

Is it Possible to Emancipate the Media from General Madness

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Abstract

The paper analyzes the crisis of postmodernity and its presentation in the mass media, which more and more often has elements of snobbery. It is based on the analyzes and questioning of Ulrich Beck and his diagnostic concept of modern societies as risk societies on the one hand, and Amin Malouf as the author of the metaphor about modernity as a kind of madness of the world, on the other. Both authors strongly position the role of mass media and their media powers in modern societies. A significant part of the responsibility for a kind of social "madness" as the conference we are following is titled - the authors contribute precisely to them-media. No one so murderously breaks, crushes and splits the world of wholeness and truth than the media, while they are in their 'perverted role', as Yurgen Habermas would say.

The treasure of wisdom that precedes history cannot be lost, but it is wrapped in countless veils that hide this treasure. Therefore, in this truly enlightened age, it is necessary to remove these veils and reveal truths, using the emancipatory mass media, as opposed to the mass media of perversion, as the same author calls them.

Keywords: *Risk Society; The Media; The World's Madness; Madness*

The crisis of modernity is incommunicable for ten thousand years, states the European thinker and sociologist Ulrich Beck. This was the conclusion of the US Congressional Commission around 2011, when it was supposed to tell future generations where dangerous nuclear waste storage facilities are located. Some members interpreted the sign as a corpse's head like this - to three-year-olds it means 'it's poison', or if it's vertical, 'yuppie pirates'. The crisis that surrounds us a decade after this event is even more dangerous. Like this previous one, the crisis of our age arises from our victories, or 'victories'. Simply because the principle, or principles, has been completely obliterated: contemplation is above the action, the immutable is superior to the variable. A single action does not contain a principle within itself and is in fact an illusion if it does not connect with a principle above its variable field.

At the time of expansion and massive multiplication of the most diverse types of risks within modern societies, any consideration of the role of mass media in these processes is indispensable. This is simply because the question arises in front of us every moment, how media presentations affect risks, social and individual risks, and how, in connection with this, the concepts of risk and socialization additionally support the contours of what the early Beck [1] labeled with the phrase 'risk society'. In the risk society, the world and the media are very connected and can have these four types of relationships:

- The world is truth and the media convey the truths about that world.
- Then, the world is a lie and the media conveys lies about the world.

- After all, the world is the truth, but the media conveys and conveys distorted and false truths about the world.
- Finally, the world is a lie and the media additionally conveys and magnifies lies about the world.

From these logically simple four possible combinations of interrelationships between the world and the media, it is noticeable at first glance that the possibility of a false media mediation of the world and its character, as truth or lies, is far greater than the possibility of a truthful media transmission of the world.

Certainly, the media, when mediating or transmitting information about the world, narrows its looseness, comprehensiveness and complexity, and even with the best intentions, they cannot be the bearers of full truths or serious epistemic knowledge about the world. Basically, their professional role is to translate the world into a message, professional information textual, pictorial, pictographic, film or multimedia message with all these elements, while on rare occasions the media is expected to competently comment on the world, processes and events and to offer knowledge about the world in a sufficient way. At the very least, the media is expected to offer wisdom or condensed knowledge about the world, which, repeated and repeated, practiced and preserved, would determine a quality epistemic knowledge of the world in which they exist.

An early philosopher of the media Marshall McLuhan stated that the complex processes of communication cannot encompass all the numerous and fluid changes within society, and that one sentence cannot encompass the entirety of what is meant, that is the famous motto of figures and backgrounds. The figure is usually in the foreground and it stands out to us, it is the most visible and dominates the presentation, while the background is either negligible or not noticed, and can be more dominant. Thus, modern recipients follow numerous multidimensional phenomena in a simplified, fragmented, selected and sometimes even in a hypnotizing way.

