

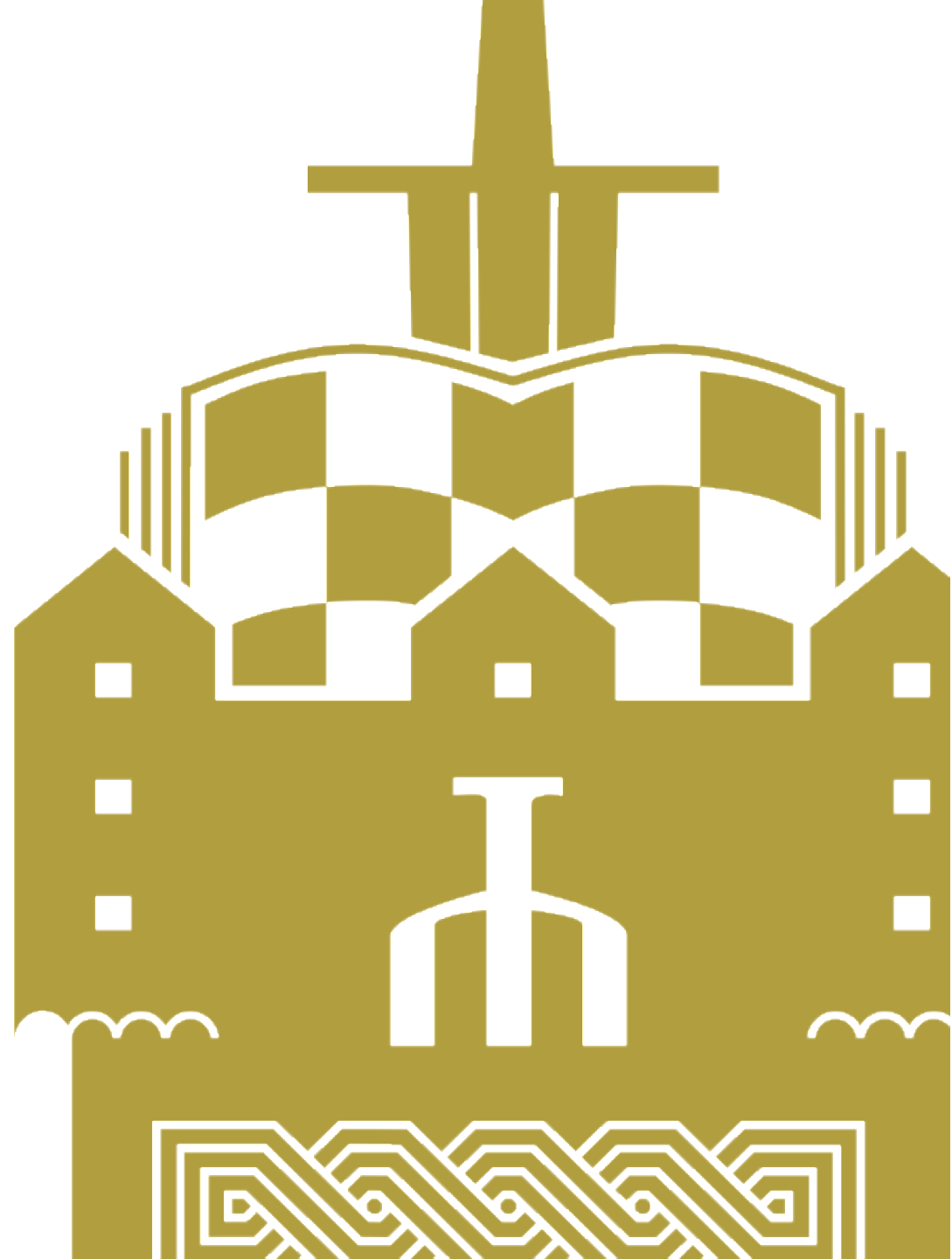


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Analysis of media coverage about war in Ukraine in Croatian media

