

**50 YEARS OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF
HUMAN RIGHTS**

**MOSCOW STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF JOURNALISM
UNESCO CHAIR IN JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MEDIA,
COMMUNICATION AND THE OPEN SOCIETY**

Moscow, November, 12-15, 1998

Abstracts

Theme 1

Mass Media and the Public Accountability

Prof. Denis McQuail, Professor Emeritus of the Amsterdam University, the Netherlands, Visiting Professor of the University of South Hampton, UK.

Mass Media and the Public Interest: forms of public accountability in an Open Society.

Public freedom of speech/press is considered a fundamental human right and also beneficial and necessary for the democratic process. However it is justified, it has to be exercised with respect for the rights of others and thus the general good of society. Consequently, freedom of the press is accompanied by various forms of accountability, that govern relations between publication and reception, including questions of effect from publication. The forms of accountability are diverse, flexible and changing and include law and regulation, professional and industry self-regulation, market systems of supply and demand and public opinion and pressure. There is nearly always a tension between freedom and accountability and it is potentially a very problematic terrain even where freedom is strongly institutionalised. This paper will discuss these issues and also consider how accountability might be exercised in the conditions of flux and uncertainty characteristic of the post-soviet media situation.

Prof. Yassen Zassoursky, Dean, Faculty of Journalism, Moscow State University, Russia

Open Society and Access to Information: To What Extent Russian Media are Contributing to the Openness of Society

Theme 2

Diversity and Access to Information and Communication

Prof. Jan van Cuilenburg, Director, Amsterdam School of Communication Research, the Netherlands

Between Media Monopoly and Ruinous Media Competition: On Media Access and Diversity in Open Societies

This paper deals with access and diversity as central concepts of modern communications policy in open, democratic societies. Access is defined as the possibility for individuals, groups of individuals, organisations and institutions to share society's communications resources, that is, to participate in the market of communications infrastructure and distribution services, and in the market of content

and communication services. Access may be sought at different layers of the communications system, each presupposing a specific elaboration of communications policy questions. Diversity, that is, media diversity refers to media content. Media diversity has two faces: reflection of population preferences and openness, equal, uniform media access for divergent population preferences. According to Western thinking free and equal access to communications and diversity of media content are best served by media competition in a free media market. That's why in Western Europe the liberalisation of media markets in the 80s and 90s has politically widely been welcomed. The relation between media competition and diversity, however, is far from being simple and linear. The paper explores the relationships between media competition and media diversity within the framework of media and democracy. Three hypotheses on these relationships are being developed. The main hypothesis is that the more media compete for market share, the more media diversity is reflective and the less media diversity is open. The paper indicates as the main trend in communications: more providers, more outlets, more competition. This trend brings along the risk of media competition solely based on price, and consequently the risk of ruinous competition. The thesis is developed that diversity and free and equal access are best served by moderate media competition, positioning itself somewhere between media monopoly and ruinous competition. In the final section of the paper the question is raised to what extent Western economic media models on diversity and access are relevant and valid to media systems in East European countries.

Dr Elena Vartanova, Associate Professor, Faculty of Journalism, Moscow State University, Russia

Universal Access to the New Media as a Form of Public Policy

It is widely understood that newly developed computer and digital communication technologies can encourage the development of democratic and open societies at large, provide better realisation of human rights and freedoms, improve communication and information exchange among people. On the other hand, development of new media brings about obvious technical, financial, educational and even physiological barriers which can not be overcome only by individual will. Universal access to technologies, networks and content distributed via global interactive digital networks is becoming the key problem of transition to a new information age. Many societies currently recognise the problem of access to the new media as an urgent political and social goal which demands not only technical solutions. Present theoretical discussions on information superhighways or information society derive from the idea of co-operation between state, public authorities and business, new information and communication industry in particular, for the benefit of users. The role of the state in providing public with easy, affordable and geographically equal access has become extremely important today. Despite of the fact that national circumstances still define different political approaches to the new media, some common principles should be accepted by all states to avoid new discrepancies at national and global levels. Technology itself can not secure the implementation of democratic principles in modern society, and the state has to extend its traditional media policy by including guarantees of universal access to emerging and technologically-based media.

