The dynamics of public discourse during the coronavirus pandemic: a request for responsibility

Grigorii L. Tulchinskii

Published online: 08 Dec 2020.

Submit your article to this journal ⬚

View related articles ⬚

View Crossmark data ⬚

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Check for updates

The dynamics of public discourse during the coronavirus pandemic: a request for responsibility

Grigorii L. Tulchinskii[a,b]

[a]Department of Problems of Interdisciplinary Synthesis in the Field of Social Sciences and Humanities St. Petersburg State University, Saint Petersburg, Russia; [b]Department of Public Administration, National Research University Higher School of Economics, St. Petersburg, Russia

ABSTRACT
The coronavirus epidemic caused not only an explosion of attention in Russian public communication, but the media discourse content also transformed radically during the first months of the 2020 epidemic: from distrust and panic to responsible balanced content. An analysis of this phenomenon allows for a deeper understanding of the evolution of the value-normative characteristics of modern society broadcast in the media. There is a trend of a transition from ill-conceived propaganda of rights to a balance of rights and responsibilities as well as an increase of attention in public discourse to free speech. In addition, there is a trend towards a transition from the dominance of post-truth to manifestations of personal freedom as responsibility. The dynamics of the coronavirus discourse not only fit into this general civilizational trend, but they provided additional impulses for the trend's further development. Such a shift in emphasis makes it useful to appeal to the concept of parrhesia – a free and responsible 'taking the floor' ('word-taking').

This virus is actually not that terrible,
but it is deadly …
In general, everything is clear,
but nothing at all is understandable.
Collaborative creativity in
Singer Olga Arefieva's LiveJournal
You'll pay for your words!
A maxim of Russian criminal culture

Introduction

Modern mass media of the postindustrial society has undergone a serious test in the year 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. The coronavirus plunged the global economy into shock, and it posed an extreme challenge to nation states as well as supranational political and public institutions. The quarantine brought industries, services, and transportation to a halt. Jobs and education were transferred to remote work and distant learning. Self-isolation and widespread distancing have transformed all spheres of public life: politics,

economics, education, leisure activities, and personal life. Such large-scale changes have inevitably impacted the methods of implementation, and, most importantly, the content of public communication. The long-brewing main trends in the evolution of public discourse of recent decades have clearly been expressed and intensified in the dynamic transformation of this content.

The focus of this work is the responsibility of public discourse. Irresponsible social communications destroy interpersonal trust in social institutions, which is necessary for the organization and development of society, legitimacy of state power, business, civil society, and personal relationships.

It is hypothesized that in modern public discourse, with a general trend of accentuating the positioning of personal emotionally expressed opinions and experiences, there is a request for the expression of responsible public speech, which is amplified during large-scale crisis situations.

Today, the rapid development of electronic technology has radically changed the format of social communications. The competition of traditional media (press, radio, TV) and new media (social media networks, the blogosphere) was quickly replaced by the creation of a single common media platform on the Internet. Moreover, news channels on the Internet, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, VKontakte (Russian equivalent of Facebook), other social networks, and mobile communications with many applications have created a rather complex situation. First of all, now there is an unprecedented opportunity to quickly reach a global audience in terms of presenting one's personal opinion, including views that are emotional and evaluative. Consequently, if previously the media broadcasted institutionally selected socially significant (at times normative) information, now the media space is full of personal opinions of experts, citizens, artists, entrepreneurs, athletes, writers, and even major politicians (social media accounts of Boris Johnson, Dmitry Medvedev, and others). In addition, representatives of the authorities get confused and contradict each other no less than bloggers. As a result, distrust of the authorities and conspiracy theories regarding their decisions arise. This is one more argument for the need for responsible discourse.

Participants in the recent roundtable 'Human Rights and the Imbalance of Mutual Responsibility,' conducted by the Russian Association of Political Science and the Higher School of Economics (St. Petersburg, 17–19 October 2019), noted a growing discord in modern society can be 'diagnosed' as well as a contradiction between an individual's right to freedom of speech (fraught with fake news, post-truth, bullying, and harassment) and damage to reputations, property, and even the life of an individual (Krivenko, 2019, pp. 107–120). Content forces the authorities and providers to develop and take measures (legal and technical) to tighten control over the content being broadcasted, its authors and those who relay content. It is no coincidence that even before the pandemic in journalism, topics of fakes, post-truth, information wars, and countering them came to the fore in discussions among experts and lawmakers. Communications during the coronavirus pandemic sharply manifested and exacerbated the processes noted above and their consequences (Agamben, 2020; Obchshestvo, 2020). The concept and practice of ensuring human rights is a great achievement of civilization. Moreover, human rights issues are an integral part of the solution to the pandemic – from the secrecy of personal data to guarantees of medical care and special protection of sociologically and biologically vulnerable elderly people and children. This article

deals with the imbalance between the right to freedom of public opinion and the right to ensure security, which raises the questions of the relationship between freedom and responsibility, primarily, in relation to public speech.

It seems that a matured request for responsible public discourse cannot be reduced to restrictive and prohibitive measures and standards. The self-organization of the network community and the self-determination of authors who take the word in the media space play an important role. In this regard, it may be useful to return to the understanding of the ancient concept of 'parrhesia' – responsible public speech (oral and written), begun in due time by Michel Foucault (Foucault, 2010) who denied that parrhesia can exist in conditions of mass communications that turn communication into an irresponsible saying 'about everything,' an abundance of conscious and unconscious fakes – in fact, irresponsible public speech. It is hoped that the content of this work will make it possible to revise Foucault's conclusions.

Thus, the purpose of the work is to justify the presence of a trend towards responsible public discourse in modern social communication and to trace the trend using media communications in Russia at the beginning and the peak of the coronavirus epidemic. To achieve this goal, a number of problems are identified that require the use of appropriate concepts to solve them.

Firstly, it is necessary to substantiate the mechanism of dominance for emotional-evaluative opinions in modern public communication, which generate an abundance of fake information. To solve this problem, ideas from social semiotics are involved (Halliday, 1978; Hodge & Kress, 1988; Leeuwen, 2005; Lotman, 1967; Randviir, 2004) and their extension to the concept of 'deep semiotics.'

Secondly, it is essential to trace the dynamics of the content of public discourse in Russian media during the coronavirus pandemic of 2020. An analysis of popular media resources is used for this. At the same time, it would be possible to separate these resources on the basis of political (official) and public communication and compare the government discourse in the media with the public resonance. However, in the case of this article, such a separate analysis of traditional media (as an example of the transmission of the official point of view) and social networks (transmission of alternative stances) does not seem so significant and it would turn the focus of the article into a slightly different dimension. As noted above, on the Internet platform there is actually a single media space that integrates traditional media and new media. And in this space (not only in Russia) the authorities and their representatives are confused and contradict each other no less than users of networks, journalists, and various experts. The development of events in connection with the pandemic illustrated this with particular clarity. Therefore, such a 'superintegration of the media and social networks' in terms of their overall low responsibility, exacerbating social stress, is consistent with the main topic of the study – identifying a common request for responsible public discourse from all actors of the public communication process. Separate analytics (interesting in of itself) would lead to a divergence of consideration of particular positions and reduce the particular positions and reduce the probative potential of considering a general trend.

Thirdly, the problem arises of interpreting the results of a review of the content dynamics of COVID discourse in the general socio-cultural and socio-political context of public social communication. To explain the dynamics, the value-normative model of sociogenesis and development of modern society, including Russian society (Inglehart

& Welzel, 2005; Politizheskaja kultura, 2015; Welzel, 2013), was used, which demonstrates the dependence of value-normative attitudes on the normal or critical state of society. The analysis also was based on a model of the general evolution (stages) of accepting the inevitable from increased (predominantly negative) emotional evaluations to constructive positive acceptance of the reality of the critical situation (Kübler-Ross, 2014). All these stages are imbued with the request for responsible information about the necessary actions.

