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POST-HUMANISM IMPACT ON MEDIA CONTENT FORMATION

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Abstract

The media are forced to respond to changes in the information consumption patterns. Among these reactions are the increasing media content visualization and its robotization. These journalistic trends are consistent with post humanistic trends in journalism. The author of the article sets the task of observing the influence of post-humanism on the formation of media content, and on the formation of its aesthetic meaning. This is the relevance of the present study. The article presents a comprehensive study of three modern phenomena: post-humanism, the visual language of mass communication (infographic) and media aesthetics. This is the novelty of the present study. The theoretical and methodological base of the study is composed of scientific papers classified in four groups. The performed literature review of Russian-language and English-language sources on the research topic reflects the degree of knowledge of each individual phenomenon and confirms the lack of a comprehensive study of the claimed topic. The present study discusses the distinctive features of posthumanism, formulates its trends in journalism, and considers infographics – a tool of visualizing journalistic content – as the most prominent representative of the media content of the posthumanism era. A specific example presents the media aesthetic potential of infographics at the present stage in the mankind life of, which is posthumanism.

Keywords: Media content visualization, visual language, post-humanism, inphographics, media aesthetics, mass media trends.

1. Introduction

The social space undergoes a transformation that also affected humanism. Scientists discuss the future in the context of post-humanism paradigm. The impact of this phenomenon on the journalistic content formation, on the formation of its media aesthetic meaning is relevant. The natural reaction to changes in the cultural landscape and the attempt to adapt to it makes modern mass culture entirely rely on the visual channel of information perception, filling it with the help of cultural heritage and social and cultural stereotypes. This is most pronounced in the media.

Changes in visual content affect not only quantitative, but also qualitative characteristics. Not only an increase and improvement in the types of visualization is observed, but also changes in the visualization tools themselves. A vivid example is infographics. Nowadays infographics is not only a visualization tool that accompanies a particular media material, but it itself is visualized, becoming more and more an independent media text. Today, in the era of the dominance of information culture, global processes of informatization and computerization of all spheres of public life and, as a result, visualization and robotization of mass communication, the value basis of journalistic content are changing towards technologicalization. The aesthetics of the media, which does not exclude the formation of humanistic traditions - attention to Man - is combined with a post-humanistic extra-emotional.

2. Problem Statement

It is important to possess information technology in order to gain access to the necessary information. Analyzing the current state of the media space, trends in the visualization and robotization of information are enumerated and analyzed. Thus, the features of post-humanism are inherent in modern media.

It is important to single out infographics among a large number of techniques of the visual language of media communication. It is infographics that is the most striking media tool of the post-human era.

In the present era of mass media visualization, there is a change in the value basis of journalistic content towards technologicalization.

The solution to these issue is the logic of movement toward the undertaking of the main goal of the present study.

3. Research Questions

Firstly, post-humanism as a philosophical worldview, the worldview that reflects the dehumanistic tendencies of the present is under examination.

Secondly, the trends in the media information visualization of communication are considered. The analysis is carried out from the position of posthumanism.

Thirdly, from the position of post-humanism, such a tool for visualizing media content as infographics is analyzed.

The fourth, the current direction in the study of media and media aesthetics is examined. Aesthetic component is increasing in modern communication.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study is to observe the post-humanism impact on the media content formation, as well as the its aesthetic meaning formation. The philosophical and aesthetic foundations of visual practices in journalism (on the example of infographics) are considered for the purpose.

5. Research Methods

The purpose and objectives of the study determined its methodology. Special and general scientific research methods are applied in the process. The analysis is based on the following methods: functional, structural and compositional, contextual, discursive, art history. The practical part of the study is based on the case study method, description and generalization.

Thus, the methodology of the present study is comprehensive and aimed at a deep and panoramic understanding of the material.

6. Findings

6.1. The theoretical basis of the study

The theoretical and methodological base of the present study is composed of scientific papers, which are conventionally divided into four groups, depending on the research purposes formulated above.

The first group includes studies on post-humanism as a philosophical worldview; the worldview, reflecting the de-humanistic trends of the present.

The authors of such studies are: Dobryakov (2018), Zagidullina (2018), Kraynov (2017), Polomoshnov (2017), Simondon (1959).

The second group consists of works exploring visualization trends in mass media as a post-humanistic trend in journalism.

