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THE FRENCH SOCIO-INTELLECTUAL DISCOURSE ON THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR

Introduction

Statement of the research problem and relevance of the study. The Russian–Ukrainian war of 2014–2026 has become one of the key challenges to the contemporary system of international relations, European security, and the normative foundations of the world order. It has not only radically transformed Europe’s security architecture but has also triggered profound worldview, value-based, and intellectual shifts within the member states of the European Union. In this context, particular scholarly importance lies in the analysis of the official positions of the most influential European states, notably France, as a significant regional and global international actor. At the same time, no less important is the examination of assessments of the Russian–Ukrainian war offered by French intellectuals, experts, and public opinion leaders. It is precisely these actors who to a large extent shape public narratives, the frameworks of political decision-making, and long-term perceptions of the place of Ukraine, Russia, and Eastern Europe within the European civilizational space.

The relevance of this research is further determined by the fact that Russian aggression against Ukraine has become a test of the ability of European elites to

rethink previous paradigms of cooperation and consolidation in their relations with Russia. An analysis of evaluations of the Russian–Ukrainian war within the French public and intellectual discourse makes it possible to gain a deeper understanding of the internal contradictions of European policy, the evolution of approaches to security, and the prospects for constructing a new European strategy toward Eastern Europe and Ukraine.

Purpose of the study. The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of interpretations of the Russian–Ukrainian war by French intellectuals and opinion leaders.

Research methodology. The methodological basis of the study is an interdisciplinary approach combining the tools of the sociology of international relations, political philosophy, discourse analysis, and intellectual history. The research employs general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, as well as specialized methods (comparative, historical-political, critical discourse analysis, etc.).

Source base of the study. The source base includes a comprehensive set of materials: official statements by the government and the President of the Fifth Republic, public speeches by French politicians, analytical reports, publications by leading French intellectuals, opinion leaders, experts, and journalists, as well as materials from major French media outlets.

Review of the scholarly literature. It should be noted that while the official position of France’s ruling circles regarding Russian aggression against Ukraine is fairly widely represented through public speeches, statements, negotiation debates, and the like, the corresponding assessments of French intellectuals and opinion leaders are far less known and have only partially been introduced into broader academic discourse. Worth noting is the observation regarding the lack of interest among French researchers in their own public ethics, political morality, and intellectual legacy: “The form of French intellectual discourse is of greater interest to foreigners than to the French themselves.”¹

Among significant scholarly studies in Ukraine, the works of Stepan Vidnianskyi and Andriy Martynov should be highlighted, as well as the monograph produced by the authorial collective of the I.F. Kuras Institute of Political and Ethno-National Studies.² Among Polish and Polish–Ukrainian studies in this field,

¹ І. Чедолума, *Минуле, яке досі з нами. Огляд на: Тоні Джадт. Недовершене минуле. Французькі інтелектуали, 1944–1956*, Львів 2024, <https://uamoderna.com/notes/mynule-yake-dosi-z-namy/> (4.10.2024).

² С. Віднянський, *Ставлення європейських інтелектуалів до агресії Росії проти України*, Київ 2022, pp. 458–468; *idem*, *Російсько-українська війна та міжнародна спільнота: основні напрями, проблеми й деякі уроки західної підтримки України*, file:///C:/Users/user1/Downloads/%

an important place is occupied by collective and individual scholarly works, including the publication *Russia–Ukraine. A Confrontation of Narratives*, as well as articles by Barbara Markovska-Marchak, Rafał Stobetskyi, and others.³ In the West, primarily in France, Germany, and English-speaking countries,⁴ this topic has also found only fragmentary reflection in individual academic studies.

Therefore, in terms of the scholarly significance of the proposed research into the public and intellectual response in France to the contemporary Russian–Ukrainian war, at least two aspects should be emphasized. The first is a comprehensive and systematic conceptualization of the research problem in the context of its formulation, intermediate findings, and final conclusions and generalizations. The second is the representation of the scholarly discourse on the attitudes of French intellectuals and opinion leaders toward the Russian–Ukrainian war as a historical, social, international, and moral–value phenomenon, process, event, and manifestation of contemporary reality.

