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Logos and Pathos. Humanities in the Condition of War

Introductory notes

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The Donbas war is a tragedy for people in Ukraine and a threat to international law and order. Yet it is also a challenge for the cultures, languages, and humanities in post-Soviet societies. The goal of this joint issue of the *Topos Journal* and *The Ideology and Politics Journal* is to uncover changes that our cultures are undergoing under the impact of the war.

This issue is based on reports delivered at the conference "Logos and Pathos: Humanities in the Condition of War" which was organized in Minsk in October 28-29, 2017. After debates at the conference and a peer review process, the selected papers were updated and were compiled into a volume of contemporary scholarly reflections on cultures in war. War in Ukraine was the central topic for the deliberations of authors who represent different disciplines and countries, including Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine. Casting this

discussion in a regional framework anticipated that it is *our* war, *our* wartime. We cannot imagine future of our region and our societies while ignoring the fact of this war and avoiding our visions of it.

For the citizens of Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus, the Donbas war constitutes a special trauma since our countries were connected not only by a common past but also by an ideological code of "brotherly Slavic peoples." Recurring revolutions in Ukraine, periodic political and economic conflicts between Belarus and Russia, and waves of nationalist movements have long been shaking relations among the three independent states in recent decades. However, the "brotherhood" myth remained strong, especially among older generations adhering to Soviet habitus and sharing common views on many historical events. But the war was such a cultural shock that it destroyed the myth and the war itself has turned into deep collective trauma.[1] Emerging gaps in the social imagination have been filled in by propagandist phantasms drawing a new image of the world, which predefines the humanities' gaze and undermines the demand for alternative sources of meaning.

The ongoing war has been followed by new forms of propaganda which transcend the traditional scope of propagandist support for military actions on a given territory. New technologies provide propagandists with new opportunities, which is changing the nature of war and spreading the language of aggression and hatred across the Eastern Europe. This propaganda predefines the way we perceive—what and how we feel—the

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[1] United Orthodox church seems to be the last moral and institutional factor supporting the myth of the "Slavic brotherhood." The current attempt of separation of the Ukrainian Orthodox church from Russian one is just another cultural shock with obvious political consequences.

war and everything connected with it. Under these circumstances, humanities have a special mission: to resist propaganda, its normalization of war and *militarization of the Eastern European Life-Worlds*. This mission is especially significant because discussions of new military conflicts among our countries play a central role in the mass media and public discourse. The war—as political instrument and threatening future—has turned into some sort of *idée fixe* of our public discussions. In this context, intellectual efforts that can offer an alternative to militarist propaganda are highly needed. The conference tried to respond to this need, as does this volume.

This issue consists of three thematic parts. Articles of the first part focus on the global context and key concepts crucial for understanding the "undeclared war" in Ukraine. Valeria Korablyova focuses on the crisis of European modernity as a framework for interpretation of the global significance of local conflicts, the specificity of the "hybrid war," and the erosion of the nation-state. Boris Kashnikov analyzes the change of the very nature of war and its interpretations in the contemporary world. While revising the traditional differentiation of terrorism and war, the author rejects the validity of the classical opposition of terrorism and just war. In so doing, he touches on the issue of intersection between universal principles and subjective teleology. The phenomenon of ideology implied in that issue becomes a central theme in the article by Pavel Barkouski, who studies characteristics of post-ideology as a new phenomenon arising due to modernity shifts. All three articles are epistemologically united around the task of rethinking fundamental concepts and principles of modernity in order to find an appropriate language for depicting contemporary reality.

Authors of the second part focus on the attitudes and reflexive practices used by researchers in social sciences and humanities for analysis of socio-political processes in Ukraine. Here, the common point is the *affected* thinking: the condition of those who study the ongoing conflict can be described in terms of trauma, interestedness, engagement, involvement etc. In her article, Tatiana Shchyttsova argues that emotional dispositions of humanities research do not coincide with the dominant affective regimes of social life. She demonstrates that humanities can help reveal deep structural changes in the contradictory socio-political experience of Ukraine. Darya Malyutina conducted series of interviews with scholars who study Ukraine. The author describes how the Russian-Ukrainian military conflict has influenced communication among scholars and academic institutions. Ihar Padporyn identifies the possibility of a particular attitude in the work of those who study war: namely, the attitude of witnessing. His hermeneutics of a witness offer a new perspective in understanding the war, i.e. relating to war as to specific *conditio humana*.

