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FRENCH MEDIAS ABOUT SOCIAL-POLITICAL SITUATION IN UKRAINE IN 2014

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In the article is discovered formation of Ukraine's image through analyses of French medias material. Factors, used by Western media outlets to build recipient's image about social-political situation in Ukraine basing on events of 2014, have been identified. The article aims to examine the way for positive image by creating high-quality information field outside Ukraine. Tendencies of Ukrainian-French political dialogue while building relevant Ukrainian state and its feature during the Revolution, Crimea annexation, beginning of the war on the East are discovering in the article. The discovering of that issue in France and Ukraine as well isn't high intensive. But for the last decades there is a great massive of various information accumulated, that covers changes in French people's attitude, shows us a positive experience and achievements in bilateral partnership. But also moment of deceleration in cooperation, reasons and motives for inconsistency of the French state leadership at the most important time for Ukraine. The purpose of the research is to analyze the situation around the understanding of socio-political changes in Ukraine from the 2014 beginning in French media and codependency with political events on the world stage. Examining the French media is going to help to understand the factors that shape a positive or negative image of a Ukrainian abroad. They also provide an opportunity to identify effective methods of influencing a foreign recipient. During the research it was found that the situation with the number of appearances of information related to Ukraine has improved with the torrent of information. The analysis of Ukrainian content in foreign media is going to control the image of Ukraine in the future and use the commitment of foreign readers, viewers or listeners to their advantage. The article also elaborates the latest developments on the subject of Ukrainian-French relations in the media. There has also been found insufficient amount of researches in the topic of Ukraine's image for its position in the geopolitical arena. The article provides recommendations for better interaction with the French media, which will make it possible to clearly speak in the world information space.

Key words: image of Ukraine, French media, socio-political situation, events of 2014.

Issue statement. In the modern world, the image of a country on the international scene plays a huge role in its development of political, social-economic and cultural ties. Without a good reputation, a country will not have the support of any world leaders or any investment flows, it won't have economic growth and it won't become an attractive tourist destination. Furthermore, its image affects also the security of the state and guarantees of that security by other states.

The subject of this article is French media outlets. Among the leading European states France has been related to us most closely historically since the times of Prince Yaroslav

and Anna of Kyiv, who became the queen of France. Pylyp Orlyk's son, Hryhoriy, was a French diplomat and among his activities was an attempt to arrange an anti-Russian coalition consisting of France, Sweden, Poland and Turkey, on the theory that with their help it would be possible to achieve the establishment of a Ukrainian state. Our longstanding relations and contacts had enabled us quickly to build Ukrainian-French diplomatic relations and bilateral cooperation in many spheres. France became one of the first Western European countries officially to recognize Ukraine's independence. Later on, after the Russian military aggression in eastern Ukraine, France and Germany became the leaders of the diplomatic efforts regarding the situation. They initiated the negotiating process in a co-called «Nomadic» format. Since 2014, besides interaction in the «Nomadic» format, unprecedented Ukrainian-French contacts have taken place. Over the last 3 years, the Ukrainian and French heads of state have had more than ten meetings in different formats. That's why we can't object to French influence on the geopolitical situation and interest in the «Ukrainian question»¹.

During the hybrid war of Russia against Ukraine, information about the events in our country has strategic importance. In an information society and globalization the interpenetration of journalism and policy becomes noticeable. It is expressed in new status of mass media. Today's media are shaping public opinion, set the terms to politics, who have to react fast and clear, they let important social events and changes being seen. That's why our task is analysis of French medias in covering social-political situation in Ukraine in 2014, when Ukraine was a topic of discussions and when the modern image of our country had began to take shape in the world's information space. It's going to be easier to understand, what are the views about Ukraine and what are the core events that formed them. Also what should we work on to enshrine positive image of our country.

The aim of the article is to analyze media outlets of France with the view to covering of the 2014 events in Ukraine in order to identify patterns in articles attitudes about social-political situation in Ukraine during the tragical events of 2014. Also to understand in which direction to work to not lose our strategic partner — France and to form positive image of our state for French people.

Analysis of the last researches and publications. The issue of researching media's role in establishing positive image of the state and security of the state in information space brought up the following scientists: O. Bilorus², O. Hrebinchenko³, S. Danylenko⁴, H. Pocheptsov⁵.