Thus, fourthly, it is necessary to find a balance in public communication between freedom and responsibility, the correlation of these concepts. To solve this problem, a methodologically important philosophy of the act as a sane (rational and responsible) action is applied, including public speech proposed by Mikhail Bakhtin. This consideration directly leads to the idea of parrhesia and the possibility of its implementation in modern mass communication.

The structure of this work is organized in accordance with the tasks formulated above. The main ideas and the preliminary text of the article were presented in May 2020, before the removal of quarantine restrictions at the end of June. During this time, the author received extremely informative and useful commentary and ideas from anonymous reviewers, whom he greatly appreciates because they contributed to a serious reconfiguration of the work's conceptual apparatus. In parallel, the opportunity arose to compare the results of the study with the subsequent development of events and the results of other studies, which, as shown at the end of the work, confirmed its main conclusions.

Fakes as a result of self-positioning

The topic of post-truth, industrial production of fake information, and the ability to confront it is a very relevant topic. Conferences, roundtables, and large-scale analytics are dedicated to post-truth. Meanwhile, post-truth refers to a deep initial feature of communication, which, thanks to modern technologies, primarily the Internet and social networks, has come to the fore. This allows for not only a new, but also a deeper understanding of the nature of communication processes, content broadcast in them, and reactions to it.

In terms of social semiotics and its expansion in terms of 'deep semiotics,' complementing the traditional analysis vectors of sign systems (syntax, semantics, and pragmatics) with a personal dimension (Tulchinskii, 2019), there is a shifting emphasis from social meanings (objective and value-normative) to personal meanings, i.e. evaluation and emotional components of the presented and transmitted semantic content of the experience. If earlier social communication was associated with the allocation and transmission of social meanings – relatively stable patterns and styles that convey cultural normative value, in the current situation communication refers more to the presentation and transmission of the unique personal experiences themselves, sometimes even those not personally collected. Instagram, partly Facebook and YouTube, are a stream of representations of personal meanings from the first person. They are aimed not so much at generating some kind of empathetic experience, but at the presentation of the experiences themselves and their recognition.

In content, such an experience is narrative discursive practice, which is a basis for the formation and presentation of self-awareness. This involves building a narrative 'in the

first person,' in which the person appears as an actor in his biography (autobiographically myself), and the coherence of such a narration is memory (Damasio, 2010; Dennett, 2003). Such a narration can be realized only in the communicative practices of public and internal speech, which describes a social experience and attitude towards it in the process of socialization and individualization.

At the same time, it is important to be aware that meaningful information, such as the content of social communication, was originally the product of a narrative 'in the first person.' Any finite system (such is the human person) is not accessible to the infinite diversity of the world. Therefore, the system is compelled to comprehend this diversity always from some position, in some perspective, in some respect, and in some sense. Meaningful information is fundamentally a product of a finite system, and in a sense, it is inevitably 'fake,' if not initially, then from a possible position of someone's evaluation.

In the current situation, in fact, we are referring to the broadest possibilities of positioning self-awareness (identity) 'in the first person,' immersing it in the context of public social communication. Here, self-awareness appears already in the 'third-person' (as identification) and feedback is received in the form of positive and negative assessments, even up to institutional social control (Tulchinskii, 2020). In addition, the question arises about the specifying role of the social status of the 'taken word' on the features and scale of the formation of the semantic picture of the world (Groys, 2016).

It is no coincidence that current discussions reveal the main ethical and legal, if not anthropological paradox of the civilizational conditions of modern social life. Opportunities and the right of the individual to express his opinion, his position, give rise to an abundance of information that is controversial, ambiguous, and questions its good faith. The situation stimulates individual and institutional ways of filtering such information, and more control over network content.

Therefore, the topic of the balance of rights and responsibilities (moral and legal) in the practice of both promoting human rights and organizing network communication deserves more attention. Indicative material to understand this is provided by the transformation of the coronavirus pandemic discourse, which unfolded in 2020.

Trend of coronavirus discourse in regard to social responsibility

Material for understanding the transformation of public discourse in the Russian language sector of the Internet is the period from January to May 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic gradually, and then to a greater degree, was approaching its peak.

The chronology of the events of this period are well-known to all. Therefore, it is possible to briefly recall the sequence of events that became the subject of public discussion. Prior to January 2020, reports of the discovery of cases of pneumonia of unknown origin in the capital of the Chinese province of Hubei at the end of December did not attract much attention in the public information space because it was perceived as a regular seasonal escalation of respiratory infections in Southeast Asian countries. Wuhan, the epicenter of the infection, was placed under quarantine on January 22. On January 30, the World Health Organization acknowledged the danger of this infection on a global scale. On February 11, 2020, in connection with the identification of the pathogen (coronavirus SARS-CoV-2), the disease became referred to as COVID-2019. Since the infection, and often a severe and sometimes fatal course of the disease, spread rapidly to almost all continents,

which was facilitated by intensive air traffic, the WHO on March 11 acknowledged the outbreak as a pandemic. From March 13, the disease's center shifted to Europe.

On January 31, Russia closed its border with China. Beginning from March 11, restrictions were placed in international air travel up to its complete cessation in a number of directions. The President of the Russian Federation announced the week of March 30-April 3 as a non-working week, and then this was extended inclusively to April 30 with the possibility of an extension or shortening of the order depending on the situation. Furthermore, subjects of the federation and local officials were given the right to implement restrictive measures and their repeal depending on the dynamics of the detection of the infection and its consequences.

The objective picture of the situation was ambiguous – the majority of those who contracted the virus, as well as those who died, where in Moscow and the Moscow region. Quarantine measures were implemented in a fairly timely manner in Moscow, which included requirements of self-isolation, strict control with the use of force by the police and the Federal National Guard Troops in order to detect those who violated self-isolation and issue sanctions. In other regions of the country, testing began much later. An arbitrary increase of those with pneumonia, in comparison to the previous year, was recorded almost everywhere, but milder measures were implemented to varying degrees.

The ambiguous and uncertain situation inevitably resulted in an explosion of pandemic content in public communication. This content in a matter of days supplanted the much-discussed topics, prior to the pandemic, of the fall of oil prices and exchange rate of the Russian ruble as well as the proposed amendments to the Constitution by the President of the Russian Federation and their approval. By the end of January, the coronavirus came to the fore and became the main topic in Russian media. If on January 15 there were 1.2 thousand messages reported about this disease, then on March 11 there were already 733.2 thousand messages. The number of publications about the coronavirus for this period increased from 263 to 35,200. Overall in Russian social networks from January 15 to March 11, the coronavirus was mentioned 13.3 million times. (Koronavirus, 2020)

According to Medialog, the coronavirus was more frequently discussed on Facebook (38.9%) and VKontakte (20.1%), followed by Twitter (16.9%), Telegram (4.0%), Instagram (3.5%) and Youtube (2.2%).

The most mentioned words in social networks during the period of March 30 to April 5, 2020 were 'coronavirus' (11.5 million messages) and 'quarantine' (10.3 million). With a substantial margin they were followed by other (on the same topic) words 'pandemic/epidemic' (3.9 million) and 'self-isolation/stay home' (9.4 million) (Slova, 2020).

However, of greatest interest is how the emotional coloring of the most popular posts changed. Despite the fact that the Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumerism (Rospotrebnadzor) created a publicly accessible resource where the dynamics of the development of the pandemic in the world and in Russia were regularly reported (Informatsionnyj bjulleten, 2020), estimates of what was happening were extremely emotional and encompassed a broad spectrum of emotions. Media, including the Facebook newsfeed and Telegram channels, had an abundance of opinions from self-proclaimed experts. Their narratives, mostly in the first person, were evaluative and emotionally charged, which, inevitability creates a breeding ground for fake information. And not everyone can make sense of this cacophony without good navigation,

and social networks made it possibile to share this confusion, enhancing social stress via the 'snowball effect.'

