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«Vocabularies of Parallels» in Ukrainian Political Communication: Analogies and Precedents in the Analysis of Conflict

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Annotation

The aim *of the article is to clarify features of symbolic comparative resources used in the Ukrainian media to represent conflict and counter propaganda, and to consider how these contribute to decision-making. Historical parallels and intercultural analogies are considered as rhetorical means used by writers in the Ukrainian media in analyzing the challenges posed by the Russian-Ukrainian military conflict.* ***Research methods and techniques****: critical discourse analysis, «problem-oriented interdisciplinary approach», which emphasizes identity and power as factors that contribute to the formation of meaning. The research procedure involves the analysis of the linguistic and actual context of tropes, comparison of interpretations, and classification of intertextual patterns.* ***Results****: different types of analogies are exploited in media texts, the differentiation of which is based on several functional criteria: either the «script of war», argumentative purpose, or sources of transposition.* ***Conclusions.*** *1. Analogies in media texts are seen as interpretive frameworks that explain current conflict through references to scenarios of military, political, and cultural histories in the world, including the causes of hostilities and models of negotiation. 2. In media texts dealing with interstate conflict and related geopolitical issues, the analogy is approached as a unit of argumentation and belief that influences the choice, and shapes Ukraine's position in the information war. 3. Analogies used in the process of media persuasion serve the functions of symbolic identification, promotion of values, transfer of experience, and proposing strategies. 4. Collectively, the public debate in Ukraine, which addresses the challenges of resistance, is an example of intercultural intertextuality, revealing the basic principles of conflict resolution and protection of state sovereignty.*

Key words: *analogies, historical parallels, discourse, conflict, frames, rhetoric, symbol, context.*

Introduction

1. Analogies as «models» and «lessons» in discussions about peace and war

Analogy is one of the most popular explanatory tools and distinctive expressive means, used in contemporary political discourse in Ukraine. After Russia’s occupation of Crimea and Donbas in 2014, Ukrainian media confronted a challenge of understanding the war and shaping a vision of the future. In time of crisis, historical narratives and references drawn from experience have become the most practical and easily accessible tool for explaining a given situation and its projected outcome. The texts of political observers are filled with examples that either concern the country’s own history *(«A hundred years ago, Russia's aggression against Ukraine was also framed as an "internal Ukrainian conflict"» “(Шпак, 2021))* or point to the significance of foreign scenarios *(«Finland during the Winter war» (Родик, 2021)* or *«Georgia in 2008» (Як Грузія судилася…2022)* for clearing major points in the debate on Ukraine’s choices. Analogies, used as a persuasive tool in the publicist texts, have distinctive evaluative profiles and clearly fall into the category *Positive example/«Model» or Negative Experience/«Lesson»* with regard to the expected outcome of project or cause.

This research is focused on the pragmatic potential of analogies that appear in the texts, recreating conditions of the war-time public mobilization. The goal of the article is to explore how the comparative symbolic resource is used in Ukrainian media to represent conflict, counter propaganda, and contribute in the decision making. In particular, we aim to 1) describe the types and sources of analogies used in media descriptions of political collisions; 2) explain the tropes’ organization within the coherent scenario of the «prototypical» conflict; 3) discuss how value-

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defining functions of analogies make impact on adopting strategies of conflict resolution; 4) to assess pragmatic appropriateness of parallels in particular situations, detecting instances of populist and manipulative overuses of the rhetorical material.

Research methods and techniques

The analysis in this article refers to media texts that were published during the period from February 20, 2014, the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war, to February 24, 2022, the start of Russia's large-scale military aggression against Ukraine. Since our study focuses on textual material immersed in the immediate context of the information war, it draws on methodologies that maximally consider social factors of text production, such as critical discourse analysis, «a problem-oriented interdisciplinary approach» (Wodak & Meyer, 2008), which emphasizes identity and power as factors that contribute in generation of meaning (Wodak, Reisigl, & Liebhart, 1999). In order to assess the informational potential of parallels in the context of public discussion and polemics, we have drawn samples of analogies from publications on analytical sites and online popular media, connected to social media, which all together constitute a sufficient and most dynamic part of the public discourse. To clarify sources, connotations, and practical implications of analogies, we rely on such particular methodological operations, as analysis of linguistic and real-life context of tropes, comparing the discourse patterns, and analysis of intertextuality.

Speaking about «vocabularies of parallels», we have in mind that the use of these rhetorical instruments is systematic (recurrent), and also systemic, i. e. typical cases, found in texts, can be categorized by topics and represented by entries. First of all, parallels can be arranged in an (imaginary) dictionary according to the thematic principle and indicate a link to pragmatic scenarios: «violation of a treaty», «the occupation operations», «military crimes», «peace negotiations», «impact of/on economy», «army building», etc.

Moreover, in addition to the thematic principle, the «thesaurus of parallels» can point to such important contextual markers for each analogy as the cultural source from which it is borrowed. This allows for cataloguing samples according to the sections/«entries», such as «American experience», «Israeli experience», or «Polish experience». In this research we do not aim at fulfilling a task of the «cultural mapping» in full scope, but do use the source-tracing angle of vision in selecting samples and commenting on their contexts in order to show the aspects of «global reach» in the interaction of Ukrainian media discourse within other political frameworks.

