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Journalism as a public communication. Comparison of Estonian, Finnish and Russian dominating daily functions²

Abstract: This chapter deals with the communication style of journalism. The thematic structure of the journalistic agenda points to very basic dimensions of the public sphere. Journalism can be observed as an indicator of the public sphere. Journalism has different styles in society, according to its relationship to the political system and the cultural context. One can detect changes in these styles and functions via the analysis of journalistic texts. This hypothesis can be proved only via comparison with journalistic styles of different countries. This analysis focuses on the main daily newspapers of the three neighboring countries of Finland, Estonia and Russia throughout the 20th century. Focus is on changes in themes. There are two basic conclusions: in spite of regime, ideology of living standards, journalism in all three countries is concentrated on the same basic topics throughout the century; and the democratic journalism is basically mediator of issues that reflect on a nation's *political structures*. The chapter includes an example from 1988 as a critical turn of the public communication.

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