

ABSTRACTS

THE ETHICS AND CREDIBILITY OF COMMUNICATION WHO SHOULD WE BELIEVE ?

by HÉCTOR BORRAT MATTOS

Borrat's article evolves as an interesting reflection on the concept of credibility. The author initially describes the process and the vectors which are involved in the production of a believable communication. The document then makes a thorough examination of the definition of that perception which the message generates, and canalizes the reason why a broadcast is categorised as believable. Borrat argues schematically the four types of actors who canalize credibility and the way in which they overcome the filter of the media text. The writer of the article names the leaders, the news agencies or the institutional sources, the informers and communicators and, finally, the medium itself which broadcasts the texts. These are the four points of reference which trigger credibility, but which in all cases come up against the prepotent filter of the media text, which forcibly cuts the actors' integrity, manipulates the sources as it wishes and runs the risk of becoming a lie to the detriment of internal coherence, correspondence with reality and the comparative analysis of texts.

NEW APPROACHES TO ETHICS IN JOURNALISM

by JOSEP MARIA CASASÚS I GURI

The main responsibility of public communication in ethics falls, in the main, to journalists and by extension, to the media. Nevertheless, we will not wholly solve the problem of the growing failure of ethical values in journalistic action if we give up on approaching the phenomenon with the desire to reach every dimension of the communicative process. The system of public communication is made up of a chain of necessary processes: production, mediation, reception and transformation. Each process which makes up the chain includes a great deal of actions and omissions, decisions and oversights which affect the ethics of communication.

The thing we call reality, the primary material of journalism, already raises problems of informative ethics. Reality and truth are two relative notions. There are almost as many human perceptions as there are realities. This observation on the relativity of the reality of things, which is the cornerstone of tolerance and freedom, explains that in the training of journalists and theoretical research into social communication, the traditional concept of objectivity is in a state of crisis.

As a result of this, the first great ethical challenge for journalists is to contribute to the construction of truth, and not to fall into the temptation of wanting to construct reality. The second great ethical challenge is to diffuse this truth without infringing peoples' rights, freedom and integrity. The Code of Ethics of the Association of Journalists of Catalonia regulates the ethical limits of our job with a great deal of skill and precision.

Nevertheless, on the question of the ethics in journalism, it is an error of reductionism to speak only of the ethics of professionals in communication. There is, of course, a journalists' ethic, but there is also an ethic for sources and an ethic for the public. Many sources of information make use of resources which violate ethics. This is the case of many of the "leaks" and that of the "sounding balloons", resources via which the sources "construct" perverse news stories. We must, then, demand that the sources also act in accordance with ethical principles.

Finally, there is an ethic for the public. When, within the framework of market freedom and plurality of choice, we record the majority consumption of particular items of the press and particular radio and television programmes, we must conclude, painful though it is, that the citizens foster the success of debased practices in journalism. The struggle for ethics in social communication is an integral challenge. Ethics must be present in every action of the complex journalistic system. Ethics, just like freedom, are one indivisible thing.

BELIEVABLE INFORMATION

by MANUEL FERNÁNDEZ AREAL

Within the broad scope of the communication phenomenon, the specific case of information needs to be analyzed- the communication of *facts*, occurrences- in order to ensure that what happens reaches the public with guarantees of reality. This information will only appear believable to the public if journalists say what happens when they give information - what the facts were and what they are. All of this involves a professional duty, that of

the journalist, which supposes the good intention of telling the truth as well as a commitment, as Martínez Albertós says, to try to give your own opinion of the facts, to make the public aware of what is opinion and what are facts. For information to be credible, then, the professional, the journalist, must not profit from others in order to promote, orientate, leave his influence or be published, as stated in the seventh criterion of the Code of Ethics made by the Association of Journalists of Catalonia. He must not rely too heavily on sources; always recognise the right of the public to receive the truth; respect the dignity as a person of each member of that public (right of intimacy, honour, etc.); not *manipulate* information making use of practices of disinformation; fight against mistakes and therefore verify the news; make use of the appropriate language which will be informative and may be understood by the public. The most important point, however, is the desire to tell the truth. This brings with it a far reaching credibility, bearing in mind the results.

