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View of Polish and Russian Media on Euro 2012: Comparing and Contrasting

ABSTRACT. *Considering the role of the media in modern society, we need to understand that public opinion about football fans in general is formed out of the information transmitted by the media. The objective of the study is to analyze the different views and aspects of the Euro 2012: its influence on countries development; its profitability but also the behavior of fans – their cooperation and rivalry. However, contemporary scholarship on sports sociology and football fandom subcultures does not recognize class impact on the near-football movement. European Football Championship 2012 showed problems of development and regulation of football fanaticism. It is essential to see how events on Euro 2012 in Poland, collision and confrontation Polish and Russian fans were reflected in Russian, Polish and UK press "Sport-Express", "Soviet Sport", "Rossiyskaya Gazeta", "Gazeta Wyborcza", "Gazeta Polska", "The Independent" and "The Guardian". Football fans', organization, and culture require precise studies, not only for understanding of current situation, but, perhaps, also for the development of an adequate strategy of interaction with them in the run-up to the World Cup in 2018. It is also necessary to identify not only the relationship of this movement to the different sectors of society, but also a subculture itself and its image in public opinion shaped by*

the media. In the era of globalization, understanding of youth subcultures is complicated and leads to a paradox. At the moment, there is a modification of the fan movement. On the one hand, we see the transition from bullying to the cultural «fanatism»; on the other hand, the question arises, if the bullies were an integral part of this culture, do we talk about the death or rebirth of culture? Youth subcultures in the era of postmodernism and globalization are transformed, into the phenomenon of «postsubculture», and may enhance the destructive tendencies in the spiritual life of the young generation, increasing the level of nihilistic attitudes. It should also be noted that the movement of football fans is becoming mainstream. There has been an increase in the popularity of fandom in society. This is due to the attention to this phenomenon in the media, in the cinema and fiction.

KEYWORDS: *football fans, mainstream, media, popularity, subculture*

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Взгляд польских и российский средств массовой информации на Евро 2012: общее и особенное

АННОТАЦИЯ. Учитывая роль средств массовой информации в современном обществе, необходимо понимать, что общественное мнение о футбольных фанатах в целом формируется на основе информации, распространяемой средствами массовой информации. Цель настоящего исследования – проанализировать различные взгляды и аспекты Евро-2012: влияние на развитие стран-хозяек, его прибыльность, а также поведение поклонников – их сотрудничество и соперничество. Евро-2012 показало проблемы развития и регулирования футбольного фанатизма. Важно изучить, как события на Евро-2012 в Польше, столкновение и конфронтация польских и российских болельщиков нашли отражение в российской, польской и британской прессе («Спорт-Экспресс», «Советский спорт», «Российская газета», «Gazeta Wyborcza», «Gazeta Polska», «The Independent» и «The Guardian»). Футбольные фанаты, их организация и культура, требуют точных исследований не только для понимания текущей ситуа-

ции, но, возможно, также для разработки адекватной стратегии взаимодействия с ними в преддверии чемпионата мира в 2018 году. Необходимым представляется также анализ не только отношения фанатского движения с различными общественными группами, но и самой субкультуры как таковой и ее имиджа в глазах общественного мнения, формируемого средствами массовой информации. В условиях глобализации понимание молодежных субкультур является достаточно сложным и ведет к парадоксу. С одной стороны, мы видим переход от агрессивного поведения к культурному «фанатизму»; с другой стороны, возникает вопрос: если бы хулиганы были неотъемлемой частью этой культуры, говорим ли бы мы о смерти или возрождении культуры? Молодежные субкультуры в эпоху постмодернизма и глобализации трансформируются в феномен «постсубкультуры» и могут усилить деструктивные тенденции в духовной жизни молодого поколения, увеличивая уровень нигилистических установок. Следует также отме-

тить, что движение футбольных болельщиков становится мейнстримом. В обществе растет популярность фэндомов. Это связано с тем вниманием, которое уделяется ему в средствах массовой информации, в кино и художественной литературе.

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА: *футбольные фанаты, мейнстрим, медиа, популярность, субкультура*

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Study of football subcultures

Dr Jack Fawbert (Fawbert, 2006, 2005) views football fandom movement as a part of a popular culture sociology. He claims that football is a global practice that has been understudied in sociology. Fawbert sees the reason of this dynamics in the fact that football studies can be perceived as degradation of science and higher education, especially in the media; however, recent academic interest towards near-football movement changed this tradition. Talking about the study of youth subcultures in general and its class characteristics, Brake noted that there are subcultures of middle and working class, which differ in structure and organization (Brake, 1995). Budford summarized these two findings in his study of English football hooliganism, where he claimed that classic crowd theories do not take into account the complex issues of violence in football movements as a part of English working class phenomenon (Budford, 1990). Thus, contemporary scholarship

in sports sociology and football fandom subcultures does not recognize class impact on the near-football movement.

