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## **HARRY POTTER: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE IN LITERATURE AND ITS PERCEPTION IN UKRAINE AND RUSSIA**

**Annotation:** This piece is an attempt to analyze social and cultural perception of J.K. Rowling's series about Harry Potter in Ukraine and Russia. In the course of research the authors come to conclusion that perception of the novels in Ukraine and Russia differs greatly. It is idiosyncratic for Ukraine to deal with practical aspect of reception such as translation and adaptation, while in Russia the accent is on the theoretical level of the reception.

**Key words:** mass literature, practical reception, theoretical reception, globalization.

## **ГАРРІ ПОТТЕР: СОЦІАЛЬНА ТА КУЛЬТУРНА ПЕРСПЕКТИВА В ЛІТЕРАТУРІ ТА ЇЇ СПРИЙНЯТТЯ В УКРАЇНІ ТА РОСІЇ**

**Анотація:** Дане дослідження являє собою спробу дослідити сприйняття романів Дж.К. Роулінг про Гаррі Поттера в Україні та Росії з точки зору соціального та культурологічного сприйняття. Автори доходять висновку, що для України більш важлива практична рецепція – різні форми адаптації та

переклади, в той час коли в Росії мова здебільшого йде про теоретичну рецепцію.

**Ключові слова:** масова література, практична рецепція, теоретична рецепція, глобалізація.

Social and cultural situation in the end of XX and in the beginning of the XXI centuries has set for literary criticism the problem of comprehension of literature as multilevel, multilayer, and addressed to the widest circle of readers. Changing of its character and functions is determined by various factors, including the process of globalization, which assumes the cosmopolitan nature of literature, the orientation towards the language of a certain national culture, while maintaining the repeatability of universal elements and structures, commercialization of the process of creating books and their distribution, simplification and standardization of broadcast information, etc. These criteria correspond to the mass literature, which was established in America and Europe in the twentieth century and over the past thirty years has become a notable phenomenon in the post-Soviet space. Created in accordance with the reader's requests, it has drastically changed the structure of the book market, the status of the writer, the relation to the book, which is no longer perceived as a certain symbolic capital, “textbook of life”, and above all, as a commodity, in particular, this is pertinent to literature for teens. This was stated by the editor-in-chief of the Russian children's publishing house “Samokat” Iryna Balakhonova. She noted that in the West, it has been a long time, since people paid attention to a decrease in the number of young readers, who not only enjoy reading, but also read in general. She points out that the literature that was offered to the younger readers earlier, that is, the absolutely and purely “children's”, or moralistic, or adult classics, which went to the category of children's reading, became uninteresting to them, and lost all the connection with young reader's real life. On the other hand, the Western market has realized that a young reader of any age, including a teenager, can also be its consumer, with whom it is possible to create a dialogue, creating a quality product that meets the immediate needs and that this product can

bring real income" [1, p. 271]. It is clear that this kind of "product" should be an exciting reading, both educating and entertaining. Bringing significant income to the writer and publisher, mass literature also performs a traditional "instructive" function, offering its readers certain standards of behavior, spiritual demands, forming stereotypes of consciousness and being an integral part of contemporary culture, reflecting those complex social processes that take place in society.

Globalization, which covered all spheres of life of a modern person, facilitating the exchange of information in connection with the development of the global virtual network, contributed to the synchronization of some social and cultural processes, which in the post-Soviet space went somewhat differently due to the special conditions of the development of literature. Any noticeable phenomenon in Western mass culture immediately becomes meaningful in Ukraine and Russia, it functions here according to the laws common to the whole world in terms of spreading of a mass product, and, at the same time, under somewhat different conditions that have a certain national specificity. The success of the popular singers (e.g.: Madonna, Sting, etc.) or their death (e.g.: M. Jackson, W. Houston, etc.), the world premiere of the film, the publication of a book that attracted the attention of the western reader and viewer (e.g.: "Da Vinci's Code" by D. Brown , "Platform" by M. Welbeek, novels by P. Coelho, etc.), raise interest in Ukraine and Russia as well; especially if a mass product is associated with scandal, acute controversy, discussion in the TV show, speeches by religious figures, politicians, medical workers, etc.

A series of books by JK Rowling about the little wizard Harry Potter, whose first novel was published in 1997, belongs to the type of literary production that functions according to the laws of mass culture. These books have quickly gained popularity not only in the children's audience, for which they were intended, but also adult readers. Translations of JK Rowling's novels into many languages, as well as the creation of the Harry Potter project, which includes screening novels, creating fan clubs, website, selling attributes, etc., made it available in more than a hundred countries around the world. A large number of publications devoted to the series of

JK Rowling's about the wizard-boy, created, according to D. Sibruck, the effect of "noise", that is, a mixture of conversations, gossip, reminiscences, assumptions, and thoughts, which attracted attention to the novels of a wider reader community, united by common cultural experiences. Speaking about the popularity of J. Fleming's novels about James Bond, U. Eco notes that, when a certain act of communication gets a wide response in a society, the decisive factor is not the text itself (in this case, the text of the book) as such but the way the text is read by this or that society" [2, p. 286]. And today the phenomenon of "The Potter Series" and the "concrete circumstances" (U. Eco) of its perception are not clear. In particular, the attention of researchers to the peculiarity of perception and functioning of this series in other national cultures, in particular in Ukraine and Russia was left to some extent undiscovered. It should be noted, however, that the attention should be paid to the mechanisms of its penetration into these countries, and the peculiarities of the translations that made "The Potter Series" a part of national culture, its study in secondary school and the specificity of understanding the ideological and artistic peculiarities of these texts in formal and informal literary studies.

Review of publications in the British and American press on the series of books by JK Rowling suggests that two topics are central to the discussion: the role and place of the Harry Potter books in the literature for children and the nature of the correlation of the issues of these books with traditional Christian values. Advocates and opponents of JK Rowling are hotly discussing her personal phenomenon as well as the phenomenon of her books, also because she awakened the children's interest for reading, attracted millions of small readers from all over the globe into her fictional world. The most productive in our opinion is the observation of researchers related to the specifics of the Harry Potter books as a product of mass literature, similar to the phenomenon of W. Disney, which functions in the current socio-cultural situation under its laws: the creation of the Harry Potter Project, "being serial", attributes, fan clubs, escapism, entertainment, curiosity, etc.

If we touch upon the issues connected with religion on the whole and Christianity in particular then we will see that the members of religious organizations, religious activists who express fears regarding the introduction of magic and everything magical into JK Rowling's texts, in their reviews go beyond the scope of discussion of literary texts. Their reviews and criticism is full of the problems concerning establishing of Christianity in the modern world, the interruption of the tradition passed from parents to children, as well as the place and role of the school in terms of engaging children to the eternal values. This topic was also extensively discussed by Orthodox leaders. On the other hand we may say that over the time the progress in terms of theoretical reception of the Harry Potter books has been impressive. According to A. Lurie, critical responses to the series by JK Rowling about the young wizard-boy Harry Potter have become more analytic.

All this can help to clarify the notions of the development of mass literature, in particular, addressed to children, as well as the reproduction of a coherent picture of literary development. The modern literary process deserves attention, at the very least because the literature of the XX – XXI centuries summed up the artistic and aesthetic pursuits of the era and outlines the prospect of further development of literature.

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