely read Newspapers, the Newspaper "the Australian" (The Australian), News Corp owns. In General "a handful of very rich people, among them Gina Rinehart, the richest woman in the world, in control of and own the most popular TV and radio stations"5.

Secondly, the frequent invasion of people's private lives, a conscious intimidation of journalists and the interviewee obviously a cynical disregard for the

rights and feelings of others in search of improved ratings or increase circulation. Thirdly, the process of news gathering and distribution in the traditional media – in print, television and radio broadcasting – distorts the true lives of Australians, namely: women as the creators of news; almost invisible, the youth often gets bad press, ethnic minorities or generally ignored or they are treated insensitively. The media exaggerate or create the sensation of natural events, in order to increase the commercial appeal of their articles. For example, reports that the Australian government is going to destroy about two million stray cats caused unhealthy excitement in the media and increased the ratings of the publications. People are also concerned that the accuracy and truthfulness of the presented stories are compromised by pressure or advertising coupled with commercial interests and political loyalty of the owners and the management in the media. "Some journalists, commentators and reporters go arbitrarily far and make the most incredible statements, misleading inaccurate historical information and sometimes spin tales. Take, for example, the message, dated March 4, 2014, which States: "According to the Ukrainian military, Russia in the form of an ultimatum demanded that the troops of the Crimea surrender. Otherwise, they will be forced to repel an attack of Pro-Kremlin forces on all fronts the strategically important black sea Peninsula". Here, among other things, the Australian media show the dense ignorance of the life of Russia and its geopolitical position.

In our view, political and social mobilization of citizens through the media is impossible only on the basis of clear and pre-agreed ethical Maxim. It would be too easy. Mobilizing the political will of citizens in the media depends on individuals - journalists, and creative communities, whose members - people of extensive knowledge, is able to combine rootedness in their culture with the broader perspective of the surrounding issues. Of how fully and intensely will these opportunities will be taken the degree of mobilization of citizens for the decision of arising problems depend. (For example, one of the hallmarks of

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domestic media is to comply with in their activities an important source of principle, which is that the media did not create morality, morality creates a media-defined "space of culture", is invulnerable to immorality and demoralize the population. Of course, not everything is so simple, however, the political culture of Russia is based on the idea that "leadership in the world of the future will be those who will have not only the dominant economic and military force..... Advantage will provide the quality of leadership, morale, motivation of the population, government strategy, political will, the ability to offer mankind a new dream"[Nikonov 2015:18] 7

Unfortunately, in most cases in Australian traditional media political and social mobilization is decided in line with situational ethics, is marked by conjecturally, sometimes grandiose substitution of concepts, behind-the-scenes agreements, informal coordination of positions, forced marginalization of some of the news and on the contrary, excessive emphasis on the other to extract the maximum amount of dividends out of the situation. Traditional Australian media have long mastered the rules of the game and their external openness of society does not prevent them to use the model of situational ethics to their advantage.

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