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Author's Program As A Form Of Modern Television Travel Journalism

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the author's television program as a specific form of modern travel journalism. Based on theoretical approaches to the concept of the author's program, its key features are identified: the pronounced presence of the author-host's personality, an individual style of presenting material, subjective interpretation of facts, genre flexibility, and an orientation toward trust-based communication with the audience. Particular attention is paid to the role of the host as a meaning-forming element of the television media text. As empirical material, the article analyzes the NTV television program Poedem, Poedim

Keywords:

author's program, television journalism, travel journalism, author-host, media personification, gastronomic culture.

The author's program occupies a special place in the system of modern television journalism, as it combines informational, analytical, artistic, and personal-interpretative functions. The author not only selects and structures the material, but also offers viewers a personal model for its interpretation. In this sense, authorial journalism represents a direction in journalism in which emphasis is placed on the author's personal opinion and style, as well as on their creative interpretation of facts. Such an approach is based on subjectivity: the author not only communicates information but also interprets it, creating unique and trust-oriented content that establishes an emotional connection with the audience. This genre is characterized by a high degree of individualization, where the author acts not only as a source but also as an interpreter.

For a more precise understanding of the specifics of this phenomenon, it is necessary to address the very concept of the "author's television program." It should be noted that contemporary television journalism theory has

not developed a unified approach to its definition. This is explained by the intergenre nature of the author's program, which may include elements of interviews, reportage, documentary narration, analytical commentary, entertainment shows, and other television formats. In the article by Sh. I. Nurgozhina and M. Zhunisova, the following definition is provided: "an author's television program is a program devoid of clichés and templates, marked by the imprint of the author's personal talent, a unique and inimitable personality" [1, p. 346]. This definition primarily emphasizes the individual and creative component of the author's program: its distinction from standardized television products lies in the presence of a clearly expressed authorial tone, an original manner of presentation, and a personal perspective on the subject matter.

Another research perspective is proposed by A. A. Kashirin, who considers the author's television program not only as a result of creative activity but also as a special form of media communication. A.A. Kashirin defines the

author's television program as a "discursive practice" through which a recognizable image of the author-host is formed. In his work, the researcher identifies the formal characteristics of an author's television program based on the participation of the author-host: the host of the program is its author, the "authorial" status is declared in the program format, the host positions himself or herself as the author, and the host's name is included in the title of the program [2, p. 152]. This approach makes it possible to examine the author's program not only through its content but also through the system of author representation within the media text. What becomes important is not merely the presence of a host, but his or her functional and semantic dominance: it is the host who organizes the narrative, sets the tone of communication, and shapes the logic through which the material is perceived.

Therefore, an author's television program can be defined as a format in which the personality of the author-host becomes a structure-forming element. The author of the television program combines the functions of journalist, director, and host, creating a unique stylistic and semantic foundation. The author's program becomes a platform for expressing the host's personal perspective, which distinguishes it from traditional television formats. In this case, authorship is manifested not only in the choice of topic, but also in the way it is presented: through intonation, visual style, episode dramaturgy, and the nature of communication with both participants and the audience.

As E. O. Basargina rightly notes: "The author's program preserves its uniqueness due to the deep personal interpretation of content. This makes it an important tool in shaping public opinion, influencing viewers' perception of the issues under discussion. The history of the genre demonstrates its flexibility and ability to adapt to changing media conditions" [3, p. 58].

In academic literature, the genre of the author's program is often examined within the context of genre journalism. Anastasia Dyachenko defines the author's program as a "genre framework" that combines several formats in order to create an artistic or analytical effect [4]. This approach is particularly important for analyzing

television projects built on the synthesis of various genre elements. An author's program may include reportage fragments, interviews, observation, commentary, elements of documentary narration, and entertaining presentation. However, all these components are united not so much by the topic itself as by the author's method of organizing the material. It is precisely the author's position that ensures the integrity of the program and transforms disparate genre elements into a unified media text.

