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Daria Rybak

*Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University
Vinnytsia*

*Research Supervisor: I.H. Panina, PhD in History, Senior Lecturer
Language Advisor: V.I. Kalinichenko, PhD in Philology, Senior Lecturer*

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AS A COMMUNICATION CHANNEL OF THE NATIONAL BRAND OF UKRAINE

Introduction. The brand of the country is an important tool for its influence on the international arena in the conditions of globalization and innovative progress. It is vital for every country to have a positive international image, but it needs tireless efforts to build it. Pronounced features of the state and its identity form the basis of

the national brand that also defines competitive advantage and income of the country, a valuable asset of the economy.

The national branding of Ukraine is a matter of pressing concern in accordance with the fact that the brand strategy of our country is not sufficiently developed, because some countries have not even heard of Ukraine. It is not complex to use public diplomacy to promote a positive image of the state and to spread ideas abroad. Since 2015 Ukraine has actively implemented cultural diplomacy and, particularly, the Ukrainian Institute was established, which effectively disseminates information about Ukraine and its cultural achievements abroad.

Review of the recent publications. The research is based on the scientific work of J. Nay [6] on public diplomacy issues. It is necessary to single out Ukrainian researchers, such as J. Drozdovsky and V. Yarosh [2], who have investigated in detail the case of the Ukrainian brand and the challenges of its formation and development. O. Rozumna [3] has studied the cultural diplomacy of Ukraine, comparing it with the European experience. World ratings, such as *The Future Brand Country Index*, have been used to justify the international image of Ukraine.

Objectives of the paper. The aim of our research is to cover the main aspects of Ukraine's cultural diplomacy which is an effective tool of foreign policy and one of the main expressions of public diplomacy, which contributes to recognizing the national brand abroad.

Results of the research. There are two main instruments of foreign policy – traditional and public diplomacy. The traditional diplomacy is aimed at establishing a dialogue with political governments of other countries through official visits, the signing of the agreements and treaties, whereas the aim of the public diplomacy is to establish and carry out public relations of another state [1: 5]. One can influence the opinion of other international actors concerning a certain state through means of "soft power" and, in the meantime, form one's own image. Such kind of diplomacy is effective, but it requires to strengthen efforts and maintain close synergy of the political government with the non-state actors, such as analytical institutions, public organizations, communities of experts and stuff.

The definition provided by the Dean of the School of International Relations at Taft University in the United States, E. Gullion, in 1965 can be considered as the first broad definition of public diplomacy. He pointed out that public diplomacy influences the opinion of foreign community concerning the foreign policy of this state, establishes communication between the branches of government and journalists, promotes intercultural communication [1: 6]. J. Nye established the term "soft power", and noted that public diplomacy tries to attract the public attention of another country through foreign broadcasting, cultural exports, exchanges, etc. [6: 2].

It is vital to transfer reasonably one's values to another state, because sometimes it cannot be acceptable and cause, conversely, the deterioration of the image of the state and the relationship between the two actors. For instance, certain American Hollywood movies may be incomprehensible to Muslim states because of different values. American scholar N. Kull points out that public diplomacy is a set of diverse cultural projects, exchange programs, short-term information campaigns,

international broadcasting and monitoring of foreign opinion about the state. It also includes the maintenance of social networks by the authorities. It leads to effective information management of a state foreign policy. It is not complex to lobby ideas and values through social networks so that they are understandable to the community of nations [1: 6]. Active and powerful public diplomacy will help to improve the international image of the state and the recognition of its national brand. Many foreign researchers have studied the topic of the Ukraine brand. For instance, N. Vorobyova named the negative factors affecting Ukraine's international image, which are as follows: the Chernobyl accident, the conflict with Russia and some neighboring countries, the unstable and unobserved economy. Nevertheless, Euro-2012, Eurovision-2016 and 2017, cultural heritage and geographical location have a positive impact on the image of our country [2: 107].

Ukraine is in the world rankings, which also defines its recognition in the world. *Future Brand* is a global brand transformation company. Every year, its experts publish *The Future Brand Country Index* [7], which ranks the World Bank's top 75 countries by GDP in accordance with the strength of perception. The 2020 Index shows which countries are qualified as "strong brand". The upshot is that they have a competitive advantage over other countries. Although Ukraine entered the top 75 countries, it took 71-st place (in 2019 – 74-th place).