Thus, the greatest involvement (the total number of likes, comments, and reposts) was generated by texts and videos in which famous people shared information and their own experiences. In one of the most popular pieces, Elena Sazhina (565.5 thousand) spoke about how more people die from other diseases than from the coronavirus. Media personality Olga Buzova (467.1 thousand) shared that due to the coronavirus, she had to cancel her trip with her sweetheart to Paris. In VKontakte, the most interest (18.8 thousand users) was created by a post about Tom Hanks' and his wife's contraction of the coronavirus.

Enhanced attention was fueled by posts with memes, videos, in which people made fun of the panic and frenzied purchases of food and supplies. Just one comical video by Andrei Borisov attracted 479.4 thousand views (Koronavirus, 2020). For comparison, a post by the Moscow Emergency Operations Center on the situation with the coronavirus resulted in 317.8 thousand views.

A surge of esotericism, typical of crisis situations that generate uncertainty, also appeared (Shishkov, 2020), such as the search for explanations in a kind of worldwide conspiracy, total manipulation, the intervention of God's will, and even aliens. One of the most popular videos about the coronavirus (170.8 thousand) in YouTube was a story by Alexei Navalny on who makes a profit from epidemics and quarantines.

At first glance, the outbreak of public coronavirus discourse confirms the abovementioned trend in terms of personification of public communication, the transformation of an individual's right to freedom of speech into the growth of fake news, post-truth bullying and bullying practices, a threat to reputation, and privacy. Some experts even referred to the vulnerability of the information society as an 'info-epidemic (Kirija, 2020).

However, an analysis of the content dynamics for the surge in public discourse illustrates a certain structure of the dynamics themselves. The noted transformation of 'coronavirus content,' presented in the media, in principle, coincides with the well-known five stages of accepting the inevitable formulated by E. Kübler-Ross at the end of the 1960s (Kübler-Ross, 2014). When faced with severe unexpected stress, the first reaction is denial, including sometimes obvious facts. Furthermore, this denial is often expressed in varying degrees – from denial of the very existence of the virus, to downplaying the significance of the infection and ridiculing those who perceive information about it seriously. Prior to the assertion of facts, denial is replaced by a search for the guilty party, the carriers of hidden evil will, and outrageous accusations against them – from foreign enemies (a Chinese provocation in the fight for world supremacy, a biological weapon supposedly developed by the USA) to accusations of the collapse of healthcare and the desire of Russian authorities to use the epidemic to further strengthen the regime.

Angry accusations are replaced by 'bargaining' (it is not that terrible, only elderly people need to be afraid of getting infected), replaced by depression (the need to stock up on foodstuffs, acquire dependable masks, gloves, think of possibly moving to the village, etc.). Characteristically, specialists noted increased depression in young people who initially believed that they were also at risk (Ekspert, 2020). It is precisely with these stages that a sharp short-term public conflict between bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church, with federal and local authorities over access to churches and conducting largescale public events with worshipers, took place. The conflict culminated in demonstratively public actions by the bishops (a flyover by Barsanuphius of Saint

Petersburg on a helicopter with an icon and a trip around Moscow by Patriarch Kirill in an armored car with an icon). Patriarch Kirill also addressed the public, summoning people to observe the quarantine.

This cycle of 'acceptance' concludes: a discussion to ensure 'remote' work, calls to heed the recommendations of specialists and local authorities, and indignation by the behavior of those not adhering to the quarantine. The increased interest was aroused by a systematically updated selection of the resource RBK with information about what was occurring in the world regarding the pandemic, specific advice about changes in lifestyles, and how to maintain a business in the times (Trendy, 2020). Materials of an expert survey on the situation with state support of business abroad on the resource Excecutive.ru were in demand (Kak pomogajut, 2020). Mass media was imbued with material concerning 'creative life during the quarantine' (RBK, 2020; Russia's, 2020). This is not access to funds or simply self-presentation on Instagram and harsh exchanges on Facebook and Twitter in regard to posts, it is something fundamentally new – real-life communication and creativity.

In the final phase, the request arises for responsible speech. This is not only and not so much controllable as it is the responsibility of the first person. Indeed, with the implementation of a long-term quarantine in April, there appeared balanced assessments of the decisions made, not only anti-crisis, but also the beginning of the establishment of institutes for the near future. Examples of this include publications evaluating the events by V. Kuzminov and V. May – rectors of leading Russian universities (Kaljukov & Doronov, 2020). The experience of the Strategic Analytical Center 'Platform' in implementing free public access not only to the data of regular monitoring of public opinion (with measurements 1–2 times a week), but also to the interpretation of the data from the point of view of losses and acquisitions during the crisis deserves closer attention. There was a request for a new social environment – both by the center's specialists and from the position of qualified experts from other public areas (Obchshestvo, 2020). Against this background of a request for responsible speech, irresponsible and ill-conceived decisions of some authorities or specific officials can intensify civic inflexibility, criticism, and political rejection.

The marked stages, to a large degree, portray the public coronavirus discourse in the country, Moscow, and Russian national media. Regional media progressed through similar stages with a certain time lag, dependent upon the development of the situation in the regions. Characteristically, during the stage of outrage, accusations were addressed to Moscow and Muscovites (coronavirus being referred to as the 'Moscow disease') (Moskovskaja zaraza, 2020) from rural residents. However, the tracing of such 'fractality' demands further research.

The results of the analytics of the Sociological Anti-Crisis Center 'Platform' are indicative of social reactions to the situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the emotional state of society, expectations, assessment of the effectiveness of the measures taken, and the prognosis of the development of events. In the course of the research, the analysts were primarily interested in the assessment of the main 'speakers of the crisis,' as well as the sources of distrust and trust in broadcasted information. The analysis illustrated that during the pandemic, a new format for the functioning of the media was clearly manifested, in which network communications complement, develop, and sometimes challenge information from official sources. As the main source of information, 43% of respondents named federal television channels and 57% named social networks. 50%

of the respondents during the pandemic period began to read news on social networks more often. At the same time, the official media sources for the majority of respondents serve as information that needs to be checked, interpreted, and discussed. It is precisely for this that network platforms are used.

According to results as of June 6, 2020, 56% of respondents do not trust official statistics on the spread of the coronavirus, and 68% of them believe that the information is intentionally distorted. According to the study, people trust primarily not the channel, but the specific source, and the individual's personality and experience, and a close and understandable audience in contrast to the distant position of the media. The greatest interest and trust (6.6–6.8 points out of 10) in a pandemic situation was caused by the experience of eyewitnesses and doctors working directly with COVID-19 patients. The information of famous experts was rated at 6.4 points, President at 5.5, and officials at various levels from 4.9–5.1. As a result, eyewitness testimony, such as a blogger's comment can be more convincing. At the same time, ignoring the private cases in the media gives the impression of deliberate silence, which leads to an increase in mistrust and alarmism.

The situation was aggravated by the accumulation of information about conflicting statistics, fluctuations, and erroneous decisions of the authorities. The explanations of officials about the inefficiency of masks for healthy people were followed by the introduction of a mask regime with threats of sanctions for its violation. However, such sanctions did not follow, and senior officials and newsmakers publicly appeared on screen without masks, and in violation of social distancing, to announce non-working weeks ('holidays') at the beginning of the epidemic and the removal of restrictions at its peak. Self-isolation was introduced along with working remotely, the closure of cafes, hairdressers, and repair services. Despite this, large enterprises with massive passenger traffic continued working non-stop and resulted in crowed public transport. To this we can add the style of speeches of official speakers, not conducive to empathy, which is so important in a critical situation.

36% of respondents during the crisis heard more criticism of the authorities for decisions made than approval, and only 15% heard more approval. What is especially important in the context of our analysis is that during the crisis, 27% ceased to trust official information for two reasons: contradictions in the information field and resentment at the injustice of decisions made (Pazl doverija, 2020, p. 8). No less uncomfortable and even dangerous was the transmission by network speakers of irresponsible information of a conspiracy type regarding the origin of the virus, its danger, and treatment methods (Leontiev, 2020; Semenets, 2020). This all occurred against the background of the fact that, with the development of events, the focus of attention and the request for information shifted from the disease itself to a general understanding of what was happening to the recovery period. People want to see and understand the prospects (work, study, leisure, and possible trips), plan one's life and their children's. And the lack of clear answers is one of the results of the discussion on the development of the situation in June 2020 (Pazl doverija, 2020, pp. 12–13).

