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MASS MEDIA CHARACTERS AS CREOLIZED TEXTS, PRAXEMES AND PRECEDENT PHENOMENA IN THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF YOUNG AUDIENCE WITH RESPECT TO POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS

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Abstract

The work is devoted to the results of statistical processing of several hundreds of the most relevant characters and analyses thereof. The purpose of the study is to identify changes or shifts in understanding the world of youth and to establish their connection with the changes of the last 6–12 years that took place in the system of images that fill the Russian media space regarding the sphere of politics. An almost complete “reset” of the figurative system of youth has been recorded. The common international value-based agenda of the youth can be considered well-formed.

Keywords

Visual image – Fictional creature – Facts and fiction – Social media – Youth research

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Introduction

The work is devoted to the results of statistical processing of several hundreds of the most relevant characters and analyses thereof within the politics sector. The purpose of the study is to identify changes or shifts in understanding the world of youth and to establish their connection with the changes of the last 6–12 years that took place in the system of images that fill the Russian media space. The study material is very relevant as it will serve as an adequate basis for specific projects within the framework of the social and humanitarian technologies used in the territory of modern Russia. It allows setting and clarifying new tasks for future research but, moreover, it sketches out the attitudes, values, and worldview of the future social and humanitarian process engineers themselves.

The purpose of the study is to identify changes or shifts in the understanding of the world by young people on the basis of a cross-disciplinary platform and to establish their connection with the changes of the past 6–12 years in the system of images that fill the Russian media space regarding the sphere of politics.

An additional problem that complicates the interpretation of such data in the indicated social group is caused by an excessive desire to analyze exclusively the content of the network and media content itself (textbooks, books, mass media products, multimedia, commercial communications). Reliance on the experience and hypotheses of experts (teachers, sociologists, psychologists) or on generalized data for all segments of the population does not reflect a real change in the value system of the group of interest.

This study is precisely focused on the real observable data – the content of the surface layers of consciousness, on the level of representations of humanitarian students studying at universities of Saint Petersburg but representing many regions of Russia. The study is devoted to the spontaneous recall of images formed under the influence of the information environment (fictional images), that is, the top of mind level.

By the nature of their future activities, students of humanitarian specialties (journalism, social and commercial communications) will have the most powerful influence on society. At the same time, due to the democratic change in the system of admission to Russian universities according to the regional results of the Unified State Exam (USE), the university audience is a wide selection of young people throughout Russia. This is a qualitative and pilot study in relation to the expanded general population of all young people in Russia of 18–23 years old.

Historically, the study is called “Fictional Creatures of the Mass Media Age”. Fictional creatures (“images” is the synonym herein) are understood spontaneously, without a hint. These are remembered emotionally significant (relevant to the respondent), animated objects of shared reality in the entire range of manifestations (beliefs, values, appearance, speech patterns, behavior, abilities, and lifestyle). Most often, fictional creatures are objects that are represented in various media and are not the result of personal imagination or a representation of an inner reality inseparable by others. It is the emotional significance, the voluntary choice of the image from the list and the formal parameters of the description result that make this format of presentation extremely rich for research. This format of their description is close in meaning to the format of media content presentation.

Methods

The methodology for obtaining and fixing empirical data has been embodied in the methodology of analyzing brands as entities, as if possessing individuality¹.

The very vector of studying the limitless development of media and information systems that complement the things missed by a person was determined by the philosophy of life, the thesis about a person as the most perfect being in objectification of the will, and the most in need of all beings, continuous need, interweaving of thousands of needs. The development of this idea later leads to the understanding of a person as an eccentrically organized being, out of balance, out of place and time, in nothing or an irrational being, wandering in its inner realities, striving for its own expression and satisfying deep needs as it was taught². This is the world of modern things, the accompanying desires and effects of Man and, even, of Science itself. It should be understood that modern philosophical anthropology, and well-known contemporary thinkers strongly advise to remember this, is a very extensive and fuzzy structuring of the research field, which includes a much larger number of directions, problems, and conceptual designs.