The third chapter is organized around cultural, anthropological, and socio-political aspects of information and discursive wars. This part starts with an article by Andrei Gornykh dedicated to a genealogy of the ideological dispositions of the "Donbas separatists." Gornykh argues that this ideology refers to the contradictory history of Soviet modernization. The author describes the contemporary history of the Donbas in terms of deindustrialization and its psychological—affective and phantasmatic—consequences for the local workers who lost their economic and symbolic status. Uladzislaŭ Ivanoŭ studies how contemporary

Belarussian language reflects the realities of Russian-Ukrainian war and accepts the "language of war." Based on sociolinguistic analysis, the author also shows the correlation between ideological positions and a specific vocabulary of the "language of hatred." Aleksei Krivolap, on the contrary, focuses on the possibility to use mass media for promotion of a "culture of trust" in Belarussian society. The author argues that in the times of information war, trust and loyalty to Belarussian language is an important practice of solidarity. And Aleksandr Sarna analyses communication among citizens in the opposite terms: he shows how conflicting discursive practices form the urban public space.

We hope that the publication of these papers will help fulfill the goals of the conference debates. Scholars who work in the field of the humanities cannot directly stop the war, but they can create preconditions to change how societies perceive the war and propaganda. In their scholarly and social activities, intellectuals can act as mediators between the everyday life of rank-and-file citizens and different expert communities. By analyzing the human condition and various spheres of social-cultural life, humanities scholars contribute to explication and actualization of the meanings and emotional dispositions that orient and motivate decision-making in expert communities.

Thus, taking the aforementioned into account, the editorial teams of *The Topos Journal* and *The Ideology and Politics Journal* offer this joint issue as simultaneously a scholarly and a civil project. This volume is addressed to all interested scholars and wider audiences, and aims at strengthening the regional solidarity of those who share an antimilitarist mission of thinking.

THE END OF "THE END OF HISTORY":

OUTLINES OF A NEW WORLD AMIDST A "HYBRID WARFARE"

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Abstract. *The paper tackles recent tectonic changes often assessed as the crisis of liberal democracy and, broader, as the crisis of European modernity. The author depicts how the triumphalist mood of the early 1990-s captured by the famous notion of "the end of history" transforms into the catastrophic mindset of today. It is argued that the contemporary poly-crisis requires new theoretical approaches and a new social and political vocabulary.*

Three paths of theorizing are distinguished hereby. The first one builds upon "the end of history" mindset keeping the present as the main point of reference and Western liberal democracy as the peak point of ideational and institutional evolution. The second approach revolves around the cyclical reading of history while tracing pre-modern features in the recent developments, its conceptual arsenal includes the notions of re-traditionalization, demodernization, neotribalism, and the like. The author argues that an alternative approach is feasible, the one focused on brand new traits of contemporaneity that keeps future free from historical determination. The latter approach is being developed in the paper based on the ideas of Ulrich Beck, Ken

Jowitt, and Mary Kaldor. It is proved that within the globalized spaces of action, any local conflict has a global dimension and global repercussions; that the novelty of contemporary warfare should be re-assessed in post-Clausewitzian terms, namely as a new social and human condition. It is suggested that the erosion of modern nation-state augments the need for strong transnational institutions against an active cosmopolitan community of citizens, to which scholars can contribute both with their civic position and with their expertise. Active citizens not only maintain "islands of civility" amidst military conflicts but they might ignite "movements of hope" as an alternative to "movements of rage" and prop up "politics of sympathy" as opposite to "politics of anger".

*   **Key words***: the end of history, epistemological perplexity, new world disorder, globalized spaces of action, islands of civility, movements of hope, the politics of sympathy.*

The full text of this article is available in Russian.

TERRORISM, JUSTICE AND ABSOLUTE WAR.

HOW MANY HORSEMEN OF APOCALYPSE?

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Abstract. The article contains the critique of the orthodox conceptions of terrorism, which tend to make a category mistake by defining terrorism as a free standing institute alongside war or an objective method of massive violence as the opposite to the principles of a just war in the just war theory. The mistake derives, in particular, from the popular definition of terrorism as a form of an unjust war, as an attack of the illegitimate combatants on the innocent people with the purpose to exert pressure on the government. In reality "terrorism" may be no less 'just' than war itself and the self-assured persistence on one's own justice proves to be one of the main sources and goals, of what is commonly called "terrorism".

I outline three subject matters, which stand behind our normative qualifications of the object as terrorism. These are the seeming irrationality of motives, presupposed depersonalization of the opponent and the unrealizable nature of the absolute goals of the violent agenda of those whom we qualify as terrorists. Terrorism does exist not as an objective institute alongside war, genocide or revolutionary violence, and not as their objective method, but as an

external and always subjective normative evaluation, which renders senselessly the very idea of the war on terror. At the same time the nature of the changing character of the contemporary war invariably drives it towards what we are prone to access as terrorism. "Terrorism" arises not despite and not beyond a 'just' war but as a result of the subjective teleology of the principles of the contemporary just war.