THE CONDITIONING FACTORS OF THE COMMUNICATION ETHIC

by ENRIC MARÍN I OTTO

The analysis of the ethical and moral suitability of communicative practices must be jointly expressed on two planes: that referring to conventions (historical ones) on behaviour, and that referring to conditioning factors arising from the system (industrial) of production of collective communication and of the "rules of the game" of the political system of the modern representative state. Definitively, we must use the historical context as a starting point.

THE BRUTALITY OF THE SPECTACLE

by JOAQUIM ROMAGUERA I RAMIÓ

After giving six examples ("pearls") of practices in so-called *informative* journalism, both in the press as well as on television and radio, which because they have become *usual and commonplace* are now considered *usual and correct*, communication wishes to point up the concept that from BRUTALITY the communicator contributes to the spectacle which he derives from it.

«The end(s) justify / vouch for / foster / favour / promote the ways and practices of the media (already called media!) with a great aspiration and/or vocation for communication from information.»

cultural disintegration arrogance banality vulgarity

disinformation stupidity frivolity lack of communication

insensitivity marginalization mediatization lack of respect

favouritism prepotency sectarianism

THE TRANSDISCIPLINARY SOCIO-SEMIOTICS OF THE VERSATILE AUDIO-VISUAL COMMUNICATOR: THE JOURNALIST AS AN ACTOR

by IVAN TUBAU COMAMALA

The observation of the way in which the word and image can be manipulated brings the author to note that information (electronic and printed) has become a spectacle and, therefore, the journalist has become and actor. Nevertheless, whilst the theatre or cinema actor does not deceive, because the fictitious nature of his performance is explicit, the journalist-actor does deceive because people suppose he is telling the truth, at a time when (the author gives the Gulf War as an example) reality, reshaped as a news item, is replaced by an invention. By erasing the perception of the frontiers between reality and fiction, success depends on the credibility of a representation: the power of persuasion involves the degree of public acceptance of a politician, and also of a television programme. With allusions to the success of *soap operas* and trash-programmes such as *reality shows*, and by contrasting the news propaganda of dictatorships with the imperatives of obtaining an audience in the free market of democracies, the author observes that the public is not exactly the victim of the media, but that most of the public seems to choose, just as it does with its leaders, what the media must be and what it must be like; and in conclusion, the author admits that this exercise of the right of majorities is a fact, but vindicates "something" different in the name of respect for minorities and individuals.

OPEN SECTION

FRANCESC DE PAULA CUELLO, REPUBLICAN JOURNALIST

by JAUME GUILLAMET

Francesc de Paula Cuello i Prats (Barcelona, 1824-1851) is one of the leading figures in Republican politics and journalism of the middle of the XIX century. His name is associated with Abdó Terradas (Figueres, 1812 - Medina Sidonia, 1856), with whom he was the main collaborator in the organisation of the first Republican party, from the regency of Espartero (1841-1843) and in the editing of his periodicals.

Amongst the first journalists of the Republican Party -Terradas, Monturiol, Estanislau Figueras, Juan Manuel Carsy, Martí Carlé...- Cuello was responsible for the continuity of the different publications - the *Hojas Terradas* (1841-1842), *El Republicano* (1842) and *El Porvenir* (1843) - as well as the author of many texts and drawings.

SUBSIDIES FOR THE CINEMA IN CATALONIA

by CARLES JOSÉ I SOLSONA

Scant industrial resources in the sector of cinematographic production in Catalonia (more than half the companies do not exceed half a million pesetas in capital) and the lack of stability in this economic area, rule out self funding and lead our film makers to look to outside sources.

Besides the payments for distribution and video, which are becoming less important in the funding process, and the postponement of payment to the suppliers, the sale of broadcasting rights and subsidies (from the state, autonomous communities or the EC) become an indispensable part of making a film.

Leaving broadcasting rights to one side - these represent between a quarter and a third of the cost of a film-, recourse to public money is usually the foundation on which cinematographic projects are built. This source, in Catalonia, is supplied by two funding bodies: on the one hand, with help from the Ministry of Culture and, on the other, with subsidies from the Department of Culture of the autonomous government, the Generalitat de Catalunya.