Author login would say: 'The true meaning of any figure, when it comes to a person, social movement, technology, institution, communication event, text or idea, cannot be determined unless the background and environment in which the figure operates are taken into account. The background provides the context from which the full meaning and importance of the figure emerges'. Thus, it can be stated rightly that this kind of narrative structure in the media, which gained momentum with the pandemic, completely omits background information in favor of presenting only the dramatic aspect of a certain event, phenomenon, and this results in models of a fragmented, media-induced form of human consciousness and risk perception. This is how the concept of general ignorance is expanded and media powerful institutions and related controllers of consciousness and mind are inserted into the game of life. It is especially important to notice the emergence of an information vacuum that is built in between the knowledge of experts and the average consumer of the media message, i.e. the average recipient. All this results in the emergence of a state of ignorance and susceptibility to directing the attitudes and thoughts of the recipients where the media wants, or at least the vast majority of the recipients. And an enlarged field of madness.

Certainly, therefore, the mass media cannot by the nature of their current and daily reporting duties, i.e. due to the nature of the speed of work and the current public discourse, the media also cannot bring wisdom about the world. So that every relationship between the world and the media is a very risky relationship, momentary, temporary and diachronic. And yet the largest number of media consumers, millions of their recipients, are not fully aware of this. They take the mass media as their main auxiliary informative, cognitive and even analytical guiding crutch, an aid, a window into the world of knowledge and a window into the world of wisdom, because books, encyclopedias, serious research, long analytical conversations and confrontations are completely foreign to them. First of all, simplified media coverage and about the pandemic, does not reflect reality, and on the other hand, a large number of media stories do not contain any relevant and grounded information about all the possible risks to which we are exposed. Risk is personalized, so we stick to the mantra that it is not news when a dog bites a man, but it is news when a man bites a dog.

For the purposes of this text and the name of the conference itself, 'on madness and the media', a more adequate term will be used; it will be the term of the world's madness-out-of-mind state and the media's madness-insanity, in order to consciously bypass this radical definition from the very title of the conference. At the same time, it should be emphasized that it is an understandable radical expression, because as such it quickly and powerfully outlines the increasingly pronounced contours of mass media activity in the risky world in which we live too fast.

We sailed into the new century without compass

Already at first glance, the name and content of the conference and Amin Malouf's book 'Disordered World' complement each other; so sporadic comparison of basic thought processes and conclusions will be very useful. In the book, the author says that we, as a modern civilization, have all sailed into the new century without a compass, and that this world has been dominated by disorder primarily in four spheres: intellectual disorder, financial disorder, climatic disorder and ethical disorder. Then the author asks a key question, which is also my question for my topic and media analytics as a touching consideration of media philosophy: 'Human drives, even darker, even closer, we begin to wonder whether our species has perhaps reached the threshold of its moral incompetence, whether it is still going always forward, or hasn't she just started a backward movement that threatens to call into question everything that so many successive generations have painstakingly built'...

From the mediaological point of view, the question still 'hangs', whether there has not been a backward movement within the media business, to a moral incompetence that can also be described as an activity of the human spirit, as a competence that has taken the path of its backward movement. Namely, so many deviations from the elementary knowledge and skills of public communication have fallen, scattered and disrupted that it is almost impossible to recognize the usual professional standards and criteria for evaluating truth and lies in the public space, and the merits of these behaviors are increasingly being resolved by courts and court settlements, punishments they become the basic postulates of journalistic activity, which has been unthinkable throughout the long history of public speech. Lie publicly and without hesitation!

The author Malouf himself underlines these difficult questions as the concern not of an irrationalist but of a follower of enlightenment, and as a supporter of freedom which he believed would spread beautifully and for a long time on the planet, and who, disappointed by the opposite tendencies in the world, and in the media in particular, clearly sees that instead of harmonic diversity spreads fanaticism, violence, hopelessness, exclusivity around the world.

Together with Malouf, I critically state that the time that was given to us, like all generations before, has pretty much leaked out, leaked out, wasted away, and we are less and less an ally and more and more a judge who lets us live a few more years on the run. Indeed, the world of our era, our so-called modernity lives on *versa*. In this world, within the media discourse, it can be noticed that there is a greater and more prevalent number of risk and alarming content than other, encouraging and positively connoted or regulated content, and even at the expense of neutral media content. The only thing he still cares about is that mass panic does not occur.

