THE METAMORPHOSES OF MEDIA COMMUNICATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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Abstract

The digital age has replaced the linear (analog) systems of processing, transmitting / receiving information with numerical or binary systems, thus broadening the possibilities of civilization to communicate. The communication transforms interpersonal relationships, modifies the way of being of people. A new society emerges, of transparency, where the information flows unrestrictedly, unlimited, and the responsibility of the individuals for the distributed information is reduced considerably. In the digital age, the term "post-truth" appears, which soon becomes popular. The post-truth does nothing else but to reanimate and give new dimensions to a struggle as old as the world between truth and lie. Today in this fight, the internet - the product of the digital era - mobilizes more than half of the world's population, and the manipulation techniques, of psychological warfare, become the main weapons in communication. The Internet has launched social networks, has given birth to citizen journalism, often calls for the manipulation techniques to form political guidelines, to change beliefs, to influence the decision-making, makes the media communication that has substantially contributed to changing modern society and post -modernly suffer too quantitative-qualitative transformations, new metamorphoses.

Keywords: *digital age, networks, internet, media, manipulation, post-truth, toxic, globalization, Oxford Dictionary, communication, information, dissemination.*

The beginning of the third millennium coincides with the birth of a new era in communication - that of the internet. Technically, the linear or analog electronic systems that have marked the telegraph, the telephone, the radio, the television, the lead-free printing etc. become obsolete. In their place there come the digital or numerical systems, where the information is converted into a binary formula. The digital techniques open up enormous perspectives for data transmission / reception, data processing and storage, new horizons for electronic computers, mobile telephones and media communication: radio, television, film, on-line press. In the third millennium the means of communication are unthinkable without digital systems. For these reasons, digital era was identified with a new society, that of communication where the internet becomes a priority mechanism. Communication has always been and remains a determining factor in the development of civilizations, it is an indispensable exponent of the culture and evolution of mankind. In the virtual space of the Internet the freedom of communication goes beyond any barriers and is restricted only by the communicator's responsibility for what he says and his hierarchical self-positioning in a world of intellectuals that exists only as a possibility.

The magic wand of change - the internet has created the spider leg of links between computers that unites them through connection language and communication: individual - computer - computer - individual, called the web. This language evolves rapidly and attracts the whole process of enlighteningthe society. Starting from the Web 0, from the original point - ARANET (1969), which marks the beginning of an operable network of computers and up to Web 5.0 (2008), an ambitious, project of the sensitive, smart Web that many belongs to the fantastic world and which, in the view of Tim Bernes-Lee, the inventor of www, represents the open, interconnected, intelligent and especially emotional Web (SALCUDEAN, 2015), which will establish a new type for relations human being - computer, the electronic technologies, and the Internet are crossing a path that can be compared to the distance travelled by the engineering practices from the Keops Pyramid to Jams Watt's steam engine.

In just four decades, the Internet has become the most popular technical and social domain. This global network has managed to unite virtually more than half of the planet's population. Mostly everyone uses the Web 2.0 operating system, (1999), which places the internet on the orbit of human communication under the generic Read - Write - Publish. This also gave birth to the blogosphere, to the social journalism and to the social networks. Any individual, without special training, but possessing the writing skill and the handling of the video/camera can become a producer of written or audiovisual media information, contributing to www through different platforms. In thesociety of communication, the information circulates freely and can overcome all the obstacles encountered on the pathway. The promptness of dissemination and the freedom of information does not, however, ensure its quality. The internet can only create impressions of transparency and of the presence at the event of an informative product of the latest quality and the deepesttruthfulness, because a careful eye can discover that the views and facts have long been consumed and have only apparent relevance or not at all. The persons who develop and distribute the information are real individuals, biological subjects with certain psychological abilities, intelligence and culture. By attending an event each individual understands the facts according to how he perceives them. His thinking and soul make him see and expose things first as he understands them, and then to transmit them to others. There are also cases when the communicator does not even attend the event, but he only heard the testimonies of others about what had happened and guided by passion, by the desire to be at the center of attention takes over the testimonies of others and interprets and releases the information without checking its truthfulness.

