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UKRAINE'S SOFT POWER HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE ISSUE

Abstract. *The purpose of the research* is to analyze historiography of Ukraine's soft power issue, directions, features, problems and prospects. **The methodology of the research** is based on a combination of theoretical provisions of the American scholar J. Nye's concept and historical approach. In the research there has been used a broad understanding of historiography as a collection of scientific works on a certain issue. **The scientific novelty** consists in the fact that a historiographical analysis on Ukraine's soft power issue, directions, features, problems and prospects has been done for the first time. **The Conclusion.** There are three main directions of Ukraine's soft power research: 1) general issues (components, problems, possibilities, etc.); 2) the soft power issue of Ukraine in some states; 3) the image aspect of the issue. Nowadays the soft power issue of Ukraine is the most studied one in seven countries: Poland, Romania, Moldova, Georgia, Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The research in this area is based on a fairly well-developed methodology, which cannot be said about other two aspects (with the exception of economic image power). The very neglect of the theoretical and methodological foundations caused the shortcomings in the studies of the Ukrainian soft power issue: 1) substitution of the research subject, in particular identification of soft power with cooperation; 2) the use of the term soft power in the title without its further use in the study; 3) lack of a unified approach to the soft power tools; 4) the use of arbitrary term "the soft power strategy of Ukraine", which is not recorded in any regulatory document; 5) identification of soft power with economic sanctions against the aggressor country, which are demonstration of hard power. The above-mentioned shortcomings are related to the indeterminacy of the research subject, its unclear framework. In addition, there is the lack of normative and legal support for the soft power policy of Ukraine, its state strategy, as well as the long-term lack of special institutions for its effective promotion, which complicates the research significantly. A prospective direction of further research is to study Ukraine's soft power, in addition to the above-mentioned seven states, in other countries, relying on the theoretical and methodological achievements of the world science on this issue.

Key words: soft power; Ukraine, historiography, foreign policy, international relations.

“М’ЯКА СИЛА” УКРАЇНИ: ІСТОРИОГРАФІЯ ПИТАННЯ

Анотація. *Мета роботи* – історіографічний аналіз питання “м’якої сили” України, з’ясування напрямів, особливостей, проблем та перспектив дослідження цієї теми. **Методологія** роботи базується на поєднанні теоретичних положень концепції американського вченого Дж. Ная та історичного підходу. В дослідженні застосовано широке розуміння історіографії як сукупності наукових праць, присвячених певній проблемі. **Наукова новизна:** вперше здійснено широкий історіографічний аналіз питання української “м’якої сили”, з’ясовано напрями, особливості, проблеми та перспективи дослідження цієї теми. **Висновки.** Можна виділити три головні напрями досліджень “м’якої сили” України: 1) загальні питання (складові компоненти, проблеми, можливості тощо); 2) українська *soft power* в окремих державах; 3) іміджевий аспект теми. Сьогодні “м’яка сила” України найбільш вивчена в семи країнах: Польщі, Румунії, Молдові, Грузії, Росії, Білорусі та Казахстані. Дослідження цього спрямування спираються на досить ґрунтовно розроблену методологію, чого не можна сказати про два інші аспекти (за винятком сили економічного іміджу). Нехтування теоретико-методологічними основами призвело до певних недоліків у дослідженнях української “м’якої сили”, які проявляються у: 1) підміні предмета дослідження, зокрема ототоженні “м’якої сили” зі співробітництвом; 2) застосуванні у назві роботи терміна “м’яка сила” без подальшого його використання в самому дослідженні; 3) відсутності єдиного підходу щодо інструментарію *soft power*; 4) доволіному оперуванню терміном “стратегія “м’якої сили” України”, який не зафіксований у жодному нормативному документі; 5) ототоженні “м’якої сили” з економічними санкціями проти країни-агресора, які є проявом “жорсткої сили”. Зазначені недоліки так чи інакше пов’язані з невизначеністю предмета дослідження, його нечіткими рамками. Крім того, суттєво ускладнює роботу брак нормативно-правового забезпечення політики “м’якої сили” України, її державної стратегії, а також тривала відсутність спеціальних інституцій для її ефективного просування. Перспективним напрямом подальших досліджень є вивчення “м’якої сили” України, у, крім згаданих семи державах, також в інших країнах, спираючись на теоретико-методологічні напрацювання світової науки із зазначеної проблематики.

