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### **Symbolism in modern motorcycle journalism**

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**Грубнік Л. В., Нечаєва Н. В. Символіка в сучасній мотожурналістиці.** Стрімкий розвиток медіа та перенасичення інформаційного ринку стали причиною переорієнтації традиційних засобів масової інформації. Зокрема, змінили вектор роботи спеціалізовані медіа, які раніше орієнтувалися на певний сегмент аудиторії. У сучасних умовах ці ЗМІ перетворюються з вузькоаудиторної преси на універсальний комунікатор, який виокремлює не аудиторію, а інформацію. Орієнтація на більш широку аудиторію зумовлює спрощення спеціалізованих текстів, що призводить до появи в їх мові нехарактерних елементів, зокрема символів. Подібні процеси відбуваються в мотожурналістиці. У пропонуваній роботі розглядаються поняття «мотожурналістика» та «символ». Крім того, досліджується вплив символів на зміст та комунікативний потенціал спеціалізованих текстів на мотоциклетну тематику. Робота заснована на низці наукових публікацій, що підтверджує загальну об'єктивність опублікованого матеріалу. Практична частина дослідження включає в себе аналіз найпопулярнішого на території України друкованого видання на мотоциклетну тематику «Мото».

**Ключові слова:** *мотожурналістика, спеціалізовані медіа, символіка, комунікація, контент-аналіз, комунікативний потенціал, заголовок, тваринні символи, «Мото».*

**Грубник Л. В., Нецаева Н. В. Символика в современной мотожурналистике.** Стремительное развитие медиа и перенасыщения информационного рынка стали причиной переориентации традиционных средств массовой информации. В частности, изменили вектор работы специализированные медиа, которые ранее ориентировались на определенный сегмент аудитории. В современных условиях эти СМИ превращаются из узкоаудиторной прессы на универсальный коммуникатор, который выделяет не аудиторию, а информацию. Ориентация на более широкую аудиторию обуславливает упрощение специализированных текстов, что приводит к появлению в их языке нехарактерных элементов, в частности символов. Подобные процессы происходят в мотожурналистике. В предлагаемой работе рассматриваются понятия «мотожурналистика» и «символ». Кроме того, исследуется влияние символов на содержание и коммуникативный потенциал специализированных текстов на мотоциклетную тематику. Работа основана на ряде научных публикаций, что подтверждает общую объективность публикуемого материала. Практическая часть исследования включает в себя анализ самого популярного на территории Украины печатного издания на мотоциклетную тематику «Мото».

**Ключевые слова:** *мотожурналистика, специализированные медиа, символика, коммуникация, контент-анализ, коммуникативный потенциал, заголовок, животные символы, «Мото».*

**Hrubnik L., Nechaieva N. Symbolism in modern motorcycle journalism.** A fast development of media and the glut of information market caused a reorientation of the traditional media. In particular, the specialized media, which previously focused on a certain segment of the audience, changed the vector of their work. In modern conditions these media, as limited press, transform into a universal communicator. Now they do not allocate the audience, they allocate the information. The orientation to a wider audience leads to the simplification of specialized texts. In this regard, the uncharacteristic elements, in particular symbols, appear in the texts. The similar processes occur in the motorcycle journalism. In the proposed research we examine the concepts of «motorcycle journalism» and «symbol». Moreover, we investigate the impact of the symbols on the content and communicative potential of specialized motorcycle texts. The work is based on few scientific publications, which create the general objectivity of the published material. The practical analysis of publication includes an analysis of the most popular print edition on motorcycle topic «Moto» on the territory of Ukraine.

**Keywords:** *motorcycle journalism, specialized media, symbolism, communication, content analysis, communicative potential, title, animal symbols, «Moto».*

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Modern people are completely dependent on information. This dependence changes their attitude towards understanding the stream of new

knowledge, towards traditional and emerging channels of information, transfers and, therefore, entails a change in their communicative function.

Previously, people turned to traditional media to learn more about the world with an inability to quickly and comprehensively fill in the gaps of knowledge. Now the selective role of the media takes on new senses. It saves the person from redundant information. This thesis is obvious for specialized editions, which transform limited press into a universal communicator. Now these media do not allocate the audience, they allocate the information. This statement is true for popular science and popular media, in particular, for motorcycle journalism.

