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***World as Global Sin:*Function of media within a system of professional ethical standards**

What is the function of the media in the system of professional ethical standards? The mass media are among the most influential companies in a democratic society, at the crossroads between citizens and their political, economic and social institutions. How can we, when we are faced with a situation of being overwhelmed with social networks, to overcome the problem with which journalism faces? Problems of rumors, gossips, manipulations with misinformation, lies, deceits and hypocrisy of politicians who are willing even to change the laws if it is personally suitable for them, or in other words - to adapt the legislation to their own interests and by that directly or indirectly usurp all possibilities of shaping the society of deliberative democracy, which may be the only way out for the world as global sin[[1]](#footnote-2).

How to be ethical in the world, where, regardless of which political option they belong to, exist the principle "in a society where everyone steals, nobody steals"?[[2]](#footnote-3)

However, as stated by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenthal in "The Elements of Journalism"[[3]](#footnote-4), the biggest confusion about journalism is the concept of objectivity. As the concept evolved in the original sense, this does not imply that journalists were freed from bias, but on the contrary. Only the name of "bias" appeared as part of journalism in turn of the millennium, from the XIX and up to the XX century, especially in the twenties of the last century, when there was a really extreme recognition of journalists as a people full of bias, usually unconsciously[[4]](#footnote-5) making mentioned. Objectivity "invited" journalists to develop a consistent method for assessing the checking of the information - transparent access to evidence - so precisely that personal or cultural bias will not impair their accuracy and their work. At the end of the nineteenth century, journalists prefer to talk much more about "realism" than on objectivity. This was the idea that, if a reporter came to the evidence and if they are stacked in a specific order, the truth itself will come to the surface in a natural way.

Realism has surfaced at a time when journalism separated itself from the party affiliation and became more accurate and more true. Coincided with the invention of what journalists call the *reverse pyramid*, where journalists are represented facts from the most important and up to least important, thinking how it would help the public to understand the nature of the conveyed information.

However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, a number of journalists started to worry about the naivety of journalism. Especially because the reporters and editors become more conscious of developing of propaganda and the role of press agents, what we nowadays call "public relations". At a time when Freud developed his theory of the unconscious and when Picasso[[5]](#footnote-6) experimented with Cubism, journalists are also developing recognition of human subjectivity.

*The method is objective, not a journalist*. Yes, back in 1919 journalist Walter Lippmann and Charles Merz, editor, for the newspaper "New York World"[[6]](#footnote-7), wrote an influential and sharp text on how culturally blind people distorted representation of the Russian Revolution in the New York Times ... *quote*: "*Most of the time, the news about Russia were not what it was, but about what people wanted to see*. "... *end quote* - they wrote. Lippmann and others have begun to look for ways for individual journalists to ... *quote*: "*stay clean and free from its irrational, unreliable, ignorant attitudes within its own observations, understanding and presenting the news*." ...*End quote*.

Journalism was, as they stressed, practiced by the "*not taught / untrained accidental witnesses*". Good intentions, or what one might call "good faith" by journalists, were not enough. Faith in harsh individualism of tough reporter was not enough. Even the innovations that have come in time were not that, as a byline, or signature of the columnist. The solution was certainly, according to those authors, that reporters need ... *quote* .. "*scientific spirit ... The answer is in a one kind of possible unity in a world that is filled with diversity as ours*[[7]](#footnote-8). *It is the unity of method, rather than a unity of a goal; unity of disciplined experiment*. "... *end quote.* These are certainly thought, by this, that journalism should strive for a common intellectual method and a common area of valid facts.

To begin, they are thinking, it was necessary to transform journalism education from "trade school shaped with people with high salaries in existing structures" towards the education of proving and certifications of the facts.

Although it was a time of believing in science, they had few illusions ... quote: "*It does not matter that the news was not subject to mathematical statements. In fact, precisely because news are complex and confusing ones, good reporting requires the implementation of the highest scientific virtues*. "... end quote.

In the original concept itself, in other words, the method is objective, not a journalist. The key was in the discipline of the craft, not of a goal. This position has some important implications.

One is that an impartial voice that is employed by many of the media - to a close, we assume a neutral style of writing news –is not a fundamental principle of journalism. Rather, it is often a means to help the media which use to emphasize that they are trying to produce something that could be objective method.

Another implication is that this neutral voice, without the discipline of verification or confirmation, creates glaze which covers something hollow. Journalists who choose their sources to express what really their position is and then use it as a neutral voice to make it look objectively, are involved in a form of deception. This implication harms the credibility of the craft making it unprincipled, unfair and biased.

Professional journalists went to the goal of redefining this concept that Lippman and Merz shaped up, but usually as individuals and on a personal level, and in the name of art or reporting routines and not for the larger goals of journalism. The term, for which I am really ready to spend hours and hours in conversations with colleagues with a view to shaping the same, objective method of reporting exists in parts, and transmits only in personal contact, direct and immediate conversation between journalists.

Developmental psychologist William Damon[[8]](#footnote-9) was at Stanford, USA, for example, has identified a variety of strategies developed by journalists to verify the report. Prof. Damon asked interviewees where they learned these concepts. The largest number of responses was: through testing, but also based on own mistakes or from friends. Very rarely the journalists admitted that they referred taught in journalism school or by their editors.