Results and discussion

The leading scenarios as sources of parallels in analysis of conflict: from understanding to decision-making

1. *Phantoms of empire against national state-building projects: resistance models and references to cases in military history*

Making sense of contemporary military conflicts, public discourse conducts a kind of «semiotic screening» of the world history time-line and may extract the necessary comparative material from diverse layers, including most distant and peripheral. Yet naturally, the most readily and frequently retrieved patterns are close to the authors' existential and socio-political background. No wonder that the principal meta-frame in Ukrainian media, dominating perception of the current Russian-Ukrainian armed conflict (Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols, 2019), is the sequence of narratives «Russian empire – the USSR as totalitarian state –

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Soviet heritage of the Russian Federation», in which two main storylines are emphasized: 1) resistance to Russia's policies of domination; 2) benchmarks of Soviet and post-Soviet military history, including Afghanistan, Chechnya, Nagorno-Karabakh, Syria, etc.

The history of empire in its tsarist, Soviet, and post-Soviet form, used as a reference for understanding present Russia-Ukraine war, is reflected upon in a twofold manner. On the one hand, authors refer to many episodes of the prolonged imperial tradition for explaining «similar» particular Ukrainian choices in the ongoing conflict, on the other hand, they apply a type of «incarnational» analysis to demonstrate continuity of century-long Ukraine's struggles for sovereignty. On some occurrences Ukrainian media just literally portray the current Russia-Ukraine conflict as the ongoing War of Independence of 1917–1921.

The journalists writing about history make a point that even the concept of «hybrid war», defining Kremlin's actions in Ukraine in 2014–2021, is not quite new, since the hybrid disaster was what commissars first brought to Ukraine on bayonets of the Red Army, preparing ground through the Bolshevik doctrines: «*Russia's hybrid war against Ukraine has been going on for a century»* (Костюк, 2022; Шурхало, 2021). Most tragic episodes of the 2017–2021 war with Russia in contemporary media analysis have acquired a function to dismiss the narrative about «brotherly nations» and serve as clues on making choices regarding «peace» offers without guarantees of sovereignty: *«Peace with Russia in 1920 then cost us tens of millions of lives... At that time, most of the society decided to end the further armed struggle with the Russian aggressor, which subsequently resulted in collectivization, deportation to Siberia, detention in the Gulag, the Holodomor, mass executions and losses in World War II and the Afghan War»* («Мир» з Росією у 1920 році потім коштував нам десятки мільйонів життів, 2022).

«New thirty-seventh. Act one» (Бабченко, 2021) – this is the analogy that journalist Arkadiy Babchenko used to characterize the rise of political repressions in Russia in 2021. The symbol of 1937 has also been common in Ukrainian media for depicting repressions in Crimea after the occupation of 2014. The intention to avoid the repeating bloody scenarios of the empire was the reason for Ukraine's independent choice in 1991, as well as the following confirmative actions. Ukrainian political discourse traditionally accentuates advantages of those former members of «the jail of nations» who, like Finland, left it before creation of the USSR, or, like the Baltic states, eventually managed to receive status of fully protected subjects of international life. After disintegration of the USSR, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia became recognized examples of persistence regarding the task of departure from Russia's orbit, with their accession to NATO and the EU highlighted in public discourse as Ukraine's must-be strategy.

The most significant Finnish lessons for Ukraine, addressing period after the «timely escape from the empire», are linked to the history of Russo-Finnish wars and especially stress the ability of well-motivated defenders to repel enemy who has a numerical advantage. The well-known Finnish recipes for building defense *(the «Mannerhaim line»)* have been mentioned in projection on the «demarcation line» issue in Donbas. The personality of Mannerhaim appears in «strategic» discourses as a model character of military commander. It is noteworthy that Washington-based analyst Andrey Piontkovsky, who often comments on the ability of Ukrainian elites to resist capitulatory compromises with Russia, has approvingly mentioned the decisive position of several leading Ukrainian politicians, including Dmytro Kuleba, Ukrainian Foreign Minister, and repeatedly referred to this group of people as a *«collective Mannerhaim» (Пионтковский, 2021).*

However, Finland has been different from the Baltic States in that it did not seek joining the Euro-Atlantic bloc. After signing a treaty with the USSR in 1948, the state accepted the policy of neutrality. Some pro-Russia loyalists in the U.S. and Europe, like Henry Kissinger and the Czech President Miloš Zeman, came with the idea of «finlandization» for Ukraine in 2014, in a sense that Ukraine, following example of Finland, should have agreed on path of «neutrality» and

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not sought the NATO membership. Ukrainian experts and the civil society leaders rejected an ambiguous scenario, arguing that it would not guarantee peace under the circumstances of real war, but signify defeat and threat of further losses.

The «finlandization» episode has finally remained inscribed in the history of the conflict debates as a notable example of the politically biased use of analogy for motivating decisions. Another well-known comparative case that provides misleading advice to decision-makers is equating the Crimean precedent with Kosovo. From Russian perspective, drawing a parallel between the two scenarios legitimizes annexation of the peninsula. Since 2014, Ukrainian analysts have denounced this view as a trap for the state's diplomacy. «The Crimean case is not Kosovo» for a number of reasons, the main of which is that Kosovo has not become part of any country: *«No one has annexed Kosovo, although Albania with a similar ethnic composition is close by»* (Віталій Портников: Крим – це не Косово, 2021). The international recognition of Kosovo independence originated in humanitarian reasons and was to a large degree motivated by the need in post-genocidal revival. In contrast, the assimilative annexation of Crimea, which became part of the federal district in RF, was marked by repressive approach to the local non-Russian population.