In the book «Information Security of Ukraine: Theory and Practice» by V. Lyzanchuk, the researcher notices that hybrid war may be divided on two stages. The first stage started in 2000s, so large-scale brainwashing on the Russian Great-State idea basis allowed to continue the war and even receive first serious results. The second stage, says V. Lyzanchuk, began

¹ Foreign cases (2019), «Ukraine and France: 25 years of Cooperation» ...

² Bilorus, O. (2001), *Globalization and Development Security* ...

³ Hrebinchenko, O. (2008), *International Rating, as The Influence Factor on The National State Security* ...

⁴ Danylenko, S. (2003), «Ukraine's Foreign Broadcasting in International Relations Process» ...

⁵ Pocheptsov, H. (2010), *The Future: Strategies, Scripts, Communications. The Handbook for Students and Graduates* ...

in 2013: denigration of the Revolution of Dignity, planning of the Crimea annexation and the undeclared «frozen war» on the East⁶. Very important to turn information in high-quality materials, we were the ones who tells about us, that's what Olexandr Myched says in the book «To See To Being Seen: Reality-show, Reality-novel and Revolution Online». Since cameras do not just represent a conflict, they take part in it, they do not just form our understanding, but manage the whole conflict⁷. Based on the research of O. Hresko some policy-information management experts addressed the coverage of events in Ukraine by western media in general and French media in particular. However, today this issue is almost unexplored⁸.

Methodological framework. The method of work is subordinated to the tasks of work and is complex. For the research, we used the monitoring method and analysis of materials while processing French radio and press thematic content. Also we used the following analytical methods: competitive, problematic and synchronized description for comparison of the themes and content of TV shows, drawing conclusions. Moreover, the modeling method, which is based on abstraction, and analogies came in handy. Modeling was used to scale the views about the original. So we modeled the way to a positive image of the socio-political situation in Ukraine.

The presentation of the basic material. If the nearest neighboring counties are able to see with their own their eyes what is going on in Ukraine, Western Europe is too far away and trusts the information provided by their reporters (in the best case) or by the Russian media. And that's the core of our security, image and potential to develop in the geopolitical arena. Whose media would speak louder?!

The year 2014 could be called the year of Ukraine's discovering to French people. If only not the sad reason and unstoppable work of Russian propaganda. Until the end of February the firstest pages contented the picture from Maidan, and the publications. one way or another, were bringing up the topic. For various reasons the conflicting different thought appears: hopes for changes, reflections about the values, callings to sanctions and Yanukovich's removal, concerns for the civil war. In Russian propaganda's arsenal were not only manipulation of civil consciousness and disinformation, but also the destruction of the identity as such. In publication «The Strategy of Ukraine's Victory Against Russia» philosophy Serhiy Datsiuk wrote: «The idea of information war is identoside, that means destruction of the all national state and civil identity of the enemies country to the state when we can call it not a human but enemy. The idea of identoside is convincing of the majority of own nation (ideally: the part of enemies nation) in the enemies ill will against you»⁹. That kind of confrontation is transferring from political level to the regular people. That's why it is important to understand what do foreigners imagine us like, particularly, partners. Because in their mind the image of the Ukrainian-enemy or, vice versa, the fighter for its freedom and European values is already forming.

⁶ Lyzanchuk, V. (2017), *Information Security of Ukraine: Theory and Practice* ...

⁷ Myched, O. (2016), «To See To Being Seen: Reality-show, Reality-novel and Revolution Online» ...

⁸ Hresko, O. (2015), *World Broadcasting Services as An Instrument of International Communications* ...

⁹ Vorozhbyt, O. (2014), «The World About Ukraine in 2014: The Year of Anxiety» ...

Maidan as the fight against Russian aggression became the turning point in the history of our French-Ukrainian relations. Finally Ukraine has started to be recognized as a member of international community, independent from Russia. «That is, unconditionally, the huge credit of what happened on Maidan, when Ukrainian people showed that it is sovereign in its right of choice», says Ambassador of Ukraine O. Shamshur¹⁰.

Today in French media Ukraine is depicted as the country which do not manage well what is it has. An article in famous French weekly *Le Point* and the comments towards it show the French people's imagine of social-political events in Ukraine in 2014: «*Rising of abuse in Kyiv: Washington threatens with sanctions*». The comments are: «taking into account the Central Chinese TV, where it says that is a civil war, I do not see what does that have to do with us. By what right Washington threatens and points out. This is ok for the government to react like that. The same would be done in any country»¹¹.