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³ *Russia–Ukraine: A Confrontation of Narratives*, “Rocznik Centrum Studiów nad Ukrainą” 2025, no. 2, https://studium.uw.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/002_CSU_SRODEK-CALY-2.pdf; B. Markowska-Marczak, *Ramy wojny: inwazja rosyjska na Ukrainie jako wydarzenie historyczne: Analiza ramowa polskiego dyskursu prasowego*, “Kultura i Społeczeństwo” 2023, vol. 67, no. 3, pp. 225–252; R. Stobiecki, *Historia i historycy w perspektywie „długiego trwania”*. *Kilka uwag o historiograficznych kontekstach wojny w Ukrainie*, “Zeszyty Wiejskie” 2024, pp. 477–491.

⁴ T.G. Ash, I. Krastev, M. Leonard, *United West, divided from the rest: global public opinion one year into Russia’s war on Ukraine*, https://ecfr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/United-West-divided-from-the-rest_Leonard-Garton-Ash-Krastev.pdf; T. Fouillet, *Guerre en Ukraine: étude opérationnelle d’un conflit de haute intensité* (premier volet), “Recherches & Documents” no. 2, <https://www.frstrategie.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/recherches-et-documents/2023/022023.pdf>; *Les impacts de la guerre en Ukraine*, red. É. Freysselinard, https://www.ihemi.fr/sites/default/files/publications/files/2023-05/ihemi_lirec_ndeg68.pdf; J. Riet, F. Klaver, *The EU and Russian Aggression: Perspectives from Kant, Hobbes, and Machiavelli*, “European Papers” 2023, vol. 8, no 3, pp. 1523–1537, <https://www.europeanpapers.eu/europeanforum/eu-russian-aggression-perspectives-kant-hobbes-machiavelli>; J. Dyduch, M. Góra, *Polish reactions to Russian aggression against Ukraine* [in:] *Polarization, Shifting Borders and Liquid Governance*, eds. A. Mihr, C. Pierobon, Berlin 2024, pp. 301–309, https://www.springerprofessional.de/content/pdfId/26566644/10.1007/978-3-031-44584-2_18?canonical=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.springerprofessional.de%2Fpolarization-shifting-borders-and-liquid-governance%2F26566620; J. Fontanel *Les fondements et les conséquences de la guerre en Ukraine*, Grenoble 2025, <https://hal.univ-grenoble-alpes.fr/hal-04972609/document>; P. Franch (et al.), *A Scathing Indictment: How European Opinion Leaders Framed Putin’s Aggression Against Ukraine*, “Journal. Media” 2025, vol. 6(3), no. 99, pp. 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.3390/journalmedia6030099> URL: <https://www.mdpi.com/2673-5172/6/3/99>.

France: between strategic autonomy and support for Ukraine

France's official position on the Russian–Ukrainian war has been shaped within the framework of the concept of Europe's strategic autonomy and the traditional emphasis on France's role as one of the leaders of European diplomacy. From the very beginning of the war, President Emmanuel Macron clearly condemned Russian aggression, stating that “Russia has chosen war, and this war is a challenge for all of Europe.”⁵

France consistently supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine by providing military assistance and participating in the EU's sanctions policy. At the same time, French rhetoric for a long period combined support for Ukraine with an emphasis on the need to preserve diplomatic channels of communication with Moscow, which found expression in the French president's distinctive formula of “looking Putin in the eye.”⁶ This reflected Paris's aspiration to retain the ability to influence the future security architecture of Europe.

Over time, the French position has become tougher. Macron acknowledged that “peace cannot be achieved at the price of Ukraine's capitulation,”⁷ and that Europe's security directly depends on the ability to contain Russian revisionism. Thus, France increasingly combines diplomatic initiatives with support for Ukraine's defense capabilities as a key element of European security.

The Russian–Ukrainian armed conflict, which entered the phase of a full-scale war in February 2022, became not only a security and geopolitical challenge but also a profound intellectual shock for European public opinion. In France – a country with a strong tradition of public intellectual reflection – the war against Ukraine was quickly understood not merely as a regional conflict, but as an existential challenge to the European project,⁸ modern political rationality, and the postwar culture of peace. French philosophers, historians, sociologists, artists, and military and political analysts increasingly interpret Russian aggression as an imperial, colonial war aimed at destroying Ukraine's political subjectivity and revising the fundamental norms of the international order.