In other words, it was the irresponsibility of the information broadcasted that destroyed social trust. Thus, the results of the analytics of the Sociological Anti-Crisis Center 'Platform,' obtained closer to the recession of the pandemic, generally confirm our conclusions made at its peak.

All of the above applies to the symptoms of the cycle (not yet completed at all levels) of society experiencing deep stress. But in this cycle, a larger transition is also expressed. An extremely revealing assessment of the situation where competent opinions are equitable with the opinions of influencers, random individuals, and (pseudo)intellectuals is encapsulated by the 24-year-old journalist Krill Fokin – 'There is a feeling, – he writes, – that we (in particular younger people, my peers and those around us) have surpassed an important stage in the emancipation of the Internet and freedom of speech: and now, the need to 'gain a voice' and express an 'opinion' must be replaced by virtues: moderation in assessments and adequacy in judgements. It is necessary 'to speak!' – especially in the conditions of a country such as Russia in 2020 and it is precisely in situations close to a crisis that the value of voluntary silence is recognized. 'There is always something to say, but the question is what is the point of the statement and to whom it can (if it can) help' (Fokin, 2020).

In order to discern the general 'diagnosis' behind these symptoms, to understand what processes of transformation of the semantic picture of the world are enhanced by public discourse in such a critical situation as the COVID-10 pandemic, it is important to switch to a wider context of public communication.

From security to freedom and vice versa

Communication provides the formation of society and the socialization of the individual. Much depends on the situation in which a society exists, this determines the value-normative context and consequently the intentionality (modality) of communication.

The fundamental, primary value, of sociogenesis is security (life sustainment). Simultaneously, confronting uncertainty, dangers, challenges, and threats is easier when security is ensured, in addition to surviving, supporting oneself, and raising children. This value is inherent on a genetic level and is the essence for the formation of living organisms, flocks, and human communities.

As soon as a certain community is formed, inequalities appear (age-related, sex, materialism, attractiveness, strength etc.), and they breed envy, resentment, and conflicts. This gives rise to the second fundamental value of sociogenesis – justice and the desire to live honestly according to the law. The implementation of this value creates norms (written and expressed in habits and traditions), systems of morality, rules, and an institutional environment in general.

Normative regulation has two vectors. On the one hand, this is social control and a battle with deviations. It is the degree of assumption of individual self-development, at times assuming creativity, which is connected with a request for clarification and revision of existing ideas and rules (in science, art, industrial practices, politics, religion, and everyday life). The second vector determines yet another value of sociogenesis – freedom and the right for individual self-realization.

A significant portion of human history has been circumvented mainly by the space of the realization of the values of security and justice. Indeed, to support the existence and reproduction of society, a value-regulatory environment is sufficient. However, in European civilization, beginning with the Renaissance and later in contemporary times (modernity and postmodernity), an emphasis was placed on the value of freedom as a guarantee of an individual's unobstructed self-fulfillment, which served as the moving

force behind economic development as well as the development of science, the arts, and other spheres of public life. It is freedom and creativity that provide not only the adaptation of the social system to changing conditions, but also allow for the conditions themselves to be altered (Figure 1).

This set of ideas underlies the concept of human development as the transition from materialistic values of survival towards 'non-materialistic' values of unobstructed self-realization (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005) – inherent in the basis of the multi-year World Value Survey (WVS. Database), which confirms the idea of a general movement along this value-based axis.

If we supplement the value axis with the normative one, associated with the concretization of justice, then a system of coordinates appears that reveal further possibilities of analysis.

In this value-normative system, the coordinate between security and freedom, designating the implemented norms of justice, was proposed as the value-normative model of political culture, which made it possible to determine the correlation of the main political ideologies in this space (Figure 2) to construct profiles of political cultures (Figure 3) and trace their dynamics (Figure 4) as it was implemented in a series of studies (Tulchinskii, 2013) Figure 3 presents a comparison of political cultures of Russia (dashed line) and the United States (dotted line) according to the aggregated value of the World Value Survey for 2013. Figure 4 illustrates the dynamics of the profile of culture in Russia in 2008 and 2019 using G. Hofstede's data in comparison of business cultures in different countries (Hofstede Insights, 2019).

The above model provides a visual representation of the role of justice as a variable on the value axis. In a calm stable situation, justice shifts towards the free self-realization of members of society. In a crisis or dangerous situation (catastrophes, war, and emergencies), the normative representation shifts to the side of security, oftentimes to the detriment of the guarantees of freedom and individual rights. This observation is important for understanding the future analysis of both the history of the coronavirus as well as its civilizational-political context.

Viral pandemic, quarantine measures, and police sanctions against those who do not observe the regime of self-isolation are well-explained in the value-normative model. The model can also explain the indignation of human rights activists in Russia and in the world in regard to decisions made by the authorities, such as actions that are beyond the scope of the constitution and infringe on human rights. Each state was forced to resolve the dilemma of respect for human rights (including freedom of movement and management
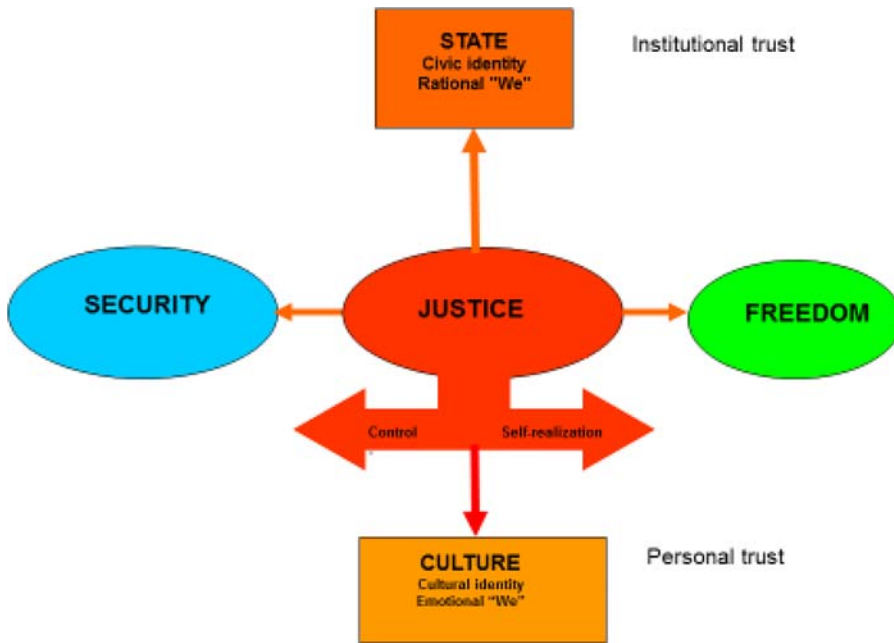

Figure 1. Basic values of sociogenesis.

Figure 2. Value-normative model of society.

of business) and the preservation of human lives. The situation once again confirmed the relativity of the institutional environment, both from the prevailing value-normative stereotypes and from the threats facing society. In a situation of mass existential threats, the rational choice of financial-economic margins is of secondary importance.

However, the scale and degree of radicalism of the value-normative shift in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic will be incomprehensible and even shocking if we do not take into account the civilization background and the context in which they were implemented, entering into positive feedback of mutual reinforcement and stimulation.

