



Investigative Journalism and Television

Журналистское расследование
и телевидение

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The article focuses on investigative journalism and the figure of the journalist in a television series, using the example of the series *A Journalist's Last Article* (2018), the events of which unfold during the period of perestroika, including restructuring in the press and television sectors, and the era following this restructuring. Behind the opposition of print and television journalism is the opposition of “true” and “non-true” investigative journalism. I argue that there is a shift in emphasis in contemporary TV series, especially about contemporary reality, from investigative journalism to live “unmasking”.

TV SERIES, TELEVISION,
INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM, CRIME,
PRINT JOURNALISM, BROADCAST
JOURNALISM, REPRESENTATIONS
OF REALITY, RECYCLING

Статья посвящена журналистскому расследованию и фигуре журналиста на примере сериала *Последняя статья журналиста* (2018), события которого разворачиваются в период перестройки, в том числе перестройки в прессе и на телевидении, и в постперестроечное время. За противопоставлением печатной и тележурналистики стоит противопоставление «истинной» и «неистинной» журналистики расследований. Утверждается, что в современных сериалах, в особенности о современной действительности, происходит смещение акцента с журналистского расследования на «срывание масок» в прямом эфире.

ТЕЛЕСЕРИАЛ, ТЕЛЕВИДЕНИЕ,
ЖУРНАЛИСТСКОЕ РАССЛЕДОВАНИЕ,
ПРЕСТУПЛЕНИЕ, ЖУРНАЛИСТИКА,
ТЕЛЕЖУРНАЛИСТИКА,
РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЯ
РЕАЛЬНОСТИ, РЕСАЙКЛИНГ

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Thus, Ida Tarbell's investigation that exposed the corruption of the Standard Oil Company and helped to bring it down was first published as a periodical in the popular investigative journalism magazine *McClure's* (1902–1904), and then in the book *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (1904). Upton Sinclair's investigation into the crimes of the Chicago meatpacking industry resulted in a series of essays in the socialist newspaper *Appeal to Reason* (1905), and then in the novel *The Jungle* (1905). Edward R. Murrow, in 1954, wrote a report about the senator Joseph McCarthy, exposing a political practice, nicknamed McCarthyism, of repressions and the persecution of left-wing individuals. *Washington Post* reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein collected and published in the *Post* the evidence that president Nixon had abused his power and, after a Congressional investigation, Nixon had to resign.

INTRODUCTION: INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Investigative journalism existed before such technologies as the radio, television, telephone, computer and the internet appeared, but technological advancements enhanced its abilities, which only strengthened with new and advanced ways to spread the news. It is widely acknowledged that television has played a crucial role in the perception of war crimes in the Western world, beginning with the Vietnam War (1959–1975). The Vietnam War also turned over a new page in the history of investigative journalism because photography and television became something like eyeholes into what seemed to be the reality of war. Through articles and visual imagery, Seymour Hersh and his fellow journalists famously exposed a massacre in the village of My Lai, in South Vietnam, only one of the numerous examples of an exposure of war crimes. As for crimes in civil society or flaws in power structures, Western television, at approximately the same time, merged with a longstanding tradition of investigative journalism that had been making its disclosures public through newspapers, magazines, books and reports⁴. Films and TV series picked up on the tendency, and the TV screen contained stories depicting investigative journalists as one of the tools of exposing the truth about crime. Filmmakers and TV producers turn to existing, well-known cases from the history of journalism. Thus, the story of the publication of the *Pentagon Papers* in *The Washington Post* that exposed the lies of the US government during the Vietnam War and the role therein of *Post* publisher Katharine Graham is reflected in *The Post* (2017, directed by Steven Spielberg). The Watergate scandal is depicted in *All the President's Men* (1976, directed by Alan J. Pakula), *Nixon* (1995, directed by Oliver Stone), and *Frost/Nixon* (2008, directed by Ron Howard); the

