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**«BECAUSE I AM NOT ONE OF THOSE, WHO CAN STEAL SOMEONE’S MERIT…»: POLITICAL DEBATE OF STEPAN SMAL-STOTSKIY  
AND IVAN FRANKO IN WESTERN UKRAINIAN PRESS IN THE LATE XIXTH –– EARLY XXTH CENTURY**

**М. I. Pelypets**

*The Lviv National Vasyl Stefanyk Scientific Library of Ukraine,  
2, Stefanyka Street, Lviv, 79000, Ukraine  
mpelypets@gmail.com*

***Research methodology.*** *Methods have been used, that in turn allows us to solve research problems and to involve scientific use new and little-known journalistic publications. The concrete historical method has been applied to analyse the source material of specified problem — characteristics of polemic materials of Stepan Smal-Stotskiy and Ivan Franko. In general, the methodological bases of the study have been biographical, problem-thematic, historic-comparative methods.*

***Results.*** *Relevance of the research polemical materials in Ukrainian press is still not fully analysed. Surely, finding out the terms of their appearance is caused by complex phenomena in the functioning of various spheres of activity in our statelessness time. It was often the press that was elected as the bearer of dispute, which played a so-called arbitrator role and spoke for a particular party controversy. It should be noted that journalism of the called period characterized the logical relationship with politics very clearly. At the time of statelessness, the establishment of a number of new political ideas — the press materials from the pages filled the segment filing pressing issues of the time to the public. And the main thing here was the ability to present a particular product quickly. Not the last factor was also the one who gave this product.*

***Novelty.*** *For the first time in the history of Ukrainian journalism, the features of the controversy between Stepan Smal-Stotskiy and Ivan Franko have been comprehensively studied. The genesis of polemical materials has been explored and their specifics has been determined. It is important that the main aspects of discussion have been highlighted on the pages of the Western press between leading figures in the context of the political situation in the late XIX — early XX century. The integrated structure, content, genre-specific of publications have been examined. The significance of polemical materials, highlighting the development of Ukrainian journalistic and political thought in the late XIX — early XX century and complex stages of its formation, of Stepan Smal-Stotskiy and Ivan Franko has been characterized. The careful analysis of the state of studies issues in Ukrainian press confirmed that the issue of controversy between Stepan Smal-Stotskiy and I. Franko was the subject of a comprehensive study. The researchers addressed this topic only occasionally.*

***Practical significance.*** *Key findings and statements can be used in the educational process in the study of Ukrainian History and Theory of Journalism, as well as at the creation of textbooks on the history of the discipline. The research materials will be effective for training courses on History of Publishing and Editing. The results can be used by scientists, including journalists, historians, philologists, which are interested in the press oflate XIX — early XX century.*