The status of the occupied Ukrainian regions is most adequately seen within the context of other frozen conflicts and territorial disagreements in the regions of former USSR, such as the «Transnistria», «Abkhazia», «Ossetia» cases, which are assessed from a united comparative perspective as signs of Russia's attempt to destabilize new countries through creation of the conflict enclaves. Excluding the prospect of NATO membership for Georgia and Ukraine is considered to be among the most practical goals set by Russia as part of its approach to hotspots.

Stating that Russia is acting in Donbas «according to the Transnistrian scenario», Ukrainian observers have in mind dangers of Russia's direct military participation in conflict, concealed under the guise of a «peacekeeper». Being a culprit of the 1992 war in Transnistria, Russia later accepted a managerial function in relations between Moldova and the separated region: *«Russia appears here as a neutral «mediator» on a par with the international organization OSCE – although it is de facto a party to the conflict and keeps a military contingent in Transnistria»* (Єрмоленко, 2022). Referring to this collision, Ukrainian analysts call on policymakers to avoid direct negotiations with the ORDiLO «leaders», since such official contacts would legitimize status of the so called «Donetsk People's Republic» and «Luhansk People's Republic» as side in talks, while the actual side of conflict is the Russian Federation. Invoking the Transnistrtria case has become especially frequent in Ukrainian public discourse in 2021, since the Deputy Head of Putin's Administration Dmitriy Kozak, the author of «reconciliation» between Transnistria and Moldova in the 2000th, was appointed responsible for negotiations with Ukraine, a symbolical and practical step aimed at achieving the same type of compromise on Donbas. Yet the Ukrainian civil society activists clearly stated that this path is unacceptable. Ukrainian military expert Yuriy Butusov explains why the Transnistria scenario is being refused: «And then what? And then the Kremlin will tear Ukraine apart as it has been tearing Moldova for 29 years» (Єрмоленко, 2022).

As well as the case of Moldova-Transnistria relations, Georgia's example serves as one more reminder to Ukraine about the risks of peaceful negotiations with Kremlin representatives: *«Russia has managed to position itself as a non-participant in the Abkhazia-Georgian conflict and thus play the role of peacemaker and mediator in negotiations between the warring parties and act as a guarantor of peace agreements»* (Іщенко, 2022).The «Abkhazia» and «Ossetia» parallel signify most unattractive prospect for Ukraine also in a sense that these «republics» are «officially recognized» by Russia, so references this scenario are used to mark actions showing that Russia pushes Donbas in the same direction. Since 2018, the distribution of Russian passports in the occupied part of Donbas has been interpreted as a digression leading to the «Abkhazia scenario». In summer 2019, media expressed concern regarding the withdrawal of Ukrainian military forces

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from frontline, which posed a risk to make the situation in Donbas closer to conditions in Georgia's occupied region: «*The deployment of forces near Zolote could replicate the scenario used by Russia in Abkhazia and South Ossetia»* (meaning that RF introduced additional troops into Abkhazia and announced relations with the governments of unrecognized republics) (Розведення сил біля Золотого…, 2022).

In 2021, Russian propaganda voiced promises to «recognize the republics», and forum «Russian Donbas» signaled about the continuing Abkhazia-type deterioration of situation in the occupied region (Кремль обрав Абхазький варіант…, 2021). At the same time, the probing scenarios for Donbas went even further. The steps such as inviting «authorities» of the unrecognized «republics» to participate in the Russian Duma elections of 2021, together with the propaganda calls «Mother Russia, take Donbas home» (as chief editor of the TV network *Russia Today* Margarita Simonyan put it), were interpreted in terms of *«the Crimean scenario»* (Чопа, 2021), which means a project of even higher-degree, actually total assimilation of the occupied area with the subject of aggression.

The conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, compared to other territorial disagreements in the post-Soviet terrain, was the earliest in origin – sparkling in the recent years of USSR, and most distinctively connoted as clashes of an ethnic nature. Yet paradoxically, this conflict, in spite of its seemingly deep-freezing state, has become the first to demonstrate a potential for transformation. In November 2020, as Azerbaijan started to reclaim territories of Nagorno-Karabakh in the course of long-sought operation, the situation had attracted the close attention of observers as a context for analyzing the Donbas case and the possibility of de-occupation for Ukraine.

During the start of the offensive, Nagorno-Karabakh was an internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan, which is directly comparable to the official legal status of Donbas as part of Ukraine. As a direct analogue to Ukraine's «Minsk Agreement», Azerbaijan had its own, and equally inefficient, Minsk negotiation process – the OSCE peace talks. Ukrainian media detected many substantial similarities between the Donbas and Nagorno-Karabakh cases, but reasonably accepted a cautious tone assessing the direct applicability of Azerbaijan experience to the possibility of «defrosting» in Ukraine.

Comparing the two conflicting realities, some media authors, especially on the onset of reignited tensions, warned against drawing overly direct parallels, not counting Ukraine's specifics, in order to avoid making wrong decisions *(«Karabakh, unlike Donbas: 8 answers to questions»* (Панченко, Сидоренко, 2022)). On the whole, majority of analytical publications took an educative, experience-tracing approach to the coverage *(«Karabakh and Donbas. What can Ukraine learn?»* (Кречко, 2021)). The main lessons from the events of 2020 address such aspects of the Azerbaijan-Armenian war, or rather Azerbaijan's advantageous situation in it, as 1) decisiveness of elites and citizens' unification around the tasks of national integrity; 2) the need for strong ally, considering the role that Turkey has played for Azerbaijan; and 3) the importance of stable economic conditions and enabling technical advantage in the operations. Alexander Iskandaryan, director of the Caucasus Institute in Yerevan, admitted: «In fact, the 20th century was at war with the 21st century. Tank, infantry, and other options for combat had to resist the drones, artillery, and aircraft» (Кречко, 2021).