Studies on the history and development of football fandom are focused mostly sociological aspect. J.E. Hughson (Hughson, 1995) became the first to use football fandom as an object of study in his ethnography *The Making of Sporting Cultures* (Hughson, 2009). He investigated the role of collective feelings and passions in sport's development as a lifestyle, and concluded that sport would not have the place it has in the contemporary society without the active fans support.

The papers on football fandom research outlines the ways football fans express their support to the club as well as to the national team. Despite the fact that football fandom subcultures in different countries have their own features, they also have similar characteristics disregarding geographical and cultural differences. Many Western studies on football fandom cover large geographical area; however, Russian movement, despite its scale, is barely mentioned in the key works on the topic. It is also important to add the issue of identity and self-identity to the study of football fandom subculture.

G. Armstrong in his study of football hooligans expresses a doubt towards the statement that violence is in the center of their behavioral choices. The author claims that the roots of hooliganism, as well as its cultural values, rituals, honor codes, and forms should be sought in the working class culture. In his manuscript, which became the first anthropological study on football violence, Armstrong proves that violence among football fandom organized by the top players in football fans' groups is a myth. The author explains that such myths are cultivated for the police authority and mass media content in order to control groups considered to be deviant by the social stereotypes (Armstrong, 2003).

Shepanskaya notes that some youth subculture representatives convert particular culture's components into their own cultural values (Shepanskaya, 1993). Using the findings of Levikova's study, we see that subcultures present themselves as dynamic systems, which are constantly changing internally and externally¹. Thus, football fandom subculture can adapt to the constantly changing social conditions.

Currently in Russia as well as in the West there is a change in the football fandom movement. On the one hand, there is a shift from hooliganism towards a socially accepted fandom; on the other hand, this change poses a following question: as hooliganism was an essential part of a particular subculture, what will happen to this subculture after it disappears? According to a number of studies, in the age of globalization and post-modernism youth subcultures transform into a phenomenon of "post-subcultures" and can provoke an increase of the destructive tendencies in a young person's worldview as well as the increase of nihilistic views².

The research on football fandom should be conducted on several levels. The first and the most expansive is a discussion about the adequacy of a term "subculture" in terms of football fans' lifestyle. Many scholars insist on the terms "post-subculture" or "contra-culture" (Davydov, 1977), thus implying the change of "classic" football fandom. The next level depends on the academic discipline this phenomenon is studied within. At the moment, interdisciplinary approach seems to be the most appropriate for the study of football fandom subculture.

The image of football fandom in Russia

At this point, there are two opposing tendencies in Russian football subculture. The first one is a clear identification with the fans of the company to which they belong, the club that they support and total rejection of the opponents. The second is the union of football fans during a game of the national team. The European Football Championship 2012 showed that there are some problems in development and regulation of football fanaticism in Russia.

The transformation of football fans' subcultures, originating in Russia, currently raises the issue of prerequisites for the formation of subculture in the society. It should be noted that the origins of Russian fanaticism could certainly be traced from the West, especially the UK. The development of movements in Russia is similar to the British one, but with a difference in a few decades. Despite the typological similarity, it can be noted that the Western and Russian football fanaticism is based on the differences of cultures and mentalities.

Football fans tend to create social tension and thus attract mass media attention through their provocative actions. At the same time, this subculture in Russia is rather exclusive and does not pay attention to its image in mass consciousness. This fact gives mass media an opportunity to create a deceitful image of a football fan, which results in an erroneous perception of the representatives of this subculture since mass media is poorly informed on the internal structure and codes of Russian football fans' movement.

First of all, mass media interest towards football fans did not have a distinct negative or positive connotation and was mostly en-

1 See: Levikova, S.I. Youth Subculture: Textbook. Moscow: FAIR PRESS. 2004. (In Russ.).

2 Chernyshenko V.V. Existential foundations of youth subcultures. Diss. for the degree of Candidate of Philosophy. Belgorod. 2011. P. 4. (In Russ.).

tertaining and interesting for the media audience. With the formation of football firms, Russian hooliganism started to emerge. The process was accompanied by several mass fights in Moscow region, where Russian police and Special Police Force played a big part. Videos from these events were the first appearance of football fans on the Russian national television, which substantially influenced the formation of their contemporary media image and created a stereotype for the following mentioning of this subculture in Russian media.