Motorcycle journalism is a type of journalism, which focuses on the demonstration of motorcycle sports and motorcycle culture. Now motorcycle journalism is defined as a separate area of journalism with its own themes, range of problems, philosophy and style of writing. Motorcycle journalism has overcome the traditional correlation with sports or automotive journalism. Today this area is not explored enough. The need for a closer study of the motorcycle editions, their semantic content and the pragmatics of writing determines the relevance of our research.

The subject of our research is the using of symbols on the pages of the magazine «Moto» as a communication technique.

The objects of the research are the texts about different events in motorcycle sports and motorcycle culture in the motorcycle magazine «Moto» (the most popular printed motorcycle edition in Ukraine).

The goal of the research is to find the communicative potential of symbols and its realization on the pages of a specialized edition «Moto».

The semantic analysis of texts in the magazine «Moto» demonstrates that symbolism is one of the most used methods, which gives new senses and performs a communicative role. A detailed study of the question requires researching the modern understanding of a symbol to identify a communicative component, which is fundamental for a journalistic text.

The simplest understanding of a symbol is «a sign that transfers abstract concepts into a concrete form» [5]. Based on the works by K. Jung, Yu. Lotman, L. Boden, O. Boyko, L. Pavliuk, Yu. Dmitrieva, a symbol is «a term, name or even an image, which endowed with its common and special additional senses that carrying something undefined, unknown» [8].

This special sense has a communicative message and provides the possibility of widening the meaning to complicate the number of communication acts and actors, which can be

involved.

First of all, we mean that a symbol can simply reproduce accumulated knowledge, «compress» a huge array of information to a universal semantic unit. Yu. Lotman noted that a symbol could «keep minimized extensive and significant texts» [4]. At the same time, we take into account the dual nature of the symbol, which, as noted by L. Boden, is «indirect, mediated communication that is installed between the specific, most expressive means and abstract reality or meaning, which it correlated» [5]. Accordingly, we can say that the universal nature of the symbol is a communicative intermediary, understandable to a broad audience, when the «abstract ideas embodied in a particular sign that is able to convey complex concepts, phenomena and states» [3].

Successful communication depends on the being of a speaker and a recipient in the same information and cultural region. In a joint cultural context the senses, which the speaker laid the symbol, will be read by the recipient adequately.

Immersed in the information and cultural region, the symbol can provoke the emergence of new senses. O. Boyko calls that this ability of the symbol creates new senses [2]. In the communicative aspect, we have smaller text, which is easy to understand by a reader. But this ease is deceptive, because the texts, which are built on the symbols, require a more subtle and profound understanding of the information. We can talk about the «ambivalent» communicative nature of a symbol, which becomes especially apparent in texts for the general reader. In these publications the semantic simplicity is offset by the symbolic richness.

The analysis of the texts in the magazine «Moto» shows main theoretical principles, which have been previously identified. They describe specific realities of the motorcycle lifestyle. At the same time, these texts are not examples of primitive descriptions. They are characterized by the figurative and symbolic author's thinking.

We mostly find animal symbols on the pages of «Moto». They are used for characterizing a motorcycle, its «revival», also to explain the lifestyle of motorcyclists, their culture and worldview.

We conducted content analysis and found that for the period from July 2014 to June 2015 the names of animals were used 55 times (beasts – 33 times, reptiles – 8 times, insects – 6 times, birds – 4 times, fish – 3 times, amphibians – 1 time). In particular, in the texts authors used the names of these animals: horse, cat, dog, deer, rat, mouse, tiger, elephant, wolverine, dinosaur, crocodile,

frog, hawk, peacock, crow, flea, fly, grasshopper, centipede, shark, and hammerhead. Some of them have been used once, others have being used constantly. They turned into a certain semantic codes, established informational-emotional clots, which transfer necessary information to the readers.

Mostly animal symbols set the emotional tone of the text and were used in the titles, which had become the object of our scientific interest.

During the analysis of animal symbols in the texts of the magazine «Moto», we relied on their interpretation in the «Dictionary of symbols», edited by O. Potapenko and M. Dmitrenko (1997) and «The complete encyclopedia of symbols and signs» by V. Adamchik (2008).

The symbol of the horse was the most presented in the titles of the motorcycle magazine «Moto». The horse symbolizes intellect, wisdom, nobility, light, movement, strength, agility, speed, running time, power and intelligence [7]. This is a typical symbol of fertility, courage and power. The horse symbolizes unbridled passion, natural instincts and the unconscious [6]. All these senses are read in the text on the motorcycle theme. But there are senses, which are the most common and recognizable in our information and cultural region. For example, a horse symbolizes speed, quickness, strength in Ukrainian culture.

