



## **Codes of Journalism Ethics in Russia and the United States: Traditions and the Current Practice of Application**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the article is to identify the main categories stated in the codes of journalism ethics in Russia and the United States, as well as the principles of their practical application. As a part of the comparative analysis of the codes of the journalism organizations of the two countries, we identify factors affecting the adoption and contents of the documents and the approaches to the regulation of different areas of professional activity which were reflected in these documents. The author applies the method of historical study (comparative historical method), the logical method of a comparative analysis of documents, i.e., the codes of professional ethics (the attention is paid both to substantive and quantitative aspects), elements of the situation analysis. The key issues addressed in the article include the legal, political and professional traditions that predetermined the emergence of the codes of journalism ethics in Russia and the United States of America; the algorithm of regulating a journalist's relationships with other participants of his professional career (a journalist and the audience of a publication, a journalist and the sources of information, etc.); practical approaches to resolving ethical issues arising in the process of journalist's work. The findings of the study show that the historical conditions of the development of the two states, as well as their political traditions, influenced the development of journalism and formation of the professional journalism culture. These factors predetermined the specific features of the codes of journalism ethics in Russia and the United States, in particular, the time of the adoption of the first codes, the current number of such codes, their substantive features, specifics of their implementation.

**Keywords:** Code of Ethics, Journalism Standards, Freedom of Speech, Political Traditions

**JEL Classifications:** Z13, Z18

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Practice of the application of codes of journalism ethics dates back several decades. Over these years, a large number of documents have appeared which have been adopted at different levels and have different status. Cultural and political traditions of the states largely predetermined the practice of the application of these documents, their substantive specifics. Democratic principles of the Western countries, the existing culture of political relations between the authorities, the society and the mass media were to provide the conditions for the seamless establishment of self-regulation of the journalistic community. Such process became a reality in the United States, where since the beginning of

statehood liberal values have been assimilated and dynamically implemented. On the contrary, a more rigid "vertical of power" in the Eastern world, including the historically developed foundations of autocracy and absolutism in Russia suggested a different model of self-organization of the journalistic community. It is obvious that the current situation cannot be understood without realizing the reasons of the establishment of the practice of ethical regulation of journalistic activity and the specificity of its development.

### **1.1. Codes of Ethics in the Media Industry of the United States**

The assumption of the earlier establishment of the ideas of self-regulation of media in the Western world is substantiated by

historical facts. The discussion of the mission of a journalist and the mission of journalism in general began in the United States at the time, when the first newspapers were published in Boston and then in Philadelphia at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The first codes of journalism ethics appeared in Europe and the United States at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest ethics documents for journalists adopted in the United States are considered to be The Kansas Code of Ethics for Newspapers and The Oregon Code of Ethics for Journalism adopted by the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association in 1922 (Pratte, 1995). These were two local sets of rules, adopted by the newspaper editors of Kansas and Oregon respectively. One of the keynotes of these texts was a declaration of commitment to the norms of balanced coverage of events and restrained creation of sensations.

The next step was the development of a National Instrument, the Canons of journalism (Code of Ethics or Canons of Journalism, 1923). This code was adopted in 1923 by the American Society of Newspaper Editors. The main provisions of the code were the articles concerning the responsibility of a journalist and the need to take care of the interests of the society, the freedom of the press, the independence of journalists from different influences, except for the influence of the public interest, thorough and accurate presentation of information, etc. One of the articles provided for the obligation to inform the public about the mistakes made in a publication. The text was approved by many publishers in the United States, who expressed willingness to follow the declaration. Among them were the Detroit News, the Chicago Tribune, The Chicago Daily News. These newspapers were gaining popularity with the readers and cared about their reputation, while trying to dissociate themselves from scandalous tabloids.

Soon thereafter the new documents of this kind emerged, which either claimed the national status or, more often, reflected the interests of a certain organization. In 1926, the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics was adopted. This code obliged journalists to find and communicate truthful information, to minimize any harm resulting from journalistic activity, to commit to independence and openness, to educate the audience. 3 years later, the National Association of Broadcasters adopted its Codes of Practices (1929), targeted primarily at radio journalists. Since 1952 it has extended to television broadcasters. Along with the general provisions on the mission of radio and television journalists, there is some evidence for specific restrictions, concerning the amount of advertising, particularly that of medicines, the programming standards, etc.