The central figure within such a structure is the host. In an author's program, the host is not merely an intermediary between events and the audience. He or she is a key figure whose personality and views influence the perception of the program. This makes the program more personal and closer to the audience, which perceives the host as a trusted individual. Consequently, trust in an author's program is largely built upon trust in the personality of the host. The host's manner of communication, speech behavior, emotional reactions, and ways of interacting with people and space become significant elements of the content itself.

Under contemporary conditions, this tendency is strengthened by media personification. Modern television journalism increasingly encounters the phenomenon in which the program host becomes not only a media personality, but also an independent brand. In this context, the concept of the "author as a brand" implies that the host, through individuality, manner of presenting information, and personal values, creates a unique image associated with both the program and its content. The host becomes a key figure embodying not only the program itself, but also the cultural, social, and even political meanings it conveys [5]. Thus, the author's program acquires a stable identity through the image of the host, who functions as the semantic center and simultaneously serves as a tool for promoting the media product.

This is of particular importance for television oriented toward the emotional involvement of the audience. "The personality of the host becomes an important factor in the success of a program, especially in the context of the modern

media environment, where viewers value not only the content itself, but also the manner in which the material is presented” [6, p. 309]. This idea allows us to conclude that, in an author’s program, the form of presentation is no less important than the content itself.

The viewer perceives information through the prism of the author-host’s personality, experience, intonation, behavior, and value orientations. Therefore, the author’s program functions as a special type of television statement in which factual material receives an individual interpretation.

Based on the approaches discussed above, several key characteristics of the author’s television program can be identified. First, it involves the presence of a distinctly expressed author-host personality, who not only presents the material but also shapes its semantic structure. Second, it is characterized by an individual style of presentation that distinguishes the program from standardized television formats. Third, it involves a subjective interpretation of facts, in which the author’s position becomes an important part of the media text. Fourth, it demonstrates genre flexibility, allowing documentary, analytical, entertaining, and artistic elements to be combined. Finally, fifth, it possesses the ability to establish a stable emotional connection with the audience through trust in the host and his or her image.

These theoretical provisions are particularly significant for the analysis of contemporary television travel journalism, since travel programs are especially often constructed around the personality of the host. In the travel format, the author not only demonstrates geographical spaces, cultural practices, and the everyday life of different peoples, but also interprets what is seen through personal experience, emotions, evaluations, and communicative behavior. Therefore, the analysis of the program «Poedem, Poedim!» should be conducted precisely through the prism of the author’s program: it is necessary to examine how the host’s personality, style of interaction with participants, manner of presenting material, and the gastronomic and

cultural context of the journey form a unique authorial model of television travel journalism. The program «Poedem, Poedim!» represents a vivid example of modern television travel journalism, in which travel is understood not only as movement through geographical space, but also as a way of becoming acquainted with the culture, everyday life, gastronomy, and daily practices of different regions. The project has been broadcast on NTV since November 2012 and combines the features of a travel show, a culinary program, and a cultural-educational television project. Its creator and first host was John Warren. Since 2019, the program has been hosted by Italian journalist Federico Arnaldi, who continued the project’s main concept — introducing viewers to the cultural and gastronomic diversity of regions around the world.

Each episode is dedicated to a particular country, region, or city, where the host meets local residents, visits landmarks, explores everyday traditions, and tastes national dishes. Thus, the gastronomic theme in the program is not independent or isolated; rather, it is incorporated into a broader cultural context. Through food, the traditions, historical memory, lifestyle, and values of local communities are revealed. This is precisely what makes it possible to consider «Poedem, Poedim!» not merely as a culinary show, but as a travel program with a pronounced cultural and educational orientation.

An important feature of the project is that its narrative is organized through the figure of the host. Federico Arnaldi acts not only as an intermediary between the viewer and a new cultural space, but also as an active participant in the events. He communicates with the program’s participants, engages in local practices, tastes dishes, takes part in their preparation, reacts to what he sees, and thereby forms the authorial tone of the episode. His personal impressions become an important element of the screen narrative, since viewers perceive the region not abstractly, but through the emotional and evaluative experience of the host.