informer, known as Deep Throat, appeared in *The X-Files* (1993–2018, produced by Christopher Carl Carter). There are also films and TV series telling fictional or semi-fictional stories of journalists' investigations, e.g.: *Three Days of the Condor* (1975, directed by Sydney Pollack), about a CIA analyst who involuntarily becomes involved in a confrontation with the deep state; *Zodiac* (2007, directed by David Fincher), that tells the story of the three men who try to solve the case of the Zodiac killer in the late-1960s and early-1970s; *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2009, directed by Niels Arden Oplev; 2011 directed by David Fincher), about a newspaper journalist and a young hacker who team up to investigate the 40-year-old disappearance and, probably, murder of a teenage girl; *Spotlight* (2015, directed by Tom McCarthy), that follows a squad of journalists who investigate child sexual abuse within the Catholic Church, and many others.

In the Soviet Union, the rise of investigative journalism, and investigative TV journalism in particular, coincides with perestroika; although elements of investigative reporting could already be found in the programs of the newsreel *Fital'*, which aired from 1962, and in the writer Julian Semyonov's search for the "Amber Room" in the 1980s. In the era of perestroika and glasnost', investigative journalism is associated with the names of Artem Borovik (*Sovershenno Sekretno, Versiya*), Yevgeny Dodolev (*Moskovsky Komsomolets, Sovershenno Sekretno*), Dmitry Likhanov (*Sovershenno Sekretno, Ogonyok*), and Yuri Shchekochikhin (*Literaturnaya Gazeta, Novaya Gazeta*). The monthly newspaper *Sovershenno Sekretno*, founded by Yulian Semyonov in 1989, was the USSR's first independent² political newspaper, specializing in investigative reporting on socially significant events, and had occupied the leading position in the genre of investigative journalism for the thirteen years of its existence. The television program with

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Sovershenno Sekretno, though, was only relatively independent, as the money for its creation was provided by the government.

the same name, which appeared in 1991, was the first program in the genre of investigative journalism on Russian television and its creator and host Artem Borovik was the first journalist to conduct an interview with Mikhail Gorbachev after his resignation from the position of president of the Soviet Union. Among examples of investigative journalism is also the TV news program *600 Seconds* (1987–1993), anchored by Alexander Nevzorov. Certainly not every issue of the program was an inquiry into a crime or criminal activity, in that *600 Seconds* was mainly a digest of Leningrad/St. Petersburg life, but it placed a special emphasis on social problems and the criminal situation in the city, accompanied by numerous scenes of violence and destruction. Yet the program's weekly show, *Panopticon*, did a decent job of providing the public with the outcomes of investigations into, for example, the secrets and hidden sides of the lives of professional street beggars and the rigid hierarchy among them (*Beggars*), into the life of the inhabitants of a city dump (*Junkyard*), and into the plight of patients-convicts of the prison-like medical-labor institution for alcoholics (*LTP*). Perestroika also gave, if not birth, then a boost, to the television and cinema of social awareness, which arranges materials taken mainly from social life and aims to elicit emotions and enable experiences associated with contemporary problems.

Among the problems in the 1990s, the period that followed perestroika, were the rise of criminal activity and the vanishing of the familiar world which Soviet citizens knew and were part of, in which case it is no wonder that the 1990s were nicknamed the new “time of troubles”. Allen C. Lynch (2005) claims that “the Russian experience of the 1990s has been a laboratory like examination of two major propositions of central concern to political science: (1) How might the institutions of a functioning market democracy be built on the ruins of a totalitarian