Ключові слова: “м’яка сила”, Україна, історіографія, зовнішня політика, міжнародні відносини.

The Problem Statement. Nowadays, the concept of the *soft power*, brought in by the American scholar Joseph Nye, gained popularity. Different scholars of various fields, political and public figures of certain countries turn to the above-mentioned concept. J. Nye defined *soft power* as a state ability to achieve what it wants not through coercion, but through persuasion based on attractiveness of culture, values, and foreign policy (Nye, 2017). Despite the fact that there are many studies on this issue, the process of forming its theoretical foundations and methods of studying specific cases of the concept implementation in international practice continues until these days. It should be mentioned that researches on the concept of *soft power* issue adapting to the realities of certain national states, in particular Ukraine, deserve special focus. There are about three dozen publications on this issue nowadays, a comprehensive analysis of which will allow us to find out the level, as well as the problems and prospects of its analysis.

The Analysis of Recent Research. The only publication on this issue was the article, published by N. Nikulishyn, part of which was on domestic historiography of the *soft power* and public diplomacy of Ukraine (Nikulishyn, 2014, pp. 35–36). The author came to the conclusion that the content of *soft power* issue, the ways of its implementation in modern Ukraine had a significant, but not a priority, place among researches conducted by domestic scholars. According to N. Nikulishyn, there was a drastic need to do research on promising sources of the Ukrainian *soft power* and to carry out a comparative effectiveness analysis

of using its various resources (Nikulishyn, 2014, p. 36). As Ukraine's *soft power* processes of formation and research received further development after the publication of the above-mentioned article in 2014, its scientific results require a significant addition.

The purpose of the research is to analyze historiography of Ukraine's *soft power* issue, directions, features, problems and prospects for the study of this topic. The research is based on a broad understanding of historiography as a set of scientific papers on a certain issue. The theoretical basis of the study is the concept *soft power*, brought in by J. Nye, which became a classic basis. It is through its prism that the concept *soft power* and its resources and means (tools) have been covered.

The Results of the Research. All publications on Ukraine's *soft power*, which emerged in the early 2010s, can be conventionally divided into three large groups: 1) the articles, which covered general issues (the Ukrainian *soft power* components, its problems, opportunities, etc.); 2) the studies on Ukraine's *soft power* in several states; 3) publications analyzing the image aspect of the Ukrainian *soft power*. Another group of studies focuses on the public diplomacy of Ukraine, which, in the classic concept of J. Nye, became as one of the paramount tools of *soft power* (Nye, 2008; Nye, 2019). Although this issue requires a separate study, that is why, in this publication it is covered briefly.

In general, a separate part of the papers consists of publications, in which there are analyzed the Ukrainian *soft power* components and directions, as well as the problems, opportunities and prospects of its application.

According to the analysts of the Institute of World Politics, a political component plays the main role in Ukraine's *soft power* potential implementation. In particular, for the Western world, through which the country is accepted in the international arena, the Ukrainian state is primarily interested in whether it is able to play a leading regional role in democratization issue (Hetmanchuk, Pyliavets & Solodkyi, 2012, p. 4). The Institute conducted interviews with the European policymakers and analyzed how attractiveness of Ukraine in the European Union could be affected by certain scenarios of the 2012 Parliamentary Elections, which were of key importance for the country's *soft power* in the EU (Hetmanchuk, Pyliavets & Solodkyi, 2012, p. 8). According to the authors of the research, the country's reputation and foreign policy future depend on whether the Ukrainian government can prove its democracy as the most attractive component of *soft power* for the Western world (Hetmanchuk, Pyliavets & Solodkyi, 2012, p. 9).

V. Horbatenko analyzed the formation of the *soft power* policy in Ukraine and identified the main directions of its practical application: 1) participation in the settlement of various crisis situations and conflicts (both local and international); 2) provision of humanitarian aid to poor countries; 3) participation in global events, such as "Euro-2012" (Horbatenko, 2014, p. 29).