Since the beginning of the 2000s, according to the World Value Survey, there has been an increase in the dynamics of values which is met with respect to the trend that
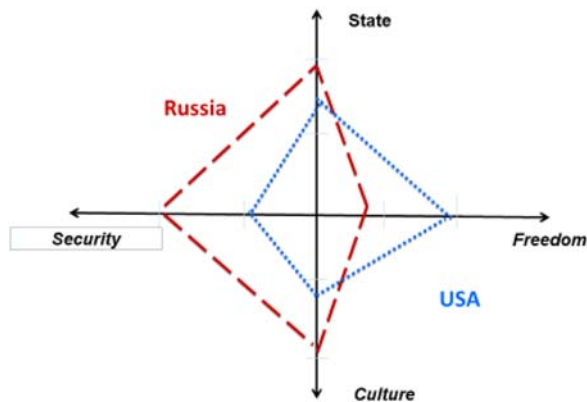

Figure 3. Comparison of the political culture of Russia and the United States.
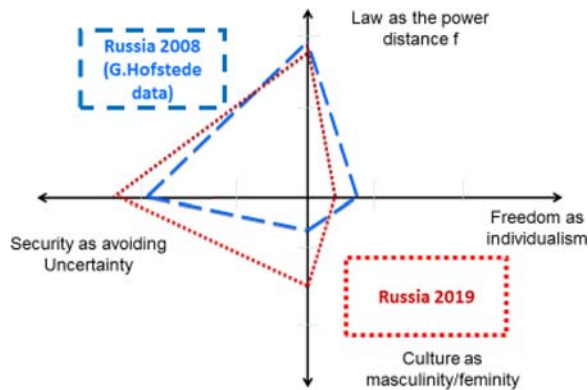
Figure 4. Dynamics of Russian political culture in 2008–2009.

dominated in the second half of the XX century (Welzel, 2013). In the political realm, the increase was reflected in the 'shift to the right' of electoral behavior in Europe and the USA due to manifestations of a crisis in the European Union (Brexit and the United Kingdom, refugee problems, ethnic conflicts, problems with financing the Greek economy etc.), and the broad crisis of the interpreted programs of multiculturalism and tolerance.

There has been an increase in the role of nation states, supplemented by an rise in ethno-national activity, which has resulted in demands for secession in countries that previously appeared to be stable political regimes (Belgium, Spain, Italy, and the United Kingdom). This trend is reflected in modern artistic culture – primarily in film and literature. It has also been observed by keen analysts (Stoljarov, 2019).

The explanation of this process as a plot of the 'world government' can surely explain everything and it is no wonder that the account surfaced at the 'stage of anger' during coronavirus discourse. Politicians often utilize the fundamental value of security by encouraging people 'to rally around wise leadership' and 'not to change horses midstream.' Indeed, consolidating society in the face of a real threat, a real (or imagined) enemy is much easier than on a constructive positive basis.

However, the situation appears to be more extreme and objective. Modern society and its way of life are a literal implementation of the great project of humanism of the Enlightenment with its slogans: 'man is the measure of all things' and 'all for the good of man, and all in the name of man!' To paraphrase a well-known Soviet anecdote, it is possible to say that we know this man. It is each and every one of us. The clustering of markets has reached the individual: a car is customized and tuned for you, the software design of computers and fashion is shaped according to your individual needs. Modern marketing makes it possible to not only implement, but also stimulate any need. Several important circumstances follow from this.

Firstly, society and each of its members has something to lose.

Secondly, any achievement of modern civilization: mail, medicine, computers, aviation, skyscrapers, water reservoirs, and all means of transportation and communication can be used for the destruction of civilization. This was clearly demonstrated to the whole world by the terrible tragedy of September 11, 2001 in New York, when the very achievements of civilization (airplanes and skyscrapers) became the means of the largest terrorist act in

history. Even just a power outage can plunge modern society at the level of the household, city, and country into deep stress and turn into a disaster.

Thirdly, in contrast to traditional society where values are structured hierarchically from the simplest physiological to transcendental values, in this society all values (including transcendental values) are brought to a common denominator of marketing becoming actual indexes of the market for mass consumption. Culture is immanent and self-sufficient.

As a result of self-sufficiency, fourthly, culture does not require an image of the future: continuous sequels, prequels, parodies, recurrent tunes, and fantasy with its medieval stylistics has taken the place of science fiction. The expansion of meanings replaces the accumulated diversity, the fractalization of the present and the past. Furthermore, this society is afraid of the future.

In connection with this, fifthly, modern society as a society of the embodied program of secularism has entered into the post-secular phase when immanence and the absence of an image of the future give rise to the fear of losing the present. This society has something to lose.

Therefore, alarm and horror are a state of modern civilization, which is afraid of itself and its future. It is well-known from history that the more developed a civilization is and the higher the quality of life, the more vulnerable the society and the more fears and phobias accumulate in that it becomes not only objects of psychiatry, but also an aesthetic conceptualization and spiritual search … This trend is clearly and coherently represented in modern cultural industries where genres have been composed as well as the corresponding markets of horror in popular literature, onscreen culture, and entertainment.

Horrification is used and even enhanced in modern political practices. The concept of Carl Schmitt is nearly axiomatically accepted among political scientists and politicians, whereby the phenomenon of politics is connected with confronting an enemy. As a result, horror as a more conscious and unintentional aspiration for security often evolves with political ambitions and not only by terrorists: an increase in anxiety, alarmism, and the creation of an image of insidious 'enemies' provides a large potential to manipulate social consciousness and behavior, including the use of possible modern information technologies as well as old and new media (Yurieva, 2016, pp. 74–80).

The political class that came to power on horror is subsequently forced to position itself, in the future, for the sake of legitimacy, exclusively in the context of 'battling with the enemy,' both domestic and foreign, and specifying the symbolic policies in accordance with the ideological content. The groups of security guards in offices and public transport, calls to be vigilant of 'suspicious objects,' and strange behavior of passengers and those passing by only complete the picture of alarm and horrification of modern social life.

If in the first stages of sociogenesis horror (relatively speaking) there is a 'natural' character of fear of uncertainty and natural forces of nature, then in the stage of a postindustrial society with mass consumption, horror of a 'second kind' appears. This entails the fear of losing the well-being of the present, a rationally created artificial environment, on the one hand, and on the other, the artificially created and cultivated horror and, ultimately, political horrification.

In this regard, the coronavirus pandemic is fully consistent with the general global trend of apocalyptic narratives that have prepared a catastrophic perception of the pandemic (Axt et al., 2020; El Maarouf et al., 2020; Rasskazova et al., 2020). It turned out that, firstly, nothing is new, we already told ourselves, and secondly, thereby preparing ourselves for a new format of existence. The alarmists prepared to such an extent that some authoritative intellectual lawmakers saw in the pandemic, and the reaction to it, the end of liberal democracy and the threat of the revival of communist ideals (Zizek, 2020), or at least, the opportunity to see the contours of the future, destructive for the current established reality (Agamben, 2020).

Responsibility as the basis of security and freedom

Preventing and overcoming the consequences of horrification can be associated with the formation of not only a 'rallying' of trust in 'ours,' but also trust of 'building bridges' between representatives of various groups in the population. Nevertheless, the experience (not only Russian) demonstrates that the solution of such problems is not the main political aim of the political elite and the political class as a whole.

However, in parallel with large-scale horrification, its value alternative clearly appears in the indicated trend of public coronavirus discourse where there is a request for balanced responsible speech or even silence. This refers to independent personal self-determination and self-realization.

The problem arises of not only comprehending what is taking place, but also a more in-depth study of the conceptual apparatus for such comprehension. First of all, this concerns the nature and essence of the idea of freedom. When connected with the phenomenon of self-awareness and a purely human dimension of existence (beyond an individual, endued with self-awareness, in a world where only cause and effect relationships exist), freedom possesses a godlike quality of non-existence and pre-existential beginning of existence (N.A. Berdyaev), 'holes in the being' (J.-P. Sartre). Although the connection between freedom and responsibility was traced previously, and even the fundamental role of the latter (M.M. Bakhtin), this was interpreted as a theological metaphysics of mortality.