Here are distinguish such researchers as Grabelnikov and Grabelnikova (2019), Kozlova and Kinderknecht (2018). As part of the present study, the work of Zagidullina (2018) "DeusEx Machine": the Human under the Expansion of the Mechanical and the Electronic," is of interest, the scholar claims that throughout the history of mankind such qualities as mechanical, sacred, and human are closely intertwined. The researcher also emphasizes that with the cult of mechanical, the genre of techno utopia is eroded. As an example, one draws attention to such a technical breakthrough as the invention of the camera and the mass distribution of photographing, which included not artists but specialists in technology and practical chemistry of reagents in the visual arts zone (p. 441).

The third group is made up of studies devoted directly to infographics, a method for visualizing journalistic content with post-human features. Here it is important to name Simakova (2019a, 2019b), and a particular importance is given to the research in the field of infographics (See: Cairo, 2013; Laikova, 2016; Laptev, 2018; Ostrikov, 2014).

And finally, the fourth group is represented by works devoted to media aesthetics, which is a fairly new direction in the media study. The key for the present research are: "The language of new media"

(Manovich, 2001), "Key features media aesthetics: mental-linguistic transformations" (Zagidullina, 2016) and "Sight Sound Motion: Applied Media Aesthetics, Sixth Edition" (Zettl, 2011).

The performed literature review on the research topic reflects the degree of knowledge of each individual phenomenon and confirms the lack of a comprehensive study of the claimed topic.

6.2. On the issue of post-humanism

Considering the mankind life stages, some researchers attribute the modern stage to post-humanism. What is post-humanism? To date, a clear, unified definition of the concept is a lacune. Different thinkers denote the term differently. The general thing is that all of them are trying to identify the problem field of modern culture and pose issues for which there are still no solutions. In the framework of the present study, the issue is adheres to the opinion of Polomoshnov that post-humanism is understood as "the totality of worldview concepts and philosophical ideas that arose as a result of the transition to post-industrial society and the related crisis of classical European humanism in the 20th century" (Polomoshnov, 2017, p. 5).

6.3. Postmodern culture is a generator of information visualization in the media

Postmodernism is considered the cultural ideology or "superstructure" of a consumer society. Appealing to dreams, fantasies, fears, the unconscious, postmodernism created an ephemeral, absurdist, visually imbued kitsch-culture that levelled the border between areas of high and elite art. According to McLuhan (2005), "... the emphasis on visibility was completely impossible until the invention of printing strengthened the visual component of the perception of the written page to a state of complete uniformity and reproducibility" (p. 205). Postmodernism arises on the basis of the development of new communication tools and technical innovations, primarily as a visual culture and develops in architecture, painting, cinema and advertising. Experimenting with secondary reality, postmodernism extends these principles of operating to other areas (including literature, music, etc.) As a result, an image within the framework of postmodern art loses its ability to reflect reality, creating its own one. "Book culture has changed and enriched not only the content of visual images, but also the methods of constructing them, the languages of visual culture, creating perfect graphic illustrations that have risen to classical standards, theatrical (dramatic, ballet, opera), film and television productions. And although they retain the basis of the book's narrative: the development of the plot, there is not only a replacement of the signs system (verbal with visual) that translates the content, but also the construction of an independent aesthetic task: the desire to evoke special intellectual and emotional states in the viewer (Strizoy & Khrapova, 2018). Projecting a quote on the media sphere, the similarity of the described situation can be confidently asserted. The appearance of an artificially created language - a set of semiotically significant characters that have adequate equivalent correspondence with units of the natural language - made it possible to provide information more accessibly and understandably to consumers. A striking representative of such a language is visual language, a concept that has recently appeared, nevertheless firmly entered into scientific everyday life. Mass media researchers of offer a fairly wide rang of visual language tools. One of them - infographics - will be dwelt in more detail in the next paragraph.

6.4. Infographics is the visual language of the post-human era

Modern mass media offer many different options and schemes for visualizing information, allowing to reflect the surrounding world, filled with images of the world, on the pages of newspapers and magazines, on television or monitor screen. A modern media consumer is provided with the choice: to read / to scroll through the text, to browse photos, videos, study in detail the infographics proposed. The present study is devoted to infographics. Since it is infographics that is the most successful representative of the visualization options in the post-humanism era.

Russian art historians Ostrikov (2014) and Laptev (2018) understand infographics as a special method of presenting information through verbal and graphic communication media, the main task of which is to effectively transmit data. The famous Spanish infographics designer and professor Cairo considers infographics as a "functional art." The researcher emphasizes its applied purpose - to structure information for a comfortable reading (Cairo, 2013). Following them, others believe that the generally accepted term infographics cannot incorporate all modern technologies for presenting information due to the broadest possibilities of media content tools, and suggest introducing a new term - media infographics. In the understanding of the researcher Laikova (2016), media infographics is a kind of "synthetic form of organizing journalistic material", a special creolized text. "Information Visualization and Infographics" by Kroshneva and Malenova (2018) describes infographics, its functions infographics and media infographics quite complete and challenging.