B. Michael, K. Hartwell and B. Nureyev believed that the growth of *soft power* of Ukraine in the international arena took place after independence in 1991. The country balanced well between Russia and the European Union, and its geographical position, population size and large emigrant community allowed to raise its international level. Achievements such as the peaceful secession from the USSR, together with a successful outcome of negotiations regarding relinquishment of nuclear status, further strengthened Ukraine's position in the world. Among other things, it helped Ukraine (along with Poland) become the first of the former Soviet republics to host the European Football Championship. Although none of the state leaders managed to transform this positive external reputation into tangible internal success. Ukraine was gripped by political instability, manifested by two revolutions.

Corruption, lack of structural reforms and dependence on heavy industry inherited from the Union, caused stagnation in the country's economy. In addition, the above-mentioned authors consider the same factors that increased its *soft power* to be the cause of the country's internal problems, in particular, the above-mentioned balancing act between the EU and Russia, which was "breaking" Ukraine into parts (Majkl, Hartvell & Nureev, 2013).

The scholar, N. Maretska conducted a rather superficial analysis and came to conclusion that it was impossible for Ukraine to use *soft power* due to a number of reasons: 1) the absence of a common national idea in the country that would contribute to consolidation of residents of all regions; 2) lack of universal attractive values; 3) lack of strategy for implementation of *soft power* and branding of the country; 4) a low level of economy and quality of life; 5) lack of own public organizations that would contribute to the formation of a positive image of the country (non-governmental organizations operating in Ukraine are mostly financed by Western structures and, accordingly, are aimed at forming an attractive image of the West). On this matter, the author of this clearly politically engaged publication noted that Ukraine was not a subject, but an object of *soft power* aimed at by this "technology" of Western countries (Mareckaya, 2016, pp. 115–116).

J. Nye considered the discrepancy in political values of the Ukrainian neighbours, their reception of certain ideas as one of the Ukrainian *soft power* formation issues. For instance, a democratic development of the country could be attractive in Poland (and in general in the West), but at the same time, it could worry the Kremlin and irritate Belarus. "If your neighbours have a different vision of politics", noted the author of the *soft power* concept, "it's quite difficult to choose a path that will interest everyone and be equally attractive to everyone" (Dzhozef Nai, 2011).

According to I. Sas, the basis of the Ukrainian *soft power* is the social capital, a human intellectual potential of the country, a necessary prerequisite for the development of which should be modernization of a cultural and educational sphere through implementation of a long-term strategy of socio-economic development and a technological structure of the national economy. According to the scholar, it is necessary to expand self-regulation and self-organization of education and culture, apply the principles of openness and transparency, establish a system of state and public support for innovations, promote economic activity in the field of culture, a public private partnership during implementation of educational and artistic projects, etc. (Sas, 2022, p. 404).

M. Protsiuk noted that the political leadership, civil society and the scientific community of Ukraine face the task of further diversifying the ways, methods and means of using the entire arsenal of *soft power* tools, in particular public and cultural diplomacy, as fully as possible. According to the scholar, their success will depend on synergy of public and private sectors, authorities and the public, governmental and non-governmental organizations (Protsiuk, 2016, p. 26). It should be noted that the thesis about an important role of a civil society in *soft power* implementation is one of the basis in J. Nye's concept (Nye, 2021).

P. Hai-Nyzhnyk and L. Chupriy noted that since the soft potential of Ukraine is much greater than its "hard" capabilities, the country needs to develop its *soft power* first. The scholars associated the increase of the latter with the development of democratic values and popularization of the national culture (Hai-Nyzhnyk & Chuprii, 2013, p. 267). A component of Ukraine's *soft power* could be the Ukrainian studies, which will spread among the Ukrainian diaspora abroad, as well as in Ukraine among foreign students. The Ukrainian studies, according to P. Hai-Nyzhnyk, should acquire a wider (deeper) strategic significance of

state importance, in particular as a Ukrainian *soft power* not only of a scientific or educational nature, but also of a council, diplomatic and political nature (Hai-Nyzhnyk, 2014, p. 235).