The search for a special human nature based on “human biological insufficiency”, forcing man to create a culture, the artificial side of Nature (including technology), is the basis of philosophical and anthropological analysis³, constituting anthropological research methods, the basic principles – anthropological reduction (justification of the way man exists in the latest situation of the collapse of a single structure of being, the reduction of human existence to the sphere of culture) and the principle of practical activity objectification in adequate cultural forms. Philosophical anthropology proceeds from the fact that a person should know himself through the prism of cultural images, ideas, and things introduced by himself. Therefore, the methodological intention of philosophical anthropology as a systemic knowledge of a person synthesizing methodological approaches and conclusions of philosophy, psychology, cultural studies, sociology, and history, as well as the natural sciences, is perceived as the basis of this work.

At the final stage, the methodology of secondary analysis of research data and approximation of trends on a reference basis was applied. The research methodology of the project, embodied in its results, has been tested by the research and scientific community:

1. The methodology won a grant of the National Priority Project on Education as part of the innovative educational program of the Russian State Pedagogical University named after Herzen, approved by the Big Academic Council of the Russian State Pedagogical University named after Herzen, 2006.

2. The methodology passed a blind English-language review of three reviewers on the Easy Chair platform for each of the two English-language conferences, DGTS and EGOSE, devoted to previous research waves, 2016.

¹ D. D. Aaker, *Sozdanie silnykh brendov* (Moscow: Izdatelskii Dom Grebennikova, 2003).

² A.V. Ulianovskii. *Mifodizain reklamy* (Saint Petersburg: Institut lichnosti, 1995).

³ M. Heidegger, *Vremya kartiny mira* (Moscow: Novaya tekhnokraticeskaya volna na Zapade, 1986); M. Scheler, *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos* (Darmstadt, 1928); M. Buber, *Das Problem des Menschen* (Heidelberg, 1948) y O. F. Bollnow, *Die antropologische Betrachtungsweise in der Paedagogik* (Essen, 1965).

Research

These materials represent the third wave of stereotypical, pilot, qualitative study on the general population of Russian youth, as well as of quantitative study on a sample of young social and humanitarian intelligentsia studying at universities of Saint Petersburg and of long-term study (2006, 2012, 2017) of the content of consciousness of the young 17–23-year-old intelligentsia. The study that underlies this article is called Fictional Creatures of the Mass Media Age. Russia, 21st century.

The 2017 project was attended by 38 authors of texts and 19 illustrators, young people from 19 to 22 years old. The presence of humanitarian and social higher education or study at the relevant departments of universities was a prerequisite. The selection procedure itself implied an objective selection of creatively gifted young people according to the criteria of this project. Young people themselves, without a hint, recalled fictional creatures during several sessions of working in groups (at least 4 hours) at the first stage. A list of 271 creatures was then formed as a result of the recall phase. At the next stage, the authors independently chose for themselves specific images in order to describe or draw them, i.e. the selected image was supposed to motivate the author to additional work and personal time expenditure. The latter means a certain degree of sympathy or interest in these images. It is the emotional significance, the voluntary choice of the image from the list and the formal parameters of the description result that make this format of presentation extremely rich for research. This format of their description is close in meaning to the format of media content presentation. Young people described the most popular images of those they could independently recall. The choice was made from the entire volume of direct knowledge of humanitarian-oriented young people.

As a result, as follows from a comparative analysis of three waves of research: a combination of software and hardware factors influenced the volume of information consumption, its selection methods, including the traditional, explicit forms of advertising, which, becoming too deliberate, reduced trust and ability to attract attention. The research method was a survey and a focused interview when obtaining a list of images and a projective method for obtaining the content of consciousness, in the form of textual, pictorial descriptions in the future.

Previous studies focused on the transformations that the images of surrounding digital reality evoke in the young social-humanitarian intelligentsia, wherein the subject was the popularity of political ideas in general and the concrete filling of consciousness in this field.