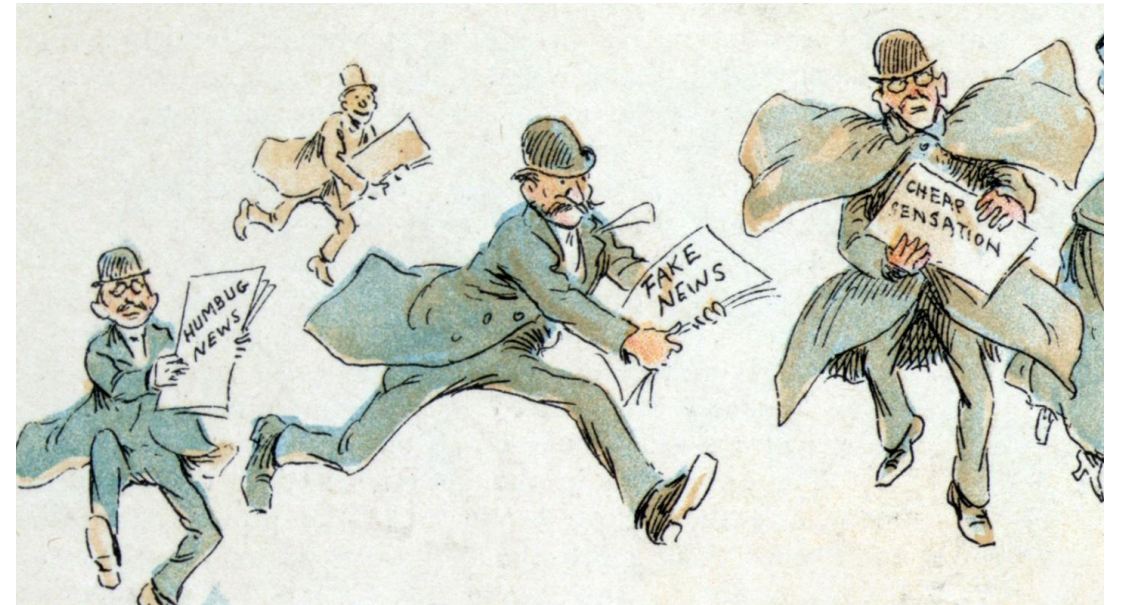
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candidate

Sapere Aude et Agere





- What is the significant of media?
- Why is it important to conduct scientific research concerning them?

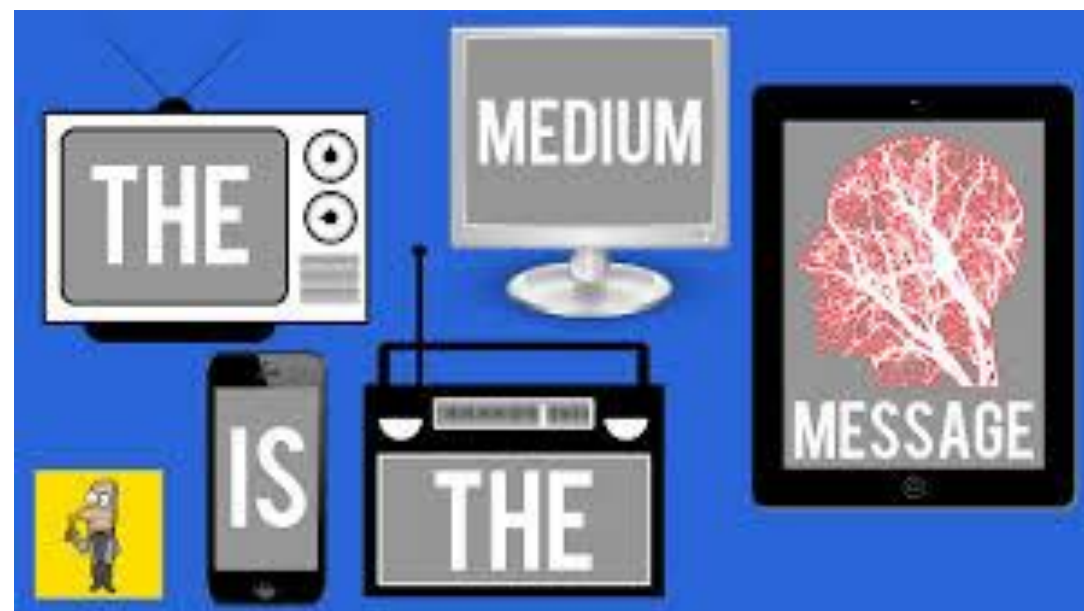




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Media

- Defining the media and media studies cannot be done without reference to McLuhan's thesis – ***the medium is the message***. According to him, it is the medium itself that determines and shapes the scope and form of human association and action. The media have become the foundation of both personal and social life; they have transformed public and political communication, culture and the arts, influenced knowledge and leisure, reshaped the family and education, and imposed the need to reconsider many values.