The world of insanity covered the truth of his, the world's true battle, his own battle, and went into a stormy storm "where it broke, it broke", as one would say. The mass media are more and more often positioned in the three last relations to the world, which we mentioned at the beginning, so they either cover up the truths and battles of the diverse world themselves, or they remember it a shade more, or else they completely and targetfully ignore the status quo and march their game of additional remembering that every day we listen, watch, surf, as fake news, as pure manipulations, as dirty conspiracies, as increasingly frequent school censorship of undesirable content or else as regular lies and deceptions... In one word, summed up, around us, in the era of media prosperity as far as technical and technological possibilities, and the chances that the world as a global village truly receives all the essential information for a good life, data and facts

for the moment, simultaneously in live transmission, live or continuously, i.e. 24 hours a day, every day of the year and seven days of the month.

But, an unprofessional approach, incipient or completely suspended ethics are only some of the elements that point to the combination of lies and the media, power and the media, interests and the media, which the early Habermas pointed out, aiming at the possibility that one day the mass media will agree not to be a tool emancipation of people and citizens, but they begin to realize their so-called secondary role, i.e. the role of perverted action and a complete professional crisis. The mass media become an extended arm of the general, already emphasized disorder of the world.

Today as a temptation of the abyss

We today, as Malouf [2] would say, are living the “temptation of the precipice”. It is “characteristic of our era, where every day people jump into the abyss dreaming of pulling all the mountaineers connected by a single rope in their fall - a phenomenon without real precedent in history...these people represent the fuse of a giant barrel of despair”. This idea that we are living in an era of peak, at least according to the external indications witnessed by all of us who try to understand and think about the world around us, is in some way based on the idea that humanity has reached its end in evolution, and that of a phase that is dramatic and in which old methods, recipes and practices are of less use. It is certainly not the end of history, it is unnecessary to talk about it in a text like this, but there is no doubt that a certain twilight of history has fallen around us, a twilight of clear certainty, and perhaps it is actually a hint of a new era, a new paradigm, a new age. It is difficult to guess who will experience it, when and how. According to Malouf, our culture, the culture of globalized people in the XXI century, can experience either implosion or metamorphosis. My view is that through an implosion of terrible proportions, they will experience a future metamorphosis in which the best, the most ethical and the most spiritual will survive. Then the collapse of the material postulates will follow, which is widely discussed in all known scriptures and books.

On the other hand, as the forces of evil, to put it that way, or the forces of implosion are increasingly visible and emerging, it is not out of place to show that their forces of action are in some way companions of this one history of the world that can be considered better.

In an interesting book under the title “The Hierarchy of Conspirators: The Committee of 300”, John Coleman [3] cites his very rare analysis and provides insights into a wealth of details and data, well-honed facts and denotations about institutions about which little or nothing is known, which with their parties exercise imperceptible control over the world and the people in it, who are actually kept silent, because they are the privilege of secret and closed discourses and hierarchies. And without a doubt, they bring a handful of interventions and unstoppable circumstances that increase the mentioned general confusion of the world. Of course, this implicitly includes people’s awareness.

The author of the interesting book ‘Committee of 300’, J. Coleman, which seems to complement such views, notes that as a former soldier and pensioner he had access to a multitude of hidden and secret documents, operations and actions, but that he wrote this book all the time under fear and surveillance, which should be read. Although it is not read. He emphasizes that he wants to “peel off the mask of the entire secret parallel government from a high level that governs Great Britain and the United States of America”. If these sensitive facts are approached critically and analytically as soberly as possible, in meeting them, one gets the impression that some secret is evident, some black hand that turns the course of history in its own mysterious way. Outside and beyond the framework that the average person busy with dromological acceleration of time, rotated space and crushed habits of mass media networking of everything around him and himself - can and wants to perceive and understand. Namely, all kinds of so-called conspiratorial information are tiring and dangerous in themselves, they carry a dose of the unbelievable and therefore it is easier to live life without worrying and without relying on them. Direct and obedient citizens are the fervent desire of every political system of the powerful.