Theme 3.

Dr. Colin Sparks, University of Westminster, UK

Global Communication and the Global Public Sphere.

**Dr Richard van der Wurff, Amsterdam School of Communication Research,
the Netherlands**

Towards a communication responsibility of electronic service providers. Regulation and control of global electronic information and communication markets.

This paper will discuss regulation of global electronic information and communication (IC) markets. It will criticise the dominant approach that focuses upon governmental regulation of market structures. This dominant approach is founded upon neo-classical economic arguments that competition will enhance performance. Yet, given the economic characteristics of networks and electronic IC products, the relationship between market structures and market performance in electronic IC markets is essentially indeterminate. Instead, the paper will argue for renewed attention for regulation of conduct. This approach is founded upon neo-institutionalist economic arguments that economic activities are structured by institutions (organisational procedures, rules and norms) rather than by market structures. An institutional framework based upon efficiency norms alone, is inadequate when electronic IC services should contribute to an open information society. Other norms reflecting the sectoral and societal impacts of electronic IC markets apart from efficiency should be included explicitly as well. Regulation of market conduct does not necessarily have to take the form of governmental regulation. This paper will argue that regulation of conduct should build upon the institutionalisation of corporate social responsibilities and corporate accountability vis-à-vis public interest groups. In combination with governmental regulation and self-regulation, this will result into a regulatory regime that is appropriate for the emerging global information society.

**Prof. Yevgeniy P.Prokhorov, Chair, Faculty of Journalism Moscow State
University, Russia**

Information Order in the Open Society

Global civilisation shifts raise the problem of information order, makes it even more acute and demands new definitions and approaches to this concept. On the one hand order is "an optimum organisation" of a certain structure, on the other hand it implies "strict regulations if the activity rules". The three main features of the Open Society are as follows: it is an information society, it is democratic and humanistic. The requirement of the information order is closely connected with the main social types of journalism: the journalism of the civil society, representing different private social forces; the state journalism expressing the ideas of those who have gained the majority in the elections; the state-social journalism defending the national interests.

Information order should be based on strict observation of a very important requirement that of providing democracy with sufficient information. It is not the amount of information received by a person it is the contents of this information that counts. High level of knowledge can never be achieved without enough effort. To create it is the task of journalism because the level of knowledge of the audience serves as the main criterion for all journalists. The theoretical idea of "access to information" should also be treated in close connection with the level of knowledge and the amount of the received information. Another important condition for increasing the level of the public's knowledge is pluralism. This approach to journalism makes another demand, that of tolerance. The "mechanism" of solving problems treated differently by different forces and the mass media representing these forces is the social dialogue. Social dialogue is an important component of the system of norms applied to the information order. Dialogue is the sort of negotiation that leads from friction to a certain decision. The atmosphere of dialogue is that of a constructive search for a decision through discussing, analysing and comparing different approaches, ideas and viewpoints.

The main difficulty of a journalistic dialogue is to recognise that on the social arena media act in two aspects: as a representative of their owner and at the same time the representative of the public. Media cannot afford to have their own "private" opinion because the normal information order dooms this "third" opinion to a close analysis from other "private" points of view and "common" interests. Journalists play the leading role in this situation but the lawmakers and authorities in general can make a great contribution. After all journalism can really act as the "fourth power" and its potential should be used to create the democratic "Open Society".

It is natural that some people will feel sceptical about it. What information order is possible in the country with no order in other spheres of life? But if we care about establishing it the first step to make is to create the information order. Aren't the mass media important enough to deserve that much attention?

Theme 4.

Open Society and Transition: National Interfaces.

Prof. Kaarle Nordenstreng, Chair, and Jukka Pietilainen, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Tampere, Finland

Normative Theories of the Media: Lessons from the opening up of the Russian society.