The data of 2006 and 2012 were published⁴: the article was filled with concrete facts on the dynamics of a change in the minds of young people of ideologemes of the Soviet Union (research wave of 2006). The conclusions of these studies were curious: in the descriptions of political creatures of 2006, residual constructions of the fundamental basic pillars of Soviet ideology were found – “Mother the Motherland”, “Soviet Hero”, “Revolution and the Heroic Ascetics Revolutionaries”. It turns out that, among the many ideologues of the USSR, it was these ideologemes that showed the greatest vitality.

⁴ A. Ulianovskii; V. Golubev; O. Filatova y A. Smirnov, Social Media Impact on the Transformation of Imaginary Political Characters in Russian Youth Culture. DTGS 2016: Digital Transformation and Global Society Communications (St. Petersburg, Revised Selected Papers, 2016): 35-44.

In 2012, an indifferent attitude toward politics and power was manifested. The images of American politics disappeared. There was no ideology, no political myths of self-identification. There was an increased tolerance to violence for the sake of logically substantiated ideas, to the ugly. Alcohol left the world of politics, but drugs came. By 2012, the Internet, Internet memes, had almost destroyed such a horizontal communication channel in Russia as anecdotes. One can state a decrease in the level of education in historical and literary disciplines, a sharp narrowing of the general outlook of youth. Through the Internet, youth gets access to English-language series, which are characterized by the image of an antihero.

The situation began to change by 2018. Characters from America overwhelm the Russian space. Comic book characters (16%), although they were originally created on paper, became famous due to the screen adaptations of Marvel. Characters of Russian literature are less popular than characters of foreign literature. If in classical literature, the percentage ratio is quite equivalent (42/58), then foreign works clearly prevail in children's literature (29/71).

The following are mentioned as politics images in 2017–2018:

- Captain America;
- Mycroft Holmes;
- Bronze Horseman;
- Putin;
- Trump.

Discussion

The considered objectives of the article are the areas of interest for several scientific disciplines:

- Applied cultural studies and philosophical anthropology – in particular, based on the mythodesign method⁵. Here, the mythodesign is based on the concept of uses and gratifications, that is, the satisfaction of consumer needs in the process of using mass media. The mythodesign works with modern social myths, which are contextually conditionally true and axiologically (in terms of values and their norms) confidential statements, and is based on the principles of social convention –utilitarian-effective interaction recorded in culture due to an acceptable social price and consequences. The practical conclusions of mythodesign are based on the materials of three waves of a stereotypical, high-quality, long-term study (2006, 2012, 2017) of the content of consciousness of the young 17–23 years old intelligentsia. The content of the method takes into account many years of testing in the learning process of students⁶. Many provisions are in the nature of social and humanitarian innovation. In the era of digitalization and the increasing role of intellectual property, creative industries are becoming one of the most important areas for the development of the economy and

⁵ A. V. Ulianovskii, *Mifodizain reklamy* (Saint Petersburg: Institut lichnosti, 1995).

⁶ A. V. Ulianovskii, *Mifodizain: uchebnoe posobie* (Saratov: IPR Media, 2019).

society and represent a set of multiple, potentially growing, market segments where advertising could show itself for their development⁷.

The primary data presented in the manual on its methodology are a series of focus groups, a long-term study (2006, 2012, 2017) of the content of consciousness of the young 17–23-year-old intelligentsia, answering a question with a hint, the result of which is the identification of mass media patterns as the sum of the accumulated audience experience⁸.

The authors of the article were inspired by German philosophical anthropology to emphasize the idea that the German ideas of the 1920s about culture surprisingly correlated with the ideas of the modern global consumer society focused on brands. The authors further proceed from the hypothesis of the relevance of German anthropology for understanding the capitalist consumer society, focused on the accumulation of visual experience, which goes into the content of consciousness. It is worth comparing the ideas of American branding of the 1980s, where the brand is understood as the sum of accumulated experience or ideas that are embedded in the minds of target audiences⁹. Some time ago, one of the authors even introduced the term “chromofascism” into critical expression during his seminars to fix the reality, when organization personnel was forced to work in an intrusive space of color, image and sound – the so-called corporate style brand.