Russian media and football fandom subculture

Russian sports press is rather developed – it is composed of more than 30 national print publications with the circulation of more than 150 thousand. The publications that have the most frequent mentioning of football fans' activities are "Sport-Express" and "Total Football"; these media have staff members that are familiar with Russian football fandom and are able to analyze objectively the actions at the stadium.

The majority of independent Internet media (Championat.com; Sportbox.ru, Sports.ru, etc.) have the most liberal position towards football fans since they are quick in their reaction towards the events and apt for discussion. The latter plays a great part in the fans' image formation since the news about fans' "actions" can be commented on by the very participants or those who are affected. Championat.com is the most active site for discussion; it even has an option for the fans' firm belonging identification during the registration process on the website in order for it to appear next to the posted comments. This helps to create a more objective representation of fans' activities in digital media.

The football fandom subculture has print and Internet media outlets of its own. Lately most of communication happens

through the Internet leaving print outlets as a custom rather than information source. Fanstyle.ru and Fanat.ru as well as particular clubs' fandom movement websites are the largest Internet portals at the moment. Most of these websites are also opened for discussion. The difference is that during the public discussion not a lot of information is disclosed or special numbers are used because of the threat of confidential information about unlawful fans' actions leak. These media outlets are also unique in their coverage of near-football activities results as well as "actions" organized by the fans of different football clubs. According to the general public's opinion, the most common reason (66%) for football fans' part-taking in various actions became the love towards the football club; the second most common reason (28%) was the desire to stand out; the third motive (12%) was sheer boredom. This data shows that self-identification with the club in the eyes of the public is the biggest motivational factor for a football fan. As for the publically perceived football fandom's goals, the poll showed that 74% of the public see it as self-realisation, 32% mentioned love towards the club, and 28% identified aggression release connected with family issues as a goal of football fandom.

Warsaw case

During the Euro Cup 2012 there were two events where Russian fans figured as main characters. One happened during the Russia – Czech Republic game and included one fan that threw "fire" on the field and then beat a steward during his detention at the stadium. The second event happened on June 12th 2012 on the day of Russia-Poland match, where Russian and Polish fans broke a fight on the bridge that connects the city with the National stadium. According to different sources, there was a crowd of 5000-7000 Russian football fans march-

ing from the city center and guarded by 539 policemen. The groups of Polish “pseudo-fans” with detonators and banners, which were negatively depicting Russian political past and present on the other side of the bridge, triggered the incidents followed³. It was clear that the confrontation couldn't be avoided as both sides started to accumulate additional forces; however, the fight did not last long – the situation was quickly regulated by the authorities. After the incident, the fights around the city followed; the mayor of Polish capital Gronkevich-Valtz stated that on the day of Russia-Poland match “there were a total of 184 people arrested by the police forces in order to prevent street fights. Among the arrested there were 156 Polish citizens, 25 Russians, and three Hungarians, Algerians, and Spanish citizens... the city did not suffer much damage as the majority of leaders were arrested.” According to the mayor, 190 injured, including 19 foreigners, were delivered to the Warsaw hospital. 6400 policemen and 2000 Spetsnaz soldiers were called to keep peace in the city; some soldiers even came to the National stadium in the end of the match. The city police representative commented: “This was an unprecedented move but we have been informed about the possibility of further conflicts”⁴.

«Sport Express» and “Soviet Sport” during and after “Warsaw case”

It is interesting to note that in the «Sport Express» newspaper for the entire period of the 2012 Championships, the term “fans’ support group” in relation to

Russian national team in football from 8 June to 8 July 2012 on the pages of newspapers were used in 10 articles, “hooligans” in 4 papers, «passive fans» – 29 articles.

A different focus of football fans’ mass actions can be identified from the regulation problems that Russia faced during the European Championship events in June and July 2012. We analyzed the media coverage of the events which included Russian fans in Poland, taking into account that mass media not only reported but also commented on the events, and media opinion shaped public perception.

As mass media has always been the only information source on the football fans’ actions for the majority of the public, Russian newspapers often faced a dilemma whether to cover these events as mere informational reports or to add commentary⁵.

Within a month after the clash between Russian and Polish fans, 175 articles were published in the Russian federal press⁶.