⁵ E. Macron, *Adresse aux Français. Publié le 2 mars 2022*, <https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2022/03/02/adresse-aux-francais-ukraine>.

⁶ F. Mauro, *The war in Ukraine and Europe's geopolitical awakening*, 2023, https://www.iris-france.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/17_ProgEurope_FMauro_EN.pdf; S. Tanevski, *French diplomacy and the war in Ukraine*, “KNOWLEDGE – International Journal” 2025, vol. 69(1), file:///C:/Users/user1/Downloads/FRENCH+DIPLOMACY+AND+THE+WAR+IN+UKRAINE.pdf.

⁷ E. Macron, *Europe speech*, <https://www.elysee.fr/en/emmanuel-macron/2024/04/24/europe-speech>.

⁸ S. Troyan, A. Kyrydon, *The civilization war 2014–2022: the national liberation war of Ukraine in XXI century (theoretical discourse)* [in:] *The Russian-Ukrainian war (2014–2022): historical, political, cultural-educational, religious, economic, and legal aspects: Scientific monograph*, Riga 2022.

Bernard-Henri Lévy: war as a moral and civilizational rupture

The philosopher and public intellectual Bernard-Henri Lévy has become one of the most consistent and visible French voices in support of Ukraine. He refers to Russia as a terrorist state, advocates its expulsion from the UN Security Council, supports Ukraine's membership in NATO, and considers the war in Ukraine to be "the most important war on the planet. What is at stake is not only Ukraine's independence, but the future of Europe and the West."⁹ B.-H. Lévy supported the Revolution of Dignity and even personally addressed the crowd on the Maidan on 9 February 2014. Since then, over the course of eight years, he filmed the documentary "Why Ukraine" – from footage of the 2014 revolution to the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the consequences of atrocities committed by Russian soldiers in Bucha, and the defense of Mykolaiv. The film premiered at the United Nations headquarters in New York on 27 October 2022. He has repeatedly visited frontline areas, documented crimes committed by the Russian army, and emphasized that this war is "a war against the very idea of Europe."¹⁰

Lévy categorically rejects interpretations of the war as a "geopolitical conflict between great powers," insisting that it is an asymmetric confrontation between democracy and imperial nihilism. As he has noted, peace with Putin built on concessions is not peace but a prologue to new wars; the Putin dictatorship is, in fact, a paper tiger: "When a dictatorship encounters strong resistance on the external front, it retreats. When it does not encounter resistance, it advances and progresses. That is what I mean when I say that this tiger, or in this case rather a bear, is paper. In other words, Vladimir Putin is strong only through our weaknesses."¹¹

Étienne Balibar and Bruno Latour: war, modernity, and the collapse of illusions

The philosopher Étienne Balibar interprets Russia's war against Ukraine as an internal crisis of European modernity that has exposed the fallacy of notions

⁹ *Бернар-Анрі Леві: Війна в Україні – це найголовніша війна на планеті. На кону стоїть не лише незалежність України, а й майбутнє Європи й Заходу*, 2025, <https://gordonua.com/ukr/publications/bernar-anri-levi-vijna-v-ukrajini-tse-najholovnishia-vijna-na-planeti-na-konu-stojit-ne-lishe-nezalezhnist-ukrajini-a-j-majbutnje-jevropi-j-zakodu-1737348.html>.

¹⁰ G. Antoine, *Bernard-Henri Lévy filme la guerre en Ukraine et alerte l'Europe sur le risque d'oubli*, "Le Journal du Dimanche" 2025, <https://www.lejdd.fr/International/bernard-henri-levy-filme-la-guerre-en-ukraine-et-alerte-leurope-sur-le-risque-doubl-159652>.