One can also list some other well-known organizations that adopted this kind of documents: American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association, American Society of Newspaper Editors, Association of Health Care Journalists Statement of Principles, Associated Press Managing Editors, College Media Advisers, National Association of Black Journalists, National Association of Science Writers, National Press Photographers Association, Online Journalism Review, Poynter Online, Radio-Television News Directors Association, Society of American Business Editors and Writers, Society for News Design. As a rule, such documents are recommendatory, but many members of the

association or organization declare that they support the declared principles. For example, the Codes of Practices adopted by the National Association of Broadcasters in 1929 was supported by about half of radio broadcasting companies and a little less than two-thirds of television broadcasting companies.

The situation is different with the codes of ethics, adopted at the level of individual editorial boards and media: They can be binding for their staff. For example, the requirement to follow the code of ethics is included into the employment contract, and then it becomes mandatory. Among the documents adopted at the editorial level, we can name the Editorial Ethics Policy (Chicago Tribune), the Los Angeles Times Ethics Guidelines (Los Angeles Times), the BusinessWeek Code of Journalistic Ethics (Bloomberg Business Week).

Currently dozens of ethics codes have already been adopted. To take a closer look at these documents, one may refer to the collection presented in the media section on the website of the Illinois Institute of Technology (Codes Repository).

## 1.2. Codes of Journalism Ethics in Russia

Codes of journalism ethics appeared in Russia much later, although the idea of a journalist's responsibility to the society had already been expressed several centuries before. For example, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century M. V. Lomonosov in his work "On the duties of journalists in course of writing compositions," intended to maintain the freedom of philosophy outlined the rules that must be followed by a journalist. Among them are impartiality, independence in working with words and others (Nazaretyan, 2010). These approaches are reflected in many codes adopted much later, as well as codes which are currently in force.

A code of journalism ethics in Russia is a product of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Until then, moral standards of the profession were discussed in journalistic collectives and in the press, they often became the subject of scientific research, were studied by future journalists at universities. In other words, journalism ethics in Russia and the Soviet Union attracted the attention of professionals and of the society in general and often became a matter of argument. Sometimes the USSR acted as an initiator of the discussion of the issues of journalism ethics at the international level. This, for example, is evidenced by the participation in the creation of the International Organization of Journalists after the Second World War in 1946, and the further work under its auspices. One of the areas of activity of the organization was to draw the attention of the international journalism community to the issues of journalism ethics and to develop a dialogue in this area.

The codes of journalism ethics in the form of written documents began to appear in the 1990's. Among the first most important documents were the codes of journalism ethics, adopted in 1991 and 1994. Their development and adoption were coordinated by the Russian Union of Journalists, and the discussion began within the framework of the all-union organization, the Union of Journalists of the USSR. These documents stipulate the need for compliance with existing norms and laws, declare commitment to the principles of disseminating reliable information, making a

distinction between facts and opinions. A journalist should correct errors in case of publication of incorrect or false information, refrain from using confidential information for personal purposes, comply with the copyrights, etc.

In 1994, the journalists from various media outlets, concerned about the further development of the Russian journalism, developed and signed the Declaration of the Moscow Charter of Journalists. 27 signatories, among them representatives of the leading Russian media (the Echo of Moscow, the Kommersant, the Moscow News and others), offered 11 provisions and expressed readiness to follow them in their work. The provisions of this Declaration and of the Code of journalism ethics of the Russian Union of Journalists (1994) have much in common. The Declaration also refers to the need to disseminate accurate information, stipulates the inadmissibility of plagiarism, emphasizes that a journalist's professional activity is stopped when he takes up arms.

The development of television and radio broadcasting in the new post-Soviet conditions predetermined the development of the specific rules of professional conduct. They were formalized in the "Charter of Broadcasters" of 1999. The document was adopted on the initiative of the largest broadcasting companies of the time – The All-Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company, the Public Russian Television, NTV, TV-5 Moscow, TV-Center, Ren TV and a number of others. Some rules of the document duplicated provisions of the codes and the declaration mentioned above, for example, articles on the reliability of the information, on making a distinction between facts and comments, on the correction of errors and inaccuracies. There were also some entirely new sections. Among these one can mention the block on the protection of rights and legitimate interests of citizens and organizations, public health and morals. It stipulates the importance of respect for the citizens privacy (exceptions can be made only for the purposes of protection of public interest), refusal to demonstrate excessive cruelty and violence. For the first time there was provision on the inadmissibility of organizing information campaigns aimed at purposeful discrediting individuals and organizations for opportunistic purposes (Charter of Broadcasters, 1999).