The information disseminated on the internet from a virtual producer can be accessed by hundreds of thousands of real people. No newspaper, no radio or television station, if it does not have a web platform, can not benefit from such a distribution of its media products.

Undoubtedly the internet is a powerful means of communication between people and its popularity continues to grow. The number of Internet users today exceeds 50% of the world's population, most of them over 81% in developed countries, and in developing countries where Moldova is located, more than 40% areregistered beneficiaries of internet services (WIKI, n.d.).

The media information distributed on the internet is as easy to access, as it is vulnerable. Its veracity requires additional verification efforts. The hybrid war between Russia and Ukraine, which led to the annexation of Crimea to Russia and continues with operations in the eastern regions of Ukraine: Donetsk and Lugansk prove that the internet can be an effective weapon of psychological warfare, of massive manipulation both of the peaceful population and the military troops. The effectiveness of the internet depends on the level of training, knowledge and intelligence of its users.

The blogosphere appeared a decade and a half before the social networks. Theoreticians and practitioners of classic journalism have skeptically approached the blogger activity, considering that the bloggers are mostly unprofessional, subjective, unfamiliar with real life, information makers, irresponsible pen pushers to readers. On the other hand, the advocates of the democratization of information support the blogosphere, considering it to be an alternative necessity of journalism (SALCUDEAN, 2015). Web 2.0 offers today automated software that allows the free creation and easy management of blogs. Thus, each individual can quickly open and permanently or ephemerally use a blog.

The blogosphere has created and developed the alternative journalism, also called social media. Facebook, Cioaglet, YouTube, Twitter, Ren Ren, Sina Weibo are social networks that unite people and that make more than half of the world's population benefit from the internet services.

But the Internet is not just a mass information system. The social networks show that the internet can also be a means of individual information: from friend to friend. At the same time, the internet does not obtain for itself only quantitative indicators concerning the degree of interesttowards the information used / visualized, but also finds out how the information is perceived, the reverse reaction, the action of the message.

The social networks have given birth to the phenomenon of trolling, to the violation of the information space through provocative posts, information based on half-truths, rumors, sensational lies. The Troll uses exciting "day to day" themes to awaken vain talk, suspicion, mistrust, and resignation. Thus, deliberately, on social networks, at the borders of a virtual world, the image of certain target groups ofreal individualsis shaped with characteristics based on criteria of age, sex, studies, occupations that activate, are remunerated, consume goods and fit into the process of participatory democracy . The more careful study of posts on the social networking shows that trolls' activism increases during psychological warfare and electoral campaigns, the latter being led by image shapers and technologist politicians of the electoral candidates.

The investigation of themanipulation process of Internet users during the psychological war between Russia and Ukraine proves that in order to use for media purposes the information posted on the networks it is necessary to be verified from at least 12 independent media sources: 5 from televisions, 3 from printed press, 2 from radio and 2 from the Internet.

The internet leads to the emergence, in addition to the new forms of information development and dissemination, of a variety of office professional journalists who promote the lazy journalism. Largely, the lazy journalism works not out of evil will and unconstrained by anyone. It takes full advantage of the facilities offered by the Internet. The lazy journalists do not leave the work desk, they travel through sites, portals, among blogsfrom where they squeeze data and facts, where they are witnessing virtually events posted on-line. They forget how to communicate with the living people, how they breathe in the atmosphere full of sounds of warmth and charm of the real world. Thus, they makespread among people a truth that is untrue, but not false, a hybrid of the imagination of the creator of media out of the journeys offered by unknown persons or good friends in a virtual space, and the sensitive memory of the author from the life truly lived.

The epic of the term "post-truth" starts with the American playwright of Serb origin, Steve Tesich who used it in 1992 during the Persian Gulf conflict in "The Nation" magazine, at the time when the Web 1.0was born. In 2004 Relph Keyes took over this term in the work "The Post-Truth" where he finds that the mankind has reached the "post-truth" age. In 2016 the Oxford Dictionary announces the post-truth as the most popular word of 2016. The Oxford Dictionary was launched in 1857 and is one of the most popular and comprehensive academic dictionaries of English language. In 1989 it is re-edited in 20 volumes, and later in electronic version. Every year the Oxford Dictionary announces the most searched word on its site.