Even though the article tells about the escalation of the abuse and hundreds of injured, French do not understand why they should sympathize and help. Considering Ukraine as the part of Russia, they were ready to Yanukovich not to sight the EU agreement. But we also understand that the problem is Ukraine's self-isolation¹².

However, over time some authors appeared, who had started to get deeper into the issue of «Ukrainian question» and become familiar with the situation. Moreover, black-and-white nature of the situation became clear for everyone: Russia is aggressor, with no doubts. French followed the events through weekly *Le Monde*. For instance, the article for January 20, 2014 journalist Piotr Smolar seems like understand the events better, that took part on Maidan and in Ukraine in general: «Political crisis, that erupted in Ukraine two month ago, this Sunday January 19th, transformed into open confrontation in the middle of Kyiv. The motive is: repressive and unprecedented regulations, inspired by Russian model, and enacted by a show of hands on January 16th, simulating election».

«The difference between «Orange Revolution» of 2004 and this one is that it was raising of charismatic leaders and popular persones, like Uliya Tymoshenko. Euromaidan never objectified these ideas»¹³.

Nevertheless, there is one negative tendency, which links all the examined materials of French colleagues: they perceive Ukraine as the country, divided on two parts: pro-Russian and pro-European. «West is the cradle of Ukrainian nationalism, the ones who look closer to the EU and discard all Russian; East is Russophile, it has cultural and economic predisposition towards the Big Neighbour»¹⁴.

Also interesting fact that politically oppositional French medias (such as *Le Point*, *Le Monde*, *France 24*, *Le nouvel observateur*, *Le Figaro*) allocate Vitaliy Klychko, emphasizing, that he's world famous ex-boxer and liberal. However journalists start to understand in time

¹⁰ Foreign cases (2019), «Ukraine and France: 25 years of Cooperation» ...

¹¹ Supinski, S. (2014), «Violent saffrontements a Kiev : Washington menace de sanctions» ...

¹² Smolar, P. (2014), «Ukraine : « En temps de crise, Ianoukovitch veut agir comme Poutine» ...

¹³ Smolar, P. (2014), «A Kiev, l'opposition en passed'etre depassee ...»

¹⁴ Smolar, P. (2014), «A Kiev, l'opposition en passed'etre depassee ...»

that conflict in Kyiv is only scaling, so opposition and world leaders as well are waiting: «In Ukraine the government is ready to make concession», «Boxer Vitaliy Klychko, the chef of liberal party «Udar», chef of manifestatiors from its beginning lost his legitimacy because of more radical layer of the ones, who blame him for a lack of firm»¹⁵.

After all, Euromaidan changed the image of Ukraine and the idea about what is happening there in French people mindes. An article in weekly Le Monde for 23.01.14., journalist Piotr Smoliar: «Who is responsible for the abuse in Kyiv on January 19th, who's responsible in death of so many demonstrators? —... the government and Yanukovich are responsible for the dramatic events». «If you use force against your own citizens, then you deserve sanctions. Ukraine is very curropted and unorganized, but on the private freedom level people there were never scared to speak their minds»¹⁶.

In French medias they write also about the world that threatens but never act. Understanding, that Ukrainians won't just go now, journalists emphasize the problem. For example, on Le Monde pages Jean-Pierre Stroobants on January 23rd publics the article: «Ukraine: Brussels raises the voice, but passes up the sanctions» [22]. Sarah Diffilah in Le nouvel observateur writes an article «Ukraine. Total radicalization of Demonstrations», where she notices that after the continuous ignorance and inactivity of government, Ukrainian protests moved from peaceful to real armed conflicts, and this is naturally¹⁷.

One more twofold phenomenon on Maidan for French was so called Ukrainian «ultra nationalism». As the result — publishing collective declaration from Ukrainian and foreign scientists about incorrect interpretation of protestant movement in Ukraine. The declaration was initiated by German researcher of post-soviet law movements in Ukraine and Russia, who now is teaching in Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, A. Umland. Experts notice very diverse community of Euromaidan and they think that accents on participation or managing of right radicals in Ukrainian protests is just sensational, but fake¹⁸. Exactly because of manipulations on the topic of nationalism Maidan triggered negative emotions of Europeans. The article in magazine Le Monde written by Benoit Vitkine is not an exception. The headline is «How Ukrainian ultra-rights joined pro-European movement»¹⁹. A new branch in French-Ukrainian information relations was Crimea's annexation. When in Ukrainian peninsula government buildings became occupied and massive confrontations took place Le Monde, AFP, Reuters posted materials where clearly said who is aggressor: «Ukraine. Russia Welcomes Usage of Weapons»²⁰.