All hierarchies of the world, from religious to political, want to have disciplined citizens around them, states media philosopher Sead Alić [4] in the book “Mass production of narcissism”, in the subsection “Is revolution possible without religious reformation?” an obstacle to key changes, and it came to the fore when consciousness had to oppose the hierarchies that took over the substance of the changes’ ([4]; 64). The better they listen, the more desirable and better servants the disciplined subjects are to any system of government. After all, the same author continues, “...the secret of the secret is a lie. The secret of political secrecy is evident in the availability of documents testifying to the concealment of the truth. The secret of the hierarchical secret is that one thing is said and narrated, and the other is intended and done” ([4]; 15).

However, when more serious intellectual and free academic research is involved, then knowing hidden facts is still useful. Therefore, a part of this text is dedicated to the recommendation that the most diverse readings be read, analyzed and confronted side by side, as well as different visions of the world and the future to also be read side by side and comparatively, analyzed and confronted. While freedom of speech (freedom of expression) can still be exercised without punishment.

One paper has already been submitted at the meeting, which will deal in more detail with the Tawistock Institute from Great Britain, so it is unnecessary to repeat it in this paper, but it should be repeated that the Tawistock Institute occupies a significant place in the flows of power, flows of capital, flows of truths of the world and flows of media presentation as well as the currents of silence and taboo about everything important in today’s world.

When you just count the nominal institutes and institutions that are under the auspices of Tawistock in the USA, and that deal with the world in the way they deal with it, one gets the impression that there is almost no room for any drop of truth that would fall on the ground of objective media presentations. there is none. Everything is already densely networked and the world is gasping under the pressures and coercions of various agencies and agencies that monitor almost every human gesture and movement, event or demonstration. Therefore, when this factually is taken into account, it is much easier to understand all the disruption of the modern world that I mention with the author Amin Malouf, i.e. it is easier to understand the disruption of the media in the general social order that we witness every day while we live.

So, if you look a little under the skin of the modern world, its powerful people and its structure, there is a little less room for disbelief in the sense of mentioning such networks of normal and paranormal in the world. There are groups that, as the reviewers of John Colemon’s book said, ‘are omnipotent and above all laws and all states, that have power over all aspects of politics, religion, commerce, industry, banking, insurance, trade, drug trafficking, the oil industry, groups that do not accounts to no one but members of their group’. It is clear that the mass media are only one of the clauses of these groups and that they are under a kind of continuous control, directive and agenda settings that work relentlessly against the real general human freedom and the sincere free development of the human race in general.

New battles for freedom of speech are ahead again

Is it then possible to emancipate the media from the general awareness of the world around us? Only to the extent that we understand that everything conspiratorial and behind the scenes does not go as planned by its internal powerful creators, that there are always pockets or some black holes in the fabric of these interlinking forces of the world, that very often, seemingly by chance, things do not happen according to the aegis and planned tasks, that a lump rolled down from the top of a hill often enlarges or simply bursts. Therefore, it is important to nurture one’s own morality, credo and belief that in the end good always wins over evil, even if only as a metamorphosis after the implosion that awaits us. Just as the Good always defeats the Evil Azazail, no matter what manipulations and perverted vices he with skill uses and shows them...

The association of honest, intelligent, brave and smart, and above all completely free people and thinkers has no alternative. Answering all evil with good, all ugliness with beauty, and all lies with truth are the most likely human emancipatory chance.

Finally, humanity is facing periods of new battles for freedom of speech, freedom of opinion and freedom of the media, just as at the dawn of the 18th and 19th centuries they took place first in Europe and America, and then in the rest of the world.

The existing virus pandemic, as well as some new ones that are simply and smoothly announced from the same holes of power, caused an unprecedented infodemic and gap between truth and lies in and around the corona virus, and the covid19 disease, methods of reporting, choices of message channels, order of value of facts and aggressive insistence on the exclusive monitoring of only that infection, and the repetition of the number of dead, infected, positive and negative people on ventilators or in hospitals, it is certainly already evident that it does not have an informative or educational role at all, but on the contrary, it has a disinformation and awareness-raising media role. No one has so strongly amplified the effects of a virus that 'suddenly appeared' and suddenly became the number one media in the whole world, but what did the mass media do? Together, globally, regionally, locally. The successive process of media globalization of the world and information globalization of the world took place everywhere. The first project as a media-institutional phenomenon, and the second as a journalistic epistemic phenomenon in the way that information is the basic tool of the mass media, and the mass media are carriers or platforms on which modern information or messages exist, as the daily prayers of modern people on planet earth, as interpreted in to the book 'Media Globalization of the World' by this author Fejzić, 2004(15) [5].