The internet networks also present the image of post-truth, which is represented by a smiley, a man's head with wide expression, smiling to tears. In the opinion of the organizers of this linguistic top, 2016 generated an interest for readers for post-truth, 2000 times higher than in 2015. The explanation consists in the increase the media frequency of that term. In 2016, the political debates related to Brexit and the consequences of Britain's outbreak from the European Union intensified. Also, a large Anglo-Saxon media space was occupied by the election campaign of the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump's election speeches and their comments.

The post-truth eclipses the rational, cold arguments through alternatives of personal beliefs and emotional states. The post-truth age is a product of the communication society, of the show and of the advertising society. In this period of globalization and economic liberalism, the marketing of any media product abandons the land of rationalism and slips into the entertainment arena, brilliant, ephemeral effects, in a turbulent rhythm with fragmentary content. Its quality of sharing public emotions becomes the fundamental criterion of information to be broadcast. This media paradigm is implemented by social networks, on-line and, paradoxically, by citizen journalism.

The anthropologist Vintil ăMihailescu believes that the post-truth era owes something to the expansion and pressure of the culture of the authentic and last but not least to the media, which ad-libitum promoted "good-news" information (for example the ideology of happiness, positive thinking and prosaic) ,

"bad-news" (frightening industry - from theEsin food, to immigrants) and imperturbably - "fake news" (from England pays for the underdevelopment of the EU, to Soros bought us with Miorițaaltogether) so no one any longer knows what the reality is, but everyone reacts to the image they are making (MIHĂILESCU, 2017). The post-truth age it is enough to collect data to reach the conclusion you want. The post truth seeks to reconcile the truth with the lie, promoting ways that shorten the distance between these notions, therefore the post-truth in action is nothing more than a quasi-global manipulation.

The philosopher Mircea Dumitru believes that there is no post-truth, but only lies and forgeries, and when we discuss the "post-truth" we do nothing but to resume a debate that lasts at least for 2,500 years and which the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle left us a clearly argued. In an interview published by the Presson portal, the rector of the University of Bucharest clearly states that "post-truth", "alternative facts", "failure of the notion of alternative truth" are nothing else but a sense of irrational fear of knowledge; that in front of us there is a kind of cultural gap that puts on one side those who will still believe in the idea of truth, in the idea of goodness and fairness, and on the other side all those who will say that these are just some cultural, political and social constructions that we should overcome. Every day the audience is overwhelmed by a chorus of cacophony of unjustified, unwarranted opinions, and after all, ordinary people can no longer distinguish between opinions and the knowledge based on scientific truths. If the people believe all sorts of aberrations and unrealisticstories, they are not just gullible, but this is because they do not even have a grain of critical thinking (SIMINA, 2017).

The philosopher Timothy Willianson believes that the post-truth is the product of a political and cultural climate, where politicians, in front of people, care less about what they say, and the people less if what the politicians say is true. People listen and react to what they want to hear. Such situations took place at the beginning of the XX century. They occurred around World War I. The press of those times in all belligerent countries abounds in propaganda messages. During the Russian revolutions ofRussia 1917

and the Bolshevik terror, the Soviet press published the calls of the revolutionary leaders, inciting the public, justifying the mass condemnations of the so-called enemies of the people, glorifying Joseph Stalin, father the saver of the oppressed people, the main promoter of the struggle with the enemy of class. The radio in the interwar period joined the press in the propagation of the Nazi and Communist truth respectively. After the Second World War the propaganda episode was taken over by the television.

The new media in the digital age does nothing else but to continue the mass manipulation techniques, but with more sophisticated operational possibilities and selectively focused on individuals and social groups that exist in a vast real space.