The host demonstrates interest not only in the external side of travel, but also in the internal

logic of local culture. He seeks to understand why a particular dish became characteristic of the region, what historical and everyday circumstances influenced its emergence, and what culinary techniques are used in its preparation. As a result, gastronomy becomes an instrument of cultural analysis.

Federico Arnaldi's authorial style is manifested through a combination of journalistic observation, personal involvement, and visual storytelling. He does not limit himself to the role of commentator, but constantly interacts with both the environment and the people around him. The program's participants include representatives of different professions, nationalities, and social groups who share their traditions, recipes, and everyday experiences. Through these encounters, the program creates the effect of direct acquaintance with a culture rather than a formal tourist overview. The host not only shows viewers landmarks, but also builds communication with local residents, allowing the territory to be revealed through human stories.

It is significant that the program focuses not only on popular tourist routes, but also on less obvious locations. During the pandemic, when international travel was restricted, the project adapted its concept and concentrated on Russian regions. Episodes devoted to Vologda, Vladivostok, Gelendzhik, Nizhny Novgorod, and other cities emphasized the cultural and historical uniqueness of these territories. For example, the episode about Vologda focused on ancient monasteries, Russian crafts, the process of butter churning, lace weaving, folk entertainment, and the preparation of layered cabbage rolls. Such a choice of topics demonstrates the program's intention to reveal the local identity of a region through specific cultural practices.

Episodes dedicated to Russian regions demonstrate an important feature of authorial travel journalism: familiar spaces can be presented as new and unknown. Federico Arnaldi, as a foreigner, observes Russian culture from the position of an outside observer, yet at the same time does not distance himself from it. On the contrary, he actively participates in events, asks questions, engages in traditional

activities, and reacts emotionally to what he sees. This technique makes it possible both to preserve the sense of discovery and to establish a trust-based connection with the audience.

Particular attention should be paid to episodes in which the program works with cultural stereotypes. For instance, in the episode dedicated to Dagestan, emphasis was placed on Caucasian hospitality, natural landscapes, tea ceremonies, and local traditions. The host not only demonstrates the beauty of the region, but also addresses widespread perceptions regarding the strictness of local customs, attempting to revise them through personal interaction with residents. In this case, the author's position is expressed through the chosen perspective: the region is presented not through conflict-based or stereotypical images, but through hospitality, everyday life, and cultural richness.

A similar mechanism is employed in the episode about Udmurtia, released in November 2023. The program begins with an expressive staged scene in which the host appears in shackles and dressed as a Russian landowner. This visual device performs several functions simultaneously. On the one hand, it attracts viewers' attention and establishes the playful tone of the episode. On the other hand, it demonstrates the author's willingness to use elements of theatricalization and performativity in order to раскрыть the topic. In the same episode, Federico Arnaldi presents various aspects of life in Izhevsk, while one of the notable moments is his meeting with the Buranovskiye Babushki group, participants of Eurovision Song Contest. Through this episode, the program connects local culture with a recognizable media event, thereby making regional material more accessible and attractive to a broad audience.

In the context of theoretical approaches to the author's television program, the project «Poedem, Poedim!» can be regarded as an example of a format in which the authorial principle is manifested through the structure of the episode, the image of the host, the selection of topics, the nature of interaction with participants, and the method of interpreting cultural material. The program demonstrates

that, in modern travel journalism, the personality of the host becomes the key factor in organizing content. Through his reactions, questions, participation in rituals, and culinary practices, a trust-based communication with viewers is established, while the program itself acquires an individual style.

The conducted analysis makes it possible to conclude that the author's television program represents a special type of media text in which the personality of the author-host acts as the principal organizing element. The theoretical part of the article established that the author's program is distinguished by an individual manner of presentation, subjective interpretation of material, genre flexibility, and the ability to establish a trust-based relationship with the audience. Within this format, the host performs not only an informational function, but also a meaning-forming one: he or she determines the intonation, structure, and mode of audience perception of the content.

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