In parallel, both projects and then processes, media globalization of the world and information globalization of the world, happened and will happen without awareness of the causes, consequences and main factors of these processes around us. Without the free possibility of confronting different views and different interpretations that would allow each interpretation an equal chance. That all speakers in the public media space are equal, equal and have the opportunity to voice their arguments. It turns out that all logical and creative questioning is superfluous. The first are the only mainstream and they are good, and the others are alternative and are bad, they are fake news and should be censored, and that is how censorship flourished in the XXI century. Additionally, it turns out that the former represent the same agenda of settings with financial and political power and can censor or ban the latter. In every possible way. Shock and disbelief stopped virtually all aspects of planetary processes in an instant. And Malouf's statement that we are followed by every fissure on the way to conquering and enjoying virtuous freedom, has been fully realized in our every day.

The mass media have again offered their secondary role, far from all forms of emancipation in the public sphere, as their unpopular and ugly side of activity - the role of perversion in the public sphere as a whole. The perversion of morality, the perversion of truthfulness, the perversion of objectivity, the perversion of usefulness, the perversion of usability. The messages that swarm around us, of which there are hundreds and thousands every moment and every day, increase the overall picture of the riskiness of modern societies and modern man. Four well-known criteria as dominant patterns of reporting are also recognized here, if the figures and their backgrounds are taken into account. First, it was reported in such a way as to apostrophize the negative aspects and consequences of a certain phenomenon, pandemics in particular, panic, fear with mandatory sensationalism, then, the reporting that offered possible solutions was softened, then it was very descriptively reported, giving all the negative assessments of potential consequences that the pandemic causes and finally, the media has constructed a form of risk in order to scare the public with ventilators, isolators, hospital beds, and all attention has been diverted from all the other, much more difficult problems in which this world is grumbling. As the author Beck would brilliantly note, everything is a function of politicization in this way: "Where the risks of modernization are once recognized - and this requires a lot, not only knowledge about them, but also collective knowledge about them, belief in them and political illumination of the accompanying chains and consequences - there the risks develop an incredible political dynamic". And about fear as capital that can easily be converted into any form of political power and commercial profit, early Bauman [6] says: "The presentation of threats to personal safety has become a significant, perhaps even the main means of the mass media in the fight for viewership and readership (increasing success as marketing, as well as political exploitation of fear)". The conclusion of John Horgan, the author of the extraordinary book "The End of Science", in which he says after talking to twenty leading Nobel laureates and scientists of the 20th century, is not at all surprising: 'If someone believes

in science, he must accept the possibility - even the probability - that the great era of scientific discoveries has ended. I consider science not only applied science, but science in its purest and most magnificent form, as a primarily human search for understanding the universe and our place in it' ([7]; 15).

And that is becoming less and less...Technology has gained primacy in the XXI century. With this, and with the gates of dehumanization and social consciousness, they are wide open...

Summary

The paper analyzes the crisis of postmodernism and its presentation in the mass media, which increasingly has elements of insanity. It is based on the analyzes and interrogations of Ulrich Beck and his diagnostic notion of modern societies as societies of risk on the one hand, and Amin Malouf as the author of the metaphor of modernity as a kind of madness of the world.

Both authors strongly position the role of the mass media and their media powers in modern societies. A significant part of the responsibility for a kind of social 'madness' is the title of the conference we are following - the authors add to them, to the media.

No one so deadly breaks, crushes or splits the world of wholeness and truth from the media, while they are in their 'perverted role', as Jürgen Habermas would put it. Veils that hide that treasure of knowledge.

Therefore, in this truly distraught age, it is necessary to remove these veils and reveal the truths, even with emancipatory mass media, unlike the mass media of perversion, as the same author calls it [8-15].

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