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**FORMATION OF THE FRONT-LINE KHARKIV IMAGE  
BY MEANS OF MEDIA****ФОРМУВАННЯ ОБРАЗУ ПРИФРОНТОВОГО ХАРКОВА ЗАСОБАМИ МЕДІА****Demydiuk O. V. / Демидюк О. В.***Candidate of psychological sciences / канд. психол. наук*

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**Abstract.** *The article reveals the features of forming the image of the border city Kharkiv, which is in conditions of unprovoked aggression. It is shown how various creative ideas and artistic techniques are used to convey to the people of other cities and countries pictures of incredible suffering and courage, and thereby form the image of the city that selflessly fights for its freedom. Some works of witnesses of tragic events are considered, including photos of the starry sky in blackout conditions, visual transformations of destroyed buildings according to the principle of “was- became”, films-excursions along the streets of Kharkiv among destroyed buildings. The purpose of such works is to convey not only informational, but also emotional messages, since they achieve the greatest effect from the point of view of understanding the scale of the tragedy.*

**Key words:** *image of a city, architecture, visual arts, chronicle of the war, front-line Kharkiv.*

**Анотація.** *У статті розкриваються особливості формування образу прикордонного Харкова, який перебуває в умовах непровокованої агресії. Показано, як різні творчі ідеї та художні прийоми використовуються для того, щоб донести до людей інших міст і країн картини неймовірних страждань та мужності, і тим самим формувати образ міста, що самовіддано бореться за свою свободу. Розглядаються деякі роботи свідків трагічних подій, серед яких фото зоряного неба в умовах блекауту, візуальні трансформації зруйнованих будівель за принципом було-стало, фільми-екскурсії вулицями Харкова серед зруйнованих будівель. Мета таких робіт – передати не лише інформаційні, але й емоційні повідомлення, оскільки саме вони досягають найбільшого ефекту з точки зору розуміння масштабів трагедії.*

**Ключові слова:** *образ міста, архітектура, візуальні мистецтва, хроніка війни, прифронтовий Харків.*

**Introduction.**

A holistic, cumulative image of a city is formed by various facets of its functioning – these are both material structures (to which we include buildings and the spaces formed by them, as well as filling these spaces with elements of urban furniture) [1], and intangible (plots of urban life, behavioral or activity factors). These aspects, or, as mentioned above, the facets of the city’s existence, leave a mark in its history, literature, photo albums and videos. Let us pay attention to the fact that in modern conditions media channels are the most effective not only in promoting, but also in shaping the city image. In the era of digital technologies and the global information space, these tasks are solved by the Internet. And in this bitter period, when the cities of Ukraine, in particular the front-line Kharkiv, are suffering from the

russia's barbaric invasion, in the absence of tourist contacts, the Internet realizes the instantaneous dissemination of the most relevant information, including facts about the life of the city and its inhabitants.

The Internet has become the most important source of information about territories (the country, the region, the city). It forms the perception and relays stereotypes about them. The Internet is often the first "entry point" for getting to know a territory. In this regard, the task of promoting the territory in the multimedia and visual environment of modern Internet communications becomes relevant. Today a positive image of a modern city and a cloud of related to it associations are being formed in that particular way.

### **Main part.**

During the war, people receive all the information about the current state and life of the city from a smartphone or a computer, accordingly forming their own ideas. Thus, the image of Kharkiv appears as photos and video reports posted in Telegram, YouTube channels, news sites and others, as they say now, publics (public pages). The most poignant messages, harrowing details and striking pictures are images of injured people and destroyed buildings as a result of incessant shelling. Olena Kurylo, a teacher, a resident of Chuhuiv, the Kharkiv region, has become the "face" of the war. On the way to Kharkiv, Anadolu Agency photojournalist Wolfgang Schwan saw a bleeding woman with a bandaged face and immediately took shots of her. This photo of a Ukrainian woman captured by Anadolu Agency, has been featured on the front pages of many well-known newspapers, including The Guardian, The Times, The Sun, The Independent and German daily Bild etc. The photo of the Ukrainian teacher appeared not only on countless front pages but also news broadcasts around the world including international news channels CNN and the BBC. She has become one of the symbols of the russian-Ukrainian war.

The famous artist and educator from Los Angeles, Zhenya Gershman, whose paintings are exhibited in galleries and private collections worldwide, based on the photo seen on TV, has performed her interpretation of the Olena Kurylo's portrait, depicting on canvas the bloody face of the woman with pale blue eyes and the head wrapped in gauze. The portrait is called "First Face of War: Intimate Portrait of a Ukrainian Teacher". Gershman's painting, as well as the original photograph by the photojournalist Wolfgang Schwan, with the consent of the authors, were offered by Heritage Auctions in an online sale, with 100% of the proceeds directly benefiting the humanitarian aid of the Ukrainian Red Cross Society [6].

The New Yorker published the materials of its correspondent Jérôme Sessini, who photographed the devastation in what had been Freedom Square. The regional-administration building, a giant structure in the Stalinist Empire style, was in ruins. An office building behind Freedom Square was destroyed — in part, it appeared, by the shelling, and in part by attempts to put out the fire that resulted. An unseasonable cold snap that hit Kharkiv in the second week of March encased the building in icicles [5].

Correspondents of the BuzzFeed News portal created an exposition from several locations of Kharkiv urban environment, overlaying photographs of destroyed buildings on the same objects from the same angles, but taken from the Google Maps

resource. In the center of each frame there is a slider, by moving which we can compare fragments of buildings before and after destruction. These photographs give us a sense of the devastation in Ukraine, of what Russia's war is doing to Ukraine. Entire city blocks look unrecognizable [8].