political economy? (2) What happens to a society in the absence, under these circumstances, of a state that is able to exercise the minimal functions of governance?” (94). In its commitment to economic and political reform, the Russian government “was thus failing to perform some of the elementary functions of governance, in the process jeopardizing not only Russia’s democratic and market prospects but the essential coherence of society; economic inequality tripled in the first years of the transition”; by 1994 the richest top 10 percent of the population was earning 14 (by some accounts, actually 60) times the income of the poorest 10 percent (Ibid.: 99–101). And by 1994 and 1995, the bottom had been reached. Not surprisingly, crime stories placed in the late-1980s and in the 1990s rather often include journalistic investigations into social problems and the felonies caused by them. Those problems and crimes are usually managed by a newspaper or a TV journalist or by a non-professional investigator who uses media in order to make public his or her discoveries. In the six parts of *Gangster Petersburg* (*Banditskii Petersburg*, 2000–2003), based on the novels by the journalist and writer Andrey Konstantinov, the actor Aleksandr Domogarov plays the journalist Alexei Obnorskii (an alter ego of Andrey Konstantinov), who is forced to conduct journalistic investigations into crimes of various kinds, starting with a painting, which is stolen from a museum, and ending with an inquiry into a commissioned murder and its possible instigator. Interestingly, in films and TV series made in the 1990s and early-2000s, television often plays a subordinate role in the story, while the main focus is on the figure of the journalist himself. More recent TV series that place the story about an investigative journalist in the 1990s, reflect more on the possibilities and limitations of investigative journalism, both in the press and on the TV screen, and on the role of media in shaping public opinion.

A JOURNALIST'S LAST ARTICLE. PRINT VS. BROADCAST?

The TV series *A Journalist's Last Article* (2018, directed by Yevgeny Sologalov, Viktor Tatarsky, Armen Nazikyan) placed the figure of an investigative journalist in the center of a story that starts in 1987: Oleg Verkhovtsev (Dmitrii Palamarchuk), a young correspondent for *Pskovskii Vestnik*, lives by the principle to write only about what he has seen with his own eyes. The first episode starts with a scene in which Oleg breaks into a countryside property of the first secretary of the Regional Committee of the Communist party. Oleg's mission is to take photos of the secretary's son, a drug addict, who injects himself while listening to Victor Tsoi's song "Gruppa Krovi". The mission is successfully accomplished, though Oleg suffers a severe dog bite. Now he has the evidence he can use in a newspaper article in order to expose the duplicity and hypocrisy of the first secretary, who has several times shielded his son from punishment for the crimes committed while under the influence.

The young correspondent is bold, ignorant of any restrictions in his hunt for information, has an active social position, and is guided by the desire to change the world. In his perspective, the principal rule of investigative journalism, that requires getting information from at least three sources, gives way to reliance on only one source, his own experience, collecting data by himself in order to have it immediate and firsthand. Reaching an established goal subsequently becomes riskier. Oleg grows obsessed with the idea to write a report about the death penalty and about prisoners who are sentenced to death. It is worth mentioning that in the late-1980s, the question of capital punishment suddenly entered the public agenda. It was one out of the several previously forbidden topics, along with prostitution, drug addiction, and

crimes of the Stalin era, discussion of which was made possible by perestroika. Heated debates concerning the rationale of the death sentence with pro and contra arguments took place mainly in the printed press. The general public mood in the country, oriented to the adoption of Western European values, was for abolishing capital punishment³.

A Journalist's Last Article does not just recreate the details of everyday life in the 1980s, but outlines the essential topics of the time, i.e., the death penalty, drug addiction and nepotism. The series also creates an image of the journalist in the period of perestroika. Oleg is genuinely excited by the idea of writing a report from death row, which is impossible for a journalist to reach; he convinces his high-ranking friends to put him into prison on false charges and, after completing the task, to get him out. By coincidence, on the same night that Verkhovtsev follows the son of the first secretary, two girls are brutally murdered, and using the murder as an occasion to get into a prison, Oleg writes a confession. However, the initial plan does not work. Oleg's high-ranking friends are killed in a car accident (as it turns out later, it was an intentional homicide), and the journalist faces a real prison sentence. Verkhovtsev's decision to fake a confession, as crazy as it may seem, has a pre-history. A number of investigative journalists, eager to get a first-hand account and impression, risked their freedom and/or life. Among the famous examples is Nellie Bly (her real name is Elizabeth Cochran Seaman, 1864–1922) who faked insanity to get admitted into the Women's Lunatic Asylum. Determined to reveal the mistreatment of patients, she risked, and was on the verge of, never getting out.⁴ Julius Chambers (1850–1920) is another journalist famous for getting into an asylum with the help of his friends and an editor from New York in order to obtain information about the suspected mistreatment of patients. His accounts of his ten days' experience were published

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At present, under the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the death penalty is established by the Criminal Code as an exceptional measure of punishment for particularly grave crimes against life. At the same time the Constitution stipulates that the death penalty can be established "until it is abolished", which de facto happened in 2009. In 1997, in order to be accepted to the Council of Europe, Russia signed Protocol No. 6 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms concerning the abolition of the death penalty (in peacetime); however, this protocol has never been ratified.