Not only Ukrainian observers figured out the experiential implications of the Nagorno-Karabakh war, but Kremlin strategists followed the case too, using the alleged «analogical» prospect of Ukrainian offensive to announce their own plans for direct participation in the warfare. Yevgeny Primakov, the Head of Russia's Rossotrudnichestvo, said that «if Kyiv is really preparing for a blitzkrieg in Donbas» (Карабахский сценарий Кремля…, 2021), then Russia will have to strike at Ukraine, and among the tools in possible war against Ukraine should be the destruction of military and command infrastructure «including outside the combat zone» (Карабахский

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сценарий Кремля…, 2021). Such threats against a country aiming to return its own territories have especially accentuated the need for Ukraine to build partnerships and alliances capable of diverting Russia from intentions to launch strikes and deploy the «preventive» offensive.

Recent developments in the course of the Nagorno-Karabakh war reminded to the community of analysts once again about the main dilemma in approaching the conflict in Ukraine. Should the de-occupation be peaceful, or military? There is a consensus in public debate that while the peaceful resolution is an absolute preference in theory, Ukraine should be prepared for active military measures. Whether experts discuss key elements of «Azerbaijan experience», or mixed, military-then peaceful, approach of the «Croatian scenario», i.e. the strategy of reintegration in Croatia, they emphasize that any repetitions could not and should not be literal, but focused on adopting positive instruments and eliminating destructive outcomes of the military tactics. Theoretically speaking, the war in Ukraine should not have started at all. The Budapest Memorandum of 1994 was meant to serve as a safeguard, built into the construction of Ukrainian independence. However, one of the nuclear state-guarantors became the occupant. The paradox of the Budapest Memorandum and therefore practical impossibility to implement it as such leads to calls for its modernized analogue, a «new Budapest Memorandum» (Україна може ініціювати новий…, 2021).

Among the factors regarded in discussions about ways to resolve conflict, there is a peculiar argument on circumstances of outside unpredictability, including complex natural forces that may suddenly come into play and bring the empire's life cycle to the end. In spring 2020, when the global markets were shattered by low oil prices and the conditions of coronavirus pandemic, the analyses of Ukrainian and Russian oppositional journalists were flooded with comparisons of that situation to the story about the last years prior to the dissolution of USSR, when the Soviet empire collapsed under the weight of its own unresolved problems: *«And you know what it all looks like? Personally, everything that happens in Russia is very reminiscent of the last years of the USSR – with the war in Afghanistan, the same drop in the oil rate and the same «unchangeable leader course». … And who knows, perhaps we have not yet seen a real oil tsunami that will collapse oil prices as in 1985, when the USSR lost its last source of income»* (Нефтяное цунами грядет…, 2021). The publicists who touch upon the disintegration phase of Soviet empire also mention Ronald Reagan's contribution into ending the Cold War, crediting him for the idea to apply economic sanctions, including embargo, against USSR. Such reminiscences in Ukrainian political communication were intended to draw attention to the sanction agenda, regarded as a crucial way to influence Russia's behavior in respect to its neighbors.

2) History of WWII as a matter of cross-cultural learning: lessons about global awareness and «paying the price» in relation to issues of the Russia-Ukraine war.

The history of WWII, with its condensed symbols like «Munich», «Nuremberg», «Berlin Wall», is another principal sense-making case in approaching present Russian-Ukrainian war. Comparative projections, instrumental in contemporary Ukrainian media, cover all the major aspects of the WWII scenario: 1) aggressor's motif and *casus belli;* 2) nature of military operations; 3) degree of harm and territorial losses in the occupied countries; 4) negotiations and finding allies; 5) consequences for the defeated enemy (international tribunal). An important reason for massive references to images of WWII in public discourse is that this story, focused on harshness and cruelty of the prototypical «enemy», is clear and finalized in juridical and ethical sense. The main implication of the narrative «rise and fall of the Reich», used in a projection onto Kremlin's policies in regard to Ukraine, is attracting attention to the issues of accountability.

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During the period of Russia's current aggression against Ukraine, the parallel «Kremlin – Reich» has appeared in various types of discourse, ranging from the campaign slogans (during protests in the world's capitals in spring 2014) to exquisite in-depth historical studies, presented as long-reads on analytical sites, tracing aspects of the scenarios in a most precise factual manner (Солодько, 2022). The basic fact, discussed as part of reflections on the present conflict, is the profound inversion in the image of Russia, contributor in the war with Nazism in 20th century that has accepted the role of subjugator in 2014. Addressing the embarrassment of many peacefully-minded Ukrainians, media analysts turned to the WWII story in order to unequivocally assert that, considering a basic positioning *«attacker – the attacked»*, contemporary Russia is in the same unethical/ criminally accountable position with respect to Ukraine as the Nazi regime had been in regard to Russians, as well as other nations, including Ukrainians, during WWII.