The paper begins with a review of the debate since the "Four Theories of the Press" and presents a contemporary model of four roles which the media may play in a democratic society with regard to its existing power structures: co-operative, surveillance, facilitative, critical. The developments in Russia since the last years of the Soviet Union, as documented by Russian and Western scholars, offer instructive lessons for

these normative theories of the media. The paper lists the most obvious of such lessons and suggests tasks for further research.

Ivan Zassoursky, Faculty of Journalism, Moscow State University, Russia

Russian Journalism and the Open Society: from Utopia to Reality, from Reality to Utopia

In spite of the existing diversity of publications, independent journalists could not exploit the variety of interests in the media business for various reasons, the most important of them, perhaps, being the absence of professionals of that kind. The new information technologies are very important for that matter. The new generation of Russian people has an opportunity to socialise in this communication environment, where the distance between the producer and consumer of information can be easily overcome. The net is certainly not a rigid society model and corporate ethics are not cool (they suck).

It is only a matter of time when the new generation of media professionals will become visible in the Russian media. Although it is evident that major publications and television channels are too tightly controlled by the capital and the state to allow some relaxation of journalist practice. Perhaps only a large wave of mass political activism could endorse some sincerity into the journalist practice and help to transform professional attitudes in mass media somewhere in the future. The quick and unexpected victory in 1991 came too soon to achieve that.

Dr. Maria Loukina, Faculty of Journalism, Moscow State University

Religious Russia on the Internet: Integration to the Open Society

In his Open Society Theory Karl Popper shows how deeply metaphysical ideas work themselves out in social and political ideologies. Though he did not focus on religion we could also say that the way to the Open Society as the controversial to the Closed (Magical, Tribal or Collectivist) Society is connected with processes in religion the society should pass through. There are two trends in religious developments, which could be observed now in Russia. First one and may be the strongest is connected with the shifting back to the values of traditional culture and the refusal from the social mobility and individualism. In life it is expressed in addressing to different forms of old church rituals and traditions in culture, education and private life. Traditional media institutions in many cases provide these views. This paper will discuss another tendency related to religious modernism that appears in different spheres related to religion. In media sense it deals with new technologies including Internet. The paper presents qualitative description on Russian Internet religious resources, its frames, cultural and population environment. What is challenging churches and Internet inhabitants, do churches only use the Web as a kind of digital advertisement area, are there any ecclesiological problems raised by the churches entering cyberspace, what are the main benefits from the "virtual communities" on the way to the Open Society? These and other questions are exercised in the paper.

Dr. Terhi Rantanen, University of Helsinki, Finland

All Was Solid and Melted Into Air. The Globalization of Telecommunications in Central and Eastern Europe

Dr. Irina Netchaeva, Faculty of Journalism, Moscow State University, Russia

Open Democracy as the South African Model of Open Society

The paper deals with obstacles and impetus, which multinational South Africa meet in its way to the Open Society. Almost immediately after refusal from Apartheid South Africa finds itself in a new technology age. The heritage of apartheid has not overturned till now. The main target for the government is to make South Africa a democratic and open society with the information and communication resources independent and available to the majority of people. This is stated by the Constitution 15, 23, The Open Democracy Bill, White paper on Broadcasting Policy, the Film and Publication Act. Theoretically authorities do not show intention to retreat from principles of freedom of expression and freedom of speech which are corner stones for a democratic and open society. But in practice there are numerous examples when the state restricts economic independence of industries and private companies thus limiting free competition in order to achieve the universal service policy. As a consequence, South Africa refuses to expose their national telecommunication monopolies to competition till 2003. It is especially clear in the field of new technologies. Afraid that benefits from new technologies provide only to the most affluent section of population government does not want to refuse from desire to regulate the telecommunication sector in all areas. It is no surprise that watching rapid convergence of computing and broadcasting in the country the Department of Communication released the White Paper on broadcasting which states "that a framework is needed for multichannel distribution services". More over The White Paper says that there is a potential for the State to intervene the net through local Internet service providers.