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The results of Nellie Bly's investigation were published in the *New York World* and later comprised the book *Ten Days in a Mad-House* (1887).

in the *Tribune*; the publication helped to release twelve patients who were not mentally ill and was a prelude to reorganization of the institution and changes in the laws on the treatment of those who are mentally ill. Oleg Verkhovtsev, with his forged confession of murder, joins the roster. Moreover, while in prison, he falsifies mental illness to get into a prison asylum.

When Verkhovtsev faces murder charges, his colleagues from the *Pskovskii Vestnik* are called to testify. The first secretary of the Regional Committee of the Communist party at the trial denies any prior knowledge of Oleg's undercover operation. So does the editor-in-chief and his close allies that represent the old Soviet style of the press. They present Verkhovtsev as an air-monger and accuse him of sensationalism and a lack of moral principles. Oleg's friend Alexei Dyomin, the only one who tried to help him, is fired from the newspaper. Alexei's attempts to bring the only witness of the crime to testify and to convince the investigator to revise the case fail. After Verkhovtsev is gone and his friend is fired, there is nobody in the newspaper to write cutting-edge articles on social themes. As the editor-in-chief puts it, "people aren't interested in how much meat this meat factory gives them. They are interested in why this meat is not in the stores. They are interested in why vendors are selling this meat from under the counter, and there are only soup kits and scrawny chickens on the counter. That's what people are interested in now!"

Meanwhile, while Oleg Verkhovtsev serves his term and in vain appeals the sentence, his friend Alexei Dyomin (Mikhail Kasapov), who was fired from the *Pskovskii Vestnik*, starts to work in TV and at some point launches a program in the genre of journalistic investigation. Dyomin's switch to television introduces the image of a TV screen to the series. *A Journalist's Last Article* juxtaposes two types of journalism,

print journalism on one hand, and broadcast on the other. It also juxtaposes two methods of investigation, undercover journalism (when a reporter tries to infiltrate a certain community) and journalism that is investigative but open.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the editorial board of the *Pskovskii Vestnik* adapts to the new situation and, identifying itself as the fourth estate, shamelessly prostitutes its position on certain matters, e.g., silence on the bad quality of vodka that is produced at a local factory that the former first secretary now owns. The style of the *Pskovskii Vestnik* changes in comparison to its pre-perestroika self. The newspaper articles are no longer just Soviet-style happy reports about the achievements of agriculture, but include an investigation into the misdemeanors of local businesses. However, this investigation is not a serious search for the truth and not a step in the struggle with bureaucracy or mafia, but a tool for raising money, as the editor-in-chief successfully blackmails the owner of the factory. Alexei Dyomin, the TV journalist, stands on the contrary as an advocate for justice. The character reappears in the seventh episode, in which we see him and his assistant on the roof (Fig. 1).

Alexei is working on a story about a music school for children that was shut down because its director decided it was not bringing in enough revenue, turning the building instead into a brothel with a sauna. Risking falling off the roof and being caught by the brothel's guard, he manages to take compromising photos of what is going on in the former music school. The journalist also discovers that behind this criminal activity is the head of the local administration, and that clients of the brothel include deputies and prosecutors. There is also another story which Alexei is in the middle of investigating, one of criminal activity in the market. Impressed with, but worried