¹¹ Д. Раєвський, Ю. Скібіцька. *Може здатися, що за мир із Путіним виступають все більше західних лідерів думок. Це не так. Ось що пишуть Снайдер, Фукуяма та Леві, які беззаперечно підтримують Україну – розбір «Бабеля»*, 2022, <https://babel.ua/amp/texts/86125-mozhe-zdatsiya-shcho-za-mir-iz-putinim-vistupayut-vse-bilshe-zahidnih-lideriv-dumok-ce-ne-tak-os-shcho-pishut-snyder-fukuyama-ta-levi-yaki-bezzaperechno-pidtrimuyut-ukrajinu-rozbir-babelya>.

of a “post-historical” Europe, and from the Ukrainian side of resistance to the Russian invasion it is “a just war, in the strongest sense of the word.”¹² In his view, tolerance of authoritarianism in the name of stability has become one of the West’s key mistakes. Balibar’s position can be reduced to several important propositions: first, the author’s opposition of the categories of “simplicity” and “complexity” in the context of narratives surrounding the war; second, recognition of Europe’s undeniable role in what is happening in Ukraine and of Europe’s fundamental responsibility for the “catastrophic development of events”; third, attention to the facets of that catastrophe that are being marginalized. Balibar is among those who contribute to the formation of the scholarly discourse on the contemporary Russian–Ukrainian war through important unambiguous statements: “Ukraine has already entered Europe,” “the choice against Putin,” “we need real actions.”¹³

The philosopher and sociologist of science Bruno Latour, one of the authors of actor–network theory of society, analyzing the war in a broader context of crises of the global world, linked it to the collapse of the technocratic illusion that economic interdependence automatically guarantees peace. His last text published during his lifetime (the French sociologist died on 9 October 2022) concerned, among other things, the war in Ukraine. In September 2022, the journal “Géopolitique” published Latour’s article “Is the ground of Europe shifting beneath our feet?”¹⁴ in which he argued that the war in Ukraine did not merely coincide chronologically with the ecological crisis, but that these are interconnected processes. He emphasized that Russian aggression represents a “return of hard politics of territories, force, and violence”¹⁵ to a world that considered itself post-political, and saw a way out in the unification of Europe into a single space that is not limited to the Schengen area.

Nicolas Tenzer, Nicolas Richoux, and François Lefebvre: the security and strategic dimension

Senior research fellow at the Center for the Analysis of European Policy Nicolas Tenzer (author of the book devoted to Russia’s war against Ukraine *Crime and Oblivion: For Strategic Thinking*,¹⁶ which received the Nathalie Pasternak Prize) consistently advocates a more radical European response to Russian

¹² E. Балибар, Про європейську війну на 21-ий день, 2022, <https://kontur.media/balibar/>.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴ *Le Groupe d’études géopolitiques publie le Grand Continent*, <https://geopolitique.eu/articles/le-sol-europeen-est-il-en-train-de-changer-sous-nos-pieds/>.

¹⁵ Д. Раєвський, Ю. Скібіцька, *Може здатися...*

¹⁶ N. Tenzer, *Notre Guerre. Le crime et l’oubli: pour une pensée stratégique*, Paris 2024.

aggression. He emphasizes that Ukraine's defeat would mean a strategic defeat for all of Europe, and therefore military support for Kyiv is not an act of solidarity but a matter of self-defense. In his essay *The End of Great Power Politics*,¹⁷ Tenzer observes the growing power of small and medium-sized states – a process in support of which, in the author's view, the European Union is interested and which requires the victory of “a nation that looks to the future and is based on a shared aspiration for emancipation”¹⁸ – Ukraine – over Russia.

Military expert Nicolas Richoux and Sorbonne professor François Lefebvre draw attention to the systemic nature of Russian military doctrine, which combines classical military operations with information warfare, terror against the civilian population, and the destruction of cultural heritage.¹⁹ An important and most effective element of counteraction is transatlantic unity; however, under conditions of a certain inconsistency in U.S. policy during Donald Trump's second presidency, Europe's responsibility increases. Lefebvre emphasized that “we need to change our approach. We have always had the U.S. nuclear umbrella; we felt protected. And now – it is felt here in France and everywhere – Europe is in geopolitical solitude. Therefore, it is necessary to create a European military force and to change political Europe.”²⁰

It was precisely French military experts and intellectuals who, in an open letter, called on President Macron to initiate the creation of a European coalition of military instructors to work in Ukraine²¹. The appeal was signed by army generals Richoux and Vincent Desportes, defense consultant Xavier Tytelman, former serviceman Guillaume Ancel, academic and military analyst Tenzer, philosopher Lévy, academician and former senator André Gattolin, and Vice President of the World Congress of Ukrainians Volodymyr Kohutiak.

¹⁷ A. Lazaréva, Nicolas Tenzer: «La victoire de l'Ukraine est toujours possible», 2025, <https://tyzhden.fr/tenzer/>.