Neurophysiological studies of the brain and cognitive processes in neural networks have confirmed the circumstance well-known from educational and disciplinary practices – self-consciousness is formed only as a result of an individual's communicative interactions with others when a person is pulled out of causal relationships, closing them to himself, making him *causa sui* – an active and sane actor (Kane, 2005; Tulchinskii, 2020). 'It was not a cup that fell, but you dropped it. I can drop it, I could not drop it, but I dropped it.' 'Others' (parents, loved ones, teachers, colleagues, and simply acquaintances) in the process of communication continuously 'burden' us with responsibility. It is in the formation of horizons and levels of responsibility that the essence of family upbringing, education, occupational training, and preparation lies. A consequence of this is the formation and consolidation of memory in neural networks simultaneously with the development of articulated speech, such as a narrative of experiences from the first person. The ability to produce such narratives is formed by the age of 3. This is self-awareness as the ability to reflect (Damasio, 2010; Dennett, 2003). In this respect, Bakhtin was ultimately correct. Presently, Robert Kane has validated the fundamental

primacy of responsibility and, secondary, the derivative of freedom from responsibility where reason is an expression of the measure and depth of responsibility of inclusion in the outside world and the possibility of influencing it (Bakhtin, 1986; Kane, 2005).

The secondary nature of freedom in relation to responsibility is also manifested in modern political realities. This is precisely what was revealed in the previously mentioned round table 'Human Rights and the Imbalance of Mutual Responsibility.' The consequences of freedom of speech and expression of responsibility, which stimulates resentment, egocentrism, conflicts, and aggression, are enhanced by the capabilities of modern means of communication. Organizers of exhibitions, theater directors, writers, and journalists unexpectedly learn that their actions resulted in a 'violation of feelings' of religious believers, as well as ethnic and even professional groups who put forward accusations, file reports with the authorities, file suits in courts, or even conduct pogroms. Entire countries are offended by the publication of caricatures, declare the prosecution of their authors, and even hunt them down. This often results in a bloody massacre, as was the case with journalists from the French satirical weekly magazine Charlie Hebdo. Lawsuits are being brought for millions of dollars due to insults 40 years ago and public opinion forces society to exclude actors, directors, producers, and managers from public activity.

The Internet has provided additional impulses to understanding the role of responsibility by revealing the main ethical and legal, if not anthropological paradox of modern social life, and separating the pole of an individual's right to freedom of speech and an individual's right to privacy, safeguarding one's reputation, and other securities while responsibility remains important. Finally, an important point in this plot was the bio-political consequences of the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, which radically changes the global political and economic format of civilization. Thus, according to Peter Pomerantsev, expressed during the discussion of his new book, 'democracy suffers from abuse of freedom of speech. But the well-being of the people suffers even more from it. The medical safety of entire societies suffers from anti-vaccination and from people who believe in semimythical methods for treating serious diseases … This is no less dangerous than discrediting democratic institutions' (Grozovsky, 2020).

Russian federalism and the European Union, whose members have traded mutual reproaches, have incurred serious threats. Jared Diamond quite accurately outlined an alternative to the two scenarios. The worst-case scenario involves further enclosure of states due to a desire to obtain one-sided benefits from vaccination to economic development. According to the best scenario, exiting the pandemic will unite people and countries in solving common problems from medicine to climate change (Diamond, 2020).

The semantic picture of the world is changing before our very eyes. It is revealing the deepest meaning and nature of free will, the role and significance of responsible self-determination in the public space.

Is parrhesia coming back?

Understanding the possibility of responsible public discourse seems especially important and relevant in relation to modern discursive network communication practices, in which network account holders obtain exceptional opportunities to 'take the word' – formulate

and position their stance on a variety of issues: from personal facts to discussions on scientific, political, and religious topics.

The term 'parrhesia' (παρρησία, parrhēsía), originating from the Greek roots πᾶν (all) and ῥῆσις (speech, utterance), has a wide range of meanings from 'speaking to everyone and about everything' to 'freedom of speech.' However, in the process of ancient and Christian discursive practices, the word was affixed and applied to the situation of statements in regard to something sincere, frank, and responsible. An analysis of this concept by Foucault (Foucault, 2010) showed that the hermeneutics of parrhesia allows us to bring the quality of communicative content beyond the framework of logical and transcendental criteria of truth to pragmatic and ethical contexts of discourse. In this case, the emphasis is shifted from assessing truth to the attitude of truth, to the phenomenon of 'taking the word' and responsibility for what is expressed. Included here are possible ramifications against the parrhesiast, caused by the negative reaction of the audience, which consists of angry individual recipients and entire communities.

In Antiquity (the first mention of parrhesia is found in the tragedy of Euripides 'Ion'), parrhesia is associated with 'isegoria' (equality of speech) and 'isonomia' (equal participation of free citizens of the state in the exercise of power). Thanks to this, the parrhesiast 'took the floor' in the whole context (political, economic, moral, religious) of the life of the society of direct democracy of the agora (Walzer, 2013, p. 4). For some parrhesiasts, as we know from Socrates' case, it ended poorly.

Foucault, who initiated the formation of modern network communication, denied the possibility of full parrhesia in the modern world where communication technologies allow speech to break away from the truth, making speech increasingly irresponsible. And the verbal and non-verbal fakes that flourished before our eyes, crowded the media space, seem to confirm this. Therefore, until quite recently, the characteristic of parrhesia as an anachronism of 'fearless speech,' appropriate in Antiquity but not in modernity, which is characterized by freedom of speech, was dominant. In this regard, these two concepts are even sometimes opposed to each other on the grounds that modern society is characterized by the institutions of liberal democracy with its basic legal guarantees of freedom of speech and conscience, as guarantees of human existence. It even comes to an alternative between a populist authoritarian regime with parrhesia and democracy with freedom of speech (Karadut, 2020) and claims to parrhesia are seen as a threat to freedom and equality from the privileged few (Bejan, 2020).

As the mentioned analysis of Foucault has shown, parrhesia can manifest itself in two ways: negative and positive. In the first case, the parrhesiast expresses something decisively, not being ashamed of possible reproaches of the inaccuracy of what was said. Such parrhesia is characteristic of populist politicians and media personalities who earn publicity in an outrageous and scandalous style. In the second (positive) case, parrhesia is characteristic of experts, journalists and bloggers who present credible and critical information, at times exposing not only the populistic post-truth, but also established stereotypes. In the 1970s-1980s, Foucault did not see the prospects of isolating the positive parrhesia before the rolling out in bulk of negative parrhesia.

Previously, Mancur Olson diagnosed the consequences of the hypertrophy of democratic rights and procedures as 'institutional sclerosis' (Olson, 1982). And the COVID-19 pandemic vividly confirmed this diagnosis. The pandemic was relatively successfully stopped in China, Singapore, and the Republic of Korea, while it hit Italy, France, the

United Kingdom, Sweden, and the USA hard. The pandemic turned out to be connected not only with the centralization of the healthcare system and other institutions of authority, which are more effective precisely in a crisis situation. The decisive moment was the semantic picture of the world, broadcast in public consciousness, 'sclerotically long' (in the idea of Olson), which remained in the 'stage of denial' mentioned above.

In this regard, it can be acknowledged that negative parrhesia (the fakes and post-truth associated with it) is a consequence of institutional sclerosis of hypertrophied rights to freedom of irresponsible speech in the early stages of Web space. Therefore, sooner or later, the demand will arise for the correction of negative parrhesia that infringes on human value, threatens reputations, well-being, and the life of others. This demand comes to fruition together with the above-mentioned dynamics of the formation of a 'metamodern cultural paradigm.' The digitalization of public communication only intensifies and strengthens this trend (Nestik, 2020). At the same time, stressful situations, such as the coronavirus pandemic, intensify the maturing of the trend for positive parrhesia and also representing positive patterns, which make these narratives morally performative. The implementation of such parrhesia becomes an important factor in confronting dangerous populist decisions of 'charismatic' leaders, including in the context of allegedly combating 'existential' dangers' (Sparks, 2017). The implementation of such parrhesia becomes an important factor in confronting dangerous populist decisions of 'charismatic' leaders.