After all, it is precisely the thesis about culture as a sphere of human artificial replenishment of its biological weaknesses. Building a new cultural identity that is in a difficult relationship with human biology lies at the very foundation of German anthropology. The idea, as indicated by the historians of philosophy, appeared much earlier than the work of German anthropologists. However, since the discourse of the article is not devoted to the philosophical movement of ideas but to specific empiricism, the discussion herein should be restricted to this measure of the depth of philosophical foundations.

- Visual semiotics, where similar images are studied from the perspective of praxemes. The scope of interest in visual semiotics includes the study of the visual aspects of the organization and functioning of culture as a communicative medium.

Visual semiotics is understood both as a relatively new, dynamically developing humanitarian science and as a multidisciplinary field, in which the traditional, classical branches of humanitarian knowledge meet and exchange methods and achievements: philosophy, cultural studies, sociology, political science, art studies, religious studies, aesthetics, ethics, history, linguistics, ethnography, etc.

The dominant aspect of the study on the indicated topics is determined by the alleged accentuation of the communicative aspects of visual semiotics, which will make it possible to focus on the connection of visual phenomena and their systems with cultural and anthropological practice. In this (pragmatic) perspective, any visual seme can and should be interpreted as a praxeme – a sign that represents and produces certain

⁷ A. V. Ulianovskii, *Kreativnye industrii: smena pokolenii i aktualnykh geroev: uchebnoe posobie* (Saratov: IPR Media, 2019).

⁸ A. V. Ulianovskii, *Kreativnye industrii: smena pokolenii...*

⁹ D. D. Aaker, *Sozdanie silnykh brendov* (Moscow: Izdatelskii Dom Grebennikova, 2003).

pragmatic attitudes, norms, and effects. Thus, the subject of visual semiotics is the understanding as a sphere of cultural and anthropological praxis, as a space of mutual understanding and interaction through optically expressed existentially meaningful meanings. The discourse has its own platform, a Russian-language journal of the same name, which has been included in the Scopus citation database since 2018 (¹⁰ and other authors of *Praxema. Journal of Visual Semiotics*, 2014–2019).

- Anthropology and cultural studies where these images are studied as modern folklore. The community of Saint Petersburg professional business marketers made reviews of this study in the *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, in which WorkLine Research (former ComCon2), one of the leading sociological research organization in Saint Petersburg, evaluated the methodology and results of this study using pragmatic criteria. In an interview based on the review¹¹, it is noted that the research methodology goes back to ethnomethodology, which allows one to obtain data reflecting modern folklore. The author also notes the importance of obtaining not only a list of fictional creatures as such but also recorded subjective descriptions of each creature, which provides additional material for qualitative analysis and correct interpretation.

- Political science, where images serve as indicators, prototypes of real political choice and suggest real trends of mass consciousness and/or are designed to overcome electoral passivity and involve the population in real political processes. There is a wide range of mass polls dedicated to “historical figures, by whose names object N should be named”, “artistic characters, whom people would choose as the President”. For example, the *Fontanka.ru* newspaper, citing the *Kommersant* newspaper, writes “If in 1999, Stirlitz was mentioned together with Peter I, Gleb Zheglov, Marshal Georgy Zhukov, then 20 years later, Professor Preobrazhensky took second place with 12%. With a margin of one percent, he is followed by the hero of the films “Brother” and “Brother 2” – Danila Bagrov, an honest investigator from the series “Secrets of the Investigation” Maria Shvetsova (11%), Ekaterina from “Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears” (9%) and Valery Kharlamov from “Legend No. 17” (6%). Stirlitz, whose image the mass media have often associated with Vladimir Putin for 20 years, enjoys mainly support among women and Russians of middle and older (over 60 years) age. However, the newcomer to the list – Professor Preobrazhensky – is popular with citizens of the Russian Federation from 35 to 59 years old. These are mainly residents of Moscow, Saint Petersburg and million-plus cities. Among young people (18–34 years old), leadership is shared by Danila Bagrov and Sasha Bely from “The Brigade” series”.