Many useful books have been written about above. IRE (Investigative reporters and editors)[[9]](#footnote-10) are trying to develop a methodology how to use public archives, read documents, and ways to apply the requirements of targeted use of the Law on Free Access to Information[[10]](#footnote-11).

But all informal strategies are not put together within a single discipline which was imagined about for almost 100 years ago by Lippmann and people like him. There is no way about the standard approach to the rules when the evidence in question, as to what the law is, or there is no agreed method of observation, as it is carried out with scientific experiments.

Even the old conventions of the ratifications are not extended in order to be adapted to new forms of journalism. Although journalism may have developed different techniques and conventions to determine the facts[[11]](#footnote-12), less has been done to develop a system of testing of the reliability of journalistic interpretation.

And, of course, the logical question follows: why do we, after all, require ethics?

It takes ...:

Because of the need for social stability if we do not want to have an organized anarchy, even within journalism. Regardless that there is no formal agreement to:

1. Do it and in doing like that, readers, listeners and viewers - consumers of media, expect from journalists to report the truth. With the aim, of course, shaping the development of a healthy society. A true first of all because there is a need for moral hierarchy because ethical system serves as a moral guardian which inform the society about the relative importance of certain customs[[12]](#footnote-13). There is a tendency when we describe the specific acts with which we disagree as immoral, although most social arrogance is nothing but a clear violation of normal behavior. Ethical system recognizes these practices for which there is a lot of social disapproval so that they can be considered immoral.
2. Due to the need for conflict resolution bearing in mind that the ethical system is important social institution for solving a cases that are presenting opposing demands within personal interests. For example, perhaps the personal interest of students is to copy the work of his colleague, but at the same time the interest of his colleague that he does not allow. This should take into account the social rules against plagiarism when it comes to assessing the moral practices arising from this situation.
3. Due to the need for confirmation of the value. For example, the controversies over human cloning - the pros and cons of scientific achievements with unimaginable ethical consequences.

As I stated earlier, the realization of the common good is the assumption of the really prosperous individual well-being, in the general sense. The most important question is HOW to define the common good, which will satisfy all levels of society, and to prevent the possibility of being accused of Unitarianism, Nationalism and / or Communism in the society in which we are living within.

To come up with an appropriate response in the deep today’s separated world today we must accept the fact that professional journalists are (those who practice respect for professional ethical standards), crucial for the transmission of cultural and non-cultural values - depending on the kind of ethical and / or unethical values they are leaning on within a particular society and themselves. By doing everything that the world as a global sin become as realistic as possible within its incidence. Although the exact opposite is on the scene in the first two decades of the XXI century.

1. Eurasia Review, USA (14.6.2016), author SabahudinHadžialić: <http://www.eurasiareview.com/14062016-world-as-global-sin-deliberative-democracy-as-the-only-way-out-essay/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Prof.DrMladenMirosavljević, Banja Luka (RS &BiH) - „Corruption as a way of life“ - Al Jazeera, 19.12.2015: <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/korupcija-kao-nacin-zivota> ... Translation of the part of the article: „ *I love Bosnia and Herzegovina. Imagine a country where not even a single news is a news. In which the main driver is not the economy, but the hatred. Country in which politics is most desirable job, and most capable person is the one who steals the most. State under an international protectorate in the middle of Europe, as the one like that does not exist anywhere in Europe, not even in her immediate surroundings. In which corruption is a way of life, and the elections are won on a goal who is bigger nationalist and who will separate his own people other and different ones In the country in. which is all make-believe things and not even closet to be like in normal world. From the social order, through democracy and up to the economy.”* Check out the above sentence in your country whenever you are and you will see a lot of similarities – at least the important ones (just think about immigrants and reactions of nationalistic parties against them anywhere in Europe and not to mention Mr. Donald Trump and his ridiculous statements about “other and different” ones in USA: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JsiGQMMoe4> (and not only about them). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. *„The Elements of Journalism*“ Bill Kovach & Tom Rosenstiel, Publisher *Crown publishers*, 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. There are plenty examples today where they are doing that with extremely conscience – Examples of bias in American media from January 2005 and until May 2016 are presented by the side of

StudentNewsDaily.com, WWW portaa: <https://www.studentnewsdaily.com/archive/example-of-media-bias/> which has a goal of building up of student knowledge in regards current happenings and making stronger their critical thinking. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. DIOGEN pro culture magazine, Editor in chief S.H., No 12, July 2011: <http://www.diogenpro.com/pablo-picasso.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Info: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Test_of_the_News> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Chinese proverb: „Road to hell is paved with good intentions“ [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Info: <http://www.williamdamon.com/about/> i <https://ed.stanford.edu/faculty/wdamon> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Info: <https://www.ire.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. For example, In the region of South\_East Europe, that Law is not so used Law. <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/pristup_info/default.aspx?id=2574&langTag=bs-BA> , exactly by the side of professional journalists, with few exception. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. This book is example: „Investigative journalism“, co-authors Mladena Mirosavljevića, Gordana Vilović and Michale Kunczika, Publisher Fridrieh Ebert Stiftung, Sarajevo, BiH, 2009: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/sarajevo/06911.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. ### Luis Advin Dej „Ethics in Media Communication: Cases and Controversies“, pg.. 24. Publisher Media center, Belgrade and Plus, Belgrade, Serbia, 2004

 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)