If we paraphrase Jurgen Habermas (Habermas, 2001, p. 49), then in a pandemic, politics catch up with and overtake the globalized economy. The market quotation is not in question, but rather the lives of concrete people and even groups of people. In such a situation, 'isegoria' and 'isonomia' appear in the face of an existential threat, which the negative parrhesia only reinforces, leading to inadequate decisions and actions, and the 'positive parrhesia' becomes urgently needed.' Parrhesia can be persecuted (Julian Assange, Edward Snowden, Boris Nemtsov, Alexei Navalny, or the doctors from Wuhan who were the first to sound the alarm), the word they convey does not immediately become an acknowledged fact. However, this does not mean that the spoken word is not socially significant and important. In the modern digitalized informational society, positive parrhesia is not the privilege of a few, but a moral duty of those who 'take the floor' ('take the word').

How can freedom of speech be reconciled with the freedom of speech of a troll? The UN Declaration of Human Rights says nothing about disinformation. There is no such legal term. Therefore, as noted by the participants in the discussion on the current situation in public discourse and prospects for new censorship (participants included B. Grozovsky, P. Pomerantsev, V. Gatov, M. Truduljubov, and Y. Yablokov), today freedom of speech is an object that requires redefining (Grozovsky, 2020). At the mentioned round table 'Human Rights and the Imbalance of Mutual Responsibility,' participants noted that to overcome the contradiction between the individual's rights to freedom of speech (fraught with fake news, post-truth, and bullying) and the individual's right to privacy, and preserving one's reputation (Krivenko, 2019, pp. 107–120), one can look to new opportunities that reveal new digital technologies for communication, big data management, formation of an electronic government, block chain technology, etc. Digital technologies are a powerful tool for the formation of a new legal culture. They are a powerful tool, but controversial. 'The more obvious the threat … to public safety, then

the more chances that even in democratic societies the methods and forms of censorship will be expanded … which can be entrusted to algorithms or, god forbid, some special organization' (Grozovsky 2020). Such censorship will be purely informational only at first glance, it will inevitably be valuable.

In the newest philosophy, the formation of a new worldview is also diagnosed. This worldview and attitude replace postmodern deconstructivism and irony with its transition from the total elimination of meanings to their new installation, new integrity, and most importantly sincerity (Metamodernizm, 2017; Pavlov, 2018; Vermeulen & van den Akker, 2010). Metamodernism is not about naivety and romanticism, but about the fact that a modern artist, politician, scientist, and any person who claims to express his view, acts in these new conditions as an ancient parrhesiast who responsibly speaks truth to 'city and the world.' And if he 'takes the word,' then this itself, like the publicly pronounced (written) word, serves as an act (Tulchinskii, 2020) of a sane actor who understands the measure and depth of his 'not an alibi in existence' (Bakhtin, 1986). The publications of the journal 'Parrhesia: A Journal of Critical Philosophy,' established in 2016 by the Melbourne School of Continental Philosophy, are devoted to a similar topic.

In the context of total digitalization, responsibility takes on more and more dimensions, which are the most serious challenges to traditional ideas about morality and law. 'The coronavirus made everyone remember why facts are needed. Information wars are very close to the war of religions and now everyone from their homes can participate in them. Therefore, we need new concepts, new rules, new ethics, and new laws that rethink freedom of speech' (Grozovsky, 2020).

In this regard, it is believed that the concept of parrhesia can be one of the possible areas for further analysis. It seems that the request for responsible speech in combination with digital formats allows for a non-trivial rethinking, which does not limit contemporary parrhesia to critical philosophy, the circle of parrhesiasts, and authors of the journal 'Parrhesia: A Journal of Critical Philosophy,' but gives parrhesia a new scale and format. Such an understanding, of course, requires special analysis, which is important and interesting, but it is beyond the scope of this work.

Ergo

The conducted analysis revealed that the semiotic vector of social communication has transformed from the emphasis on the transmission of social normative meanings to the presentation of personal meanings (emotional-evaluative opinions and experiences). Such a change in accentuation in public space raises the problem of a balance between the institution of freedom of speech and conscience, the technical capabilities of their expression, on the one hand, and the need for strict control in the information space, which is a critical mass of irresponsible information that threatens personal and institutional security, reputation, and other issues. This situation contributes to the growth of mistrust in society. The dynamics of public COVID discourse have illustrated this imbalance and its consequences clearly. There is a request for responsible free speech, implemented not only through social control, but also through self-filtering of the information flow, the desire for reliable information sources, and a desire for people who can represent information responsibly.

In addition to technological and institutional measures, self-restraint, and personal responsibility not only of politicians, experts, bloggers, and other opinion leaders, but also from their audience and individual users play an increasingly important role. An example of this is the transformation of the coronavirus pandemic discourse that unfolded in 2020 and the comprehension of its transformation.

It is possible to speak about the ripening of conditions for revising Foucault's assessment of the prospects for the concept of parrhesia in relation to modern discursive practices. Furthermore, it is not unlikely that the discussion will be about the revival of the phenomenon of parrhesia as a responsible public word that implements public speech (as a responsible action) in a new format and scale.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

Notes on contributor

Grigorii L. Tulchinskii holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Accounting from St. Petersburg State University, and is Professor in Accounting at the Department of Problems of Interdisciplinary Synthesis in the Field of Social Sciences and Humanities of St. Petersburg State University, Russia, and is Professor in Accoutning at Department of Public Administration of National Research University Higher School of Economics in St. Petersburg, Russia. His current research interests include social communications, philosophy of culture and personality, social engineering. Honored Scientist of Russia.

References

Agamben, G. (2020). *Giorgio Agamben: Normalising the state of exception under the Covid-19 epidemic.* https://non.copyriot.com/giorgio-agamben-normalising-the-state-of-exception-under-the-covid-19-epidemic/

Axt, J. R., Landau, M. J., & Kay, A. C. (2020). The psychological appeal of fake-news attributions. *SAGE Psychological Science*, *31*(7), 848–857. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797620922785

Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). K filosofii postupka [To the philosophy of action]. *Filosofija i sociologija tekhniki. Ezhegodnik 1984–1985*: 80–160.

Bejan, T. M. (2020, April 12). *The two clashing meanings of 'free speech'.* https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/12/two-concepts-of-freedom-of-speech/546791/

Damasio, A. (2010). *Self comes to mind: Constructing the conscious brain*. Pantheon.

Dennett, D. (2003). *Freedom evolves*. Penguin Books.

Diamond, J. (2020, July 5). *Best-case and worst-case scenarios. Life in a time of Covid.* https://www.edge.org/conversation/jared_diamond-best-case-and-worst-case-scenarios

Ekspert. (2020, April 13). *Ekspert VSE zajavila o smene v razvitii situatsii s koronavirusom v Rossii* [HSE expert announced a change in the development of the situation with coronavirus in Russia]. https://ria.ru/20200413/1569943348.html

El Maarouf, M. D., Belghazi, T., & El Maarouf, F. (2020). COVID – 19: A critical ontology of the present. *Educational philosophy and theory*. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2020.1757426

Fokin, K. (2020, April 10). *Epokha karantina glazami 25-letnikh* [The quarantine era through the eyes of 25 year olds]. https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2020/03/29/84585-dostatochno-li-blizko-rvutsya-snaryady

Foucault, M. (2010). *Rech' i istina. Lektsii o parresii (1982–1983)* [Speech and truth. Lectures on parrhesia (1982–1983)]. Delo.

Groys, B. (2016). *V potoke [In stream]*. Ad Marginem.

Grozovsky, B. (2020). Informatsionnye vojny blizki k religioznym [Information wars are close to religious]. https://www.colta.ru/articles/society/24937-diskussiya-informatsionnye-voyny-grozovskiy-pomerantsev-gatov-trudolyubov-yablokov

Habermas, J. (2001). *Postnational constellation: Political essays*. MIT Press.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as social semiotics: The social interpretation of language and meaning*. University Park Press.

Hodge, R., & Kress, G. (1988). *Social semiotics*. Polity.