From Ukrainian viewpoint, there has been an obvious contradiction between Russia's role as an occupying state and the maintained image of victorious nation in WWII. A peculiar stance of the Russian propaganda, however, has been not only to suppress information about Kremlin's hybrid affairs, but, moreover, to use the story about «victory over Nazism» (Москва виправдовує свою агресію…, 2022) as a vindication for actions harming Ukraine. Not only Ukrainian writers, but also supporters of Ukraine abroad pointed to this hybrid function of Russian commemorative discourse: *«Moscow has been using the anniversaries of the victory over Nazism to legitimize open and hybrid aggression against Ukraine since 2014»* (Москва виправдовує свою агресію…, 2022).

During celebration of the 75th anniversary of victory in World War II, Ukrainian media analyzed Kremlin's aggression against Ukraine, combined with its self-glorifying historical stance, as a case of the abused memory of WWII. In 2020 and 2021, on May 8, the Day of remembrance and reconciliation, the Ukrainian social media users transformed the commemorative motto *«Never Again»* into formula *«Never? Again…»*, referring to the lasting Kremlin's war against Ukraine's statehood and the nation.

Observers of the Russian-Ukrainian military conflict note a striking resemblance of the Nazi propaganda messages, focused on the «common heritage», like language and nationality, to those that Kremlin has used to achieve its goals in Ukraine, deploying self-legitimating formulas «protecting the compatriots» and «helping ethnic Russians». The «ethnic»-centered mottos *Russian world* and *Novorossiya*, used as mobilization slogans in Russia's hybrid operations in Crimea and Donbas, are interpreted as functionally equivalent to the *casus belli* rhetoric of the Hitler's offensive: *«During Putin's rule, the ideology of the so-called «Russian world» was born and gained strength – it is tracing paper from Hitler's «German world», which uses the national question in foreign policy and suggests expanding the empire to the West by military means under the pretext of "protecting all Russian speakers"»* (Мирович, 2022). Since 2014 through all the period of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, it has been a common topic in the information war discourses to accentuate that Putin's «Crimean speech», delivered on the occasion of the peninsula's «joining» Russia in 2014, echoes Hitler's «Sudeten speech» (Солодько, 2022). Putin in his «Crimean remake» has used the slogan «unification of the divided people» (Солодько, 2022) as an analogy to justify military campaigns against sovereign states (Путін повторив промову Гітлера…, 2021).

The story about Hitler's annexation of the Czech Sudetenland in 1938, one of the most frequently cited analogies to the occupation of Crimea (Портников, 2021), is often analyzed with respect to its international implications, embodies in the symbol of the *«Munich Agreement/Conspiracy»* (Мюнхенська змова…, 2021). This cliché refers to the meeting of leaders of Germany, Great Britain, France and Italy in September 1939, when they signed a treaty that allowed Hitler's troops, after occupation of the Sudetenland, to proceed with conquering the rest of

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Czechoslovakia, and then invade France. From today's perspective, the Munich appeasement approach is viewed as not timely stopped major disaster and a lesson regarding the role of global players in arrangements of international order. Media discourse, dealing with representation of the current conflict, reflects vastly on the historical images of negotiators, like in a typical reproach addressing Emmanuel Macron*: «Given his country's bitter experience with Alsace and Lorraine, Macron should better understand why Ukraine needs more support in countering aggression from a strong neighbor and regaining control of the annexed territories. …None of us can afford to forget what happened in Munich in 1938, when the British and French prime ministers, Neville Chamberlain and Edward Daladier, naively pursued a policy of appeasing the Putin of their era»* (Нагайло, 2021).

Using the image of «Munich» in projection onto Ukrainian events, specifically rounds of «peace talks», the authors measure such a «parameter» of each negotiation situation as the (un)willingness of European mediators to «give up» Ukraine's concerns in exchange for European business interests. In spring 2019, this symbol appeared in publications about the PACE deputies' decision that allowed the Russian delegation to return to PACE and restore Russia's voting rights (Лащенко, 2022). Russian opposition politician Gary Kasparov pronounced a categorical verdict on this PACE decision*: «This surrender is worse than in Munich in 1938»*. During the Munich conference on security in 2020, Ukrainian representatives had opposed initiatives which would lead to reconciliation with Russia without a substantial peace plan for Ukraine: *«The Munich conspiracy. What choice will Kremlin make Zelenskyi confront?»* (Климпуш-Цинцадзе, 2022).

Two other symbolic figures of comparison, originating in the history of pre- and post-WWII international agreements, are related to Russia's position as negotiator on the occasions such as: *1) the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact; 2) the Yalta agreement.* Periodically activated warnings, based on these parallels, aim at excluding the possibility of behind-the-scene deals with the aggressor state and preventing the removal of Ukrainian question from the international negotiation agenda.

In Ukrainian media, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact is explained as «conspiracy between Nazi Germany and the Stalinist USSR», or, according to Donald Tusk, «the infamous agreement between the two deadliest totalitarian empires in history» (Москва виправдовує свою агресію…, 2022). Ukrainian politicians and analysts referred to this name prior to each following «Normandy summit», warning against the attempts to «trade Ukrainian security for European «stability», or recognizing with satisfaction that the anticipated threat was diverted: *"Putin did not receive a new Molotov-Ribbentrop pact"»* (Яценюк – о «нормандском саммите»…, 2022). The particular practical deal, such as building the «Nord Stream» pipeline, has been characterized as a «new Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact» (Норд Стріми як новий пакт Молотова-Ріббентропа, 2022) in Polish-Ukrainian media, since this project, implemented by Russia and supported by Germany, endangers Ukraine's security and also neglects economic interests of Poland (Норд Стріми як новий пакт Молотова-Ріббентропа, 2022).