Keywords: *terrorism, just war theory, massive violence, radical Islamism.*

The full version of this article is available in Russian.

CONTEMPORARY POST-IDEOLOGIES:

"HYBRID IDEOLOGIES", OR "NEW MYTHOLOGIES" AS A FACTOR OF CONSTITUTING OF POST-MODERN SOCIAL FIELD

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Abstract. *The post-ideologies today are one of the key factors in the constitution of politics and the formation of the identity of human. One would treat them as new mythologies (for establishing a syncretic worldview on the foundation of the fundamental faith, or constitutive myth(s)), hybrid ideologies (relying on the hybrid nature of their origin and interconnection of constituent parts) or post-ideologies (as reflected in the time of their emergence after the traditional ideologies and instead of them). The article deals with the difference between contemporary post-ideologies and the classical understanding of ideology, critically assesses the use of the concept of "post-ideology" in modern social critical theory. In addition, it analyzes the main mechanisms of its formation on specific examples and indicates the main ways of its impact on the screen of mass consciousness.*

Key words: Post-Ideology, New Mythologies, Hybrid Ideologies, the Critique of Ideology, Post-Politics, Propaganda, Poststructuralism, Postmarxism.

Ideology in modern times has always played a prominent role as a special practice for the establishment of "public consciousness": it created a kind of rational model of the worldview, which presupposed a specific "correct" order of views on politics, questions of faith, economics, etc. The power groups could use ideologies as conscious ways to manage the views of the masses of people. Therefore, they were widely employed by both national states and international associations or communities. Largely, the role of ideologies in modern society was consistent with the strategy of metanarratives, the creation of "grand narratives" by J.-F. Lyotard (1993), who competed with each other for the right to determine the legitimacy of certain ideas within their own worldview. Although, with the example of Marxism and its specific embodiment in Stalinism, Lyotard notes the duality of this impulse to work with narratives of ideological systems. On the one hand, sciences within the framework of Stalinism were called upon to "only figure as citations from the metanarrative of the march towards socialism, which is the equivalent of the life of the spirit". On the other hand, one should take into account that for Marxism "socialism is nothing other than the constitution of the autonomous subject and that the only justification for the sciences is if they give the empirical subject (the proletariat) the means to emancipate itself from alienation and repression" (Ibid. 37). In other words, ideology seeks to affirm a certain "Order of Things" in its dogmatic integrity, and to appeal to the complete and final liberation of mankind within the framework of the "concept of Justice", which, according to Axel Honneth, has both a moral and a basic social meaning (Honneth 2001).

In the "golden age" of ideologies, one could even consider them a "transformed form of consciousness", as K. Marx and F. Engels did in their famous "The German ideology". They asserted, however, that "morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life"(Marx and Engels 1976, 47). Or, to emphasize, one could even consider them a "false consciousness", as it was later labeled by F. Engels (Engels 1968). However, even if one believes, after the classics of Marxism, that ideologies are completely dependent from material life, though representing it in their distorted light, one should admit the following circumstance. The "traditional" ideologies tried to establish a rather coherent and internally consistent worldview system (even if falsified in its fundamentals), which relies on solid grounds of common sense, scientifically represented though basically reconstructed and modified in a paranoid way, that sets the basic elements of a person's understanding of his/her own life.

Nowadays we see the disappearance and decline of the traditional ideologies as new forms of manipulation of the consciousness of the masses emerge. They originate from the processes of constituting fragile, or "weakened" identities (pensiero debole, Weak Thought: Vattimo and Rovatti

2012), the phenomenon of post-truth[2], the destruction of habitual ideas about society, reality and, for example, about such basic manifestations of human life as war. The today's human is perhaps managed by a mosaic worldview, which lacks strong islands of truth as an absolute conviction of correspondence between our notions and reality, where the concepts of the real and virtual, fair and dishonest, war and peace have become blurred and often indistinguishable. Thus, the hybrid wars of our time undermine our understanding of the nature and possible strategies of warfare, mix the true reality of the war with its media representation, and make us unsure of our statements and assessments of what is happening on both sides (Barkouski 2016).

