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Image of the first lady in mass media

Summary

The image of the nation depends directly on that of first persons', leaders representatives of elite, artists, sportsmen. President's wife, a First Lady plays a notable role in political life of a country, she is the embodiment of female audience, she is closely followed by journalists. Her image in the press may enhance or deteriorate the reputation of the whole country. This article concerns the role of the first lady in nation's image formation.

The key words: press, first lady, leader, image, audience

1. Introduction. The image of the first lady complements one of the President, which undoubtedly influences that of the country. President's wife or any other person in the position of the first lady (a President, a Queen, a Prime Minister) plays a notable role in country's political life/ The image of the first lady and international image of the country are interconnected parts of the whole image. This article takes into account the forming of the image of the first lady specifically in Ukraine, because for every country, depending on the traditions, the perception of a woman, the methods of image forming are individual, personalized.

2. Topicality: this article analyses tools and methods used to influence the audience, the influence of the first lady on political life of the country; researches the creation and the enhancement of the positive image of the woman who is a wife to the leader of nation.

3. Goal: to research various aspects that part of the positive image shaping, her influence on the nation's leader image perception both within the country and without.

4. Task: to observe the interdependence between the first lady positioning and the country's image in the press. The author sets out to research tools and methods used to build up the image, create an efficient technology to reinforce the positive image, the algorithm of communication with media and translation of the image to the target audience.

5. The research in this field has been of a importance for Ukrainian and other scientists, imagemakers, including: Arif Guliev [11], G.G. Pocheptsov, V.V.

Rizun, V. F. Ivanov, V.Kostikov, D. Olshansky, N.Kachynska, V.I.Torsunov, V.M.Shepel, Gulyev Arif oglu Dzhamyl, A.P. Sytnikov, Jack Segela, Devid Gergen, Richrard Veslin Michel Porter, Robert Sguaer, John Diadorff, Tim Bell and Bernard Inghem, Noy Vebster et cetera. These researchers state in their works that in the eyes of international community the image of a specific country is directly associated with the portrait of the current government, first persons of the nation, whereas one of the leading roles that present the country is the one of the first lady. First of all, such a person is the formal wife of the president or another notable female politician of high rank, or she might even be an informal leader lacking any political status.

In journalism, image is a concept described as a mental representation of an object formed in collective consciousness under the influence of mass media [1, p.1]. As to the first lady, it is the result of her work on herself and a well-thought actions of a team of high-level professionals. This concept encompasses both internal and external images: ability to present oneself, public positioning in the context of current events, times and political situation, including the ability to dress oneself accordingly, communicate, etc. We believe that one of the components of the image of a specific person is her idealization in positive sense or rejection, derision in negative sense. The image of the first lady depends on the values offered to the society, her desire to be closer to people, to life the life worthy of any honorable lady and with that care about national interests. The following are types of first lady's image: desired (expected), real, traditional, favourable (positive), idealized, innovative, where this woman plays a role on a par with the man-leader.

The above listed characteristics of the image do not include possible combinations, niether contradict nor interdict one another, and may transform from one into another under certain circumstances. Professional approach in forming the desired initial image is based on the thorough, all-round analysis of the environment around this public person and on the analysis of the target audience. In this case the tools are media. Mass media play the role of a meme in modern information field, influencing the way a country is perceived in the world.

6. Method of research. Learning from predecessors, we may conclude that researchers, political engineers, practicing scientists, achieved various levels of understanding of the concept of public image, about the role of first lady in forming of nation's image, her influence on mass media, her perception of information and forming of public thought. The author conducted her own research, learning about Ukrainian and other first ladies from 2006 to 2014. Specific sources include an interview for author program at Golos Kieva radio station [2], «Safari Ukraine» magazine [3], and, especially for this research, an interview with the first ladies Aliyeva Mehriban First Lady of Azerbaijan; L. Kuchma, K. Chumachenko-Yushchenko, L. Yanukovitch - First Lady of Ukraine, Y. Timoshenko [4]; monitoring and analysis of publications in business media and information analytical press about first ladies' public image, inquiry with professional image makers and journalists, PR professionals.