Image of the *«Yalta agreement»* is used in texts, representing format of the information war, to oppose Russia's understanding of the post-USSR new states as its own sphere of supervision. In 1945, when Stalin met with other heads of state in Yalta to determine the order of the post-war world, their agreement led, among other results, to the USSR's occupation of the Baltic states. Since the start of war with Ukraine, Kremlin aims to revise the post-WWII order and include the «gains» of Putin's aggression in new geopolitical chart of conduct. In the article, published in *The National Interest* in 2018, Putin called leaders of the five nuclear powers to convene a summit, focused on «redistribution of the spheres of interests» (Солодкий, 2022), an initiative dubbed as *«Yalta-2»*. The *«new Yalta»* reference was actualized before the planned meeting of Tramp and Putin in 2018, when Tramp explicitly declared that he was ready to make concessions to Russia,

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and Ukrainian commenters were concerned that the concessions, resulting from Trump's personal submission to Putin, could harm prospects of Ukraine's sovereignty (Гладієвський, 2021).

In contrast to historical symbols marking lack of support for the objects of aggression on part of the international community, the images highlighting victorious stories of WWII refer to the world powers' decisive actions, in particular building alliances, opposing the Nazi regime. One such reminder about resolution and consolidation is the narrative about the Allied landings in Normandy on June 6, 1944 and opening the Western (Second) Front during World War II. The analogy, called «meeting in Normandy», often illuminates moments of hope in developments related to Ukraine's real and potential allies. However, used with regard to the so called «Normandy format», this symbolic name has become considerably inflated. The first meeting that gave name to the format was held in 2014, during the celebration of anniversary of Operation Overlord in Normandy. Leaders of France and Germany talked with Putin, one of the invitees, who at that time already annexed Crimea and started military campaign in Donbas. Russian president, in chief of all the operations against Ukraine, has been participant of the «Normandy» talks since 2014 through 2021. To apply comparative logic, Hitler's presence was impossible during the war-time actions. The «peace talks» of heads of four states, including the occupier and the attacked country, have in fact become a unique sign of hybridity in events surrounding the Russia-Ukraine war.

The «accountability story» in the WWII repertoire of comparative themes relates to the symbolic name of *Nuremberg,* which appears in a variety of media texts from the most publicist ones to the substantial analysis by juridical experts. When the Prosecutor's Office of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea initiated an international lawsuit over the annexation of Crimea by Russia, the public relation discourse stressed the conceptual relation of this endeavor to the *«example of military tribunal in Nuremberg, when the former leaders of Nazi Germany were tried»* (Мокрушин, 2021). After the «Kremlin report» was prepared in the US in 2018, which included a list of individuals that could be subject to the U.S. sanctions, the Kremlin's critics discussed this announced policy as a beginning of symbolical *Nuremberg trial,* stressing the need to hold accountable all those representing the «collective Putin»: *«That is why (because the entire system is more scary than its leader alone – A.), at the Nuremberg trials and other post-war trials, the entire party elite of the Nazis was condemned, including even the Foreign Minister, who had recently paid visits to world capitals. That is why the «Kremlin report» contains the entire top of the Russian government, including even the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who continues to make the same visits»* (Конец симбиоза. Виталий Портников… 2021).

Ukraine is critically vulnerable in its encounters with nuclear-armed Russia and therefore dependent on the position of international mediators and their practical efforts. The unified function of images, originating in the history of WWII and touching upon the alliance-building, negotiation matters, and accountability procedures is to remind about the need for unified actions in support of Ukraine and decisive policies of containment.

3.Cumulative effects of interconnected images and precedents in tracing present global threats.

The scholars agree on the status of analogy as a trope, yet specify that it can be close either to metaphorical or literal «node». The literalness of analogies sometimes goes as far as gathering single cases in a combined «mega-case», which is a subject to legal analysis. In the law practices, «reasoning by analogy» appears as «case-based reasoning», or «precedent»: *«There is a disputed case (the target), and someone reasons from analogous case (the source) to support some conclusion about the target»* (Guarini, et al., 2009). With respect to analysis of conflict in media,

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the notion of «analogy» can also be applied to clusters of precedents in text implying justification or «guilt» of some actor's deeds viewed as part of a coherent «program» directed by certain intention.

When analogical arguments and multiple projections become part of an investigation, they are meant to prove non-randomness of a criminal's behavior. Ukrainian investigator, politician and lawyer Hryhoriy Omelchenko in the article, called *«The plane with Polish President Kaczynski was blown up by a thermobaric charge. The survivors were shot»*, providing a detailed analysis of facts that explain catastrophe of the Polish airlines airbus near Smolensk, likens this case to the story about the MH17 crash in Donbas in 2014. He also draws an in-depth parallel from Polish history, mentioning the crash near Smolensk in a precedential connection with the Katyn massacre, the execution of Polish prisoners of war in April 1940. The investigator has described this crime in detail in another article *«Crime without punishment: from the Katyn tragedy to the Smolensk plane crash»* (Літак з президентом Польщі Качинським…, 2022). The village of Katyn, where twenty thousand Polish officers were killed by Soviet secret police, is located near Smolensk, so, half metaphorically speaking, bomb dropped twice at the same place, with a difference in seventy years.

