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**CIVIC DUTY AND THE EMPIRE: IMAGES AND METAPHORS IN
US MEDIA MYTHOLOGIES**

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Abstract

In modern humanities, there is a constant process of expanding the methods of analysis, approaches to understanding the subject of research, interdisciplinary synthesis. The study of the process of the emergence and evolution of metaphors in the context of the US media discourse will contribute to both the approbation of a new approach to the classical subject (foreign policy), and will allow using a specific example of the methodological tools of history, political science, philology, sociology to understand modern military-political, historical, ideological, socio-cultural processes, some of which may be challenges for Russia and its society. A comprehensive analysis of the evolution of images and metaphors through the study of the specifics of the perception by the political elite, the military, the public and the US media of international relations at the beginning of the 21st, which allows one to speak about the formation of a special phenomenon of the socio-political life of the United States, the reconstruction and explanation of which are impossible within the framework of the traditional methodology of historical research, and require an interdisciplinary approach based on the analysis of images and metaphors. In 2003-2005 there is a serious transformation in the media discourse of the United States of such categories as "empire" and "civic duty". The empire is finally deprived of its negative color, and the civic duty of the Americans receives the broadest, moreover, a global interpretation.

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1. Introduction

Metaphorical imagery has been particularly prominent and significant in terms of US foreign policy since World War II (Aslami, 2020). Metaphors served as the imaginary cornerstone of US global leadership throughout much of the Cold War, providing a powerful cognitive and rhetorical foundation for the rationale of US foreign policy (Levin, 2020). Moreover, strategic analysis in the United States has often been characterized by metaphorical thinking. This is directly related to the need to ensure Russia's national interests in the international arena, which implies the formulation of practical solutions to the global challenges of our time, one of which is information war (Levin, 2021). The importance of studying manipulative technologies is recorded in such documents as "Doctrine of Information Security" (2016), "Fundamentals of State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2025" (2014), "Historical and Cultural Standard" (2021). At the very beginning of the 21st century, the American state and society faced the problem of mobilizing society in a completely new "war on terror". And very quickly, the language of images and metaphors became dominant not only in political discourse, but also in print and electronic media (Hendrickson, 2017).

2. Problem Statement

The interaction of the media and the state in the course of "small wars" and asymmetric conflicts of our time has long been the subject of close study by specialists of various profiles (Christiansen, 2020). Certain interest can be aroused not only by the study of already traditional categories: the image of the "Other" in the US media discourse during the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, research on imaginary geography, analysis of propaganda, but also the study of the American media in the context of analyzing the understanding of the experience of European powers in counterinsurgency operations. and, more broadly, to establish the role of "history lessons" in American media discussions during the 2000s. (Baker, 2020). It should be noted that the interest of the US military, politicians and experts during the military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan in the 2000s, to the colonial experience of Great Britain and France, is an obvious and substantively considered phenomenon, while the refraction of this experience from the point of view of the language of images and metaphors in the US media are largely unclear (Hughes, 2010). For this study, out of all the variety of existing metaphors and images, we have chosen two: "civic duty" and "empire".

3. Research Questions

The American media played a much more complex role in the war in Afghanistan and Iraq than simply providing information to the conflict; in February 2017, former President George W. Bush noted that the media in the war on terror "is necessary for the spread of democracy" (as cited in Siemaszko, 2017). In this speech, the former president actually emphasized that the task of spreading democracy globally has become a dominant factor in such a category as American civic duty. We can say that the concepts of "civic duty" – "democracy" – "empire" have merged in the US media space into a single stable formula, where, when designating one element, the other two were automatically understood.

Given the current intertwining of the interests and views of the American media with the military, government, and business representatives, it can be argued that the mainstream media not only played a significant role in gaining public support for the 2003 war in Iraq (in accordance with Bush's thesis on democracy), but also to some extent reflected on their pages the attitude of the above structures to historical experience and, most importantly, to what extent this experience should become a part of the US media discourse – in the context of the war with Iraq (Ritzer, 2004). The formation of the image of a new war in the US public discourse began long before March 2003. The preparatory period lasted from 2001 to 2003. The narrative published in the media presented the future war in Iraq as a continuation of the “war on terror” and as a war of “good against evil” – it developed more fully and consistently in late 2002 and early 2003. administration officials through several messages from President Bush and many television appearances (Cohen, 2003). These two war stories were inextricably linked, even intertwined, supporting each other in important relationships. To some extent, these prevailing images of a future war in Iraq had deeper roots than the rapidly changing political climate after 9/11. To understand the historical basis on which the information support of asymmetric conflicts after 2001 was built, it is not enough to establish an overly updated comparison of September 11 and Pearl Harbor; and the war in Afghanistan and Iraq with the concept of a "crusade". Because, in addition to these very clear markers, there were also others in the media discourse of the United States, often not so clearly expressed, but coming from the experience of the Cold War and the process of decolonization (Lorcin, 2002). This historical experience can be clearly traced in the example of the formation of public opinion during the period of two key events: September 11, 2001 and March 20, 2003. It needs to be clarified once again that for the United States, the national experience of the Vietnam War (and more broadly the entire Cold War), including its continuing cultural impact, had a profound impact on the way the government and military officials planned the war in Iraq and, possibly, more importantly, the manner in which the Administration and its associated media planned to demonstrate the war in Iraq to the American public.

4. Purpose of the Study

Consequently, the purpose of the study is to trace how the attitude in the US media discourse to such categories as "empire", "civic duty", "patriotism", "lessons of history" was formed and changed in the early 21st century. And to clarify: which of these served as metaphors and images to explain America's current foreign policy agenda.