- Philology, where images with textual accompaniment are called creolized texts, by which it is customary to understand a complex textual formation, in which verbal and nonverbal elements form one visual, structural, semantic and functional whole aimed at a complex effect on the addressee¹².

This synthesizing turn in the dialectical spiral of the language science history was predetermined inevitably. It is connected with the appeal of linguistics to the problem of

¹⁰ S. S. Avanesov, “Vizualnye konnotatsii v semantike lichnosti”, *Journal of Visual Semiotics* Vol: 3 num 5 (2015): 28-53.

¹¹ A. Tikhonova, “Gerasim i Mumu vyzhili”, *Delovoi Peterburg* num 32 (2007). Available: https://www.dp.ru/a/2007/05/21/Gerasim_i_Mumu_vizhili

¹² M. B. Voroshilova, *Kreolizovanniy tekst: aspekty izucheniya. Politicheskaya lingvistika* num 20 (2006): 180-189. Available: <http://www.philology.ru/linguistics2/voroshilova-06.htm>

communication in full, which implies the synthesis of linguistic means of communication with nonlinguistic ones, the study of their organization in a single process and text as its result¹³. A change in the way people and the world communicate is interpreted as a crisis of classical rationality based on the logos – the word, and the emergence of its nonclassical forms. The beginning of the scientific understanding of creolized, or semiotic complicated, video verbal, polycode texts was laid in works on semiotics, which was due to the study of the image as a special sign system, as well as possible contexts for its application¹⁴. Thus, visual thinking is interpreted as a type of thinking based on nonclassical rationality¹⁵.

The role of visual rhetoric in the representation of creolized texts can be ascertained¹⁶.

The work of the latest art by Andrei Ulianovskii can be considered as an example:

“€cop to €copus”

(2019. Material: paper, steel, plastic. Stored in the exposition at the Department of Advertising of the Saint Petersburg State University).

“€cop” means “together”, “in one group”.

“€copus” means the translation into Russian of a trademark of a well-known indexed English-language database – Scopus.

Here, the replacement of the phonetically identical Latin letter “S” by “€” as a hybrid visual metaphor contains the main expressiveness of the specifics of the publication activity of works by Russian scientists, which are understandable to themselves.

- Linguistics studying patterns and processes of information processing by young people, where the phenomenon is called a precedent. A precedent name is an individual name associated with a well-known text or a precedent situation, a kind of complex sign; when it is used in communication, an appeal is made not to the actual denotate (referent) but to the set of differential attributes of the given name. The discourse of precedent names is devoted to the study of precedent names as a national-cultural component of the discourse of the linguistic personality of a high school student. The studied phenomena are considered in the work as elements of the Russian linguistic consciousness, signs of those collective representations that are basic for the Russian linguistic and cultural community. The relevance of this issue is associated with the growing interest of modern linguistics in the functioning of linguistic consciousness in various communicative environments, as well as the possibility of applying its results to solve scientific and practical problems in the field of linguistic didactics. The need to build such a “model” that would testify to the verbal and nonverbal preferences of high school students is due to the

¹³ A. A. Bernatskaya, K probleme “kreolizatsii” teksta: istoriya i sovremennoe sostoyanie. Rechevoe obshchenie: Spetsializirovannyi vestnik num 3 Vol: 11 (2000).

¹⁴ M. B. Voroshilova, Kreolizovannyi tekst: aspekty izucheniya. Politicheskaya lingvistika num 20 (2006): 180-189. Available: <http://www.philology.ru/linguistics2/voroshilova-06.htm>

¹⁵ A. Yu. Zenkova, Vizualnaya metafora v sotsialno-politicheskom diskurse: metodologicheskii aspekt (Ekaterinburg: Mnogobrazie politicheskogo diskursa, 2004): 39-54.