Infographics is the most successful and dynamically developing direction in modern media. Infographics in a journalistic text can perform various functions. The present study distinguishes three main ones: 1) illustration of journalistic content; 2) self-contained journalistic content unit; 3) combination of both (creolized or multicode text). It is important to note that the role of infographics in the text is changing. Modern infographics is not only a tool for visualizing verbal text, but also visualize itself. That is a transition from creolized verbal text into creolized infographics. Another feature of modern infographics is the ways to create the infographics itself. When creating it, not only graphs and charts are applied, but also photographs, drawings and other illustrations. Modern technology has allowed infographics to turn into an interactive one.

Modern infographics is evolving towards journalism, responding to such trends as the "visual turn" — through the creation of a visual media image and the personification of a journalistic text — through building an author-reader dialogue. Accordingly, for infographics, both the content and the design principles of systematizing, structuring and presenting information are equally important. From the worldview point it represents what idea the author intends to express (when creating infographics more often - a collective author), from an aesthetic one - how accurate and harmonious the created image is.

An actual example is a content unit by Argumenti i Fakti (Arguments and Facts) (http://www.aif.ru). It is a multimedia special project "Made in the Crimea. Culture" (03.12.2015), released by the joint efforts of the Ministry of Culture of Russia and the editors of Argumenti i Fakti (http://crimea.culture.ru/). The content browsing is non-linear. It is performed by a virtual train running between the cities of the Crimea, along the "railway", made in the form of a time line, and applying the right panel, which refers to specific works of art. That is a collection of curious facts about the peninsula, accompanying artifacts that "carry" the reader to the Crimea. The cities of Crimea are presented through

texts of famous people: letters by Belinsky, *Sevastopol Stories* by Tolstoy; also through the appliance of modern art works such as Kavkazskaya plennitsa (The Caucasian Captive) and Chelovek–Amphibiya (Amphibian Man) and others. The project contains information on various areas of art and covers the period from the 19th century to the present day. The authors show the reader the peninsula through the eyes of great people who created films and paintings, books and poetry. The factual base of the material is composed of quotes by famous artists, singers, composers, writers of the Crimea, interesting details, one way or another connected with the peninsula. Readers will be able to find out what inspired Pushkin to create Kavkazskiy plennik (Prisoner of the Caucasus), how they chose the location for the film Alie parusa (Scarlet Sails), why many Koktebel residents are dissatisfied with Bulgakov's publication Puteshestvie po Krimu (Journey through the Crimea).

This special project is not informational, but educational. The data combined into infographics is not only visualized and systematized, but also personalized. The media language, represented by multimedia infographics, supplemented by a factual base, beautifully designed in terms of aesthetics, allows the reader to enjoy the proposed virtual journey. This example characterizes the new principles of communication based on the active participation of the addressee in the process of perceiving the media text, and hence the formation of a media image based on the information received. Note that when creating an infographics unit, both the designer and the reporter apply facts, turning them into a journalistic image. It is important that when creating infographics, the authors team pays more and more attention to such quality as artistry.

Thus, summing up the arguments of this paragraph, the formation of the aesthetics of the visual communication language - infographics - is affected by: technological progress, the author's style (team of authors) and design. All these indicators are features of post-humanism.

7. Conclusion

The main features of post-humanism are supposed to be technology, the rejection of anthropocentrism and the collective subject.

Having analyzed the theoretical base related to the trends of information visualization in the mass media, the emerging new system of social values based on ownership of means, technologies and channels of informatization leads to dehumanization of society. Visual content replaces texts, forming clip thinking, which is the reason why post-humanistic trends are traced in journalism. The new technological reality - digitalization - has made verbal text equal to audiovisual. We are of the opinion that the orientation of a person only on visual communication alienates one from literature, which contributes to the targeted and speedy formation of a common informational, aesthetic - cultural - code.

In modern communication, the role of the media aesthetic component is increasing. The aesthetics of the media, which does not exclude the formation of humanistic traditions - attention to a human being - is combined with a post-humanistic extra-emotional. Under these conditions, the most striking media tool for transforming the processes of reality perception – post-humanism - is infographics.

Acknowledgments

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