Russian journalists' associations as well as individual editorial boards also adopted other codes of journalism ethics. For example, in 1997 the Declaration of the Russian Guild of Court Reporters was published. It dealt with the professional conduct of journalists with regard to the specifics of the coverage of legal and judicial issues. A recent example is the development of ethical rules of work in social networks for journalists of the Echo of Moscow radio station at the end of 2014. These rules became the basis for the draft addendum to the Charter of the radio station, which was published on its website on March 3, 2015. In this document there are theses regulating the political activity of journalists. For example, journalists should "refrain from any agitation and political activism in favor of any political party or politician during the election campaign." They should also avoid "public criticism of editorial policy, colleagues, shareholders or guests of the editorial office; this doesn't refer to the criticism of their public positions" (Draft Addendum to the Charter of the Echo of Moscow Radio Station, 2015).

Thus, there are obvious differences in the experience of formalization of the standards of journalism ethics in Russia and in the USA. In Russia, this process started much later, in the late twentieth century, while in the United States, the first documents of this kind began to appear at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The quantitative ratio of codes in the two countries is also different. There are no exact statistics, but the rough estimates show that the number of American codes, including those adopted by national organizations of journalists, media industry associations, individual editorial boards, amounts to several hundred (account should be taken of the widespread practice of adoption of codes of ethics at the editorial level). The Russian experience shows that there are only a few examples: The most famous codes adopted by the Russian Union of Journalists and a number of Moscow Organizations have already been listed. In the non-metropolitan areas and among the members of journalistic community the initiatives of this kind are scarce. Perhaps in this case one can talk about just a few dozens of such documents. The problem is to identify the causes of such differences, to assess factors which affected the adoption of codes of ethics and the practice of their application in Russia and the United States – The two countries, representing different political cultures.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

As a part of reflection on the problems that have been identified, the authors apply several methods to reveal the historical and current specifics of the application of the codes of journalism ethics in Russia and in the United States, to compare the special aspects of their implementation in different countries, to identify the causes of this state of affairs.

The comparative historical method makes it possible to compare the standards of moral and ethical regulation of a journalist's work in the two countries in different time periods. This method is typical for historiography and other areas of historical research. It is based, on the one hand, on a comparison, which is typical for almost any scientific research: Any data analysis is impossible without comparison and identification of common or different characteristics. On the other hand, the historical comparison involves studying the form and content of the processes or phenomena during different historical periods. That makes it possible both to discover essential manifestations of the studied phenomena at a certain stage and trace their dynamics. In the context of our study it is important to pay attention to the stage of appearance of the codes of journalism ethics in Russia and the United States, as well as to the further establishment of the practice of application of the ethical standards in historical hindsight.

The method of logical analysis involves the reconstruction of the development of a phenomenon or a system. At the same time a researcher uses the tools of theoretical analysis, explores the elements and relationships of a system. It is important to take into account the development of this system, instead of studying it separately, detached from the environment. A formalization of the process of the study and its results is also required. In our study the logical method is applied to the comparative analysis

of documents, in particular – The codes of journalism ethics. While using a certain degree of formalization and identifying a number of substantive and quantitative characteristics, the documents are studied in the context of historical circumstances, the specifics of the activity of organizations by which they were adopted, the extent and efficiency of influence on journalistic processes.

Because of the need to analyze the real situations which journalists encounter in addressing ethical conflicts, and to study the specifics of the application of the codes of journalism ethics on a case-by-case basis, the elements of the situation analysis are also applied. We identify typical situations and typical types of behavior of journalists, the effectiveness of the application of the codes of journalism ethics.

It should be noted that these methods are used conjointly in the process of the study, which makes it possible to get more consistent results.

### 3. RESULTS

The study shows that in Russia and the United States the adoption of codes of journalism ethics was influenced by different factors.