In the first case, state subsidies have injected a total of 3,848 million pesetas into Catalan films which feature in the catalogues of the ICAA from 1984 until 1992. These grants involved 62% of the allowance of that period and met almost a third of its cost.

Support for the two thirds of the cinematographic output has been given from the Generalitat, with an overall sum of 1,158 million pesetas since 1986, which have covered between a seventh and an eighth of the investment.

As far as the fruits of public investment are concerned, the indicator which results from comparing the takings of each film in the cinemas where they are being shown, with the respective quantities of subsidy, is not very encouraging, since the takings for almost three quarters of the subsidised films which have been premiered do not add up to the public subsidy received.

REDEFINING THE POLITICS OF COMMUNICATION IN EUROPE

by MARCIAL MURCIANO I MARTÍNEZ

Murciano analyses the main trends in the politics of communication and traces them throughout the last ten years in Europe, and particularly, the new prospects which are being outlined today in this field. The text recovers telegraphically the most fundamental measures which have been taken to date in the field of communication. From three main guidelines these measures are oriented towards making it possible to set up a unified market in communications materials, in developing an industrial policy in the sector and also linking the market with new technologies and telecommunications. The writer of the article reviews and assesses the latest steps in audio-visual policy, the programmes and studies carried out, and the tangible results on a commercial and industrial level of the audio-visual media in the main countries of the Continent. Finally, the author gives his opinion on the consequences of the recent development in the audio-visual sector, which is openly heading towards intense financial activity and to business concentration in large European groups; processes which are emerging thanks to the policies of national governments. Murciano ends his analysis by warning of the limitations concerning freedom of business and freedom of expression which stem from business concentration, and calls for the relevant official bodies to reshape a policy of European communication which favours pluralism, decentralisation and participation.

CAN WE CONTINUE TO SPEAK OF MASS COMMUNICATION?

by MIQUEL RODRIGO I ALSINA

As the title/question shows, the author asks if we can continue to speak of mass communication. After a brief review of some of the definitions of mass communication, the author will approach the problems of these definitions. The author will finally make several proposals, in order to avoid letting down the audience.

ELEONORA DUSE AND "ASHES"

by JOAQUIM ROMAGUERA I RAMIÓ

The Italian Eleanora Duse (1858-1924) was one of the great divas of world theatre, on the same level as Vera Komisarjevskaja, Isadora Duncan or Sara Bernhardt in terms of talent, versatility and an extremely varied repertoire.

In 1916 she was tempted by the film cameras and starred in a film which was worthy of her talents: *Ashes (Ceneri)*, directed by Arturo Ambrosio and Febo Mari, from the novel of the same name by Grazia Deledda, who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1926.

The artistic and commercial result of her cinematographic debut was not as expected; this was such a disappointment to her that she never set foot in front of a film camera again.

The only copy of the film that was saved, with practically complete footage, is to be found in Barcelona in the premiered Spanish version. This communication sets out the study we have made of it, and narrates the human and artistic journey of Duse as well as other aspects of the film and its production.

BEGINNING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1993-1994

THE EXTENDED HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

by MITCHELL STEPHENS

The traditional histories of journalism do not begin until more or less the time of the first printed periodicals. Two German weekly papers were published in Europe in 1609; if a number of earlier printed or handwritten publications are taken into account, the dawn of the history of journalism goes back to about a century earlier, but no more; and as for the United States, the dates fluctuate, according to sources, between 1690 and well into the XIX century. The traditional history of journalism neglects the news systems which came before printed periodicals, and the author qualifies it as a truncated history.

The author became interested in an "extended" history of journalism by wondering just when sensationalism began. In America the answer leads to the very origin of the informative press and, going further back in time, we need to look at Europe, where the fact that sensationalism flourished in pamphlets and informative broadsheets in the XVI and XVII centuries (which often spoke of monsters, crimes or witchcraft) invites us to go even further back in time. When we come to Cicero's Rome, where the sensationalism of certain news items was a cause for regret, the author understands that the history of sensationalism and, by extension, that of journalism, is as old as human societies. In his search for data on communities without writing, he turns his attention towards anthropology, which confirms the existence of oral systems of news which were organised in networks of meeting places (markets, encampments, hide-outs...) and served by specialists, aficionados (the gossips) and others of an institutional nature: "ceremonial corridors" (amongst the Fox Indians) messengers and proclaimers.