D. Korotkov had a somewhat alternative opinion regarding the prospects of the Ukrainian *soft power*. The scholar truly believed that the basis of Ukraine's *soft power* was a civil society, which manifested itself during the "Orange Revolution" of 2004 and the "Revolution of Dignity" of 2014. However, according to the scholar, after the events of 2014, there was an urgent need for modern Ukraine to limit (informationally and financially) the use of *soft power* and give priority to hard power through the military power formation, which "has always served as the main indicator of the strength and prestige of the state" (Korotkov, 2018, p. 135).

Among the studies devoted to Ukraine's *soft power* in individual states, we should mention the publication of the Institute of World Politics – an analytical centre that implemented a comprehensive project to study the regional power of Ukraine (Hetmanchuk, Yenin, Zarembo, Pyliavets, Ozymok, Solodkyi & Shynkaruk, 2011). With the help of a specially developed methodology, which was personally approved by J. Nye, the scholars of the Institute assessed the potential of *soft power* of Ukraine in six states: Poland, Romania, Moldova, Georgia, Belarus and Russia. The study of the Ukrainian *soft power*, conducted by the expert team, consisted of three main components: 1) the study of the Ukrainian *soft power* according to more than 30 quantitative and qualitative indicators, which covered the political and economic levels, as well as the level of public diplomacy (it is not about means of influence, but those aspects of relations with Ukraine that are positively accepted in the studied country); 2) media monitoring – analysis of messages in the mass media (selected five to eight publications from each country) that covered the events of domestic or foreign policy of Ukraine in 2010 – 2011; 3) an expert survey of almost a hundred leading analysts, journalists and statesmen of six countries of the region, on the basis of which the Institute determined the TOP-5 associations with Ukraine for each of the states, as well as the index of the Ukrainian *soft power* on a ten-point scale (Hetmanchuk, Yenin, Zarembo, Pyliavets, Ozymok, Solodkyi & Shynkaruk, 2011, pp. 4–5). The result of the conducted research was an analytical analysis of the Ukrainian *soft power* potential in six states, as well as recommendations for its strengthening (relative to all countries and each state separately) (Hetmanchuk, Yenin, Zarembo, Pyliavets, Ozymok, Solodkyi & Shynkaruk, 2011, pp. 104–111). The basic recommendation of the authors was to strengthen competitiveness of economic and political development model of Ukraine as a democratic and economically developed country, which should become an attractive example for imitation in neighbouring states. We could bicker over the last thesis, since, based on the above-mentioned research logic, democratic Ukraine was unlikely to be attractive among certain parts of the population of Russia and Belarus.

Almost 10 years later, the results of a similar study conducted by analysts of the "New Europe" Centre were presented (Miedvedieva, 2020). The study on *soft power* of Ukraine in five post-Soviet countries (Georgia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Russia) was based on the use of the following methods: 1) a quantitative method (calculation of the average index of *soft power* by conducting a questionnaire among 55 experts using 13 indicators, which were developed on the basis of four sources (component categories) of the *soft power* formation: political values, foreign policy, popularity of Ukrainian products, popularity of Ukrainian culture); 2) in-depth interviews with 38 experts according to *soft power* indicators (experts compared Ukraine's *soft power* before and after the 2019 Presidential elections); 3) discursive analysis of media content – study of the number and context of messages in the media covering the Ukrainian events (monitoring of 5 – 8 media

resources from each state) (Miedviedieva, 2020, p. 6). As a result of the conducted research, it was concluded that V. Zelenskyi's Presidency, in general, increased the attractiveness of Ukraine in the above-mentioned countries due to the involvement of certain elements of the President's *soft power*: non-systematic elements (Georgia), anti-corruption rhetoric (Moldova), youth (Kazakhstan) and the others (Miedviedieva, 2020, p. 88). According to the results of the study Ukraine made serious gains in the context of *soft power*: a political system openness, an active civil society, free media, liberalized conditions for doing business, tourist attraction, etc., in the reception of Georgia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Russia citizens. At the same time, Ukraine does not use this potential fully in order to strengthen its influence in the region (Miedviedieva, 2020, p. 90). The main recommendation of the analytical note is identical to the one that was formulated based on the results of the 2011 study: a democratic and reformed Ukraine will become *soft power* for the citizens of the region. As H. Miedviedieva pointed out, *soft power* of Ukraine is not about PR for cosmetic updates, but it is about informing about the country's fundamental reconstruction" (Miedviedieva, 2020, p. 91). The recommendations were also formulated in the field of security (conducting a dialogue with the countries of the region regarding countering Russian aggression by creation of various platforms), external communication (forming a kind of friends club of Ukraine in other countries, which would include leaders of a public opinion), business (IT sector, tourism, medical services) and art industry (cinema, music, cooking, etc.) (Miedviedieva, 2020, pp. 91–93).