#### 3.1. Development of the Standards of Journalism Ethics in the United States: Factors and Priorities

In the United States, these processes were largely caused by the dissatisfaction of a part of the journalistic community with the direction of the development of the press. The state of the American journalism at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was largely determined by the strengthening of the so-called “yellow press,” the development of the movement of muckrakers, the ambiguous economic status of media.

The commercialization of the press, speculation on scandalous topics provoked discussion on the mission of the journalist in the society. This issue has become the subject of public discussion. Some publications appeared that criticized the processes of commercialization of media, the impact of capital on print media. Other targets of criticism were the monopolization of the mass media market, the concentration of media assets, reduced competition in some areas (for example, decreasing number of cities where two or more competing city newspapers were published). The corrupt practices, merging of the interests of the business and political elite and the media were also identified. This sentiment, in particular, was reflected in the studies and publications by Sinclair (1920), Seldes (1935), Lippmann (1920; 1965), etc. The issues of journalism ethics were often raised in the works by these and other authors. After a couple of decades the American Society became the stage of debates on the responsibility of the press to the society. In particular, the commission established in 1942 on the initiative of Henry Luce, the owner of the Time Magazine, came to disappointing conclusions concerning the status of the press freedom in the US. The situation required taking action to change the state of affairs, including self-recovery efforts in the journalistic community.

An important factor which influenced the emergence of professional codes, was the creation of organizations, aimed at bringing journalists together and helping them to solve the arising problems. These processes became more intense in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, although there were also some examples in the earlier history. For example, in 1887 the American Newspaper Publishers' Association (ANPA) was established. Among the goals of the ANPA there was the organization of mutual assistance among its members, solving economic and other issues. Among the organizations which appeared in subsequent years, there were a lot of well-known associations which were active throughout many decades. Let us enumerate some of them.

The National Press Club was established in 1908 and brought together journalism organizations, public funds and other associations. Its goal was to develop collaboration between journalists, as well as to establish the ethical standards of the profession. In 1912 the American Association of Teachers of Journalism was established. Despite the fact that its main mission was to hold annual conferences and compile statistics, its activity greatly influenced the development of the profession of a journalist in the United States and identifying a set of competencies for journalism education. Another union, the American Society of Newspaper Editors (1922) is considered to be one of the first major professional associations, which started to work at the national level. Other associations, which include the American Newspaper Guild (1933) and ANPA (1937), also contributed to self-organization of journalists.

At about the same time the development of professional journalism education was under way in the United States. The attempts to start training journalists in educational institutions took effect only in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Schools of journalism were established at Columbia University, the University of Missouri, the University of Wisconsin and some others. The beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century was dominated by a practice-oriented approach to the training of future journalists. Subsequently the educational curricula began to include theoretical disciplines that enhanced the knowledge of graduates, who got an idea of the place of journalism in the society, its functions, goals and mission.

Professional publications for journalists were established. Some of them were issued on the initiative of journalism organizations, as the Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE Bulletin, 1922). Some publications appeared on the initiative of the professionals engaged in education. These include the Journalism Bulletin (1924), founded by Lawrence Murphy of the University of Illinois. The American Association of Teachers of Journalism began to prepare textbooks for students. The emergence of some of the professional media – Broadcasting and Cable, Television Quarterly and others – was also caused by the development of new types of media (Shvetsova, 2009). The aforementioned print media addressed the problems of the journalism industry, the prospect of its development, the issues of professional conduct.

These factors have largely predetermined the emergence of codes of journalism ethics in the United States, and have influenced their content.

### 3.2. Conditions of Formation of the Standards of Ethics Regulation of Journalistic Activity in Russia

The emergence of codes of journalism ethics in Russia was predetermined by different historical and socio-political conditions.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, after the revolutionary turmoil, the development of media was regulated by the documents issued by the communist party and the government agencies. Traditionally, the first to be mentioned is the decree on press, issued on October 27, 1917 by the Council of People's Commissars. This move, as well as the establishment of revolutionary tribunal of the Press in 1918, involved encouraging media support for the new government. It brought about the closure of print media which were unfriendly towards the ruling party policy. Before the late 1980s and early 1990s the bodies of the leading party of the USSR issued dozens of resolutions and decisions which determined the media activity. These included, for example, the decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR No. 21 "On the reorganization of the planning and regulation of the press" (1931), the decree of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks "on the workers' press" (1932), the decrees of the Central Committee of the CPSU "on improving the management of the mass movement of correspondents of the workers' and peasants Soviet press" (1958), "on improving the radio information" (1964), etc. In these conditions, the standards of conduct for journalists were determined by resolutions and decisions of local party organizations. The first code of journalism ethics was adopted only in 1991, at the Congress of the Union of Journalists of the USSR.