Against the fashion for marginalizing intercultural similarities and highlighting cultural differences, the author points out the similarity in interest for news in all societies and eras and says that an extended history of journalism will show an extreme awareness of "shared humanity".

The oral systems of news, although weakened by printed and electronic means, have not died out (cafes, friends...) and they can be vindicated as democratic, egalitarian and because they are beyond the control of the authorities. The written news item enters the extended history of journalism as a medium which is capable of keeping itself intact in spite of the great

distances in the frameworks of imperial magnitude. This is how the Chinese *tipao* emerged (written stories from the Court) or the Roman *acta* (informative broadsheets which were displayed in the Forum and copied and distributed to the provinces), but written news, open to repression (in China) or to collapse (in the Roman Empire), entered a crisis which halted the development of journalism for over a thousand years.

The author gives the example of the return of Columbus from his first voyage to America, news of which was spread orally by Columbus himself (at banquets, celebrations and parades), by letters from individuals and by the printed publication of the letter from Columbus to the Crown; the arrival of the Vikings in America, five hundred years earlier, had received very limited diffusion, and the comparison highlights the wealth of the European news system at the end of the XV century; a wealth which the traditional history of journalism does not perceive.

All the periodicals of the world are the descendants of the two German weeklies published in 1609; nevertheless, in the research for the predecessors to these two periodicals, etymology brings us to the Venetian *gazette* and *avisì* from the second half of the XVI century, handwritten weekly papers which were distributed in Europe but which, once again, are ignored in the traditional histories of journalism.

Research has not been done into whether the Venetian weeklies of the XVI century were, in turn, predecessors. If we want to eliminate the huge gaps in the history of journalism, we must admit that the thirst for news in all societies is a substrate which is common to all the forms of oral, written, printed and now electronic communication. The author wonders if it is licit, when we face up to the future of communication, to ignore so much data from its past.

WORKS ON THE HISTORY OF THE PRESS: VALENCIAN PRESS

LIGHT AND SHADE IN THE BEGINNINGS OF THE VALENCIAN PRESS

by RICARD BLASCO I LAGUNA

Blasco makes a brilliant contribution to the recovery of the origins of the Valencian press. On the one hand, his analysis consists of a deep examination of the figure of T.V.M., the initials of one of the precursors of the first

periodical in Valencia, *El Diario*, and of the promoters of the publication itself, on the other. The first part of the article is structured as a detailed examination by the author on the personality which is constructed from the initials mentioned. Blasco perfectly illustrates his hypothesis that the writer - which Lluís Tramoyeres discovered in his 1880 study - is the doctor Tomàs Vilanova i Muñoz (T.V.M.). From this interpretation, the writer of the article breaks down the complete characteristics of this personality, his appearances in journalistic print, his tendency to use pseudonyms, his writing and his course of development, which has also been examined by Joan Fuster. The following part of the document also invites us to reveal a series of concerns on the embryonic period of *El Diario*. Blasco brings to light the task of the two main promoters of that written medium, which started up in 1790, the price of printing the paper and its main aesthetic and stylistic virtues. Lives, anecdotes, friendships and the business relationship between the promoting partners, Pasqual Marín and Joseph de la Croix, are closely examined by Blasco, who manages to bring to life areas which were decisive in linking up the first manifestation of the written press in the capital of the Turia region.

AN APPROXIMATION TO THE PRESENCE OF LITERATURE IN THE VALENCIAN PRESS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE XX CENTURY

by CARLOS SANZ MARCO

The communication includes part of the research work - Doctoral Thesis - which was presented in the Faculty of Philology of the University of Valencia in November 1990, under the supervision of Professor Joan Oleza Simó.

