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THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN PROMOTING CULTURAL VALUES: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF THE USA PRESS (THE WASHINGTON POST)

The following article is devoted to the survey of cultural values on the basis of American newspaper The Washington Post. The survey was conducted during the period of January, 2018 till November, 2018. The following values were taken for the analysis: love, hate, peace, war, happiness, sadness, success and crises. Having studied the above mentioned values we came to the conclusion, that media use those words in both direct and indirect meanings, but the most overwhelmed issue is the fact, that usage of the words with negative meaning was to determine some positive facts. The main aim of this method can be either to attract reader's attention or to create an atmosphere of fear in the society.

Today, the media, having ceased to be exclusively a transfer tool, have become a unique mechanism that forms a new socio-cultural reality. This is particularly evident in the periods of radical changes in society.

The radical nature of the ongoing changes in modern world, which affected all aspects of the life of society, has truly become a «fertile ground» for the formation of a new media discourse filled with new myths, stereotypes, symbols, etc.

The **object-matter** of this study was to investigate the role of media in promoting values in the United States of America on the basis of the newspaper The Washington Post, which is considered to be a major American daily newspaper published in Washington, D.C., with a particular emphasis on national politics and the federal government, that we used as a **material** of the survey [The Washington Post:6]. The Washington Post has distinguished itself through its political reporting on the workings of the White House, Congress, and other aspects of the U.S. government.

A the **subject-matter** of this article is to define the values which are presented and popularized by the mass media in today's society and whether they do reflect social reality in a broad sense, or whether, instead, filter out the view of reality which they see fit to be made public. To my mind, the answer to this question is that the media do both, depending on the way we define reality.

Theaim is to reveal the trends in the predominance of negative value key dominant over the positive, as well as the processes of transformation of the meanings of the identified values.

To take, first, political reality, mass media, in one sense, do not provide a faked view of it. Taking into account what is considered as politics today, i.e. the activity of professional politicians 'representing' the people, one may argue that it is politics itself, which is faked, and mass media simply repro-

duce this reality. But, at the same time, if we give a different definition to political reality, mass media do provide, in general, a distorted picture of it. In other words, if we define as real politics the political activity of people themselves (for instance, the collective struggles of various sectors of the population around political, economic or social issues) rather than that of professional politicians, then, the mass media do distort the picture they present about political reality. They do so, by minimising the significance of this type of activity, by distorting its meaning, by marginalising it, or by simply ignoring it completely.

Furthermore, mass media do provide a distorted picture of political reality when they come to report the causes of crises, or of the conflicts involving various sections of the elites. In such cases they faithfully reflect the picture that the sections of the elites controlling them wish to reproduce [Reed2014:117].

Regarding this aspect, the important conclusion was drawn by Alexander King and Bertrand Schneider, two rapporteurs from the Club of Rome. They said that mass-media has become one of the main agents in the shaping of the public opinion and of peoples' thinking. In accordance with Herbert I. Schiller, America's media managers create, process and preside over the circulation of images and information which determine peoples' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. Many times the media manipulates the audience, creating a false sense of reality, delivering only certain information about an event or other. Paulo Freire said that the manipulation of human minds is an instrument of conquest. Regarding the manipulation process through mass media, Schiller identifies five myths that structure the content: myth of individualism and personal choice, the myth of neutrality, the myth of unchanging human nature, the myth of the absence of social conflict and the myth of media pluralism [Schiller 1992:112-201].

Cultural values also shape mass media messages when producers of media content have vested interests in particular social goals. The producers offer media content that promotes or refutes particular viewpoints. Governments, corporations, nonprofits, colleges, indeed most organizations, all try to shape media content to promote themselves and their values. In its most heavy-handed form, at the level of government, this type of media influence can become propaganda, communication that intentionally attempts to persuade its audience for ideological, political, or commercial purposes.

To study the values, which are now presented by the mass media, we examined the articles, that are presented in the newspaper the Washington Post during the period from January, 2018 till November, 2018. For the analysis we took common values and anti-values taken by modern society and calculated their general number during the analyzed period, taken into account that some words are used in their direct meaning and some of them are used in indirect meaning. As a result we got the following figures.

Values	Number	Anti-Values	Number
Love	939 348	Hate	184 388
Peace	661 892	War	1 982 367
Happiness	661 920	Sadness	278 376
Success	1 150 373	Crises	36 630

As we can conclude from the received figures, the general amount of positive values prevail over the negative anti values except the amount in usage of the world “war”, which, as we suppose, can be so high due to war and terroristic actions that happen all around the world and as we know America doesn’t show itself as an indifferent country in the above mentioned situations. Here, we can be confident, that according to the survey mass media do reflect the political and economic situation of the country and the world.

The next stage of the survey is to study the usage of the words and its context. For instance, the word “war” is used both in direct and indirect meanings: in November’s edition there was an article with the headline “Syria’s Civil War”, where the studied word was used in direct meaning, but it is important to mention that more often we could read the headlines with the usage of this word in the indirect meaning, for example “Is Denaturalization the Next Front in the Trump Administration’s War on Immigration?” or “As Trade War Bites, China Advisers Recommend Lowering 2019 Growth Target”. We suppose that the aim of usage the word with negative meaning is to attract the reader’s attention, but also it can be used to create an atmosphere of fear among readers. The next example is devoted to the word with positive connotation “peace”. In the following example the studied word is used in its direct meaning “UN: South Sudan still fragile but there’s a chance for peace”, here the meaning of the positive word has an absolutely negative connotation “Florida newspaper: ‘Rest in peace, public education’” [The Washington Post:6].

According to our survey we came to the point that the individual or direct effect of media relies on persuasion. The emphasis is on the persuasive power of the content, which ignites an individual learning process, updating personal values and beliefs. Media can also have an effect via a social mechanism. Here, media influence is rooted in the fact that it can provide information in a way that enhances coordination on a norm or action through the creation of common knowledge. In the current information system, there is no escape from the influence of the media in every sphere of our lives. The meaning we assign to media reporting is not determined exogenously but by our world view, our own paradigm, which in turn, as we have seen above, is the result of a process of socialisation that is conditioned by the dominant social paradigm. Furthermore, mass media functioning plays a crucial role in the reproduction of the dominant social paradigm and the socialisation process generally.

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Ключові слова: ЗМІ, культурні цінності, газета, конотація.

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Key words: mass media, cultural values, newspaper, connotation.