¹⁸ Nicolas Tenzer, *spécialiste des relations internationales* : «L'Ukraine est une nation tournée vers l'avenir, fondée sur une volonté commune d'émancipation», 2025, https://www.lemonde.fr/livres/article/2025/05/16/nicolas-tenzer-l-ukraine-est-une-nation-tournee-vers-l-avenir-fondée-sur-une-volonte-commune-d-émancipation_6606390_3260.html.

¹⁹ У Парижі французькі та українські інтелектуали дискутували про європейський вимір війни Росії в Україні, 2025, <https://www.ukrinform.ua/amp/rubric-world/4039945-u-parizi-francuzki-ta-ukrainski-intelektuali-diskutuvali-pro-evropejskij-vimir-vijni-rosii-v-ukraini.html>.

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ «Rien ne démontrera mieux la fermeté de notre engagement en faveur de l'Ukraine que l'envoi d'instructeurs militaires», 2024, https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2024/11/20/rien-ne-demontrera-mieux-la-fermete-de-notre-engagement-en-faveur-de-l-ukaine-que-l-envoi-d-instructeurs-militaires_6404104_3232.html?lmd_medium=al&lmd_campaign=envoye-par-appli&lmd_creation=ios&lmd_source=default&fbclid=IwY2xjawGqtZZleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHFer6deAAQ0uysAjpIubbZM5UtiAWWwL-rOfsbXgbSfzqZirzLwGaQZTkg_aem_zu0haxJNUf-vINTOnMu-7A.

Historical-memory, cultural, and civic discourse: Galia Ackerman, Françoise Morvan, Sonia Wider-Atherton, Jean-Dominique Giuliani

The French historian Galia Ackerman emphasizes that the war against Ukraine is a logical continuation of Russia's Soviet and post-Soviet imperial policy. She points to the continuity of practices of mass violence – from the Holodomor to Bucha – as a key to understanding the actions of the Kremlin. Anthropologist Véronique Nahoum-Grappe analyzes the war through the prism of dehumanization, noting that Russian propaganda reproduces classical colonial narratives that legitimize the destruction of the “Other.” Publisher and playwright Françoise Morvan, as well as cellist Sonia Wider-Atherton, stress the moral responsibility of European culture. For them, support for Ukraine is not only a political but also an ethical duty of the artist.

A significant number of representatives of France's academic, teaching, cultural, and artistic circles have called on official Paris to preserve and strengthen support for Ukraine. In an appeal published in “Le Monde”²² and reprinted in other media, it was stated: “We, citizens of Europe, call on the President of the Republic and his government to support and strengthen the position they have finally taken after so much hesitation: unwavering, powerful, and rapid support for Ukraine until the last Russian soldier leaves its territory. To this end, Ukraine must finally receive all the weapons it has requested: tanks, long-range missiles, and aircraft, which are necessary for its victory. And as soon as possible. It must no longer fight with its hands tied behind its back and with an unarmed sky ... We can act, we must act ... For this, we have a common slogan: Russia, out of Ukraine!”²³

Political figure and publicist, President of the Robert Schuman Foundation Jean-Dominique Giuliani, in his book *A European Without Complexes*,²⁴ defines Russia as an “enemy” of the European Union. Giuliani challenges Angela Merkel's position regarding the prospect of Ukraine's membership in the North Atlantic Alliance. On this matter, in one of his interviews, the President of the Schuman Foundation stated: “I think that if France and Germany had agreed in 2008 to Ukraine and Georgia joining NATO, there would be no war today. Honestly, at the time I did not think so. Like most people in France, Germany, and

²² “Ne trahissons pas l'Ukraine! Ne nous trahissons pas nous-même!”, 2023, [https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2023/09/27/ne-trahissons-pas-l-ukraine-ne-nous-trahissons-pas-nous-meme_6191206_3232.html#xtor=AL-32280270-\[whatsapp\]-\[ios\]](https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2023/09/27/ne-trahissons-pas-l-ukraine-ne-nous-trahissons-pas-nous-meme_6191206_3232.html#xtor=AL-32280270-[whatsapp]-[ios]).

²³ *Ibidem*.