Ya. Turchyn analyzed main components of Ukraine's *soft power* in the Republic of Poland. These were, in particular, political and economic attractiveness of the country, the Ukrainian community's influence, the Ukrainian culture popularity and the media role in creating the Ukrainian brand (Turchyn, 2012, pp. 120–124). The scholar made the following conclusion that there was a drastic need to strengthen democratic reforms in Ukraine as the main tool for its *soft power* implementation. According to Ya. Turchyn, further promotion of the Ukrainian *soft power* in Poland, its achievements in the economic and cultural spheres could be levelled by unsuccessful political reforms in Ukraine (Turchyn, 2012, p. 124).

V. Horbatenko called the Ukrainian-Polish cooperation, in particular cross-border cooperation, a kind of training ground for the formation of Ukraine's *soft power* policy. The scholar considers joint scientific and educational projects, exchange of students, expansion of interfaith relations, involvement of the Ukrainian diaspora of Poland in a public and political life, etc., as promising directions for the policy implementation (Horbatenko, 2014, p. 30).

The publications, which highlight the aspects of *soft power* in the context of Ukraine's international image occupy a special place. Their authors, as a rule, focus on such issues as the use of certain resources and tools of image strategy, evaluation of vital events through the prism of *soft power*, problems and prospects of forming a positive brand of Ukraine.

The Ukrainian researcher O. Chuhaiev brought in the concept of *soft economic power* as the power of a country's economic image and brand, which was based on a subjective reception of the country's economic system by its own and foreign citizens, fairness of its economic system, etc. (Chuhaiev, 2017, pp. 64, 70). The scholar made a conclusion that Ukraine had an average level of *soft power* components in terms of inflation, the financial sphere and economic growth, and a very low *soft power* according to the criteria of the state budget, salaries and economic cooperation after conducting a webometric analysis of *soft power* economic factors (economic image) (Chuhaiev, 2017, p. 253). In addition, O. Chuhaiev singled out positive and negative economic factors of Ukraine's image. Hence,

science and education, agricultural opportunities, natural resources, cultural and sports industry, transport potential became positive economic factors, and economic instability, a low level of development, social insecurity, overbureaucratization, corruption, etc., belonged to negative economic factors (Chuhaiev, 2017, p. 253).

The scholars often mentioned Euro-2012 among the events, which influenced the international image of Ukraine significantly. According to O. Semchenko, the Championship was success in promoting a positive (in contrast to those events that show Ukraine as “a martyr state”) brand of Ukraine as a powerful European state capable of holding such global events (Semchenko, 2012a, pp. 270–271). In general, a positive sports image of the state, according to the scholar, is an attractive factor for foreign tourists, investors and organizers of major sports competitions (Semchenko, 2012b). R. Potapenko pointed out a crucial role of the Ukrainian athletes’ achievements (S. Bubka, A. Shevchenko, Klytschko brothers), as well as the country representatives’ success at the international Eurovision contest, in forming a positive image of Ukraine (Potapenko, 2021, p. 226). The author calls the creation of the Ministry for Information Policy in 2014 an important institutional achievement, which contributed to popularization of Ukraine in the world (Potapenko, 2021, p. 227). K. Savon drew attention to the role in promoting the image of Ukraine of international non-governmental organizations and foundations, such as the World Congress of the Ukrainians, the “Open Ukraine” Foundation and the World Federation of Ukrainian Women’s Organizations (Savon, 2020, p. 114). According to D. Korotkov, the “Orange Revolution” of 2004 and the “Revolution of Dignity” of 2014 were the landmark events of modern Ukraine, owing to which the country’s positive image was formed abroad, in particular in European states (Korotkov, 2018, p. 135). Although according to I. Slisarenko, the “orange brand” of Ukraine as a democratic state suffered, if not collapse, then huge moral damages mainly due to the marginal state of foreign policy informational component at the end of 2005 (Slisarenko, 2008).