Theme 5.

The Public and the Media – the Role of Participatory Communication

Dr Jo Bardoel, Amsterdam School of Communication Research, the Netherlands

Participation, Representation & Responsibility: organising 'access' in the information age

Direct participation is an old ideal in social communications. The nostalgia for direct, unmediated communication comes back over and over again, especially in periods of new technological opportunities and rapid social change. Practice shows that participatory communication tends to be viable though under special

circumstances only, and that communications in larger communities is unthinkable without proper mechanisms of representation. In fact the problem of representation in relation to participation has never been taken seriously in communications theory and practice, and for that matter the paper examines the dilemma of participation versus representation in old and new media policies. Traditional mass media are, to paraphrase Peters (1993), splendid in representation but horrid for participation. The paper analyses to what extent citizens' participation has been realised in the respective communication domains (press, broadcasting, common carriers and culture) through combinations of market freedom, state intervention and the self-organisation of citizens in an open society as the Dutch. Subsequently the paper examines to what extent citizens' participation and access can be realised more adequately in the new media environment. Does the new technology indeed implicate a shift away from old-fashioned, passive mass communication to new active interpersonal communication, and therefore offer new, bright perspectives for participatory communication? Clear is that the convergence of technology and markets creates a new communicative playing field with important, although not homogeneous, implications for both political participation and social integration. Consequently the paper concludes that notions as participation, representation and social responsibility will have to be conceptualised and operationalised anew for the new media age.

Dr Andrey Raskin, Faculty of Journalism, Moscow State University, Russia

Open Society: new information possibilities and old humanitarian problems.

Theme 6

Media, the State, Private Capital and the Concept of Public Service in the Structuring of the Open Society

Dr Kees Brants, Amsterdam School of Communication Research, the Netherlands

Public Broadcasting and Open Society: a Marriage under Threat?

The changing media environment public service broadcasters in Western Europe recently have had to cope with - competing with commercial channels for audiences and advertisers - has not only put pressure on their assumed role and mission in liberal democracy, but also brought to light the tensions, flaws and paradoxes inherent in the public service notion in capitalist societies. The paper discusses both the developments of broadcasting in Western Europe in the last ten, twenty years, and the identity crisis of public broadcasting which puts pressure on its acclaimed function towards open societies.

Prof. Evgeniy I. Pronin, Dr. Elena Pronina, Faculty of Journalism, Moscow State University, Russia

Communicative openness and information security: boarders and guaranties

The history of the world journalism is along list of incidents slightly different in the scale if the events and their participants but identical in their social essence and in communicative mechanism. That is why without sinning against representativeness we can make definite conclusions, sort of negative axioms of information security:

1. For the authorities there are no moral, logical or ethical limits when they want to disclose some of negative facts or some demerits of their rivals.
2. There is no guarantee that the authorities will stay away from censorship when their weak points can be revealed by the mass media (including journalism, philosophy and art).

The evolution of the leading publicist's typosyndrome reveals a sinister tendency. For thirteen years of the perestroika and democratic reforms press wanted to become a state power. Journalists' aim was not the metaphorical "fourth power" but the actual power. It looks like a terrible experiment with real consequences was held on the real people of the real country with the only aim to see what would happen to the communicative openness and information security if the freedom of expression was used as a privilege of the press. That is why we can make definite conclusions, which are nothing but the negative axioms of communicative openness.

1. For a politically oriented journalist there are no moral, logical or ethical limits when it is necessary to suppress other information channels.
2. There is no guarantee that a politically oriented journalist will not exaggerate some facts according to his political interests.

Communicative openness and the information security guarantee each other because communicative openness of society is practically the only one guarantee of its information security. And vice versa, information security makes sense only in the open society. And it is only the information security that can ensure communicative openness. The lack of information security "closes" society and influences even the interpersonal communication. That is why the process of creating communicative openness should start with the efforts to provide the information security.