¹⁶ A. V. Ulianovskii, Mifodizain reklamy (Saint Petersburg: Institut lichnosti, 1995).

relevance of the approach effectiveness taken in modern school education to the formation of the cognitive base of the Russian language personality in the process of its formation. Understanding of precedent names is an important criterion of communicative competence, since it involves not only a narrow grammatical mastery of the language but also the mastery of a certain social and cultural code, knowledge and ideas that are national for the Russian linguistic and cultural community. In the diachronic aspect, the relevance of the work is due to the possibility of analyzing changes in the Russian language consciousness associated with a change in the cultural paradigm¹⁷.

From the authors' point of view, regarding the model of precedent names, it can be stated that in the historical perspective, when generations of young people change, the connotations of the precedent name can change right up to the exact opposite. It is not difficult to fix this and it is possible by many methods, starting with a simple interpretation by the observer and ending with fixing the values along the axes of the semantic differential. A precedent name is really just a name that goes through the story without change. Let us explain with an example from the research wave of 2006, when the semantics of the text about Malchish-Kibalkhish (a good boy) (a cult-favorite boy for the USSR, a supporter of the revolution and a hero of the Gaidar fairy tale) allowed attributing him to negative heroes, and the description of Malchish-Plokhish (a bad boy) (the antagonist who sided with the Russian interventionists "for a box of cookies and a barrel of jam", a symbol of a mean betrayal in the USSR) was clearly executed with sympathy for this character, which, of course, did not coincide with the official assessment of these images in the Soviet tradition. However, in a later study of 2012, these images, in general, ceased to be mentioned by students.

- Sociology, where the key aspects of the traditional functioning of electronic and print media are well studied by the classics of both sociology and political science¹⁸ which emphasizes the role of shaping the structure of the media foundation in modern society. This understanding is deepened by modern sociologists¹⁹. The symbolic functions of the imagination, which were supported not only by mass communications²⁰, as well as cultural structures and constants²¹, but also by large-scale continental platforms²², were studied.

It is empirically and conceptually substantiated²³ that in order to achieve good results in the field of modern social communications and successful television and web series, a project must be able to integrate modern mythology with the humanities, media

¹⁷ G. G. Sergeeva, *Pretsedentnye imena i ponimanie ikh v molodezhnoi srede*. Avtoreferat dissertatsii po filologii: Ph.D. Thesis Abstract) (Moscow, 2005). Available: <http://cheloveknauka.com/pretsedentnye-imena-i-ponimanie-ih-v-molodezhnoy-srede#ixzz5hsSTrzN6>

¹⁸ H. Lasswell, *The Structure and Function of Communication in Society*. In *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication* (Chicago, 1971) y W. Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (NY, Harcourt: Brace and Company, 1922).

¹⁹ S. I. Shelonaev. *Institutsionalizatsiya mediaprostranstva* (Saint Petersburg: Vlados Severo-zapad, 2013).

²⁰ E. Katz y P. F. Lazarsfeld, *Personal Influence: The part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communication* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1955).

²¹ E. Cassirer, *The Myth of the State* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979).

²² C. Bottici, "Myths of Europe: A Theoretical Approach", *Journal of Educational Media, Memory, and Society* Vol: 1 num 2 (2007): 9-33.

²³ M. McCombs y D. Shaw, "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass-Media", *Public Opinion Quarterly* Vol: 36 num 3 (1972): 176-187.

format, modern art and folklore. In relation to the characters, this idea means the complete abolition of the semantic boundaries between the imaginary and the reality.

Modern media research focuses on the border between “we /they” and “concept and keyword” (for example, “Soviet”) in the structure of media text as a mechanism for the production and creation of reliability of media text and images, trust in social media – this is a way to denote social reality in some aspects such as self-presentation of the society. However, despite the understanding of the role of social media in embedding youth myth in the reality of Russia²⁴, full-scale studies to understand the role of digital media hosts in spreading the social myth of imaginary characters in Eurasia have not yet been implemented, although steps in this direction have already been taken. The American sociological approach to the analysis of the myth creation by the consumer society²⁵ and the use of the results as an empirical base on the problem of transforming the social myth of the consumer society²⁶ has already been tested. Obtaining the content of the subconscious and repressed areas of consciousness of Russians, i.e. obtaining information by deep and systematic methods, has already received sufficient coverage²⁷.

