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NON-GOVERNMENTAL PROJECTS OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY IN UKRAINE

Introduction. Culture is an inalienable part of the modern international relations. In recent years, the use of cultural diplomacy in building dialogs between countries and nations has grown significantly, as cultural diplomacy has established itself as one of the most effective ways to protect the national interests of the state and achieve goals in various fields. But what actually is cultural diplomacy? There is no single definition, but most of the scholars and diplomats used to explain cultural diplomacy according to Milton Cumming's definition [1]. The American political scientist calls cultural diplomacy "the exchange of ideas, information, values, beliefs and other aspects of culture to foster mutual understanding".

The objective of the paper is to discuss the non-governmental projects of cultural diplomacy in Ukraine, such as *Stopfake.org* and *Global Ukraine* in particular.

The goals of cultural diplomacy range from strategy to strategy, but the background that contains such objectives, as protection of national interests of the state, building and maintaining the country's positive image, sharing national culture and traditions with the world are present everywhere. Examples of cultural diplomacy manifestation include different kinds of exhibitions, international festivals, translation of literature, common science and researching projects, cinema, music etc. The role of cultural distributors is often played by states and governments, NGOs, firms, companies, different types of stars, individuals or nations.

The real interest and understanding of the significance of cultural diplomacy as one of the ways of implementing foreign policy, in Ukraine began to be gradually formed only after the events of 2013-2014. If the state strategy is properly formed, Ukraine will achieve success in the production of cultural diplomacy, because Europe and the United States still do not have enough information about the culture of modern Ukraine.

However, not only state cultural diplomacy can create and maintain the image of the country, protect national interests and make the world acquainted with the identity of the people. Non-governmental cultural diplomacy, just like the state diplomacy, began to gain active momentum in Ukraine after the events of the Revolution of Dignity. Moreover, it was on the wave of patriotism and the desire for change caused by Maidan that two online media projects appeared, which I would like to draw attention to. I would tell you about *Stopfake.org* and *Global Ukraine*.

Stopfake – one of the first media projects about Ukraine, created to inform the international community. *Stopfake* arose at the beginning of March 2014, its founders were teachers, students and graduates of the Kyiv-Mohyla School of Journalism. The

project's first goal was to check and disprove disinformation and propaganda about events in Ukraine, which were distributed by the media. "Eventually the project grew into an information center where we study and analyze all aspects of the Kremlin propaganda. We not only look at how propaganda affects Ukraine, we also try to investigate the influence of propaganda on other countries and regions, from Syria and Turkey to the European Union, as well as countries that were once part of the USSR" [4]. The project is independent on the position of the authorities. The creators note that it does not receive funding from official government bodies, but operates with money raised by crowdfunding, as well as allocated by the International Renaissance Foundation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, the British Embassy in Ukraine and Sigrid Rausing Trust.

The site is available in 10 languages: Russian, Czech, Italian, English, French, Dutch, Romanian, Spanish, Bulgarian and German. I was surprised by the absence of the Ukrainian version of the site. *Stopfake* consists of several divisions: a news line, information about the project itself, several thematic news blocks, video news and even a test "Is it easy to deceive you", which suggests checking your awareness of the myths of Russian information propaganda and the ability to distinguish real news from falsified one.

Moreover, the site has had a news archive since the day the project was founded and up to the present. Visiting the site helps foreigners create a clearer picture of who Ukrainians are, what their history, culture and characteristics are. Thanks to the project, the world makes its impression of Ukraine, forms its attitude towards it, which means that *Stopfake* is a good example of the production of people's cultural diplomacy.

Global Ukraine appeared on the same wave as *Stopfake*, but later, in 2015. The organization is one of the most important resources of the people's diplomats of Ukraine. The goal of *Global Ukraine* is "to develop the strategy of people's cultural and business diplomacy through the development of a communication platform with our Global Ukrainians – active Ukrainian leaders at the global level." [2]. With the support of the Renaissance Foundation, the international organization held several *Global Ukraine* Forums, where young Ukrainian leaders tried to create a concept for the conduct of Ukrainian cultural and public diplomacy, created such projects as *Global Ukraine Academy*, *Global Ukraine – BUSINESS HUB*, *Global Ukrainians Network* and *Global Ukraine News*.

The main information source is *Global Ukraine News (GUN)*. This is a news portal, the pages of which are available in Ukrainian, Russian, Greek, Portuguese and Chinese. GUN is the main source of dissemination of the information component of the people's diplomacy of the international organization.

The creators of the network themselves when describing their invention, say: "Using the map you will get the information about the geographical location of Ukrainians in the world, and by going to the profile of a particular country you can find out what Ukrainians do there, what events are organized, how our ambassadors promote Ukraine's interests in this country, and the like. And in the profile of each country one will also find available all the publications that were made by the

editorial of “*GlobUkraineNews*” about each of the countries, and a photo album in which you can view vivid photos from the life of #*GlobalUkrainians*” [3].

The Foundation has two educational projects, such as the Global Ukraine Academy, aimed at identifying Ukrainian leaders, creating new agents of cultural diplomacy and activating their actions at all levels, from local to international, and Global Ukraine – BUSINESS HUB, which contributes to the development of Ukrainian business. Stopfake and Global Ukraine are just a drop of those projects created by activists after the events on the Maidan that have become engines of development of cultural diplomacy of Ukraine. However, in my opinion, it is these projects that are a vivid example of Ukraine’s active, innovative and incalculable cultural diplomacy.

Conclusion. *Stopfake* and *Global Ukraine* appear to be just a drop in the ocean of those projects created by activists after the events on the Maidan that have become engines of development of cultural diplomacy in Ukraine. However, in my opinion, these projects can be viewed as a vivid example of Ukraine’s active and innovative cultural diplomacy.

References

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ACTIVITY OF THE USA IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Introduction. The Middle East is currently viewed as one of the key regions for the United States of America in the world arena. Support of Israel, counteraction to strengthening of Iran in the region, oil production safety, etc. are traditionally referred to the American interests. In the plane of realization of the interests the United States are usually assisted and supported by their allies in the region: Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Israel.