DR. Alexander Altounian, Russia

AUTHORITIES, PEOPLE AND POLITICAL WRITER: THREE TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS

The paper deals with political writers' assumptions on relationships between the authorities and people, authorities and society in Russian historical and modern political discourses. In reasoning of some Russian 19-th cent. intellectuals, in soviet and modern political writings we can find evidences that the ideal "authorities-people" relationships are understood as a unity, as an entire merging. (Katkov, soviet political slogans, modern political writings). A variant is possible - the ideal of unity is betrayed by authorities. There is another type of "authorities-society" relationships. They, authorities and society, are viewed as normally separated, autonomous. All

problems appeared from their autonomous existence are to be resolved by political writers' activity. Their role is being a mediator between authorities and society. Such view on "authorities-society" relationships was quite usual in Modern History. The view have appeared many times in Russian press since 1810-ies and especially during the periods of expectation of reforms. Such view has been widely spread in recent years (at the end of 1980-ies and the beginning of 1990-ies). This view on "authorities-society" relationships could be described as Glasnost policy. What views on the subject have intellectuals and political writers today? New paradigm of relationships between authorities, society and political writer is coming into existence and strengthening.

Theme 7.

Media and the New Information and Communication Technologies in the Development of the Open Society

Drs Piet Bakker, Amsterdam School of Communication Research, the Netherlands

Media logic of new technologies.

Internet-based technology differs fundamentally from other new technologies. It is impossible to create a monopoly in Internet media. There will be powerful content providers who will attract most of the traffic on the internet but small, new content providers will attract a substantial part of the internet traffic. In some parts of the internet (news groups, e-mail-discussion lists, ICQ, FTP-traffic) it is impossible to create a monopoly or obtain a substantial market share for any content provider. Also distribution is impossible to control. New cable, ISDN and ADSL technologies will create a situation where internet providers will become obsolete. Every individual will be his own provider. This means that the internet can serve as a powerful medium for groups and individuals. New internet-communities have be formed. Examples of such communities using new technologies will be given.

Prof. Vladimir M. Gorokhov, Chair, Faculty of Journalism, Moscow State University, Russia

Humanisation of Mass Media on the Way to Open Society

Mass information processes as an interaction of different streams and channels of information produced in large social groups necessary and sufficient for their vital activity. Mass information processes : regulated and self-regulated integrity of the

information space. The Civil Society as an information society where the social information no longer belongs to the authorities or political elites but becomes a natural basis for democratisation of all social relations. Mass information processes:

- reflect the objective conditions of the vital activity of large social groups;
- are the synthesis of different information streams which include the elements of common sense and scientific knowledge, illusions and stereotypes, moral norms and ideological values, the elements which express the interests and needs of large social groups;
- serve as an object of political and ideological interpretation;
- have inherent laws of development and functioning;
- exist in the interaction of institutionalised and non-institutionalised sources of information.

The humanisation of mass information processes as the realisation of human rights and freedoms, the way of developing interaction between the person and the group, where the person acts as an equal and sovereign participant of their information dialogue with the group and society. Pluralistic structure of the information society makes it possible "to humanise" mass information processes, to overcome the information alienation of a citizen. Humanisation of mass information processes is reached through the unity of purpose, methods and results of the information activity. The key role of mass media in forming the contents structure and information interaction between the person and the group, in structuring the prognostic model of this interaction. The concept of the information stratification as a methodological basis for researches in the sphere of humanisation of mass information processes. The essence of the concept – theoretical substantiation of humanistic priorities in the sphere of information interaction between the person and the group. Economic, political, technological and legal preconditions for humanising mass information processes: expedient combination of property forms in the process of producing, editing and distributing information (various actors owning the means of information production). The democratic character of political system which provides partnership of the State and the institutions of the Civil Society; the humanised sphere of social relations; the developed legal basis protecting not only the right of free circulation of information in society but also guaranteeing the unity of rights and responsibilities in the sphere of information interaction; the expansion of technological basis, universal computerisation on all the levels and, finally, moral and spiritual norms which form the humanitarian environment for the information interaction.