The emotional focus of media coverage of these events was generally negative, but some articles were neutral. For example, Prosvetov wrote that “the lack of aggression and reciprocal friendliness is the loss of happiness. Especially, within the light of Warsawevents”⁷. Another article stated: “Today we learned about two Warsaws. The one is the older part of the city and next to the railway station, where normal fans from both teams communicated, made friends and the other one we saw screaming and fighting”⁸.

The Minister of Sports did not see Warsaw events as the fight between the football fans. He even stated that the march of Russians before the game was not a provoca-

3 Roganov N. Polish Ambassador to Russia Wojciech Zajoncowski: Poles are to blame first. *Soviet Sport*. № 87 (18728). 14.06.2012. (In Russ.).

4 V varshave zaderzhany dvadcat’ pjat’ rossijan. *Sport Express*. № 128 (5896). 14.06.2012. P. 3. (In Russ.).

5 Bobrov A. Tem, kto bil styuarda , grozit do 5 let tyur'my. *Sport-Express*. 16.06.2012. P.4. (In Russ.).

6 On the basis of Integrum

7 Prosvetov A. Tri khar'kovskikh feirverka. *Sport-Express*. № 128 (5896). 14.06.2012. P. 5. (In Russ.).

8 Rabiner I. Dve Varshavy. *Sport-Express*. № 127 (5895). 13.06.2012. (In Russ.).

tion; on the contrary, it is safer for all the fans of a national team to gather and jointly walk to the stadium and these marches should be organized before each match. Sports Minister is not inclined to view the events in Warsaw as the fight of the fans. He also said that «Russian march before the match with Poland was not a provocation. Yes, on the contrary, the fans of one of the countries got together and went to the stadium – it only contributes to security in the city. These marches should be organized before each match – especially in the light of an unhealthy interest in the Russian fans of certain groups of Polish citizens, «Here, have a look: June 12, a small group, which attacked our citizens was organized, here and there. And in all three in the morning, as if on command, has ended. What was that? Controversial...»⁹. Although, the president of Russian Football Union reacted: “I honestly don’t know why this march was organized. I think that one shouldn’t provoke others.”

“Soviet Sport” published a good example of public opinion on the issue. One of the fans from Russian side, who did not participate in the march said that “there are freaks on both sides. Right before the game with Czechs in Vrozlava we talked with some of our people who clearly did not come there to watch football and enjoy Euro. Their goals have nothing to do with sport. They obey to some kind of leaders and follow their orders. They came to shout out their political slogans and to fight. They are provocateurs; football is just an excuse for them to tell others about themselves. Most of those we are talking about have it written on their faces that they are bandits. This is conventional but this is truly obvious.” Although, fans’ fights

usually happen outside the city line, the anonymous source said that Polish fans refused to follow this rule and said they will fight right in the middle of the city. “They have no principles, and on the 12th of June they used brass knuckles with spikes and tear gas. I can still feel it in my eyes.¹⁰” The newspaper also published a survival kit before the match Russia-Greece after the June 12th events¹¹.

“Soviet Sport. Football” weekly paper published an article that confirmed the participation of “fighters” on the Russian side during the march, but the first articles on the issue saw the reason of clashes as being political. “They have no specific attributes but they are easy to identify by their uniform. They are on their own. Russian Fan March in Warsaw which was organized by Russian Fandom Union before the Russia-Poland match was a good chance to play with muscles.” Alexander Shprygin, the head of Union of Russian Fans, did not consider Russian March as a provocative act and said that the Union is outside the politics. He considers this event a success: “We marched in columns and Polish radicals couldn’t do anything to us. All the experts expressed their gratitude to the Union for organizing the march. This was the only way to get to the stadium safely.” However, Shprygin admitted that the organizers did not expect the number of Russophobes to be so big. He also admitted that there were fans, about 200 people, who were supposed to show physical resistance at the march in the case of a conflict. The men wearing hoods in the front lines of the marching crowd are called out to react on provocations.

It is also important to note that the analysis of the articles is prepared in at-

9 Ibid

10 Lyapin M. Nas izbivali kulakami, dubinkami». Varshavskij sud opravdal Rossiiskikh fanatov, zhestoko zaderzhannykh policiej *Sovetskij sport*. № 89 (18730) 16.06.2012. (In Russ.).