²⁴ J.-D. Giuliani, *Européen sans complexes: Pour une France enfin européenne*, Paris 2022.

even the United States, I believed that we should not provoke Russia. Today I have changed my mind and believe that NATO membership is a guarantee that Putin will fear attacking anyone who is a member of the alliance.”²⁵

He links the war to the mistakes of European policy over past decades, which in fact laid the groundwork for the current war: “Russian aggression against Ukraine... became a brutal wake-up call for our partners ... Current events caught a sleeping Europe by surprise.”²⁶ Giuliani is deeply convinced that “the only thing that can stop Putin is force.”²⁷ In this difficult situation, Europeans should – and increasingly do – choose the path of cooperation to develop effective responses. At the same time, it is precisely the French intellectual segment that plays a key role in shaping the moral and ideological justification for supporting Ukraine as a defense of the European project itself.

Conclusions

Overall, the French intellectual discourse on the Russian–Ukrainian war is characterized by a high level of conceptual reflection and a clearly articulated position. Among the voices defending Ukraine in France are the influential organization *Stand with Ukraine* (an international solidarity movement that organizes protests, social media campaigns, and fundraising efforts) and the organization *Desk Russie* (a French online platform that disseminates information about Russia and other former Soviet states worldwide) under the leadership of Ackerman. Influential pro-Ukrainian positions are also represented by the voices of philosopher and political journalist Lévy, chief spokesperson of *Stand with Ukraine* Aline Le Bail-Kremer, French political analyst and international security expert Tenzer, Sarah Daniel from the leading weekly *L’Obs*, Professor Lefebvre, and other representatives of the French community.

For most French intellectuals, the war appears as a civilizational rupture that requires Europe to abandon the illusions of post-historical peace and to return

²⁵ А. Лазарева, Жан-Домінік Жуліані: «Якби Франція та Німеччина 2008 року погодилися на вступ України й Грузії до НАТО, то сьогодні не було б війни», 2023, <https://tyzhden.ua/zhan-dominik-zhuliani-iakby-frantsiia-ta-nimechchyna-2008-roku-pohodylysia-na-vstup-ukrainy-j-hruzii-do-nato-to-sohodni-ne-bulo-b-vijny/>.

²⁶ J.-D. Giuliani. *Europe de la défense: y croire et persévérer!*, “Dossier. Ukraine, un an après: quelle sécurité pour l’Europe. Esprit defense” 2023, no. 6, https://www.defense.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/esprit-defense-numero-6-hiver-2023-dossier-ukraine-un-an-apres-quelle-securite-collective-pour-l-europe-ue-otan_1.pdf.

²⁷ J.-D. Giuliani, «*La seule chose qui peut arrêter Poutine, c’est la force*», https://www.lepoint.fr/politique/la-seule-chose-qui-peut-arreter-poutine-c-est-la-force-28-03-2022-2469910_20.php.

to responsibility for security, freedom, and political subjectivity. Indicative in this regard is the interview of French intellectual Lévy with the Ukrainian service of *Voice of America* on 9 December 2023, in which he noted, in particular: “The real border of America, of the West, of Western values runs through Ukraine – in Avdiivka, Klishchiivka, in Bakhmut.”²⁸

The prospects for further research lie in a deeper analysis of the dynamics of intellectual and political narratives in EU member states over a longer time horizon, particularly in the context of a possible end to the active phase of the war and the formation of a postwar order. Of particular interest is the study of the impact of Ukraine’s wartime experience on the transformation of European strategic culture, as well as the role of intellectual networks and transnational debates in developing a new concept of Europe’s responsibility for security on the eastern flank. The results of the research may be used as a theoretical foundation for further scholarly inquiry, as well as an analytical basis for forming a comprehensive understanding of Ukraine’s place in the European political and intellectual space under conditions of prolonged geopolitical transformation.