by, Alexei's bold investigations, his chief warns him and reminds him of what happened to Dmitrii Kholodov, a correspondent for the newspaper *Moskovsky Komsomolets*. Kholodov was known for his articles about corruption in the Russian army and his severe criticism of Defence Minister Pavel Grachev for the misuse of funds intended for the resettlement of former Soviet troops who had been based in East Germany. In October 1994, Dmitry Kholodov was killed at his workplace at the *Moskovsky Komsomolets* when he opened a booby-trapped briefcase. The microphone that Alexei holds in his hand is marked "10" (he is an anchor of the program *Sensation 10*), that reminds the viewer of the program *600 seconds*, amounting to "10" minutes. *Sensation 10* is on the fictional Channel 25, the program *600 seconds* was on Channel 5. In the TV series, Alexei Dyomin, like Alexander Nevzorov, combines traits of a crime reporter and an investigative journalist. The differences in the work of those two types of journalists are quite significant, yet in practice they have much in common within the same newsroom, since a part of an investigative reporter's job is to keep track of the criminal situation in the city or region.

In one of the episodes, Alexei Dyomin clashes with his former boss from the *Pskovskii Vestnik*, and it seems at first that there is an opposition of the printed press, on one hand, to TV journalism, on the other. However, what is juxtaposed is the 'honest' or true journalism that Dyomin embodies and the corrupted, untrue journalism embodied by the editor-in-chief of *Pskovskii Vestnik*. Not only do Dyomin and his former boss use the findings of their journalistic investigations differently, one for making the world better, the other for making himself richer, they treat their responsibilities to society differently. Never giving up his attempts to find out the truth and to help his



← **FIG. 1**
A Journalist's Last Article. Season 1,
episode 7, 0:27:58h.



← **FIG. 2**
A Journalist's Last Article. Season 1,
episode 8, 0:39:45h.

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It is noteworthy that in this episode, TV news is an “event” (Yu. Lotman) that changes the course of the story narrative. Compare with, for example, the episode *The Executioner (Palach, 1990, directed by Victor Sergeev)*, where the main character Olga learns about the death of her friend Svetlana from the program *600 seconds*. Here, the episode has an informative function that does not constitute an “event” as it does not influence the storyline.

imprisoned friend, Alexei states that “the worst thing in the world is indifference, especially to human life.” When two prisoners escape from the prison asylum during a fire, one of whom is Oleg Verkhovtsev and the other is a serial killer, the editor of *Pskovskii Vestnik* does not inform the readers about the event because he was instructed by the authorities not to do so. Alexei, who is free to choose topics for the program himself, on the contrary hurries to spread the news and warn about the danger, thus demonstrating that he learned the lesson Oleg taught him “to tell the truth, no matter how scary and bitter it is.” Oleg watches the TV, realizes who in fact the companion with whom he shares food and lodging is, disarms him and, though risking his own arrest for his escape from prison, nevertheless informs the police about the dangerous criminal’s whereabouts (Fig. 2)⁵.

There is a well-known list of the ten principles of journalism:

- 1) Journalism’s first obligation is to the truth.
- 2) Its first loyalty is to citizens.
- 3) Its essence is a discipline of verification.
- 4) Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover.
- 5) It must serve as a monitor of power.
- 6) It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise.
- 7) It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant.
- 8) It must present the news in a way that is comprehensive and proportional.
- 9) Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience.
- 10) Citizens have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news as well — even more so as they become producers and editors themselves (Kovach; Rosenstiel 2021: xxvii)

Following those principles is what distinguishes true journalism, to which Alexei Dyomin and Oleg Verkhovtsev are adherents, from the false journalism of the editor of *Pskovskii Vestnik*. However, at some point there is a question of verisimilitude and verifiability. Jean Baudrillard, in his discussion of media representations of the Gulf war, denounced the spectacular dimension of the war as filled with uncertainty. In his view, spectacularizing wars involves deterrence — the reality that is spectacularly presented on television screens vanishes, while leaving us “with the symptomatic reading on our screens of the effects of the war, or the effects of discourse of the war, or completely speculative strategic evaluations which are analogous to those evaluations of opinion provided by the polls” (236). Verkhovtsev in his pursuit for justice, while trying to help his girlfriend to return the bank stolen from her father, makes up the existence of the organization “White Arrow.” According to his legend, the organization consists of active and retired secret service people who act as law enforcement and executes dishonest businessmen.⁶ The chief editor of *Sensation 10* doubts the authenticity of the video tape, however Dyomin, who does not know the truth about the origin of the video, wants it to be true, and chooses to believe in the existence of the organization that restores justice in unjust times. Unaware, he sides with Verkhovtsev and insists on the video to be shown in the program (Fig. 3 and 4).

