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BRITISH MEDIA AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR CREATING AN IMAGE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY

Introduction. The monarch is the image and the face of the country. People are watching them closely and tracking every word of theirs, as well as their act, therefore, they should be very careful in their actions. The same is relevant for all the members of the royal family. It is becoming more special and increasingly important because of the growing influence of the media which now impact our lives. The British royal family owe the mass media their extreme popularity throughout the world, but this also had its own price – now there is not a single step, no mistake that can be kept in secret, and at least the whole Europe will speak about it the next day.

This paper is about the most highlighted and scandalous events of the royal family that British media are so much fond of.

A comparative analysis has been conducted on the basis of the population surveys, namely: how their consciousness is influenced by the fact that they read about their "idols ". In addition, the paper discusses the influence that the media manifest when affecting the Queen and her loved ones (special attention is paid to the so-called "effect of Princess Diana").

Review of recent publications. According to the historiography of this issue, we have divided the literary sources into the following groups:

1. The first group includes the researches about the impact of the media on the royal family from a sociological point of view based on the materials of English-language media texts. The problem has been investigated by such scholars as E. Zaperta., N. Blain.

2. The second group includes the researches related to the life and death of Princess Diana. It has been discussed by M. Sonkova and M. Angelova.

3. The third group of research works concerns the changes in the views of the British population on the monarchy and royal family under the influence of the mass media, and to what consequences it has led to. The problem has been investigated by S. Ivanova, N. Blaine, M. Billing. Also, the work is based on numerous contemporary materials of the British media and sociological surveys held in different years and by various magazines, newspapers, etc.

Objective of the paper. The aim of the paper is to study the role of the mass media in the process of forming the image of the British royal family and how they influence the opinion of the British society in this regard.

Results of the research. A characteristic feature of the British media is that sometimes their interest and the thirst for sensations do cross the certain boundaries, and the Queen and her family may be victims of persecution. This is exactly what had happened with Diana, the Princess of Wales [3]. Now her sons William and Harry feel the same, as well as their favorites, Keith and Megan. The reasons for this are: firstly, almost complete freedom of the British press, that, however, after the tragic death of Diana, which the media had been accused of, has suffered some restrictions; and secondly, their certain bias in the presentation of information about the royal family. One way or another, almost every year there are complaints from the family side about the "officiousness" of the reporters to be considered [1].

Being recognized personalities and patterns for imitation, members of the royal family cause not only admiration, but also criticism. Publicity of their lives has led to the fact that some journalists called the family a "live soap opera" [6]. On the other hand, BBC reporter M. Billing gives them the label of "living fossils"[4], since they are all closely related to the past, which, in his opinion, hinders further development. Prior to this, his colleague Oakland adds that the monarchy reflects more Anglicanism than Britannia, and the alienation of members of the royal family from "simple" life supposedly supports class divisions and hierarchies in the society [5].

In addition, some media outlets point out that, being a role model to follow in a family life, they do not help to fight racism and homophobia (although they do not support it deliberately) because everyone lives in heterosexual marriages and with white partners (before the appearance of the well-known American Megan Markle).

These statements can not be called empty words, because, as the researches have showed, they became template for the British society.

As for the "effect of Princess Diana," it is possible to observe not only the excessive attention of the media to her personality but also the strong influence of this attention on her life and even on death [2].

Several years before the catastrophe, she had even claimed that the media literally transformed her life into hell. All this led to the fact that the society accused the mass media of what had happened to their Princess.

Conclusion. Consequently, it should be mentioned that each member of the royal family has a certain image in the eyes of the public which they are obliged to follow – any departure from it, any wrong step may lead to public condemnation, discussion, and, even, a scandal. All of this is due to the mass media which follow every single movement of theirs and is such a "tool" that shapes this image. They pay particular attention to the "most interesting", in their opinion, individuals, who, nonetheless, are suffering from such excessive observation.

And though all the British people seem to read every day about the most famous family in the UK, and the way this information is presented, should definitely have shaken their loyalty. However, sociological polls have shown that they still love and respect their Queen and her family. In addition, most of them are convinced that the monarchy was, has been, is, will be and should exist for many years and even centuries ahead.

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