Defining the four primary tasks for the first lady that become the foundation in forming a positive public image.

1. First lady, remaining a woman, a wife to the president of the country, a mother, needs to stand up for community's interests, namely: get involved with the problems of health and education of the nation, social security, defend the rights of women and children, ecological and cultural problems, and other issues that support public image.

2. She needs to exemplify the main premises of the Constitution (care about preservation of traditions and laws of the nation).

3. Synchrony between the actions of the first lady and government programs. Namely, to exemplify the support of the President's actions, for example, if government stress on supporting domestic producers in mass media, then the first lady will unobtrusively show her sympathy for domestic producers of clothing, food, and cars, will choose a local resort, etc.

4. Healthy lifestyle.

7. Aliyeva Mehriban First Lady of Azerbaijan.

Aliyeva Mehriban First Lady of Azerbaijan, the most energetic first ladies in the world. Her father, professor Arif Pashayev, is Azerbaijan's eminent scholar, pedagogue, public person, academician of the National Academy of Sciences, laureate of the State Prize, doctor of physics and mathematics. Since 1996, Arif Pashayev has been the rector of the National Aviation Academy under the Azerbaijan Airlines State Concern.

Her mother – orientalist, philologist, critic, translator, doctor of philology, professor Aida Imanguliyeva - was the first doctor of science in Arabic literature and first professor-woman in Azerbaijan. Her numerous scientific works (3 monographs, over 70 research papers) analysed a synthesis of western and eastern cultural traditions, development of creative style and formation of new artistic trends, which has laid a foundation for future studies of not only Arabic, but also all new Oriental literature. Mehriban Aliyeva is a granddaughter of professor Mir Jalal Pashayev - a writer, philologist, Honoured scientist of Azerbaijan, doctor of philology (1947), and eminent journalist, pedagogue, honoured person of science Nasir Imanguliyev[10].

Mehriban Aliyeva married Ilham Aliyev in 1983. They have three children named Leyla, Arzu and Heydar, and four grandchildren.

Mehriban Aliyeva: Success for success' sake, power for power's sake, and ambition have never been key motivations for me. The main thing is to be of help to people, and to find ways of helping those in need. And such help and support can be very diverse. Some need help to have their health brought back, to get education, or to establish a museum, while others need help to preserve architectural monuments for future generations. Sometimes there is a necessity to support the development of infrastructure, sometimes there is a need to provide organizational support for interesting projects, and what is really important to me is when we succeed in both realizing large-scale projects and helping real people [8].

In 1988, Mehriban Aliyeva graduated from the 1st Moscow State Medical Institute named after M.Sechenov with honours diploma. During 1988-1992, she worked at the Eye Diseases Research Institute in Moscow under the leadership of

academician Krasnov, received the degree of a doctor of philosophy, having defended a thesis on “Euthanasia and humanism issues in medicine”.

In 1995, the Friends of the Azerbaijani Culture Foundation, which is currently led by Mehriban Aliyeva, was established upon her initiative.

In 1996, with the objective of broadly promoting the Azerbaijani culture, she founded the “Azerbaijan - Irs” Magazine, which is published in three languages (Azerbaijani, English and Russian).

For her tireless endeavours towards preserving and developing Azerbaijan’s folklore and music legacy, Mehriban Aliyeva was awarded the title of UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador.

In 2002, Mehriban Aliyeva was elected president of the Gymnastics Federation of Azerbaijan. Her excellent organizational skills and growing prestige in the world played a decisive role in making a decision by the International Gymnastics Federation to hold the “A” category phase of the world cup competitions on rhythmic gymnastics (2003), the World Cup (2004), 27th World Championship (2005), and 23rd (2007), 25th (2009) and 30th (2014) European championships in Azerbaijan.

On December 8, 2012, the European Olympic Committee’s General Assembly took a decision to hold the 1st European Games in Baku. With a view to holding the first European Games at a high level, an Organizing Committee was established on January 17, 2013, and Mehriban Aliyeva was appointed chairperson of the Committee.