The «crime and punishment» motif, used as a generic concept or activated by allusion to Fiodor Dostoyevskyi's novel, characteristically often appears in political analysis as a frame for describing Kremlin-related collisions. This reference is used to emphasizes an embarrassing fact that the nuclear ownership and hybrid methods of warfare complicate the possibility to prosecute the alleged responsible entity. Good knowledge of the Russian literature came handy for Boris Johnson when he commented on the poisoning of Russian ex-spy Sergei Skrypal and his daughter in Salisbury. To refute numerous lies spread by Russian propaganda after the attempted murder, Johnson made a point that the history «rather reminds the beginning of «The Crime and Punishment»: *"We are all confident of the culprit – and the only question is whether he will confess or be caught"»* (Голова британського МЗС порівняв…, 2022; Buchan, 2021). In response to the incident, Britain expelled 23 Russian diplomats, and twenty-six countries, including Canada, the EU, Ukraine, and the US, joined the initiative.

The second wave of resonance investigations and the following diplomatic war, including mass expulsions of Russian diplomats, concerned explosion of ammunition depots in Vrbětice in Czech Republic in 2020. Czech Deputy Prime Minister Jan Hamacek compared this situation to the 2018 Salisbury poisoning. The familiar faces of GRU agents, acting in both incidents, appeared in news stories as signs of a «well-founded suspicion» that subversive operations involve deployment of the same personnel, officers of the Russian special service. Ukrainian investigators discovered earlier that at least one of the mentioned perpetrators was a participant of operations in Crimea, so the roots of the entire agent «networking» went deeper: *«The GRU task force prepares war in Donbas, annexation of Crimea, poisoning of Skrypals and interference in US elections»* (Спецгрупа ГРУ готувала війну на Донбасі…, 2022). The Vrbetice case just added more realization to the fact that Kremlin's controlling activities worldwide are similar not only by substance, but also by style and participating characters.

Comparative analysis of consequences that various countries face dealing with Russia brings in focus the category of *global threats* and is instructive as to the need for collective security measures. Depicting risks posed by Kremlin globally, the critics recall of Russia's support to dictatorship regimes *(Syria, Libya, Venezuela),* cyberterrorist attacks on foreign organizations *(in Estonia, Georgia, Ukraine, the U.S.),* as well as work of the liquidation squads abroad executing assassination plots *(polonium in London, Novichok in Salisbury and Sofia).* Emotive symbols, depicting war crimes and images of destruction, such as *«Groznyi», «Aleppo», «Debaltseve», «Avdiivka»,* tell essentially similar stories, regardless of difference in details of the scripts. Examining excesses of warfare, Ukrainian media report that the Kremlin ruler personally

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authorized the use of prohibited types of weapons in cities: *«(Putin) …has already given the go-ahead three times for the use of the entire arsenal of weapons, except nuclear, against urban development. This was the case in Chechnya, Ukraine and Syria. Phosphorus, thermobaric, cluster and other munitions were used, which were clearly prohibited by various conventions. In addition, the use of chemical weapons in Syria was carried out either with the direct or indirect participation of the Russian Federation»* (Anti-colorados. Только сила…, 2022).

Multiple geopolitical cross-references, indicating Russia's interference with the affairs of many countries, serve as the parallels to the case of Russian-Ukrainian war and at the same time they outline the global context of this conflict. To describe extended dimension of the global confrontation and collisions, media discourse draws on historical parallels and generalized images, such as *Global hybrid war, New Cold war, the Third world war, Caribbean crisis-2, new Iron Curtain.* From this broadened analytical perspective, Ukraine is viewed as a core and the battleground of the hybrid warfare that Kremlin wages against Western democracies.

In the asymmetrical war that Russia wages against Ukraine, the outcome of conflict depends to a large degree on such aspect of international support for the country under attack as the ability of global powers to set limits for the state violating law. Just like the image of Nuremberg translates simple but omnipresent idea that crimes of aggression are to be condemned, the «Hague» narrative plays identical role, yet draws on more modern contexts. The Ukrainian public discourse explains senses of the «Hague» referring to procedures of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Olena Zerkal, former Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister, has commented on the verdict to Ratko Mladić as a possible precedent for keeping accountable the initiators of war in Ukraine: *«…International courts have proven it, albeit slowly, that they can punish war crimes. This means that the aggressors who committed them in the Crimea and Donbas will also be punished»* (Вирок Гааги доводить…, 2022). The subsequent uses of the «Hague» code are directly connected to investigating Kremlin regime's actions against Ukraine, including the hearings in the case of MH17 in the District Court of the Hague (Сітнікова, 2022), as well as workings of the International Criminal Court (ICC) that conducted a preliminary examination of events in Ukraine related to the armed conflict in Donbas and the annexation of Crimea (Гаага против Путина?..., 2021).

