

Miloje Popovic
Serbia

Future of journalism

/ few modest lines /

Please let me present some fundamentals, which are by my modest opinion, important to consider for the overall future of journalism:

1. Technological revolution has created an explosion of tech-users. Television, mobile phones and Internet – to mention just a few – influence directly the classical forms of journalism, expressed primarily in printed press. Circulation of printed media decreases rapidly in almost all countries, as the logical consequence of these trends. Technological revolution introduced the devices that in pocket dimension, sum up almost all modern inventions in this field - television, transmission of the picture and video, news, mobile communication, music video and others.
2. Technological transformation of the global communication goes hand by hand with large economic, political and social changes and trends. Wars, tensions between big powers, nations, and races, national and religious conflicts are partly result of the liberalization of communications. Former areas of world, practically excluded from the actual global events, became in relatively short historical period, aware of their position. With the assistance of the modern gadgets, widely available and relatively cheap they now have the privilege of up to date information. Technological innovation and demand for global and current events affect position of old media, which lose the ground and the position enjoyed for decades and centuries.
3. Financial and economic crises in the worlds' vital regions brought social uncertainties and turmoil of the middle and lower classes. Financial manipulations of the big financial and bank institutions and greed for profit at all cost, resulted in the policy of merging of political, economic and ruling circles. This social and political class is usually owns the largest share of media in every country. Privatization of media, covered with the mask of profitability, deteriorated the status and freedom of journalists and journalist profession overall. The media owners gave up the proclaimed policies of noninterference in

- the continents and freedom and became practically a constituent part of the national politics. In such environment the free minded journals are being excluded from the media scenes. In other words, the independent journalist are fired and dismissed, or they fear for their destiny and feel humiliated. Selection on the obedient and non-obedient journalists, is also further downgraded by the structure of the journalist salaries and bonuses. As the result, the prestige of journalist profession has lowered rapidly causing the imminent negative trends.
4. Overall, it would be better to address the main issue with the narrow approach and to consider the reasons for the fall of the media in contemporary world addressing just few mentioned elements and trends. However, they are a result of the complex events and issues, and only comprehensive analysis is needed. In the present day every person, in possession of the modern technical devices, becomes a part of media world, simply becoming a potential associate by sending in a second the message and picture from any part of the world via global networks. Till recently this was the privilege only of the professional journalism. The technological development and the liberalization of communications have the opportunity to endanger the position of the ruling classes while also giving them additional arguments to suppress media and journalists. This is, of course, only a part of the whole story, but it has its place in global picture of our issue. We are entering more and more in the future where the information and news, now with the solar speed, become a decisive element of power. Who first possess the information – has the chance to transform them in power.
 5. We are living in the world where we are not able anymore, like in the past centuries and times, to foresee the future. We are living on the lonely planet, far from the cosmic world. Our destiny is unknown, except maybe by the God above us, who can solve our troubles and problems. Thus, we have to do it by ourselves. Technologically, we reached the point and capabilities to destroy the contemporary civilization. Maybe in the future the human race may fall down or in disappear, but the planet will continue to tour its path around the sun. The media, as significant part of modern times, shares the destiny of the turmoil world, which is currently in search for its existence. In this self-struggle for survival, media may have an upper hand and contribute to positive solutions which, I am sure, will appear. It may be the high price, but the positive side of the human race will prevail. We must believe in media and open communication. Crisis will cause

media to transform, as it happened with many other phenomena and appearances in the recent past and history. If we conceive this only as the period of global crises and the struggle of the world to surpass it – concisely or in other way – the future can offer the chance to better side of humanity, as well as to media and journalists.

Athens, AEJ Executive Meeting, March 4 – 7, 2010