The appearance of the codes of journalism ethics in Russia, as in the United States, was influenced by the creation of professional journalism organizations and unions. Their rapid development began in the 1990s (prior to that, the most authoritative and virtually non-alternative organization was the Union of Journalists). The associations established in this period included the Academy of Russian Television (1994), the Russian Public Relations Association (1991), the Association of Directors of Communications and Corporate Media of Russia (2004) and many others. The beginning of their activity was related to the adoption of declarations, which specified the aim and objectives of the activities of almost each organization. They attracted interested professionals, held conferences and meetings, organized discussion of internal corporate issues, developed relevant documents.

The development of journalism education encouraged the discussion of the work rules of media correspondents. The prototype of the modern journalism faculties and departments, which existed in Russian universities over 100 years ago, was the practical training courses opened in Moscow in 1905 under the guidance of Professor Vladimirov. It is also known that in 1909-1911 the leaders of the Russian revolutionary movement (Lenin, Lunacharsky, etc.) taught the basics of journalism in the party schools which existed abroad. Journalism training schools, and subsequently journalism faculties and departments were established in the major cities of the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s. The researchers note that later training

of journalists became more fundamental; curricula began to include courses in political science, cultural studies, religion, social studies, natural sciences, as well as a course of journalism ethics (Kikhtan, 2015).

Schools of journalism studies were established at the universities, research papers in this field began to appear. Obviously, it does not make sense to analyze works on the history of journalism in general, because it is beyond the scope of this article. Let us pay attention to the interest of researchers to the subject of journalistic ethics. Among the authors who addressed these problems we can mention Avraamov (2003), Kirichek and Fedotova (2004), Lazutina (1999), Richter (2002), Tulsanova and Dorsky (2011) and many others. These researchers, who represented different scientific schools and universities, characterized the situation with the development of journalism ethics in Russia and abroad, identified key problems, offered an analysis of the main documents, and outlined their vision of the further development of the situation. Their works have become a basis for studying journalism in the Russian universities and for further scientific inquiry.

It should be noted that recently a number of works have appeared, where ethical issues are considered either in the context of the interdisciplinary research, or in relation to the functioning of the new media. In this respect one can refer to the studies by Litvinenko (2012), Nikonov (2013), Potolokova and Kuryshva (2013). The authors address directly the problems of political communication, information society, internet technologies; however, ethical issues get new meanings and solutions in this context.

Summing up the results of the study, we may note that in the United States formalized documents for journalists concerning the issues of moral and ethical conduct (ethics codes) appeared much earlier than in Russia. The time lag is approximately 70 years: Between the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the 1990s. This may indicate the presence of certain conditions in the society essential for the emergence of relevant documents. At the very minimum, the media institutions should get some autonomy and freedom; the relevant organizations and structures should begin to develop – professional journalism organizations, a system of training and a theoretical base for the fundamental understanding of the phenomenon. It is evident that this set of factors developed in Russia only at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, whereas in the American Society it existed several decades earlier, though in a slightly different form.

Besides, the historical analysis highlights a variety of the key factors which influenced the formation and development of journalism ethics in the two countries. In the United States, the attention was drawn to these issues due to the negative impact of the "yellow press," the increasing amount of scandalous, negative information in the media. The response to this situation was the establishment of professional unions and associations, development of codes of ethics. In Russia the phenomena of this kind are also observed to a certain extent: After becoming independent in the 1990s, the press became virtually unregulated, journalists from some media outlets did not feel any