All the newspapers pick up the hot topic and reprint the story first told on TV, and even those who know that the story is fictional support the idea that it is real and contribute to the story, filling it with more details. Thus, the journalist’s will to believe helps to make the effects of the video true. Dishonest businessmen got the message and acted accordingly in fear for their lives. Contrary to Baudrillard’s claim,

6 According to A. Lynch, by the mid-1990s in Russia criminal elements controlled 40,000 privatized enterprises and collected protection money from 80 percent of the country’s banks and private enterprises (Piotr Filipov, Yeltsin adviser). In August 1995, the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs estimate that criminal groups controlled over 400 banks and 47 financial exchanges. In 1997, three-quarters of Moscow shops paid security firms for protection, and Russian businessmen had to pay bribes (Lawrence Summers, US deputy secretary of the treasury). By 1997, 41,000 industrial companies and 80 percent of joint ventures were believed to have criminal connections (121–122).

FIG. 3 →

Fig. 3: *A Journalist's Last Article*. Season 1, episode 10, 0:05:05h.



FIG. 4 →

Fig. 4: *A Journalist's Last Article*. Season 1, episode 10, 0:19:51h.





← **FIG. 5**
A Journalist's Last Article. Season 1,
episode 12, 0:44:44h.



← **FIG. 6**
A Journalist's Last Article. Season 1,
episode 12, 0:46:44h.

the reality as presented on the TV screen did not vanish, even though fake, instead assuming the status of independent reality.

Furthermore, video evidence shown on TV constitutes formal grounds for legal procedures. For example, in the 1990s some policemen could take goods from small 24-hour shops without paying money, especially at nighttime. To disclose such misuse of power, an investigative journalist would take the place of a cashier and capture events with a hidden camera. In conversation with the prosecutor Stemberg, a former detective on Verkhovtsev's case (Karen Badalov), Dyomin boasts that this is what he did and what led to the legal case and the subsequent resignation of the head of the police in one of the districts in St. Petersburg. On the objections of the prosecutor that he ought just to have filed a complaint, the journalist responds that when something is shown on his TV program, it works; otherwise, it does not. The assumption is that if you tell the truth, people trust you.

LIVE BROADCAST AS THE FINAL WORD

It would be no exaggeration to say that contemporary films and TV series “fell in love” with live broadcasts and talk shows. Though the events of the *A Journalist's Last Article* were placed in the late-1980s and the 1990s, the series themselves were filmed more recently. It is not surprising that the culminating moment in *A Journalist's Last Article* is the live broadcast that starts as the conversation between the anchor Dyomin and the prosecutor Stemberg about Verkhovtsev's ‘cold case’, and ends with the arrival of Verkhovtsev, still a fugitive. The television studio becomes a stage on which the dramatic turn happens: the case is considered not fully resolved and is reopened for further investigation (Fig. 5 and 6).



← **FIG. 7**
A Journalist's Last Article. Season 1,
 episode 16, 0:49:46h.

The assumption is that new methods, i.e. a DNA test, could now be used on the surviving evidence to prove Verkhovtsev's innocence or guilt. However, the story ends with Oleg Verkhovtsev taking over the editor-in-chief position in the newspaper. In the final scene he is working on a typewriter, presumably writing a book. Behind him on the wall there is a newspaper; and the title of the article reads "Yeltsin seems to have sclerosis. He has forgotten his promises". This is one more reference to *600 Seconds* and a hint that the perestroika style of journalism is coming to its end (Fig. 7).