European Communication Monitor from 2013 presents a comprehensive study of global communication and public relations management where 2710 professionals from 43 countries were surveyed and 73.7% of respondents mentioned that "the development of socially sensitive strategies to the social, cultural and political processes "represents the most difficult aspect to manage (ZERFASS et al., 2013). For these reasons, communication and public relations specialists consider that "compared to informative calls, emotional ones are more likely to be distributed", and the "social emotionality" can become a strategic tool in the selection, dissemination and archiving of information (CRĂCIUN, 2017).

The communication society has created favorable conditions to shape and develop the critical thinking of citizens too. It provides people with free access to information from various sources; freedom of expression and public gatherings; promoting civic activism; good conditions for teaching and education; a cultural environment favorable to the multilateral development of personality. A broad range of opportunities is incumbent on the audiovisual communication. Digital technologies have opened new horizons for the communication through photographed, filmed images, animations and graphics. The audiovisual communication, through static and dynamic images, is becoming more and more popular and forms a special style of thinking. The contemporary

techniques make it accessible, to photograph, to film, to edit images, to transmit, and to store them without great technological effort. In the transparent atmosphere of unrestrained communication, when personal opinions become messages that are taken as immutable truths, the communication through images requires skills and aptitudes of high responsibility not to distort a reality. The conventional obligations advanced to the message emitter in images are motivated by the receiver's priorities for image versus sound or text. "better to see once, than to hearten times," some say, and some more skeptical say, "See and not believe!"

One thing is certain: public fairness and accountability requires that images be communicated with a proper moral and aesthetic attitude so as not to leave room for the wanted evil, for aberrations.

The invalidation of rationality causes toxicity. The linguists, publishers of the Oxford Dictionary, found that most e-mail addresses in 2018 were poisonous, toxic, intoxicating, 45% more often than in previous years. In the top of the lexical interest of English speakers, the word toxic was situated before the word slang, which in Romanian can be slang, swindle, noise, fiasco and euphemism. The editorial board of the Oxford Dictionary motivated the priority of the word toxic by being the most commonly used by the media and the population in dictionary appeals to elucidate its meaning.

In 2018, the Anglophone media generated a true documentarydetective novel, having as subject the poisoning in Salisburg, Great Britain, with a neuro-paralysing substance of the Russian ex-spy Sergei Scripali and of his daughter Julia. Sergei Scripali had Russian and English citizenship, and his daughter had come from Moscow to visit him. English counter-intelligence services proved that the substance originated from Russia's chemical weapons arsenal and could be „Новичок". The liquidation operation was executed by two Russian espionage officers of military services: Alexandr Petrov andRuslan Başirov. It was the second case when the Russians were liquidating their espionage agents who had requested asylum in Great Britain, the first being AlexandrLitvinenco, poisoned in 2016 in London with polonium. The English Society witnessed

an interference on the Great Britain's territory with mass poisonous substances by Russian agents, facts that could not remain outsidethe media interest. The journalists have launched investigations in parallel with Scotland Yard. In a globalized world, the investigation was also carried out in Russia by "Фонтанка.ру" - an electronic publication, edited in Petersburg, Russia.

The Russian journalists, those from "Radio Cechia" and "Radio Svoboda", demonstrated on the basis of archive documents, testimonies, audiovisual materials, postings on "Одноклассники" (a Russian social networking), that under the name RuslanBashirovRussia's hero,AnatolCeapiga,was the one who acted, and Alexandr Petrov and Alexandr Mischin - both of them are ГРУ officers (Army's Major Espionage Department).

The media produced a global informational resonance over the poisoning of the Scripalifamily-father and daughter, by the Russian special service, which was maintained for a long time not only in the Anglophone language environment, but also in all other media environment.