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FRANCUSKI DYSKURS SPOŁECZNO-INTELEKTUALNY O WOJNIE ROSYJSKO-UKRAIŃSKIEJ

Streszczenie

Artykuł analizuje francuski dyskurs społeczno-intelektualny dotyczący wojny rosyjsko-ukraińskiej jako wielowymiarowe pole, w którym krzyżują się interpretacje polityczne, moralne, historyczne i cywilizacyjne. Agresja Rosji przeciwko Ukrainie w latach 2014–2026 ukazana jest

nie tylko jako konflikt militarny i geopolityczny, lecz także jako głęboki wstrząs intelektualny dla Europy, podważający iluzję „posthistorycznego pokoju”, dotychczasową kulturę bezpieczeństwa oraz wcześniejsze paradygmaty współpracy z Rosją. Szczególną uwagę poświęcono Francji jako jednemu z kluczowych aktorów europejskiej dyplomacji i przestrzeni intelektualnej. W artykule przeanalizowano oficjalne stanowisko Francji kształtowane przez koncepcję strategicznej autonomii Europy oraz jego ewolucję – od ostrożnej dyplomacji do coraz wyraźniejszegołączenia inicjatyw politycznych z wojskowym wsparciem Ukrainy. Równolegle ukazano znaczenie francuskich intelektualistów, filozofów, historyków, socjologów, ekspertów wojskowych, artystów i publicystów, którzy w istotny sposób wpływają na narracje publiczne i moralną ocenę wojny. Artykuł omawia poglądy m.in. Bernarda-Henriego Lévy’ego, Étienne’a Balibara, Bruna Latoura, Nicolasa Tenzera, Jeana-Dominique’a Giulianiego, Galii Ackerman, Françoise Morvan i Sonii Wider-Atherton. W ich ujęciach wojna jawi się jako agresja imperialna i kolonialna, cywilizacyjny przełom oraz asymetryczna konfrontacja demokracji z autorytarnym rewizjonizmem. Autor dowodzi, że dla znacznej części francuskich elit intelektualnych wsparcie Ukrainy stanowi nie tylko wybór polityczny, lecz przede wszystkim obowiązek etyczny i warunek obrony samego projektu europejskiego. Metodologicznie badanie opiera się na podejściu interdyscyplinarnym, łączącym analizę dyskursu, filozofię polityczną, historię idei oraz socjologię stosunków międzynarodowych. Wyniki pozwalają lepiej zrozumieć wewnętrzne napięcia europejskiej debaty oraz intelektualne podstawy odpowiedzi Europy na wojnę rosyjsko-ukraińską.

Słowa kluczowe: wojna rosyjsko-ukraińska, francuski dyskurs intelektualny, bezpieczeństwo europejskie, autonomia strategiczna, imperializm, pamięć historyczna, wartości europejskie, Ukraina

THE FRENCH SOCIO-INTELLECTUAL DISCOURSE ON THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR

Abstract

The article examines the French socio-intellectual discourse on the Russian–Ukrainian war as a complex field where political, moral, historical, and civilizational interpretations intersect. The Russian aggression against Ukraine (2014–2026) is analyzed not only as a military and geopolitical conflict but also as a profound intellectual challenge to European modernity, the postwar culture of peace, and established paradigms of cooperation with Russia. The study emphasizes that the war has become a critical test for Europe’s ability to rethink its strategic responsibility, security culture, and normative foundations. Special attention is paid to France as one of the key actors in European diplomacy and intellectual life. The article analyzes the official French position shaped by the concept of European strategic autonomy, as well as its gradual evolution from cautious diplomacy toward a firmer stance that combines political initiatives with military support for Ukraine. At the same time, the focus is placed on the role of French intellectuals, philosophers, historians, sociologists, military experts, artists, and public figures whose interpretations have significantly influenced public debate and moral framing of the war. The research highlights the contributions of Bernard-Henri Lévy, Étienne Balibar, Bruno Latour, Nicolas Tenzer, Jean-Dominique Giuliani, Galia Ackerman, Françoise Morvan, Sonia Wider-Atherton, and others. Their reflections conceptualize the war as an imperial and colonial aggression, a civilizational rupture, and a confrontation between democracy and authoritarian

revisionism. The article demonstrates that for many French intellectuals, support for Ukraine is not merely a matter of political alignment but an ethical and existential imperative tied to the defense of the European project itself. Methodologically, the study relies on an interdisciplinary approach combining discourse analysis, political philosophy, intellectual history, and the sociology of international relations. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of internal debates within European societies and the evolving intellectual foundations of Europe's response to the Russian–Ukrainian war.

Keywords: Russian–Ukrainian war, French intellectual discourse, European security, strategic autonomy, imperialism, collective memory, European values, Ukraine