responsibility to the society, often “sailed close to the wind” in the legal field. In this respect, the adoption of ethical standards helped to set some limits. However, in this case account should be taken of the decades-long dependence of journalists from the party-state structures, continuous work in the conditions of censorship. Exemption from this dependence required new approaches to the regulation of mass-media. Alongside with the legislative acts, the adopted codes of ethics could also perform this compensatory role.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The discussion in the research literature on the emergence and the practice of current application of ethics codes is focused on several problematic aspects. As the Russian author K. A. Nazaretyan rightly points out, one point of view is based on the fact that journalism ethics emerged and developed alongside with the development of the journalism itself (Nazaretyan, 2010). This view is shared by Kumylganova, who points out the development of the moral consciousness of a journalist in the course of professional activity (Kumylganova, 1992). Another view of the problem assumes that journalism ethics began to develop alongside with the formation of the professional community of journalists, which took place in the middle and in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Avraamov, 2003).

Another debating point is related to the identifying of the reasons for the adoption of codes of ethics, the increasing interest in the self-regulation of media. This aspect of the problem is also addressed by different researchers. Some of them believe that this development can be attributed to external factors. For instance, White asserts that codes of ethics are always adopted “under pressure from the outside, which induces the development of self-regulation.” McQuail shares the same opinion. He expresses confidence that the moral principles of journalism are most clearly and vividly articulated in times of crisis and at the turning points in the history of the society (Pattyn, 2000). A slightly different view of the problem is expressed by Kaplar and Maines, who focus on the journalists’ ability to take independent decisions. For example, they point out the main ethical principles taken by journalists from the classical liberal theory – Independent gathering of information and skepticism towards authorities (Kaplar and Maines, 1995).

Among the issues under discussion is the possibility of the development of professional ethics by the journalistic community in authoritarian countries, which include the Soviet Union. The view that everything, including ethical principles, was determined by the party structures and government authorities, is questionable. While agreeing in general with these arguments, we have to note that in practice there were examples which did not fit in this schema. For instance, the major editorial boards followed the rules that were currently reflected in the ethics document of the journalism organizations in different countries. These principles include, in particular, careful work with facts and revalidation of received data (dissemination of false or misleading information could have serious consequences for the author and the editor of a newspaper). Another rule was that of

inadmissibility of plagiarism. Violation of this principle could also entail punishment. The principle of the social responsibility of journalism was also implemented. Print media gave coverage to problem situations; the criticism was often followed by the authorities’ response and appropriate measures. Systematic work with readers’ letters was underway. Thus, the situation with the ethical standards in journalism in the Soviet times was not unambiguous; many standards that were adopted by individual editorial boards were then reflected in the codes of journalism ethics.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

It is important to emphasize that the sphere of ethical standards and rules of journalism is not some rigid formation. Despite the fact that the provisions of the basic documents seem to be firmly established and are often repeated in various texts, new codes are adopted, draft amendments to the existing codes appear. For example, in the fall of 2014 there were reports of the plans for introducing changes in the codes of ethics of the American journalists (SPJ). It was proposed to introduce amendments to the code adopted by the Society of Professional Journalists, to add an article on providing access to the original information to the audience, when it is appropriate. It was also noted that journalists should not have to pay for news, and when this occurs, the published information should be indicated by a special mark. Among the innovations introduced by another organization, the Radio Television Digital News Association was the recommendation for journalists to verify information, “to tell the remaining part of the story and acknowledge the absence of important additional information” (Sadovskaya-Komlach, 2014). This approach means that journalists are aware of the need to explain information, to help a reader, a listener or a viewer to get an understanding of the events which take place. This adjusts the earlier principles suggesting that a journalist is just an intermediary whose task is to transfer information from the source to the audience.

Further discussion should take place in the context of the political culture of different countries. This article only makes an assumption that the model of ethical regulation of journalistic activity is correlated with the social and political traditions of the society. What are the mechanisms and consequences of this influence? To what extent is it true for other countries, for the regions of Eastern and Northern Europe, Asia, etc.? It is evident that such research requires the use of additional methods, including polling, sociological surveys, and content analysis.

Certain transformations of the codes of ethics are likely to take place with the further development of the new media and means of communication. It is clear that in this situation the issues of the protection of privacy and personal information become particularly acute. The problems of the reliability of information, determining authorship of texts also become increasingly relevant. Along with the existing universal approaches, unique ways of solving these problems are also possible in certain countries, which is in no small measure determined by the political and cultural traditions of their development. These issues require further attention of researchers.

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