11 Egorov D. Kak ne poddat'sya na provokacii v Pol'she. Pamjatka rossiiskomu bolel'shchiku. *Sovetskij sport*. № 89 (18730) 16.06.2012. (In Russ.).

tempt to pay attention to the internal proceedings between the Russian Football Union, the Ministry of Sports and the Union of Russian Fans. And if the minister of the Sports does not see anything alarming in a demonstration before the match, S. Fursenko, the president of the RFU, has responded well to this event was organized by why this march, to be honest, do not know. I think that one should never provoke other people's action. I understand perfectly that the Day of Russian people want to hold a demonstration, but ... In themselves these passages may be, and there is nothing wrong with that. But, as previously mentioned, it would be a kind of demonstration, bullies, of course, prepared for it. The idea to hold on June 12 in Warsaw, the procession in honor of Russia was itself a provocative, say many journalists. The correspondent of «Soviet Sport» confronts readers wrote: «Nobody thought of holding peaceful demonstrations in Jerusalem, the Palestinians. Or, in Tehran, American marches. Why should march knowing about complicated relationships of our countries, and the power of the Polish armed wing bigotry?»¹² «Moreover, many journalists converging on the view that the resolution of this march, the Polish authorities, or a bad job or a deliberate provocation.

Y. Abrashev, head of the Russian police at Euro 2012 stated “Unfortunately, there is a very small group of fans – we saw it, and Wrocław, and Warsaw – which I would not call our patriots football country. Due to the severe sanctions imposed on them, they can be tightened in the case of repeat incidents. But I do not think that these people can equate all the Russian fans. More than 90% of the fans

of our team were very good. The organizers of the march had to think ahead about the consequences. They are not stupid people, and deliberately went to take this step for any reasons. However in such situations, one is never to blame. If a person does not want to give in to provocations, he won't. I would not look right or wrong. This is a lesson for the future. When it became known about the organization of the march, the Interior Ministry of Russia was against the idea¹³.

Most of the articles on the events of June 12 in the newspaper Sport Express were neutral.

Also in the «Soviet Sport» interview on 15.06.2012 S. Fursenko said about a possible group of provocateurs, and blamed the events of Union of Russian Fans on June 12th¹⁴. Due to the fact that the media almost always makes an attempt to express the opinion of the people, the publication of «Soviet Sport» with the title «The voice of the people...»¹⁵. However, it should be noted that all the conclusions and many comments that boil down to the Russian fans, are far from around football subjects and did not know the specifics of the Polish fan culture.

The weekly «Soviet Sport. Football» published an article where explicitly stated, that on the part of Russian fans on the march was attended by «soldiers» and yet in the wake of the first articles talked about the political reason of provocation and political clashes. They are not attributes, but they are easily recognized by its uniform. They are on their own. «Russian march of fans» in Warsaw, hosted by the Union of Russian Fans on the eve of the match Poland – Russia – a great chance to flex its muscles». The head of the Union of Rus-

12 Zilbert A. Kuda vel most Ponjатовskogo? Bepopyadki pered matchem Pol'sha – Rossiya glazami korrespondenta «Sovetskogo sporta». Sovetskii sport. № 87 (18728). 14.06.2012. (In Russ.).

13 Egorov S. Jurij Abrashov: Odni isportili prazdnik, drugie podstavili sbornuyu. Sovetskii sport. № 88 (18729) 15.06.2012. (In Russ.).

14 Prezident RFS Sergey Fursenko: Znaem o gruppe provokatorov. Sovetskii sport. № 88 (18729). 15.06.2012. (In Russ.).

15 Glas naroda zachem iz-za banditov nakazyvat' sbornuyu? Sovetskii sport. № 88 (18729). 15.06.2012. (In Russ.).

sian Fans Alexander Shprygin does not believe Russian march a provocation, said that the PSA out of politics. And consider this event a success. «We have a column, and Polish radicals almost could not do anything with us. All the experts expressed their gratitude to the PSA for the organization of the procession. It was the only way to get safely to the stadium. «But still, confirmed that the organizers of the demonstration did not expect that level of russo-phobia is so great. What is on the march was attended by fans, which may repulse – an asset the Union of Russian Fans, about 200 people, which exercised a force protection. Guys hooded front were called to react to provocation. In fact, fans defended «Kuzmichey» (passive football)

Polish media and football fandom subculture

Division of Polish fans is quite similar to Russian. In every big club there are hooligans who are not generally as much interested in football as in confrontation with opposite club hooligans. Ultras – they prepare presentations during matches and cheering. And there are picnics who are mostly interested in football.