Hofstede Insights. (2019). https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country/russia/

Informatsionnyj bjulleten. (2020, April 9). *Informatsionnyj bjulleten' o situatsii i prinimaemykh merakh po nedopuchsheniju rasprostranenija zabolevanij novym koronavirusom* [Newsletter on the situation and measures taken to prevent the spread of diseases caused by the new coronavirus]. https://rospotrebnadzor.ru/about/info/news/news_details.php?ELEMENT_ID=14210&sphrase_id

Inglehart, R., & Welzel, C. (2005). *Modernization, cultural change and democracy: The human development sequence*. Cambridge University Press.

Kak pomogajut. (2020, July 5). *Kak pomogajut biznesu zarubezhnye strany vo vremja pandemii* [How foreign countries help businesses during a pandemic]. https://www.e-xecutive.ru/management/practices/1992204-kak-pomogaut-biznesu-zarubezhnye-strany-vo-vremya-pandemii

Kaljukov, E., & Doronov, I. (2020, April 9). *Mau sprognoziroval mir budutschego posle pobedy nad koronovirusom* [Mau predicts the world of the future after defeating coronavirus]. https://www.rbc.ru/economics/01/04/2020/5e8355899a7947630847bbb8https://www.rbc.ru/economics/01/04/2020/5e8355899a7947630847bbb8

Kane, R. H. (2005). *A contemporary introduction to free will*. Oxford University Press.

Karadut, I. C. (2020, April 12). *Truth-telling in the era of post-truth: two cases of parrhesia for democracy. The internet, policy & politics conference 2018. Oxford Internet Institute (OII) / University of Oxford*. http://blogs.oii.ox.ac.uk/policy/wp-content/uploads/sites/77/2018/08/IPP2018-Karadut.pdf

Kirija, I. (2020, April 17). *Mir nakryla nevidannaja prezhde ifodemija* [Unprecedented infodemia covered the world]. https://www.vedomosti.ru/opinion/columns/2020/04/15/828157-infodemiya

Koronavirus. (2020, April 10). *Koronavirus "zarazil" socseti i SMI* [Coronavirus "infected" social networks and media]. https://www.mlg.ru/~tfAs9

Krivenko, S. (2019). *Materialy diskussij rossijskikh pravozhachshitnikov, ekspertov i uchjonykh v 2019 godu* [Discussion materials of Russian human rights defenders, experts and scientists in 2019]. izf koalitsii pravozhachshitnikov.

Kübler-Ross, E. (2014). *On death and dying*. Scribner.

Leeuwen, T. v. (2005). *Introducing social semiotics*. Routledge.

Leontiev, D. (2020). *Virazhi i mirazhi pandemicheskogo soznanija* [Turns and mirages of pandemic consciousness]. https://psy.su/feed/8337/?utm_source=vk&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=1

Lotman, J. (1967). K problem tipologii kultury [To the problem of typology of culture]. *Trudy po znakovym systemam III*.: 30–38.

Metamodernizm. (2017). *Metamodernism: Historicity, affect, and depth after postmodernism (Radical cultural studies)* (R. Van den Akker, A. Gibbons, & T. Vermeulen, Eds.). Rowman & Littlefield.

Moskovskaja zaraza. (2020, April 11). *Moskovskaja zaraza* [Moscow infection]. mirvracha.ru > news > moskovskaya_zaraza-06-04-2020.

Nestik, T. (2020). *Koronavirus: vyzovy lichnosti, obtshestvu i gosudarstvu* [Coronavirus: Challenges to the individual, society and the state]. https://psy.su/feed/8338/.

Obchshestvo. (2020, July 5). *Obchssestvo i gosudarstvo posle "idealnogo shtorma"* [Society and the state after the "perfect storm"]. https://pltf.ru/2020/06/09/obshhestvo-i-gosudarstvo-posle-idealnogo-shtorma/

Olson, M. (1982). *The rise and decline of nations: Economic growth, stagflation, and social rigidities*. Yale University Press.

Pavlov, A. (2018). Obrazy sovremennosti v XXI veke: Metamodernizm [Images of the Present in the, 21s. t century: metamodernism]. *Logos*, *28*(6), 1–19.

Pazl doverija. (2020, July 5). "*Pazzl doverija": o glavnykh "spikerakh krizisa", istochnikakh nedoverija i doverija informatsii* [About the main "speakers of the crisis", sources of distrust and trust in information]. https://pltf.ru/2020/06/16/issledovanie-platformy-pazl-doverija/

Politizheskaja kultura. (2015). *Politizheskaja kultura* [Political culture]. Jurajt.

Randviir, A. (2004). *Mapping the world: Towards a sociosemiotic approach to culture*. Tartu University.

Rasskazova, E. I., Leontiev, D. A., & Lebedeva, A. A. (2020). Pandemic as a challenge to subjective well-being: Anxiety and coping. *Konsul'tativnaya psikhologiya i psikhoterapiya* [Counseling Psychology and Psychotherapy], *28*(2), 90–108.

RBK. (2020, April 13). *RBK zapustil online-kvartirnik s artistami i muzykantami na samoizoljatsii* [RBC launched an online apartment with artists and musicians in isolation]. www.rbc.ru/society/04/04/2020/5e7bc11a9a794723edda386f?from=from_main

Russia's. (2020, April 13). *Russia's 'Isolation Art' Takes the Internet By Storm*. https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2020/04/06/russias-isolation-art-takes-the-internet-by-storm-a69887

Semenets, A. (2020, July 5). *Chem opasny rassylki v messendzherakh* [Why are messaging in messengers dangerous]. https://www.rosbalt.ru/moscow/2020/06/20/1849779.html

Shishkov, A. (2020, April 11). *Mozhet li virus vojti v Tsarstvo Nebesnoe?* [Can a virus enter the kingdom of heaven?]. https://www.colta.ru/articles/society/24017-teolog-andrey-shishkov-o-koronaviruse-i-hristianskih-dogmatah

Slova. (2020, April 9). *Slova nashego vremeni* [Words of our time]. https://www.mlg.ru/blog/viral_smm/7329/

Sparks, M. (2017). Promoting health in a post-truth world. *Health Promotion International*, *32*(4), 599–602. https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/dax042

Stoljarov, A. (2019). *Prizrak natsii* [Phantom of the nation]. Strata.

Trendy. (2020, April 11). *Trendy koronavirusa* [Trends of coronavirus]. https://www.rbc.ru/trends/education/5e877a269a79472ff038a0d8

Tulchinskii, G. L. (2013). Politicheskaja kultura na osjakh tsennostno-normativnoj modeli sociogeneza [Political culture on the axes of the value-normative model of sociogenesis]. *Filosofskie nauki*, *2013*(1), 24–38.

Tulchinskii, G. L. (2019). Rasshirenie vozmozhnostej semioticheskogo analiza: istochniki I soderzhanie kontseptsii "glubokoj semiotiki" [Expanding the possibilities of semiotic analysis: Sources and content of the concept of "deep semiotics"]. *Voprosy filosofii*, *2019*(11), 115–125.

Tulchinskii, G. L. (2020). *Filosofija postupka: samoopredelenie lichnosti d sovremennom obchshestve* [Philosophy of action: Self-determination of personality in modern society]. Aleteja.

Vermeulen, T., & van den Akker, R. (2010). Notes on metamodernism. *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture*, *2*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.3402/jac.v2i0.5677

Walzer, A. E. (2013). Parrēsia, Foucault, and the classical rhetorical tradition. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, *43*(1), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/02773945.2012.740130

Welzel, C. (2013). *Freedom rising: Human empowerment and the quest for emancipation*. Cambridge University Press.

WVS. Database. https://www.worldvaluesurvey.org/wvs.jsp

Yurieva, T. S. (Ed.). (2016). *Terror i kultura* [Terror and culture]. St. Petersburg State Univ. Press.

Zizek, S. (2020, July 5). *Slavoj Zizek: Coronavirus Is 'Kill Bill'-Esque Blow to Capitalism and Could Lead to Reinvention of Communism*. http://www.revistaikaro.com/slavoj-zizek-coronavirus-is-killbill-esque-blow-to-capitalism-and-could-lead-to-reinvention-of-communism/