Classical stories about war, the way they are told in media, have taught the public that there should be a «paying the price» moment, and therefore developments in the course of present conflict are shown as leading (or «not yet») to this final scenario point. The «judgment» slot is a necessary part of the generalized model of military conflict, which recreates its time-line logic (from *casus belli* to law enforcement) and represents basic concepts as a set of opposites: *«enemy» – «ally», «aggressor» – «victim», «capitulation» – «victory», «trust» – «treason», «impunity – accountability for aggressor».*

The classification scheme below shows how clearly connoted reusable symbols, belonging to the traditional network of comparative signifiers in Ukrainian media, reveal different thematic aspects of the scenario of military conflict:

1)Comparative framework for geopolitical sense and global scale of conflict *(New Cold war, the Third world war, Caribbean crisis-2; new Iron Curtain);*

2)Propaganda and ideological motivations for the war *(Crimea as «Sudetenland»; Putin's remake of Hitler's Sudeten speech);*

3)*Casus belli* and provocations used to get Ukraine into warfare and then accuse it of «hostilities» – *the Gleiwitz incident; the shelling of Mainila;* false peacekeeping intentions of the attacking side *(Russia as mediator in Transnistria; the 2008 war in Georgia);*

4)Military operations and defense strategies *(«the Mannerheim line» for Donbas, Ukrainian volunteers as American minutemen);*

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5)Decisive policies of containment and effectiveness of military leadership (allusions to *Churchill's Fulton speech, the Reagan doctrine, Golda Meir's political views, «the collective Mannerheim»)*;

6)Indecisiveness of international negotiators and mediators *(Munich agreement; appeasement policies of the 1930s);* warnings against the agreements and settlements with the country disrespecting international order *(Molotov-Ribbentrop pact; «the Yalta deal»; Budapest memorandum);* the compromise initiatives *(«finlandization»);*

7)Status of the occupied territory *(«anschluss of Crimea», the «Abkhazia», «Ossetia», «Transnistria» scenarios);*

8)De-occupation and reintegration strategies (military or mixed options *«Donbas as Nagorno-Karabakh», «Croatian scenario» vs* peaceful, «naturally occurring» dissolution and reunion – *disintegration of USSR; reunification of Germany);*

9)Debate surrounding assistance to Ukraine, building alliances and partnerships *(the Normandy meeting; the Lend-Lease Act, the Marshall plan, «the Iron Dome for Ukraine»);*

10)Responsibility for occupation and war crimes *(«new Nuremberg», «the Hague», «bunker for Putin»).*

Establishing links between the current political situation and the traditional knowledge of past global events, analogical reasoning contributes to creating a roadmap of historical memory and the project of national identity. In its entirety public debate, addressing tasks of resistance and public consolidation, grows into a case of global intertextuality, revealing the underlying principles of the cooperative conflict resolution.

Conclusions

Analogical reasoning is a form of argumentation, significant for shaping Ukraine's position in the information war. The analogies in media discourse, focusing on experiential scenarios, make a contribution into creating the database of ideas and overview of possibilities that are necessary for seeking solutions and goal-setting in the situation of conflict. They enable enforcement of moral truths and therefore make impact on taking sides, clarifying motivations, and fostering resilience of the civil society.

The analogies often appear in media narratives of war not as isolated items, but as clusters of parallels that demonstrate the application of a certain political method across vast territories over a long time. Reflecting on the network of «precedents», which reveal instruments used by the leadership of the Russian Federation in the course of hybrid war and military conflict, the media authors attract attention to the theme of the occupying state's responsibility and call for practical responses on the part of key global players.

Since analogies in public discourse are taken as models for practical application, it is important to take critical approach to this trope as a container of pragmatic senses. The simplified comparisons, as well as politically biased assessments, could result in misleading strategies and create trap for negotiators. In case the authors are able to avoid populism and prejudiced framing, the arguments adopting reasoning by analogy serve as an adequate tool of decision-making, enhance persuasiveness of the text, and enable adequate social and individual positioning in the debate.

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«Словники паралелей» в українській політичній комунікації: аналогії та прецеденти в аналізі конфлікту

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Анотація

Метою *статті є з'ясування особливостей порівняльно-символічного ресурсу в дискурсі репрезентації воєнного конфлікту в українських ЗМІ, у зв'язку з функціями протидії пропаганді та мотивування практичних рішень. Розглянуто історичні паралелі та міжкультурні аналогії як риторичні засоби, що дають змогу українським медійним авторам висвітлювати комплекс актуальних проблем, спричинених збройною агресією Росії проти України.*

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Методи й методика *дослідження: критичний аналіз дискурсу, «проблемно-орієнтований міждисциплінарний підхід», який бере до уваги категорії ідентичності та влади як чинники генерування сенсів. Дослідницькою процедурою став аналіз лінгвістичного та реального контексту тропів, порівняння інтерпретацій, та класифікація інтертекстуальних зразків.*

Результати*. Встановлено, що в медіатекстах використовуються різні види аналогій, в основу диференціації яких покладено декілька критеріїв функціональності (елементи фрейму «сценарій війни», або аргументативна мета, або джерела кроскультурних транспозицій).*

Висновки. *1.Аналогії в медіатекстах виконують роль інтерпретаційних фреймів, що пояснюють сучасні колізії через покликання на сценарії військової, політичної та культурної історії різних країн, включно з тематичними компонентами «причини воєнних дій» та «моделі перемовного процесу». 2. У медіатекстах, які стосуються міждержавного конфлікту й пов’язаних із ним геополітичних питань, аналогія слугує як одиниця аргументації та переконування, що обґрунтовує вибір та формує позицію України в інформаційній війні. 3. У процесі медіаперсвазії аналогії виявляють такі функціональні аспекти: символічна ідентифікація, просування цінностей, передача досвіду, та пропозиція рішень і стратегій. 4. У своїй сукупності публічний дискурс в Україні, який реалізовує завдання опору та консолідації, є прикладом міжкультурної інтертекстуальності, розкриваючи принципи вирішення конфліктів та захисту державного суверенітету.*

Ключові слова: аналогії, історичні паралелі, дискурс, конфлікт, фрейми, риторика, символ, контекст.

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