There is just one national sport newspaper in Poland – “Przegląd Sportowy”. There are six national newspapers with sport section “Gazeta Wyborcza”, “Rzeczpospolita”, “Gazeta Polska Codziennie”, “Dziennik Gazeta Prawna”, “Fakt”, “Super Express”. There is also one football portal not connected with regular press where you can find not only results but also opinions. To show the mood of Polish press the best in this short time and because of polarization Polish political scene (there are not in fact neutral newspapers in Poland). I decided to analyze two newspapers from two sides of political scene – “Gazeta Wyborcza” regarded as left sided “modern” and friendly to foreigners and “Gaze-

ta Polska” regarded as strongly right sided – both anti-Russian and anti-European Union.

It must be said that the attitude of Polish mainstream (left sided) media towards Polish fans which can be seen in articles created after Poland – Russia game during Euro 2012 was connected with the strategy of Polish government before Euro 2012, namely – putting many restrictions against fans which was to show that they can cope with Polish hooligans (the most important – the amendment of Act on mass events security). Providing the personal identification data with a photo was required to buy a ticket for a Polish League game. The pyrotechnic became the main ‘enemy’ (after the amendment it was possible to be sentenced to five years in prison) but there was a possibility to be charged for sitting on not assigned seat.

All tickets had a fans’ name printed on them. In the first and second division all people on the stadium needed to have their profiles with photos and all personal data in the system of identification. There were restrictions connected with going on away matches. The Polish Cup final was completely banned for organized groups. Fans were able to cope with it. They travelled as ‘unorganized’ groups and even very antagonized fans were sitting next to each other and sang together anti-government chants and showed anti-establishment placards. The mainstream Polish media supported the government reporting even very minor breaking the law.

“Gazeta Wyborcza” and “Gazeta Polska” during and after “Warsaw case”

“Gazeta Wyborcza” was blaming Polish hooligans for riots whilst “Gazeta Polska” was trying to justify Polish fans behavior by real or not provocations made by Russians.

“Gazeta Wyborcza” – the most important Polish newspaper was trying to warm down atmosphere before the game. One day before the game there was an interview with Alexander Shprygin – the leader of Russian Fandom Union who was saying that most Russian fans had come to Poland just for sport and politics is not important for them. One day after the Poland versus Russia game “Gazeta Wyborcza” informed about riots. It was said that there had been a few serious incidents during Russian fans march on stadium which were provoked by Polish fans against calm Russia supporters. “Gazeta Wyborcza” described events as at the beginning there was about 5000 Russian supporters who met near National Museum and started going in stadium direction. They were stopped by aggressive group of Polish who were chanting texts like “Russian whore” and “Russian fuck off”. However they were separated by the police. But there appeared more and more Polish who were attacking Russians, throwing stones, and trying to beat them. Some people were injured and ambulances needed to take them to hospital. The word hooligan is only used to describe Polish fans. Russians are described as simply fans. It is highlighted that very few of them had soviet symbols (provocative against Polish because of Polish history before 1989 when Poland was controlled by Soviet Union). It is also pointed that Police used force only against Polish fans. They have stolen Russian scarves and flags¹⁶. Next day there is an interview with Shprygin saying that Russians are in hospitals but Polish police worked well and there is no problem between Polish and Russian fans. There is also said that the Vladimir Putin advisor Michail Fiedotov would come to Warsaw because of these

incidents. The title of article “The march of Russians fans. There was a riot. Polish started” as the whole text blames Polish supporters for all the situation¹⁷. The comments which were appearing in “Gazeta Wyborcza” after the game also blaming Polish supporters. Russian writer Viktor Jergiejew said “It was not because of politic; it was just a group of people who wanted to fight; however it can change the attitude among ordinary people, which had been very good earlier. It was also said in “Gazeta Wyborcza” that Polish embassy in Moskow did the right thing confirming that Polish were provocators¹⁸.