There is interesting and deep article in weekly Le Point: «Crimea: Russian Economic Support — Hope For Ones, Fear For Others». Here the author brings up the topic of Russian

¹⁵ Smolar, P. (2014), «A Kiev, l'opposition en passed'etre depassee ...»

¹⁶ Smolar, P. (2014), «En Ukraine, le pouvoir pret a des concessions» ...

¹⁷ Diffilah, S. (2014), «Ukraine. «Il y a une radicalization generale de la protestation» ...

¹⁸ Dutsyk, D. (2014), «Euromaidan In World's Eyes» ...

¹⁹ Vitkine, B. (2014), «Comment les ultranationalistes ukrainiens ont investi le mouvement pro-europeen»

²⁰ Smolar, P. (2014), «Ukraine : la Russie approuve un «recours a l'armee» ...

propaganda and clearly demonstrate the difference between two sides on example of two interviews of a student and an old man²¹.

The war impressed French people very much but they were not understand enough, who exactly had it started and for what: is it a civil war or war between Russia and Ukraine. Unfortunately, Russian propaganda did everything possible to convince Europeans that there is just a fight against fascist top and «ultranationalists». On the weeklies pages *Le Monde* for January the 20th Mathilde Damge published an article with a frightening statistics and called it «war»: «People`s Drama And Economic Collapse: The War in Ukraine in 5 Numbers»²².

If earlier the huge problem in many countries, event in popular media outlets, were pro-Russian views of an editor, now they are blamed in overly «pro-Ukrainianism». The newspaper *Libération* event investigated the system, which worked in France for Kremlins money against Ukraine²³.

The former journalist of France Press, mister De Kochko, *Libération* says, is responsible for multiple information companies on TV, where he was highlighting the topic of «anti-government coup d`état on Maidan», «Nazies in Kyiv» etc. He thinks that all the prosecutions against Russian Federation are fake, subjective and baseless.

Former «Radio of Moscow», which used to be, information supplier on behalf of the Kremlin, only renamed «The Voice of Russia», embarrassed French journalists because they do propaganda. Also, an online-version appeared. The government media «Russian Newspaper» every month publishes their version of events in Russia Beyond the Headlines as an insert in popular media *Le Figaro* under the name *La Russie d`aujourd`hui* (Russia Today).

Libération summarizes its detection of Putin`s net in France in unambiguous clear idea, that the Moscow`s goal is total control of government in Ukraine or, at least, ability to vetoing the decisions which are not compatible to its plans²⁴.

The proof is documentary movie of a French journalist Poul Moreier «Ukraine. A Mask of Revolution» about event is Ukraine in 2013-2014 and modern social-cultural life. It was possible to watch it on private and paid French channel Canal+. However, according to the reaction in French media community, in Russia people (mostly not watching the film) paid more attention than in France. Because journalist community in France don`t recognize that kind of movies: it has trumped-up facts and clearly subjective main message, without any truthful ground²⁵.

Results and prospects of future researches and discussions. The absence of clear-cutted position and reactions one would expect from Ukraine in the international information field shifts the complicated mission of bringing the truth about Russia`s actions and social-cultural situation in Ukraine on foreign medias, diaspora and exceptional diplomats. But without harmonious work by everyone who is responsible for the country`s image on the world

²¹ Le Point (2014), «Crimee : espoir d`une aide economique russe pour les uns, peur pour les autres» ...

²² Damge, M. (2014), «Drame humain et effondrement economique : la guerre en Ukraine en 5 chiffres» ...

²³ Shkil, A. (2014), «Putin`s Agents. French Network. (The Investigation)»...

²⁴ Shkil, A. (2014), «Putin`s Agents. French Network. (The Investigation)»...

²⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MzCLu2qQ0B8>

arena — Ukrainian media outlets, politics, information agencies and Ministries — it won't work. There are events and phenomena, incomprehensible to Europeans today: patriotic and nationalistic moods, our striving to keep our borders, while Europe got rid of them, unity or split of our country and, for sure, what exactly happened earlier²⁶.