- Economics – by 2014, approaches to a qualitative assessment of both superficial inventions and the basic concepts themselves in the heads of the population of a particular territory had been already shaped in Russia. Estimates of the value of what actually lies behind deep concepts, almost full of sacred values for the older generation of the USSR, objects of trust and even faith, such as Russia (i.e. the Motherland), the cost of territorial entities are thoroughly substantiated. Such a transformation of basic meanings, an inventory of all values according to the criteria of capitalization, had and has a strong influence on the transformation of the values of youth from 2006 to 2017²⁸.

- Technology (information technology). Such a characteristic (for the whole development of Technology under the auspices of capitalism) fixation on “untruth”, fixation on “praxeme” in a manipulative understanding and reliable imitation of even the appearance of Internet audiences is demonstrated by an approach for constructing bots and hoaxing of Internet communication. This approach has been brought up to the software product called “APG” at the beta level, and developers are winding up their scientific communication activity – links on their sites are inactive and they do not get in touch (for example, <http://jisun.me/#about>). Product descriptions²⁹ have somewhat

²⁴ A. Ulianovskii; V. Golubev; O. Filatova y A. Smirnov, Social Media Impact on the Transformation of Imaginary Political Characters in Russian Youth Culture. DTGS 2016: Digital Transformation and Global Society Communications (St. Petersburg, Revised Selected Papers, 2016): 35-44 y O. Filatova; V. Golubev y A. Ulianovskii, Young People's Values: Identifying Trends in Russian E-Society. EGOSE '16 Proceedings of the International Conference on Electronic Governance and Open Society: Challenges in Eurasia ACM International Conference Proceeding Series (NY, USA, 2017): 143-148.

²⁵ C. Fischer, “Considering the “Magical” World of Consumption”, Berkeley Journal of Sociology num 49 (2005): 137-157.

²⁶ G. Ritzer, “The “Magical” World of Consumption: Transforming Nothing into Something”, Berkeley Journal of Sociology num 49 (2005): 117-136.

²⁷ Z. V. Sinkevich; O. K. Krokinskaya y Yu. A. Possel, Institutsionalizatsiya mediaprostranstva (Saint Petersburg: Piter, 2005).

²⁸ O. Filatova; V. Golubev y A. Ulianovskii, Young People's Values: Identifying Trends...

²⁹ J. Soongyo; J. Salminen; H. Kwak; J. An y B. J. Jansen, Automatic Persona Generation (APG): A Rationale and Demonstration. CHIIR '18 Conference on Human Information Interaction and Retrieval New Brunswick (NJ, USA, March 11-15, 2018): 321-324.

ominous connotations, as if referring to the ideas of Orwell and embodying in their visualizations no less sinister futuristic British series of the “Black Mirror” platform by NETFLIX³⁰.

Therefore, the above approach can be described as directly opposite to what is stated in this article – in Russia, it is the demystification of the user's inner world and the demonstration of the “codes” of its artistic samples for identification, the codes expressed in the visuality of heroes, their values, their aesthetics. The authors of APG understand this issue as the use of “big data”, i.e. huge amounts of statistics, to simulate the authenticity of communications and disguise its artistic nature, its cybernetic, artificial nature. That is, the attitudes toward the praxeme are directly opposite. This is misleading audiences by simulating a pleasant and trusting respondent in the case of AGM. Similar software, obviously, was used when Trump won the elections. It would be disquieting if similar approaches were used in Russia.

Conclusion

The study that underlies this article is intended to describe a set of images that characterize the visualization of comprehension in the representations of such a fairly prosperous part of Russian youth as students of the social and humanitarian areas of Russian universities in 2017–2018. An almost complete “reset” of the figurative system of youth has been recorded. The common international value-based agenda of the youth can be considered well-formed. The number of characters suffering from alcoholism or drug addiction is sharply reduced (compared to 2012); the attitude to alcohol and drugs in society is becoming more neutral. In the wave of 2017, a large number of characters with a variety of obsessions appear. Basically, obsession is associated with some kind of fixed idea. The study has shown that fictional characters coexist with real images of media personalities and objects of the surrounding social and cultural reality. A completely unexpected facet and an amazing feature of this connection is the blurring of the border between objects of fiction and reality.