Using the symbol of the horse in the titles of the magazine «Moto», authors often appeal precisely to this sense. Thanks to this, they explain the characteristics of motorcycles to the audience in a simplified way. In addition, the symbol of the horse creates images, which makes difficult specialized text more interesting to read for an average reader. The presentation of a model of motorcycle Indian Dark Horse called «Dark Horse» (№ (04) 271, April 2015, p. 6) is a great example of the horse allusions. The image of quick black horse occurs at the beginning of the material and is supported in the description of this model: «"Dark Horse" is the lightest and fastest model of the family. Its characteristic feature is a matte-black colour, only somewhere is accented with chrome detail» [1]. Thus, we see the activation of the symbolic characteristics of the animal. They explain to the reader the high-speed advantages of this model compared to other motorcycle brand The Indian.

Quite often authors used the symbol of the cat. Two publications about the motorcycle brand Ducati have the headers «Cat from hell», «Hell cats» (October 2014, pp. 8–9). Traditionally, a cat symbolizes the ease, speed [6]. Also this animal is associated with the evil, the devil, witches,

darkness and death. The reason for such beliefs is the black colour of the animal and glow eyes in the night [7]. Combining the symbol of the cat and the definition of «hell», the author emphasizes the supernatural characteristics of the motorcycle brand Ducati. In addition, the text transfers the idea of the singularity, the uniqueness of the motorcycle and its «otherworldly» ease and quickness.

Other animal symbols are found once in the headers of the magazine «Moto». In «British tiger» (№ (06) 273, June 2015, p. 40), the author describes the model of the motorcycle Triumph Tiger 1050. The tiger symbolizes strength, courage [6]. Thus such image emphasizes the greatness, the nobility of the motorcycle. In some cultures the tiger is perceived as the king of beasts [6]. This sense with the definition of «British», which also means something royal, exquisite, refined, points the majesty of the motorcycle and explains to the audience its status benefits.

In the titles authors sometimes used the symbols of animals that traditionally are not compared with motorcycles. So, the author of the text shares his impressions of the motorcycle «Epron» and compares it with the rat («Rat nautically», № (12) 267, December 2014, pp. 76-77). The image of dirty, disgusting animals appears in the imagination of the audience [6]. This image is confirmed by the author of the article: «The oxides, the dark rust of iron...» [1]. Another example of using the rat symbol is a material called «Killer mouse» (№ (01) 268, January 2015, p. 6). Using the symbol of little creatures, the author explains to the audience the unusually small size of the Yamaha YZR500 «El Raton Asesino».

On the pages of the magazine «Moto» authors simultaneously use two or more animal symbols. An example of such is the title «Bambi against dinosaurs» (№ (04) 271, April 2015, pp. 26–35). In this text the image of a good and clumsy deer from a cartoon is opposed to the dinosaur, which means something old, ancient, at the same time great, strong, mighty [6]. Thus at the header level a contrast of «big – small» has been created. In the text the motorcycle Yamaha MF-09A is compared with other two-wheeled vehicles such as BMW F800R, Honda CB650F and Suzuki GSR750A: «...a high silhouette and little tail reminiscent of a clumsy deer, the Bambi, especially against a more "muscular" competitors» [1]. In contrast to the characteristic of other motorcycles, an author writes: «...against the background of "nine" the other three contenders for the leadership look like dinosaurs» [1].

In the headers of the materials authors use

symbols of birds or fish. An example of using the symbol of a bird is the text «Silent hawk» (№ (03) 270, March 2015, p. 7). The hawk is a symbol of speed, ease [6]. Using the symbol, the author describes the advantages of a new army motorcycle, which the company «Alta Motors» plans to release. The quiet is a major advantage of a motorcycle, which will be used as a war machine.

In the article «Great red shark» (№ (9) 264, September 2014, p. 82), an author says that the bike looks very aggressive, appealing the natural traits of a marine predator. Especially it is in the

red colour, which also symbolizes aggression.

So, we explored the use of symbols on the pages of specialized magazine about motorcycles «Moto». We found out that their main function is the activation of familiar ideas about animals to facilitate the understanding between an author and a reader. At the same time the symbolization of the imaging technology creates the emotional tone of perception of technical features. It gives us the opportunity to talk about symbolic as a way of providing specialized texts on more universal level, which potentially expands the readership of this type.

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