“Gazeta Polska” shows different point of view. This right sided medium was generally against Russian government which was regarded as guilty of provocations during march. It was pointed that there were Soviet Union flags and caps with symbols of hammer and sickle. These symbols are connected in Poland with period of time between 1945 and 1989 when Poland was dependent from Soviet Union – especially by strongly right sided nationalist which is an ideology of most of the most engaged hooligans and ultras in Polish fandom. The motif which was repeated during next few days in “Gazeta Polska” was the case of hurting its journalist Wojciech Mucha by Russian fans. It is pointed that Russians provoked fights and Polish police did not treat both sides in the same way. All restrictions were just against Polish supporters. “Gazeta Polska” also pointed that the atmosphere was made warmer by Russian authorities. According to the newspaper there were signals from Polish embassy in Moscow addressed to Russian Sport Minister Witalij Mutko that Soviet Union symbols may not be well seen in Poland and may case the escalation of vi-

16 Polska kibolska wita. *Gazeta Wyborcza*. 13.06.2012. P. 3

17 Marsz rosyjskich kibiców. Była zadyma. Polacy zaczęli. *Gazeta Polska*. 14.06.2012. P. 2.

18 Nie ma wojny z Rosją o kiboli. *Gazeta Wyborcza*. 14.06.2012. P. 5.

olence which was ignored by Russians. It was also noticed that Shprygin is a member of Nationalists Party led by Vladimir Volfovich Zhirinovskiy. Russian television Dozhd was said to compare game to Warsaw Battle which in 1920 stopped Soviets from expanding to Western Europe. According to "Gazeta Polska" on a Russian edition of "Newsweek" there was a Polish coach Franciszek Smuda in a uniform of Józef Piłsudski – one of Polish commanders during Warsaw Battle. It was also said that Russia Today informed about death of one Russian fans during fights on streets which again made the situation warmer¹⁹. The last think which was mentioned by "Gazeta Polska" was a flag which with the agreement of UEFA and Russian Federation was shown on crowds during the game. According to "Gazeta Polska" it was showing Dmitry Mikhaylovich Pozharsky – the leader of uprising against Polish in XVII century. However, Alexander Shprygin – the leader of Russian Fandom Union said that it had been Ilija Muromiec – the legendary Russian hero²⁰.

"Gazeta Polska" used situation before Poland – Russia game for Polish interior political fight as the president of Warsaw who agreed on march where there were provocations was from opposite political option.

Generally in Polish media you could not find something like neutral and positive attitude towards fans at all. All the articles which were connected with fans behavior on streets of Warsaw were strongly negative. In "Gazeta Wyborcza" we could find articles blaming Polish side and sometimes both – Polish and Russian. In "Gazeta Polska" all the articles were blaming Russians for incidents in Warsaw.

I have not also found any statements of Polish authorities – both state and football – as the event was taking part in Poland it was probably very difficult to opt for any sides of confrontation.

The Guardian noted that it was a bizarre mixture of violence and hostility alongside jovial and amiable supporters caught up in the chaos unawares, paying for their curiosity by being charged at by police. Children having their faces painted were soon witnessing a scene of vehement hatred – a theme that has spanned the history between the two nations for many years²¹.

Number of British journalists noted the political aspects of the problem. Trouble flared after a march by thousands of Russia supporters came under attack, while visiting fans inside the stadium also unfurled a giant banner that read «This is Russia» – something that could be seen as a taunt about the decades of Moscow's control over Poland during the cold war²².

The British media, in particular The Guardian, wrote that the UEFA could only ban them, it was just unfortunate that they were drawn in the same group as the Poles. Poles, police, Russians, neutrals, riot vans and ambulances. Given the enmity between the three main parties – Poles, Russians and riot police – some of the old ultra-violence was inevitable, but it could have been an awful lot worse. Journalists note that they were impressed the restraint of most supporters, who in addition to being herded into an unnecessary crush, then had to climb barriers or descend steep banking to reach the ground because the police had decided to close the normal entrances²³.

19 Rosyjscy bandyci pobili naszego dziennikarza. *Gazeta Polska*. 13.06.2012. P. 5.

20 Antypolski księżę na Narodowym. *Gazeta Polska* 14.06.2012. P. 7.

21 Ibid

22 Euro 2012: UEFA condemns 'isolated' violence after 24 fans injured. *The Guardian*. 13.06. 2012.

23 Wilson P. Euro 2012: Warsaw violence was inevitable but could have been worse. *The Guardian*. 13.06. 2012

The articles of «The Independent» had large political overtones²⁴. Thus, in particular phrases like Warsaw's most recognizable building remains the monstrously Stalinist Palace of Culture, a permanent reminder of the decades that Poland spent under Communist leadership backed by Moscow. The Independent journalists write that the countries still have awkward diplomatic relations, with Poland suspicious that Russia would like to destroy the nation's sovereignty, and Russia distrustful of Poland's EU- and NATO-oriented foreign policy²⁵.