5. Research Methods

Key methods among the rest of the methods were the use of political metaphors and an appeal to citizenship, duty, and patriotism (and through it to the close and very distant past of the United States), which have proved to be particularly successful techniques for maintaining the Bush administration's favorable versions of the war after the outbreak of hostilities (Buranok, 2020). It can be argued that the interaction of the White House, the press and the US society at the beginning of the XXI century. accumulated all the experience of the Cold War, the experience of the Second World War and, at the right moments, one can observe the appeal of journalists, experts and statesmen to the more distant past in

search of models for the most effective use of images and metaphors in media discourse (Buranok, 2020). And in the period 2001-2003, not only the historical American experience fell into the focus of the journalistic and expert community: an increasing number of politicians, experts and journalists appeal to the civic feelings of Americans, trying through the interaction of such categories as civic duty, patriotism, security - to substantiate new inevitable conflicts.

These information strategies have also helped shape a new image of asymmetric conflict: "war as liberation". Having received relatively little emphasis at the start of the war, this design became more prominent in 2004, after coalition forces were unable to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and, in addition, the 9/11 Commission report that no evidence of a link was found. Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda. Here a very important role is played by the comparison in the media of the "advantageous" civil rights of Americans and the "oppressed in rights" inhabitants of "totalitarian states". Manipulative technologies in this aspect are most clearly traced in the period 2002 – early 2003.

American expert Eland, speaking about the peculiarities of the "new empire," singles out weapons of mass destruction, control over which should become the main task of America (Eland, 2002). It can be seen that before the start of the operation against Iraq, American journalists built into a single system extremely diverse ideological paradigms and approaches to the analysis of international relations: imperialism, civic duty, the consequences of decolonization, the patriotic legacy of World War II and the Cold War – and they all connected and interacted with each other. through stable, emotionally expressed images and metaphors.

6. Findings

In modern studies on international relations, a fairly popular direction is the study of the specifics of media discourse. And a special role in this discourse is played by historical symbols and stable metaphors, the appeal to which can form a certain public reaction.

At the same time, in the modern US foreign policy discourse, there are not only fundamentally significant metaphors, but also well-established images of the past, the actualization of which is used to explain, understand and, in part, form the international situation. Typically, such conceptual structures include a whole set of metaphors, symbols and images that are deeply rooted in national identity (Malkin et al., 2018). Both September 11th and March 20th became periods of overactive use of political metaphors in the media, the content of which actually actualized the historical experience. The uniqueness of these metaphors lies in the fact that they are used both for "internal consumption" (political discourse) and for external consumption.

7. Conclusion

Thus, American journalists at the beginning of the XXI century. raised questions about the evolution of the American attitude to such a phenomenon as empire, talked about its forms and methods of governing "overseas territories", talked about the limits of application of the American experience in modern Iraq. All this was a fairly popular and extremely controversial issue in American society, because was associated with such fundamental concepts as democracy, self-determination, civic duty, empire,

colonialism. In general, US journalists saw in such an analysis an opportunity to more deeply and concretely illuminate ideas about practical approaches in international relations in the context of the transformation of the world order in the 21st century.

All this as a whole formed an almost colonial approach to the depiction of the war in Iraq in the US media discourse. Consequently, we see that by the spring of 2003, US experts and journalists came to an almost unanimous opinion that the US at the beginning of the 21st century is realizing (on various recognized scales) imperial functions, which means that it is necessary to take into account and analyze the experience of empires of the past. This very quickly grew together in foreign policy discourse with “admiration for History” and resulted in an actualized past, when models for resolving asymmetric conflicts are built not only on the American historical experience itself, but also on any “imperial experience”. The beginning of the invasion of Afghanistan and, especially, Iraq led the American expert and journalistic community to understand the specific interest not only in the imperial, but also in the colonial experience of the past. And the beginning of this process: the "colonial" rhetoric of politicians, journalists and experts.

An important part of American public opinion in the era of the “war on terror” was the problem of developing approaches and assessments in the US media to the problem of the formation of a “new American imperialism” and its interaction with other subjects of international relations. American experts and journalists in 2001-2002 noted that one of the important results of World War II was the gradual disintegration of colonial empires due to the growth of national movements and a significant weakening of the old empires after the war. And the war in the Persian Gulf, the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict, the "war on terror" – all this the media tried to present as a continuation not of the Cold War and as the consequences of the confrontation with the USSR, but as a logical continuation of the colonial issues and problems unresolved in 1945. And the process of aggravation of national movements in the Arab world coincided in time with the genesis of the new American empire. This new understanding of history was largely based on the rethinking of such fundamental concepts as "democracy", "citizenship", "empire".

The complexity of this situation was reflected in the US media, trying to form an understanding of the new "imperial process" in which America was involved. In the course of a complex search for the optimal way of interaction between the theories of the “new empire,” Wilsonism, and global democratization, several opposing points of view have developed in the American press. Thus, the study of the relationship of the US media discourse is of interest to analyze how the US gradually realized the country's place in the system of international relations that had changed after September 11, and looked for optimal ways of interacting with its closest allies (Ramazani, 2020).

It can be argued that by 2003-2005. there is a serious transformation in the media discourse of the United States of such categories as "empire" and "civic duty". The empire is finally deprived of its negative color, and the civic duty of Americans is receiving the broadest, moreover, a global interpretation, where the need to protect and ensure the safety of the "home front" is one pole of understanding, and the other pole is the expansion of the American understanding of civics, democracy and debt to all "external fronts".

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