Ukraine should pay attention to the experience of branding policy and brand strategies of leading countries such as France, Poland, Germany. Place branding that means to promote the features of cities or regions can be relevant for Ukraine. It will unite the Ukrainian society, which has not lost the national idea, and, consequently, will form a positive image of the state. Cultural diplomacy as one of the main expressions of public diplomacy is an effective tool in promoting the image of the state. Until 2015 the cultural diplomacy in Ukraine was poorly productive, as it was focused exclusively on the historical past and cultural heritage. Undoubtedly, there were cultural and information centers, but their activities were mostly protocol and, unfortunately, did not give an effective result for Ukraine's image.

In 2015 Ukraine officially decided to implement cultural diplomacy. On the one hand, this is an important development for the promotion of the state and its cultural heritage abroad, but the lack of experience in implementing of such a tool of public diplomacy has caused a few challenges. In 2015 the Ukrainian authorities conducted negotiations concerning the establishment of the Ukrainian Institute.

They gave examples of prominent European cultural institutions, such as the Goethe Institute, the British Council, the French Institute, the Czech Center and others. It is not surprising that the creation of this cultural institution has faced several challenges. For instance, there was no platform for cooperation between the authorities to discuss and formulate thoroughly the further concept of the Institute. The National Reform Council within the President of Ukraine, as an advisory body, did not participate actively in the process of implementing the Ukrainian Institute. Public organizations, analysts, experts should be also involved in the development of cultural diplomacy [3: 29]. In 2017 the Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers decided to establish the Ukrainian Institute, which they had discussed for a long time

beforehand. Recently, Ukraine's Ministry of Finance has announced a significant reduction in the budget for cultural diplomacy of Ukraine and it has caused a conflict. The main problem was the lack of communication among the authorities. There is also a certain peculiarity when we try to determine the accountability of the Ukrainian Institute. On the one hand, the institution is part of the cultural sphere, but, on the other hand, the Ukrainian Institute is accountable to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, because it protects the foreign policy interests of the state. The government thought those cultural institutions are accountable to the Ministry of Culture and were funded by its budget programs. The upshot is that insufficient communication among the authorities caused such misunderstanding.

Nowadays, the Ukrainian Institute [4] promotes actively the image of Ukraine abroad. The main program areas of the institution are, particularly, the implementation of artistic, academic and cross-sectoral programs, the promotion of Ukrainian music, cinema and the Ukrainian language abroad. Despite the pandemic and the reduction of the budget for projects, the Ukrainian Institute is successfully implementing its plans. The Institute promotes Ukraine's image abroad and facilitates the international dialogue. In 2018 the government approved the official brand of Ukraine – *Ukraine NOW* and it was an important decision. The creator of the brand was the Ukrainian agency – *banda.agency*.

They note on the website: "To change the perception of Ukrainians globally and convince even more people to visit us, Ukraine needs a brand, that will show us as an open modern country, where all the most interesting things are happening right now" [5]. It is worth admitting that branding is successful when the state is the initiator, but the private companies, NGOs, communities of experts, who, obviously, have more experience in the field of image design, help to develop and implement branding policy.

Conclusion. The implementation of public diplomacy is important and even necessary for Ukraine. It is a chance to be heard, to tell the world about your own achievements, to be able to respond clearly to challenges and, definitely, to pursue confidently foreign policy interests and goals. The results of public diplomacy of Ukraine are gradually gaining momentum. Cultural diplomacy was previously a chance to tell about your own past and cultural heritage, and it was stated declaratively in the adopted documents. Nowadays, Ukraine has enhanced the means of "soft power", although the lack of state support makes it impossible to achieve effectively these goals through cultural diplomacy.

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Anastasiia Skrypniuk

Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University

Vinnytsia

Research Supervisor: I.Y. Charskykh, PhD in History, Assoc.Prof.

Language Advisor: V.I. Kalinichenko, PhD in Philology,

Senior Lecturer