In 2017, the general youth international value-based agenda can be considered formed. Its essential feature is a further decrease in the influence of advertising and brand communications.

Images related to American politics are replaced by American TV series heroes. There is no ideology, no political myths of self-identification.

³⁰ “We present Automatic Persona Generation (APG), a methodology and system for the quantitative formation of individuals using large amounts of data on social networks. The system works, its beta version is deployed with several client organizations in various industry verticals, from small and medium-sized enterprises to large multinational corporations. Using a robust web infrastructure and stable internal database, APG currently processes tens of millions of user interactions with thousands of online digital products on various social platforms such as Facebook and YouTube. APG identifies both individual and important user segments and then creates character descriptions automatically adding features like names, photos, and personal attributes. We present a general methodological approach, the development of architecture, and the basic functions of the system. APG has potential value for organizations that distribute content through online platforms, and is unique in its approach to character creation. APG can be found on the Internet at <https://persona.qcri.org>.”

Respondents perceive socially significant images through the prism of social networks but many characters are perceived by respondents as an image that came from different sources; young people are not alien to the complex and contradictory characters from classical literary works. “Show personas” include extremely versatile characters that are found in different sources. Young people paid attention to the most influential political figures of the present – Trump and Putin³¹ [28]. In the study, these images are significantly named as media brands by their surnames. In the study, the images of Putin and Trump are conveyed in a deliberately classic, restrained manner. On a poster with Trump, one can see the author’s ironic postscript, handwritten: “Trump is ours” (a creolized text!).

As a result of the cross-disciplinary review, the following can be summarized:

- Regarding the model of precedent names, it can be stated that in the historical perspective, when generations of young people change, the connotations of the precedent name can change right up to the exact opposite.
- Regarding the praxeme of this study, its results are aimed at demystifying the user's inner world and demonstrating the “codes” of his artistic samples for identification, codes expressed in the visuality of heroes, their values, their aesthetics.
- Regarding technology (information technology), the focus on a praxeme in a manipulative understanding and reliable simulation of even the appearance of Internet audiences is typical, and the latter demonstrates an approach for constructing bots and hoaxing Internet communication.
- Regarding politics, the characters of the media serve as indicators, prototypes of real political choice and suggest real trends of mass consciousness and/or are designed to overcome electoral passivity and involve the population in real political processes.
- Regarding economics, as shown, an inventory of all values according to the criteria of capitalization had and has strong influence on the transformation of the youth’s values. It is confirmed that in the long run, the brand of the character is only a name. It can be added that, in the long run, investing in the development of character connotations as a brand does not make economic sense. Only attachments to the character’s name make sense. Unlike product brands, a mass media character brand can diametrically change its values already on a scale of 10 to 15 years.
- Regarding creolized texts, a crisis of classical rationality based on the logos – the word – is ascertained. Visual thinking is treated as a type of thinking based on nonclassical rationality. The role of visual rhetoric in the representation of creolized texts is understood. This confirms the hypothesis of an increase in the value of visual rhetoric and its description based on textual rhetoric³². The latter substantiates the final conclusion that the description of the diachronic development of mass media characters is productive on the basis of the provisions on the linguistically clear precedent name of a character, while its synchronous development, in terms of establishing a stable emotional assessment by the audience, is based on the theory of philology, creolized texts.

³¹ A. Lobova, “The Image of V.V. Putin in Texts of Mass Media in The Guardian”, Information Age Vol: 2 num 2 (2018). DOI: [https://doi.org/10.33941/age-info.com22\(3\)2018005](https://doi.org/10.33941/age-info.com22(3)2018005)

³² A. V. Ulianovskii. Mifodizain reklamy (Saint Petersburg: Institut lichnosti, 1995).

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