Mehriban Aliyeva is the president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, which was founded to study the rich legacy of Azerbaijani people’s national leader Heydar Aliyev, and cultivate his national statehood ideas in new generations. On 10 May 2004, inauguration of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation took place.

For the fruitful activity associated with the development of culture, education and healthcare in the Republic of Azerbaijan, broad promotion of the Azerbaijani people’s cultural heritage on an international scale, and great services to the organization of the 1st European Games, Mehriban Aliyeva was conferred on the Heydar Aliyev Order [10].

The author introduces her own terms used by public image professionals. In particular, “PR-filter”: it is important not to allow provocative information in mass media in order to prevent the destruction of a positive image of the leader. There are two ways: closedness and maximal population of infospace with positive information in order to create and sustain the object’s positive image. A piece of news created artificially or on purpose, information pretext. Author’s definition is “PR bait”. The goal is to engage as many sympathizers as possible and to create a pool of journalists, to establish a long-term media partnership.

Modern political theater play suggests several female roles for the image to fit: a splendid woman, a muse for the President and for the country; modest and unobtrusive first lady, independent politician, a shadow of her husband; independent politician, feminist leader, spiritual leader, a guardian angel, like Mother Theresa.

The most charismatic first lady of the USSR was Raisa Gorbacheva. Where there used to be neutralization and detachment from state affairs, there came a really bright and active first lady, who was involved in large-scale social work. Being a trusted partner of her husband, she promoted his success abroad. Western mass media reviewed her favorably. Raisa Gorbacheva became a symbol of a new kind of a modern woman in USSR. But she didn't have sympathizers in Russia. An exquisite lady wearing exquisite dresses and hats did not fit the reality of everyday socialist life, where a woman worked just as much as a man, where close to all women lived modestly and experienced global deficit.

The first lady Liudmila Kuchma will be remembered for her immediacy. When interviewed by Golos Kieva radio station, she was very sincere and couldn't hold her tears while telling about her husband being able only to congratulate her and their daughter Olena with International Women's day on about 10th or 11th of March, which meant that he didn't belong to their family but to the country. And it was something to put up with, renunciation of private life in favor of Ukraine. This is life.

We may consider Katherine Yushchenko a public person. The first lady #3, who almost always followed her husband in protocol events, was very active in philanthropic activity as the head foundation Ukraine-3000. Yushchenko was a typical American presidential spouse: her husband's open assistant, a part of his image. K. Yushchenko is the most open president's wife in Ukrainian history so far. "In countries where the institution of the first lady is a long-standing tradition, there are principles of creating of her image and there is a whole department working on her image. Such a tradition does not exist in Ukraine so far. "[6, p. 41], – without placing any blame states Katherine Yushchenko while commenting to Korrespondent. Lady Katherine could remain role model for imageology, but her materialism eliminated completely all the efforts of the imagemaking team.

Years 2010-2014. The leader is so charismatic and strong that the question of president's wife is a taboo for mass media and general public. Lyudmila Yanokovitch never became the first lady. Being official wife to the President, she never lived in Kiev, where her husband held his office and lived. For mass media it was about 'preserving home comfort in Donetsk surrounded by daughters-in-law, grandsons'. Lyudmila Yanukovitch is not mentioned much. Even official web-pages of all European counterparts of Mr Yanukovitch, Russian and American presidents had special sections dedicated to first ladies with brief bio and current activities of the wives of the most important state officials. Such a section once existed on the portal of Ukrainian leader, but only up until 2010. With Yanukovitch at power the section was archived. The "Why?" from a journalist got a response from state PR department [6, 37], that it is a specific request from President's wife and from now on they're not responsible for communications with lady Yanukovich.

Mrs Yanikovich i is indeed a very modest and non-public person, who prefers home and family, church, to social actions. Her favorite social activity and entertainment is Donetsk Opera and Ballet Theater. Mrs Yanukovich knows opera well, knows the how and who of the performances, knows the history of opera and

has told the bios of famous opera singers. This person could be an honorable first lady at the head of social development of Ukraine: helping theaters and centers for culture, founding personal awards for children musicians, organizing musical festivals and other cultural and art events. Mrs Yanukovich could be a perfect molding clay for shaping an exemplary first lady: openhearted, of the church, a modest mother. But the taboo prevented such a work.