- Mass communication is a form of communication in which the source is a mass medium (a journalist or media speaker), while the recipient is a mass audience receiving an identical message. According to McQuail, the functions of mass media in society are:
 - they serve specific purposes, needs, and uses in communication,
 - they employ technology to communicate publicly with distant audiences,
 - they are organizations that produce and distribute media content,
 - they manage information in the public interest.



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Media

- **Media freedom is a necessary condition for applying these principles.**

In democratic countries, journalistic associations usually set national codes of ethics for journalists.



- According to the American Press Institute, the goal of **fact-checking** organizations is to increase knowledge and publicly report on statements made by politicians and other individuals who influence the lives and incomes of others.
- **Fact-checkers** investigate verifiable claims in an impartial manner through rigorous verification and the publication of clear information, which enables consumers to make informed choices when voting or making other significant decisions.



- Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have become major channels for reporting on the war in Ukraine. Unlike traditional media, social media allows real-time dissemination of information, direct communication from journalists, officials, and civilians, and widespread sharing of images, videos, and personal testimonies.
- Key characteristics of social media coverage include:
 - **Real-time Updates** – News and developments are shared instantly, often before traditional media can report.
 - **Citizen Journalism** – Civilians on the ground post firsthand accounts, photos, and videos, providing immediate but sometimes unverified information.
 - **Viral Spread of Information and Misinformation** – While social media allows rapid awareness, it also facilitates the spread of rumors, propaganda, and manipulated content.
 - **Emotional Engagement** – Posts often include personal stories, appeals for aid, and graphic content, which strongly affect public perception and sentiment.
 - **Polarization and Bias** – Algorithms can create echo chambers, reinforcing specific political narratives and perspectives.
 - **Fact-checking Challenges** – The sheer volume of content makes verification difficult, requiring specialized fact-checkers to maintain accuracy.





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Background of the war in Ukraine

- The Russo-Ukrainian War began in 2014 with Russia's annexation of Crimea and escalated in February 2022 when Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This conflict has become the largest war in Europe since World War II, drawing widespread international attention and condemnation Russo-Ukrainian War.



- A qualitative analysis was conducted on media content available through online portals and daily newspapers in Croatia, focusing on news reports, analyses, and columns published since the onset of the war in Ukraine. The analysis aimed to identify common characteristics and trends in Croatian media coverage of the conflict.



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Examples

- The largest Croatian portals – **Večernji**, **Jutarnji**, and **Index** – have been reporting on the Russian invasion from the very beginning. On February 24, 2022, they published news about the invasion and reactions from international politicians, creating a *Live* section for real-time coverage.
- Examples include: **Index.hr** on March 20, 2023, republishing a BBC article titled *Oxford Professor: Putin May Have Sent a Double to Mariupol. Look at His Hand*, March 6, 2023, *Brits: Russians Send 1950s T-62 Tank to the Battlefield and Fight with Shovels*, and January 24, 2024, an article by Mario Galić titled *Ukraine Has No Chance of Victory, and Europe Has Only One Year Left to Prepare*.

Putin je novi Hitler



Piše: Goran Vojković
22:13, 30. rujna 2022.



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Key findings

- Through qualitative analysis of media content available on online portals and in daily newspapers (news reports, analyses, columns) since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, the following common characteristics have been identified:
 - there is no war correspondent/reporter
 - most content consists of agency reports and translations from foreign media
 - only one source of information (usually)
 - timely reporting – extensive coverage in the media
 - analyses by experts
 - lack of objectivity – Croatian media have clearly taken the Ukrainian side



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Conclusion

- An analysis of media coverage of the war in Ukraine in Croatia shows that portals such as **Večernji**, **Jutarnji**, and **Index** provided timely information and real-time coverage from the very beginning. However, much of the content relied on agency reports, translations from foreign media, and social media posts, with a notable lack of on-the-ground correspondents.
- In the first months of the invasion, the narrative emphasized Russian failures, while later authored articles increasingly highlighted the real possibility of a Ukrainian defeat. This shift demonstrates how media narratives evolve depending on the political context and events on the ground.
- Media freedom and adherence to professional and ethical journalism principles—including fact verification, impartiality, and accountability—are essential for providing accurate and objective information. The role of social media further underscores the challenges of controlling the spread of information and misinformation, highlighting the need for critical engagement and fact-checking.