In The Independent Often there are descriptions of the tragedy in Katyn in 1940, and the catastrophe in Smolensk. Repeatedly in The Independent the theme of nationalism and protest movement in Russia was raised. Comments were also made on Maria Baronova, a Russia fan, who helped organize the protests in opposition to President Vladimir Putin, was in the stadium on the game with the Czech Republic, Black colors of extreme Russian nationalists. «This is Russia», something that could be seen as a taunt about the times of Moscow during the Cold War²⁶.

Conclusion

Carrying out a comparative and comparative analysis of thoughts on the events of Euro 2012 in the press, number of facts can be noted. The Russian press clearly discussed the legitimacy of the march on June 12, despite criticism, most articles had a neutral color. The accusations of Russian fans in the Russian media are not traceable. There is inconsistency in the actions of the Union of fans and the football union, the aggressiveness of Polish fans.

While Euro 2012 was connected with the strategy of the Polish government before Euro 2012, namely – put a lot of restrictions against the fans, which was to show that they can cope with the Polish hooligans. The title of the article is «March of Russian fans». There was a riot. Polish began, «as the whole text accuses, Polish supporters for the whole situation.

It is interesting that the European press, particularly the English, tried to be neutral in their comments on the events of June 12. The Guardian wrote that you cannot have a match in Russia in Poland, especially during the Russia Day, without waiting for a certain amount of friction.

Neither the Russian, nor the Polish group of fans is known for their restraint. Although Polish hooliganism and racism were the focus of attention on the eve of the tournament, Russian fans were involved in his first violence, with the fights after the final whistle of 4-1 rout of their side from the Czech Republic in Wroclaw. A small group of fans mercilessly attacked local flight attendants, placing at least one steward in the hospital.

The articles «The Independent» had great political overtones. It was noted that the countries still have uncomfortable diplomatic relations, and Poland is suspicious of the fact that Russia wants to destroy the country's sovereignty, while Russia is distrustful of the foreign policy of Poland and the EU oriented towards the EU and NATO

The active actions of fans in recent championships are vividly reflected in the press. This negatively affects the image of fans and the country as a whole. This becomes an instrument for manipulating the mass consciousness in the light of the 2018 World Cup. The British BBC television

24 Masters S., Wilson J. More than 100 arrested as old hatreds erupt at Euro 2012. The Independent. 13.06. 2012.

25 Walker S. Poland v Russia: A rivalry most bitter. The Independent. 12.06. 2012.

26 Runsbys B. UEFA condemn violence between Russia and Poland fans at Euro 2012. The Independent. 13.06.2012

channel, which showed the documentary «The Army of Russian Hooligans,» compiled the story in such a way as to discredit the upcoming World Cup in Russia, the Russian embassy in London said²⁷. According to Russian diplomats, after viewing, there is a feeling that his main goal is to sow fear in Britain society for the safety of fans who planned to go to Russia and to repel the hunt for a trip.

At the beginning of the XXI century, the key for the development of football organization fanaticism decades, significantly growing in the number of fans, complexity of the structure and movement during the arising interest shown by the major media to this unusual display of youth activity. The sports press is increasingly mention the new «share» of fans of different clubs. Radio and television a begin inviting the leaders of fan movements to primetime programs. In addition, the accumulated footage of fans clashes with each other and with the police gives journalists a reason to conduct its own investigation and to provide the viewer in the form of educational programs in key channels.

It is widely believed that the representations in the media of football fans were resistant to cultural shifts, of violence in club football. At the same time, relying on a more romanticized reading of «traditional» rigid identity of the working class of English football and xenophobic hostility against the «other», it can also operate in less subjective terms. Steve Redhead, thinking about saying the writer Paul Morley that «you have to suffer, to watch football,» argues that commentators, representing the interests of the middle class talk about the widespread populist cultural beliefs in the «reality» or authenticity – fandom working class culture should

be intact streamlined technologically sophisticated «modern», and to be perceived as coming from continental Europe or the United States (Redhead, 1997). This view is itself a myth that reproduces itself as a popular sport and cultural «history».

The audience of fans expanding the national and trans-national levels, mainly due to the television and watching the webcast live at home. Mediatization of society contributed to the promotion of football and fandom and mediatization football, live sports events, not only did not stop the fans and just added new ways to incorporate the game.

Football fandom has begun to change with the development of information technologies. Internet Accessibility influenced fandom subculture. Active fans moved to social media. Any fans continue to go to games and ride for his team, it is especially important for those who believe that the «visits» are central to the support of the club.

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