TheScripalicase of poisoning with toxic mass neuro-paralysingsubstance it is relevant and it can be considered an eloquent product of the Russian post-truth, that is of the reconciliation of truth with lie. Russia's ideologists under Putin's presidency launched their national post-truth that comes to reconcile the imperial Russia of Nicholas II and Vladimir Lenin's Bolshevik Russia. Thus, the earthly remnants of the Tsar's family were searched in the Ecaterinburg region, where all the members of the family were massacred by the Bolsheviks and cast into a mine hole. They were found, identified and buried with great honors in the Petropavlovsk Cathedral, Sankt-Petersburg. The Russian Church martyred and sanctified them. At the same time, the executioners who have committed the massacre of the imperial family remain honored as heroes of the revolution.

Stalin's face, the despot that killed millions of people, destroyed churches, turned monasteries into torture places, is painted on icons, sanctified, and set in esteemed places as if it were a guardian angel. The victim martyrizes his executioner and considers that he was right when he committed

mass crimes, because he was guided by an ideal. The appearances of reconciliation do not unite people, but they give birth to new monstrosities, which are justified and presented as remarkable facts committed in the name of truth. After the collapse of the USSR in the name of truth, in 1992 the Russian Federation launched an armed conflict on the territory of the Republic of Moldova in the regions on the left bank of the Nistru River; in 2008 the Russian Federation provoked a war in Georgia in South Ossetia; in 2014, despotically annexed Crimeea and unleashed an armed conflict in the eastern regions of Ukraine - Donetsk and Lugansk.

The post-truth can first cause virtual intoxication in the social psychological environment, then real homicide.

The Oxford Dictionary interpreted the wordtoxic, expanding its semantic area, multiplying its meanings. Explicitly, the adjectivetoxic has the quality poisonous and refers to chemical substances, "toxic waste", "toxic gases", etc. The media conveyed to the word toxic implicit connotations, in the sphere of communication it expressespsychosomatic states seemingly not evident but evil.

Every year, the Oxford Dictionary presents the words most widely addressed to, by the Anglophone public, to understand. Usually they are taken over from the media and express the meaning of the facts and events of the year in question. The dictionary presents the most frequently searched words in the temporal and spatial Anglophone proximity. In a globalized world, in the digital era, when the information circulates freely and does not know any borders the words from the semantic top of the Oxford Dictionary, penetrate into other mass media too as well, than in the area of their initial circulation, being taken over and translated. Certainly post-truth and toxic, in the linguistic sense, transcend the national Anglophone framework and acquires socio-human connotations of wide circulation and cultural width.

CONCLUSIONS

- The digital age opens new perspectives in the media. The emergence and development of

New media facilitates the inter-human communication in the globalized world, and at the same time makes the perception of frontiers between the real and the virtual space between the material and the imaginary disappear.

- The communication society in the digital era is a product of economic liberties and viabledemocracy. The free marketbased on consumption in a globalized world comes into the communication society with the paradigm of the consumer-being, moulded and responsive to the sale-purchase show, other than the rational, humanist and moderate man of tomorrow.

In the communication society thepost-truth has found a fertile soil and spreads over vast areas. The post-truth, in the approach of some philosophers, seeks to reconcile the truth and the untruth, the real and the imaginary, the culture and the lack of culture, and in another vision the post-truth does not exist, but it is only a continuous struggle between the truth and the lie, between the objective reality and the subjective discourse, between those poor with the spirit and those spiritually rich.

- The notion of post-truth has emerged in a world of a high degree of democracy where it first became popular. It represents a key word in the reference studies of the sociologists, anthropologists in the Anglophone world (the origin linguistic space of the term) being taken over by the globalized media penetrates into all the countries aspiring to material prosperity.

- The reconciliation of truth and lie, manhood and civilization, excessive tolerance in face of violence can lead to theintoxication of the virtual ideological space, to direct poisoning, to bandit attacks in a real environment.

- Since its appearance, the media is a public arena where truth and untruth come together, where the world assists and can participate in the clash of ideas and not in direct clashes between people and attacks on the person. It is an arena where the witnesses are not mere spectators who have come to have fun, but are judges, each in his own way and all together, remaining " cold to everything", designates the winner. In the digital era, as never before, the spectators are given the opportunity to

become impartial and righteous judges, because they have a large arsenal of data and facts that require little intellectual effort to place man on a new social stage.

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