From the point of view of modern communication processes, in order to make a positive impression, a first lady doesn't need to address meetings or be among the top media people. It is enough for her to be spiritual and heed to advice by image, PR, and political technologists. To respond to social issues in a timely and balanced manner, first ladies create philanthropic organizations, public offices, where specialists register citizens' requests in real time and provide correct feedback to the audience while prepare the first lady to a public appearance that will be beneficial for her public image. The first lady is an atmosphere, a special spirit of kindness and spirituality, greatness and generosity – such a positioning will be effective in mass media.

8. Finalizing discussion. An extra to the external image could be specific results of the activity of the first lady publicized in mass media: the part she took in social projects, the promotion of the programs of reforms in some specific educational, social, or healthcare initiatives. The stand and the public action of the first lady can first of all influence the passive apolitical audience, those who have electoral right: housewives, the elderly, the disabled and people having medical conditions, including young citizens who haven't decided about their political views [7, p 466-470].

9. Techniques for creating the image of the first lady.

To reinforce the positive image of the first lady, the wife of the leader of nation, author suggests her own methods:

- method of accordance – adapting audience requests to the existing characteristics of the object of the image;
- method of concordance – interconnectedness between public events for positioning of the first lady and the strategy of the development of the country;
- method of enhancement – enhancement of the strong parts of the personality and her skills,
- method of direct advertisement – the team's work related to popularizing the required image in mass media;
- method of transformation of success – following the guidelines of international and historical experience in positioning first ladies;
- quick response method – monitoring situation and real-time response;
- mirroring method – when the image of the first persons is reflected on the image of the country and the way around, when state activities influence directly the image of the President and that of the first lady in their public actions and effects, in commenting the situation is mass media;

Creation of the image for the first ladies is the work for political engineers, imagemakers, sociologists, PR experts. Some imagemakers are prone to create an emancipated image, one that is close to man's image. The author does not support

this theory, because only her husband, the president needs to be manly. The work of the first lady is to be the contrast background for her husband, not to weaken his manliness but reinforce it. If the president is a woman, then in the image of this politician, manly traits should dominate (decisiveness, adherence to principles, absence of jewelry, pant suit style, business dress code, discreet haircuts), some femininity is allowed but in general it is globally accepted that a high-ranking woman should look strict, elegant, temperate but never sexy.

The topic of female politicians is important for image experts [9, p.280-286], because there is enough space for creativity and thorough work.

10. Conclusions

The image of a state directly depends from the image of its leader, in particular from a President and other public officials. Elected by people, a leader plays crucial role in political life of a country. This scientific study intends to provide professional analysis of an image-maker, scientist Mrs. Chekalyuk as well as assessment-feedback of from the point of view of a leader's psychological readiness to accept a public persona offered by image-makers. This text proposes several methods how to create image and how to define terms. Mrs. Chekalyuk treats a state image as an internal and external image of a country, which is formed and fixed in mass consciousness of citizens under influence of political leaders, distinguished men and economical, political, ecological as well as others factors. The suggested material is structured and is relevant to the practical realities of imagemaking for the first lady in Ukraine. Currently, the standard depends on mentality. For example, domestically the standard is a caring, wife and mother, loving and sincere patriot, femininity, but externally, for example in France, an exquisite lady, gallant and reserved partner of the president, in Arabic countries it is a silent jewel that decorates her man.

In this research a range of ways of developing the image of the first lady and female politician in the modern information space is offered to influence the forming of the image of the country. The image created by professionals will mask personal characteristics and will only inform the public about socially important qualities of the first lady, will satisfy general audience's expectations: obligation, adherence to principles, willpower, femininity, honesty, service to the country and to the people. Currently, mass media is the most efficient instrument in the forming of the state image. More detailed information about the positioning of the image of the state in the light of first lady's perception in media is available in author's PhD thesis "Media mechanics for forming a positive image of Ukraine in the world: reality, evolution, projections."

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