Vladyslav Krasnoshchok, a medical doctor and an artist from Kharkiv, posted photographic materials on the Photo stories from NPR page, where he captured the war in black and white. "I only work with the physical photos," he says about his choice to use an Olympus Pen S 35 mm camera from the 1980s loaded with black-and-white film rather than a modern digital camera. He develops the film himself and prints his images at his home in one of Kharkiv's residential neighborhoods. "I really believe my work differs a lot from the digital images because it's actually in front of you," he says. "This is, like, actual art, and this is really important for history" [2].

The Kharkiv resident Vadym Belikov takes a photo of Iskander and S-300 missiles, that are launched from Belgorod (Russia), from a window of his apartment on Saltivka. He simply opens the window and fixes the war. If someone from the Ukrainian media asks for footage, he does not refuse. "The more people see it, the better. This needs to be shown, because there are a lot of people in Ukraine who feel very relaxed, because they are not being bombed, and they think that there is no war: I am separate, the war is separate," says Vadym Belikov. The distance from Kharkiv to the border with Russia is less than 40 km. A rocket from neighboring Belgorod reaches the city three minutes after launch. The short approach time forces the photographer to choose whether to take a photograph or run to a shelter [3].

Due to regular air attacks and proximity to the front line, Kharkiv has blackout measures and curfew restrictions. The authorities ask residents to turn on the lights in their apartments as rarely as possible, they have also stopped using the street lighting. Therefore, on a clear night in the sky above the city, it is possible to see not only thousands of stars, but even the Milky Way. The photographer and amateur astronomer Pavlo Pakhomenko has decided to take advantage of this opportunity and captured Kharkiv at night without light pollution. "For years I dreamed of making such shots in the hope of a planned power outage or a planned educational event," Pavlo Pakhomenko writes on his Instagram. "Unfortunately, the "evil jinn" has fulfilled my desire in the most unpleasant way – by means of the war. My new dream, after the Victory, is that every year at the end of February, during a moonless clear night, the lights are turned off for one hour and everyone goes out into the streets to look at stars and remember all those who lost their lives during this war"[9].

The chronicle of the war, live footage of the destroyed residential quarters of Kharkiv are reflected in many streams, video reports and documentaries. The authors of the animated historical documentary series "Kings and Generals" are releasing episodes dedicated to different stages of the war - how the unprovoked invasion began, how Ukraine managed to win the first phase of the war, about the sinking of the Russian warship Moskva, the flagship of the Russian Navy's Black Sea Fleet, how the conflict has turned into the war of attrition, about the beginning of the Ukrainian counter-offensive in Kherson. The current episode (at the time of preparing this article) "Ukrainian counter-offensive on Kharkiv" depicts the unique operation of Ukrainian troops in the Kharkiv region - the Balakliia-Izium counter-offensive

succeeded, pushing the russians through Oskil and opening the way to north Luhansk and the important cities of Lyman and Svatove [4].

In the international project of the Ukrainian Institute “Postcards from Ukraine”, the famous British actor Hugh Bonneville voiced the story of Kharkiv, which is destroyed and damaged by russian invaders. Almost every building in its historical centre is an architectural landmark. “This is how the whole world will learn about Kharkiv and its architecture destroyed by the russian army. The historic center and bomb craters in Freedom Square, which contains prominent monuments of constructivist architecture, have become a terrible reminder of the price of liberty in the 21st century. However, squares can be destroyed, but you can’t destroy freedom,” the actor says in the video [10].

Maksim Rosenfeld, a Kharkiv artist, designer, lecturer, author of many video tours around Kharkiv, remains in the city even during shelling and takes pictures of the destroyed quarters, and then he edits the next episode. A few years ago, with the support of the Mayor’s office, he released a multi-episode serial “Kharkiv stories” about the architectural sights of the city. For example, in the first series “The Palace of Labor”, he told the history of the House of Trade Unions, showing this wonderful grandiose building of the early 20th century from all angles, including quadcopter flights. Since the first days of the war, it has been turned into ruins. After three months of the war, despite the incessant shelling, Max Rosenfeld and the team of the Kharkiv regional film commission resumed the city video tours on the Kharkiv NOW channel. The first episodes show terrible images of historic buildings destroyed by the war. This is the history of Myronosytska Street, a street that is located in the center of the city. And this is the place where there were several hits of missiles and high capacity aerial bombs, as a result of which almost all large buildings were turned into ruins. Or an episode about the ruined Northern Saltivka, where the frames of destroyed residential high-rise buildings resemble collapsed houses of cards. The following series are filled with love, pride and admiration of the author for the courage and resilience of his native city. According to Max Rosenfeld, scars are just embellishments of the city. Then, despite the wounds gaping on the body (facades) of Kharkiv, a series of plots follows, resuming the old style of narration about the history of the city, about its architecture, about the people who created it, about the events that accompanied it [7].

### **Conclusions.**

In conditions of the war, in conditions of constant shelling, when hundreds and even thousands of civilians die under the ruins of residential buildings, schools and hospitals, the Internet remains the main media tool that disseminates information about life of Ukrainian cities, in particular, the front-line Kharkiv. National channels of television and radio communications, news feeds of the main information publications, social networks are involved. Not only streams and online reports reflecting the main events in real time are performed, but also all kinds of acts of creative activity of city dwellers. Various artistic techniques are used, creative ideas are realized, the purpose of which is to convey not only information but also the mental and emotional states of ordinary people, to demonstrate the spirit of resistance and faith in the victory. Artistic images, creative ideas, and various techniques of

different kinds of visual arts leave the strongest imprint on the minds and hearts of those to whom these messages are intended. Historians, writing the chronology of this war, will definitely use such materials at the proper time.

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