Some foreign scholars noted the growth of an international image of Ukraine and its *soft power* after February 24, 2022. According to J. Nye, the author of the *soft power* concept, owing to his unofficial dress code and constant communication with Western media and parliaments, V. Zelenskyi managed to present Ukraine as an attractive and heroic country. The result of this was not only sympathy of the West, but also a significant increase in the supply of military equipment necessary for Ukraine (Nye, 2022). D. Ellwood drew attention to the growth of Ukraine’s position in Brand Finance’s international rating of *soft power* after the invasion of Russia: familiarity increased by as much as 44%, influence – by 24%, and reputation – by 12%. World media focused on the conflict, which had also a positive effect on the reception of Ukraine in the majority of global *soft power* index elements, even those not related to military efforts. D. Ellwood used the term “cultural revolution” in this regard, which, mainly due to the worldwide spread of the Ukrainian music, produced positive results with an extraordinary speed. “This is a *soft power* game at its most literal, in which, as Joseph S. Nye mentioned from the very beginning, the nation’s culture is critical to its appeal”. At the same time, the scholar emphasized that the moral authority of the Ukrainian government’s foreign policy nowadays depends entirely on its activities on and off the battlefield (Ellwood, 2022).

The majority of scholars associate improvement of the international image of Ukraine with the processes of democratization and construction of a civil society that meets the European standards (Bikir, 2019, p. 39; Havrylenko, 2013, p. 529; Potapenko, 2021, p. 224). According to O. Semchenko, Ukraine should concentrate on its own social and economic issues,

promoting its real success in those areas where there are resources for positive reception by Western public opinion. In addition, according to the scholar, a purposeful state policy should be implemented in the country in order to support positive and neutralize negative stereotypes, image formation in the international space, effective branding and reputation management (Semchenko, 2012a, p. 271).

The following issues and shortcomings, which are characteristic of the Ukrainian *soft power* studies should be singled out:

1) substitution of the research subject or its unclear framework, which is manifested, in particular, in identification of *soft power* with cooperation (Turchyn, 2012, pp. 124–125; Horbatenko, 2014, p. 30; Nikulishyn, 2015, pp. 61–64);

2) the use of the term *soft power* in the title without its subsequent use in the study (Musiienko, 2013);

3) the lack of a unified approach to *soft power* tools: in one study, the revolutions of 2004 and 2014 are called its tools (Korotkov, 2018, p. 135), in the second one – *soft power* itself acts as a tool for forming a positive image of the country (Semchenko, 2014; Bikir, 2019, p. 39), and in the third one – the sports image potential, which is the *soft power* of Ukraine (Semchenko, 2012b);

4) identification of *soft power* with economic sanctions against the aggressor country (Horbatenko, 2014, p. 30), which are a manifestation of either “hard” or “smart” power;

5) arbitrary use of the term *soft power strategy of Ukraine*” which is not recorded in any regulatory document of the state or any of its institutions (Turchyn, 2012, p. 120; Korotkov, 2018, p. 135).

The Conclusion. Thus, the study of *soft power* of Ukraine has been ongoing since the beginning of the 2010s and is carried out mainly by domestic scholars. There are three main directions of Ukraine’s *soft power* research: 1) general issues (components, problems, possibilities, etc.); 2) the Ukrainian *soft power* issue in several states; 3) the image aspect of the issue. Nowadays the *soft power* of Ukraine is the most studied issue in seven countries: Poland, Romania, Moldova, Georgia, Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The research in this area is based on a fairly well-developed methodology, which cannot be said about other two aspects (with the exception of the power of an economic image). The very neglect of the theoretical and methodological foundations caused the above-mentioned shortcomings in the studies of the Ukrainian *soft power*. The above-mentioned shortcomings are related to indeterminacy of research subject, its unclear framework. In addition, almost complete lack of a normative and legal support for the *soft power* policy of Ukraine, and its state strategy, as well as the the long-term lack of special institutions for its effective promotion, complicate the research significantly. A promising direction of further research is to study Ukraine’s *soft power*, in addition to the above-mentioned seven states, in other countries, relying on the theoretical and methodological achievements of the world science on this issue.

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