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HOW THE FOREIGN NEWSPAPER PERIODICALS INTERPRET THE BEGINNING OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Introduction. Nowadays mass media play a crucial role in the global society. It also significantly impacts on conflict and war contexts and relations between different international actors. Consequently, this activity needs to be discussed in greater detail within this piece of research.

Review of recent publications. Historiography of the Russian-Ukrainian War of 2014-2018 is still in the stage of its formation. It is represented by a number of

Ukrainian scholars, such as S.S. Troyan [1], L.L. Zaliznyak [2], V.V. Holovko [3], A.A. Sobolev [4], P. Guy-Nyzhnyk [5], L.V. Chupryi [5], A.M. Datsiuk [6], who highlight the historical origins and civilizational preconditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war in their studies, the Ukrainian-Russian relations in the context of the geopolitical confrontation, the political factors of Moscow's aggression against Ukraine and the Ukrainian situation in the context of the antiterrorist operation and Russian armed aggression. At the same time, there are no scientific researches in Ukrainian historiography that would clarify the causes and the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war of 2014-2018 on the basis of foreign periodicals comparative analysis.

Objective of the paper is to discuss the ways in which the foreign newspaper periodicals interpret the beginning of Russian aggression against Ukraine by means of comparative analysis.

Results of the research. There are various materials in terms of types, genres and origin published in the foreign periodicals ("Foreign Policy", "Foreign Affairs", "The Washington Post", "Красная звезда" ("Krasnaya zvezda"), "Аргументы и факты" ("Argumenty i fakty"), "РИА Новости" ("RIA Novosti"), "Известия" ("Izvestiya")), which we have analyzed in regard of the tasks of this paper.

In American periodicals there were issues under the general heading "Putin's Russia", separate articles, notes and interviews were placed on the newspapers pages entitled "Why Putin Seized the Crimea", "Putin's Foreign Policy", "Suddenly Inevitable Sovereignty of the Crimea", "The Russia's New Plan for the Crimea: Vegas in the Black Sea?" and "Putin Says that his Annexation of the Crimea is Strategic, and Russia Will not be Isolated". Various aspects of information about the Russian-Ukrainian war of 2014-2018 in Russian periodicals were published under the propaganda directed headlines: "Give Back the Maydan to Yanukovych", "The Fight for European Integration Has Brought to the Blood", "Now it's Really a War", "The Crimea is Ready to Say its Word", "The Crimea: Victory Day", "The Unity Re-establishment".

Reviewing the American and Russian press, we took into account the annual independent studies and the accompanying ratings of the press freedom in the world countries. Freedom House's rating of 2014 imposes freedom of the press in the United States in the category of "free" (21 points with the best result 0 - "free") and "non-free" in Russia (81 points) with their gap in 60 points [7]. The World Press Freedom Index from the influential international non-governmental organization *Reporters Without Borders* in 2015 ranked the United States 49 and Russia 152 among 180 countries in general [8]. The Russian media depends on the preferences of their owners: violence, threats, intimidation and persecution of workers and media organizations are continuing. The American press is considered one of the most progressive in efficiency, relevance of the events analysis and the volume of the proposed material, the scale of the readers and objectivity.

One of the hot issues for us is to determine the date of the beginning of the current Russian-Ukrainian war. The law approved by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine determines the official date of the Crimea peninsula occupation commencement by the Russian troops on February 20, 2014 [9].

The materials which were placed on the pages of “Foreign Affairs” offer a historical excursion on the preparation of Russian aggression against Ukraine. Beginning in 2008, Putin ushered in military reforms and a massive increase in defense spending to upgrade Russia’s creaky military. Thanks to that project, Russia has recently evinced a newfound willingness to use force to get what it wants. First, in February 2014 after the mass protests of Ukrainians at Euromaydan and the escape of Viktor Yanukovych from Ukraine, Moscow sent soldiers in unmarked uniforms to wrest control of the Crimea from Ukraine, implicitly threatening Kiev with a wider invasion. It then provided weaponry, intelligence, and command-and-control support to the pro-Russian separatists in Ukraine’s Donbas region, checking Kiev’s attempts to defeat them. Putin’s government resorted to a tactic known in the West as “hybrid warfare”: providing logistics and intelligence support for the pro-Russian separatists in the Donbas region while undertaking military exercises near the Ukrainian border to keep Kyiv off balance [10].

The Russian newspaper “Argumenty i Fakty (Arguments and Facts)” offers the following chronicle of “The Crimean Spring” events: on March 16, 2014, a referendum took place in the Crimea and Sevastopol, according to which about 97% of the republic voters and 95.6% of the locals voted for the reunification of the peninsula with Russia. Two days later, on March 18, an agreement was signed in the Georgian Hall of the Kremlin to include the Crimea and Sevastopol in the Russian Federation [11].

The employees of the Russian Center for European Studies provided us with the expert assessment of the political and socio-economic situation in Ukraine. “The westernization process of Ukraine, initiated from the outside, which entered the active phase in December 2013, has caused a massive crisis in the country that touches all vital spheres of Ukrainian society... The biggest manifestation of this appeared in the area of Ukrainian foreign debt, in particular, to Russia, which arose through “the war” in the East of Ukraine that, according to the West, was generated by Russia” [12].

Conclusion. Thus, the problem under consideration is based on the periodicals materials and requires further in-depth research. Press information is an indispensable source for studying the causes, the beginning and the course of the modern Russian-Ukrainian war. A comparative method of research, carried out in the paper, has allowed to find out different approaches, interpretations and assessments about various aspects of Russian aggression against Ukraine. At the same time, the analysis of the newspaper materials proves that the comprehensiveness and objectivity of press information largely depend on the level of democracy within the country’s political regime.

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SETTLEMENT OF UKRAINE-RUSSIA ECONOMIC DISPUTES: NAFTOGAZ VERSUS GAZPROM

Introduction. During the past century up to now the international economic relations have played the crucial role in creating a new post-war world order. Maintaining peaceful political, trading and economic relationships with the neighbor states is enormously important under the economic development of every country, and Ukraine in particular. In June 2014, Gazprom and state-owned Naftogaz lodged multibillion-dollar claims against each other with the Arbitration Institute of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce, which resolves commercial disputes. Due to the deteriorating relations between Kyiv and Moscow since Russia's annexation of Crimea and the start of Russia-backed separatist violence in Ukraine's Donbas region the issue is becoming extremely topical.

Review of recent publications. The issues of settlement of Ukraine-Russia economic disputes have been of great interest to such scientists as S. Alekseev,