The detailed examination of the content of the newspapers: *El Radical*, *El Pueblo*, and *El Mercantil Valenciano* was carried out. All of these were deeply rooted in Valencian society of the time (1890-1923). The examination dealt with the classification of collaborations in: serials, stories, literary articles and critiques, articles giving opinions, chronicles and poetry.

A computer programme allowed a total of 4,485 files to be put in order and crossed with the following data: collaborations of each author indicated, newspaper and date in which it appeared, section, journalistic genres, etc. Chronological and generic charts are included for each of the newspapers examined and also as a whole.

The conclusions allow the ratification of intuitions and the noting of the extraordinary presence in the period studied of the literary tale, the survival

of the serial, the overwhelming strength of the article giving an opinion, and the consolidation of a genre which is as versatile as it is genuinely journalistic: the chronicle.

The evaluation of the Tribunal was unanimous in the sense that the work opened parallel pathways for research in other newspaper libraries in Spain and into other periods of history.

"EL CAMÍ". VALENCIANIST WEEKLY CITY OF VALENCIA (1932-1934)

by MAVI DOLÇ I GASTALDO

From the beginning of the XX century the Valencians have endeavoured to consolidate publications for expression in the Catalan language. Nevertheless, Valencianism was not a very widespread political trend until the time of the Second Republic and, therefore, the weekly press, and in general, Valencianist reviews had a lifespan of no longer than six months.

The weekly paper *El Camí* came out at a particularly timely moment. In 1932, Valencianism managed to throw off the label of a movement which had been yearned for and finally gained political representation in institutions. Valencian society let itself be influenced by the Valencianist theses, albeit not on a large scale.

The union of the Valencianists of all political colours was possible in *El Camí*, a weekly paper started by Joaquim Reig. In reality, however, it was run by a board made up of a group of Valencianists who were representative of the left and right wing. For this reason, *El Camí* was always defined as an independent weekly.

The importance of *El Camí* lies in this binding power, but also in the task for linguistic normalization and the cultural and political recovery of the Valencian Country. Through *El Camí* Valencians proclaimed the unity of the Catalan language and agreed to adopt as its own the spelling laid out by Pompeu Fabra, which the paper itself set out to diffuse from the beginning.

El Camí consolidated the name of "País Valencià" (Valencian Country) and restored Valencian customs and traditions. It had a decisive political influence on Valencian society and, therefore, on political groups, which were obliged to consider Valencianism as a further point to be vindicated in their programmes.

Throughout 133 issues, *El Camí* was constituted on the most important vindicative platform in the history of the Valencian press until the time of the Second Republic.

MISCELLANY

THICS, JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

by JAUME GUILLAMET

The author suggests we consider the debate which has arisen on the ethics of journalism, preferably in Europe, as a wider question which is explained by the profound transformation of the media, and businesses involved in communication, and which must also be inferred in the general ethics of communication and of the different sectors which participate in it.

The author analyses the ethical initiatives and proposals put forward by different bodies and organizations between 1992-1993, as well as the differences with which they are approached in different countries, according to political history, political traditions and levels of economic development. Thus, the incidence of new technologies in the media present similar problems, varying, however, in the depth of their effects and in the possibilities of social and professional reaction.

NOTEWORTHY CONTRIBUTION BY ETTINGHAUSEN:

349 GAZETTES FROM THE XVII CENTURY ON THE WAR OF THE REAPERS

by JOSEP MARIA FIGUERES I ARTIGUES

The appearance of the anthological facsimile work on the XVII century gazettes related to the War of the Reapers by Professor Ettinghausen is a noteworthy contribution because the compilation of the 349 gazettes is an original documentary contribution which places precious material within the

reach of scholars. From this monumental compilation, Professor Josep Maria Figueres reflects on the role of gazettes, particularly on the aspect of newspapers as a documentary element whilst performing a simultaneous dissection of Ettinghausen's work.

Simultaneously, the merits of the compilation as an energising factor in future research is highlighted, and the uneven criticism which the work has received is discussed, providing an overview of the different opinions which, in relation to Ettinghausen's contribution, have concerned themselves with the XVII century in the written press, something which is quite uncommon.