Similarly, live broadcast, though not in the TV studio but streamed on the internet, becomes the final word in the TV series *Clerk* (2021, directed by Oksana Karas), which tells the story of Arina Alferova (Victoria Tolstoganova), an official in the regional Ministry of Health whose lover speculates and sells huge batches of expired drugs and

fakes on the market without her knowledge, to which she is an unwitting accomplice. When this is uncovered, Arina goes to the Ministry and there, from the office, indicts live on air all those involved in the case, listing their names. Featuring a live broadcast on screen produces in the viewer the illusion of co-presence in real time “here and now”. The anguish or relief that the viewer experiences adds to this illusion. There are numerous other examples in films and TV series of talk shows, reality shows and live broadcasts when masks come off and the “truth” is revealed.

To conclude, print and broadcast journalism on the TV screen reflect the time that enters the film either as a certain atmosphere or as a social situation and social relations. Baudrillard (2001) identifies three main forms of interaction with the past: simulation, citation, and reappropriation (re-appropriation). Series that include television from a certain period in history often combine all three of those forms. In an effort to enhance the impression of reality from a film about the past, directors insert into films and series fragments of TV programs that, though fictional, refer to existing ones. The inclusion of fictionalized documents of the historic period is not only a marker of a particular era; in some cases, it is an attempt to attract attention to certain phenomena, as, for example, the role of print and broadcast journalism in a liberal society. ♡

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Season 1, episode 16. 00:49:46.

Резюме

Статья посвящена журналистскому расследованию и фигуре журналиста в телесериале на примере сериала *Последняя статья журналиста* (2018), события которого разворачиваются в период перестройки, в том числе перестройки в прессе и на телевидении, и в постперестроечное время. В Советском Союзе расцвет журналистики расследований, и, в частности, тележурналистики расследований, совпадает с перестройкой, хотя ее элементы можно найти в программах киножурнала *Фитиль*, начиная с 1962 года, и в поисках писателем Юлианом Семеновым «янтарной комнаты» в 1980-е годы. К примерам журналистских расследований относится и телевизионная информационная программа *600 секунд* (1987–1993), ведущим которой был Александр Невзоров. Конечно, далеко не каждый выпуск программы был расследованием преступления или преступной деятельности, поскольку *600 секунд* — это в основном дайджест ленинградской/петербургской жизни, хотя и с особым акцентом на социальные проблемы и криминальную ситуацию в городе, сопровождаемую многочисленными сценами насилия и разрушений. В сериале *Последняя статья журналиста* (2018, режиссеры Евгений Сологалов, Виктор Татарский, Армен Назикян) фигура журналиста-расследователя находится в центре истории, которая начинается в 1987 году: Олег Верховцев, молодой корреспондент *Псковского вестника*, живет по принципу писать только о том, что видел своими глазами. Верховцев смел, не знает никаких ограничений в своей охоте за информацией, имеет активную социальную позицию и руководствуется желанием изменить мир. С его точки зрения, главное правило журналистского расследования, требующее получения информации как минимум

из трех источников, уступает место единственному источнику — собственному опыту, самостоятельному сбору информации. *Последняя статья журналиста* не просто воссоздает детали повседневной жизни 1980-х годов, но и очерчивает важнейшие темы того времени — смертную казнь, наркоманию и протекционизм. Сериал также создает образ журналиста времен перестройки. Олег искренне увлечен идеей написать репортаж из камеры смертников, куда журналисту попасть невозможно; он убеждает посадить его в тюрьму по ложному обвинению. Однако все идет не по плану. В *Последней статье журналиста* сопоставляются два вида журналистики — печатная и вещательная, телевизионная. В ней также сопоставляются два метода расследования: журналистика под прикрытием (когда репортер пытается внедриться в определенное сообщество) и журналистское расследование без прикрытия. За противопоставлением печатной и тележурналистики стоит противопоставление «истинной» и «неистинной» журналистики расследований. В заключении статьи утверждается, что в современных сериалах, в особенности о современной действительности, происходит смещение акцента с журналистского расследования на «срывание масок» в прямом эфире.

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