2014 was rich for tragic and meantime historically important events. Besides of that, it was the year of Ukraine's appearance on European map in minds of French people. They started to talk about us as a separate geopolitical unit, we've got a chance to get a new status of political player in world's information arena. And we for sure were losing it to many times because we were not ready for this possibility and responsibility. Anyway, French medias made up ambiguous image: fighters for freedom, ultranationalists, divided East and West, pro-European and rusophilian, who are not able to use what do they have, willing to enter EU, fighting with Russia, very similar to Russia, but sovereign nations in the same time.

Conclusions. Image of French people about Ukraine needs to be changed. People have to be «pulled out» of Russian information environment and interpretation of events. It was created artificially. Russia, by the way, during long years was setting up the ground for information support and argumentation of legitimation its military invasion in Ukraine. On the other hand, we need to enhance production of Ukrainian, and Ukrainian speaking content. That is crucial to understand the role of «commentators», bots and pseudo-experts in media outlets, who are the channels of disinformation and spreaders of information trash. The attempt to block all the Russian social networks in 2017 got a flurry of criticism by human rights activists, but it had a large positive impact. We should not forget also the role of books and cinema, they also form negative image about the events in Ukraine. For instance, Poul Moyers movie. Repeatedly Ukrainian and foreign experts emphasized that it is right time to create a department or organization to combine all the formations (NSDC, Ministry of Information Policy, National Council of Ukraine for Television and Radio Broadcasting) that have to provide defence of Ukraine in information space and correct events presentation or to monitor the foreign media outlets. We already have Public Broadcasting but it needs to be developed and the standard have to get higher. Moreover, we need a modern channel to communicate with the world. For the last years Ukraine filmed more movies than for the whole independence thereby ensuring support for the national cinema with the financial support and quotas.

So the state in 2014 has to change its priorities for the media field fundamentally, where almost in the same time we had to reduce influence of information aggrency and stimulate our own products, working on excluding Soviet style journalism and fought off the fakes on international level.

Political dialogue on the highest level should be used more for economic diplomacy purposes. The main task is, surely, high-quality replacement of Ukraine's information appearance in France, and also overcoming the monotony and unipolarity of the content. Positive image of the country with interesting perspectives, attractive terms of cooperation and investors security is needed.

²⁶ Current archive of the 1st ED, f. PUFRR (2014)

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ЗМІ ФРАНЦІЇ ПРО СУСПІЛЬНО-ПОЛІТИЧНУ СИТУАЦІЮ В УКРАЇНІ У 2014 РОЦІ

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У статті досліджено формування іміджу України через аналіз матеріалів французьких ЗМІ. Визначено чинники, якими західні мас-медіа конструюють уявлення реципієнтів про суспільно-політичну ситуацію в Україні на прикладі подій 2014 року. Стаття спрямована на дослідження шляху до позитивного іміджу створенням якісного інформаційного простору за межами України. Досліджено тенденції українсько-французького політичного діалогу під час будівництва української держави та його особливості у часі Революції, анексії Криму та початку війни на Сході. Вивчення цього питання як в Україні, так і у Франції не відрізняється високою інтенсивністю, але за минулі десятиліття примножено багато різної інформації, що висвітлює зміни ставлення французів до України, розкриває позитивний досвід і досягнення в двосторонньому партнерстві, але також і моменти гальмування у співробітництві, причини і мотиви непослідовності французького державного керівництва у найважливіший для України час. Метою дослідження є аналіз ситуації щодо розуміння суспільно-політичних змін в Україні з початку 2014 року у медіа Франції і взаємозалежність із політичними подіями на світовій арені. Вивчення французьких ЗМІ дозволить розуміти чинники, які формують позитивний чи негативний образ українця закордоном. А також дадуть можливість виявити ефективні методи впливу на іноземного реципієнта. В ході дослідження виявлено, що ситуація із кількістю інформаційних приводів пов'язаних із Україною покращилася зі збільшенням потоку інформації. Саме аналіз українського контенту в іноземних медіа дає можливість у майбутньому контролювати імідж України та використовувати прихильність іноземних читачів, глядачів чи слухачів на свою користь. У статті також опрацьовано найновіші дослідження на тему українсько-французьких відносин у ЗМІ. Також виявлено недостатню кількість досліджень щодо ролі іміджу України для її позиції на геополітичній арені. У статті подано рекомендації для ефективної взаємодії з французькими ЗМІ, що дасть можливість чітко звучати у світовому інформаційному просторі.

Ключові слова: імідж України, французькі ЗМІ, суспільно-політична ситуація, події 2014 року.