What is replacing the familiar ideologies is characterized by mixing various rationalized mono-ideologies into a hybrid whole, which allows combining seemingly hardly interconnected things (for example, the ideas of communist statehood with Orthodoxy and autocratic rule as it is now often practiced in the Russian Federation). Moreover, it combines them in a kind of faith that appeals primarily to the emotional, rather than rational principle in human. Based to this, one would call such new manifestations of mass consciousness as *new mythologies* (for establishing a syncretic world view on the foundation of the fundamental faith, or constitutive myth(s)), *hybrid ideologies* (relying on the hybrid nature of their origin and interconnection of constituent parts) or *post-ideologies* (similar to

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[2] According to the Oxford Dictionary, post-truth is "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief". The Oxford Dictionary (n.d.). *Post-truth*. Retrieved from: https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/post-truth [Accessed 5 October 2018]

postmodernism, post-truth, post-human, etc. as a reflection of the time of their emergence after the traditional ideologies and instead of them). Unlike the classical ideologies, which were practiced primarily and specifically as steady forms of outlook, organizing human activity and thought process in a certain way, the post-ideologies function as an effect of a cumulative environment that completely distorts the intellectual space of activity and forces a person to exist in a contradictory and illogical reality with modified beliefs about the consequences of their own actions.

Using such a concept as "post-ideology" in this context, one cannot ignore the ways of its usage, which are common known today. The concept of "post-ideology" is primarily used by the actual authors in the field in a negative sense as an indication of the missing dimension of the ideological in the modern contour of political and cultural reality. This general way of understanding the status of ideology in the post-modern world is based on the adoption of several theoretical assumptions that are reproduced in one form or another in the philosophical discourse about the political.

First, it is hard not to see the influence of Fukuyama's ideas with his statement of the "end of history", as a consequence of the destruction of the bipolar world, the crisis of historical ideologies, alternative to liberalism, and the final victory of the concept of liberal democracy over its ideological adversary. "That is to say, for a very large part of the world, there is now no ideology with pretensions to universality that is in a position to challenge liberal democracy, and no universal principle of legitimacy other than the sovereignty of the people," states the American political thinker (Fukuyama 1992, 45). Since, in the logic of the author, the pragmatics of the global

ideology presupposes the need for its opposition, conflict with a competing project or projects on a world level, the absence of a commensurate competitor for liberalism means, then, the transition of the world to a state where the ideological field is homogenized and as such ceases to be the object of struggle and rivalry, but only a certain background for the further development of the social. "The end of history will be a very sad", says Fukuyama. "The struggle for recognition, the willingness to risk one's life for a purely abstract goal, the worldwide ideological struggle that called forth daring, courage, imagination, and idealism, will be replaced by economic calculation, the endless solving of technical problems, environmental concerns, and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands. In the post-historical period there will be neither art nor philosophy, just the perpetual caretaking of the museum of human history" (Fukuyama 1989, 17).

Although Fukuyama recognizes that although, for example, Islam constitutes "a systematic and coherent ideology, just like liberalism and communism, with its own code of morality and doctrine of political and social justice", directed not only to the members of a particular ethnic group, but to humanity as a whole, he still concludes that "despite the power demonstrated by Islam in its current revival, however, it remains the case that this religion has virtually no appeal outside those areas that were culturally Islamic to begin with" (Fukuyama 1992, p. 46), and therefore it is not able to form a competing global ideology against liberalism. This approach associates the "post-ideological" state of the world with the loss of the possibility of competition between ideologies as a mean of social struggle and of the unification of value and political principles in the global

perspective. Of course, today a number of Fukuyama's forecasts look rather utopian, but we can definitely agree with him that now there is no global confrontation of political ideologies on a global scale in the former sense of the Cold War times.

Second, there is no doubt that the use of the concept of "post-ideology" is now under the influence of the critique of the ideological dimension of the social, which is produced within the framework of the ideas of poststructuralist philosophy and in many respects should be understood in opposing the concept of L. Althusser's ideology. Thus, Althusser explicitly emphasizes the dual function of ideology in modern society: ideological recognition (reverse side of which is the function of non-recognition) and the formation of the subject's knowledge of the world and him/herself, where ideology "works" as an integral part of the state apparatus. The second case is the most obvious as a visible manifestation of ideology, as part of its direct impact on the individual, where it announces itself as far as possible explicitly. In the first case, "ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called *interpellation* or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: 'Hey, you there!' Assuming that the theoretical scene I have imagined takes place in the street, the hailed individual will turn round. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical conversion, he becomes a *subject*. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was 'really' addressed to him, and that 'it was *really him* who was hailed' (and not

someone else)", writes Althusser (Althusser 1994, 130-131). Moreover, in his understanding the category of the subject is constituting any ideology, but Althusser immediately specifies that "the category of the subject is constitutive of all ideology, but at the same time and immediately I add that *the category of the subject is only constitutive of all ideology insofar as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of 'constituting' concrete individuals as subjects.* In the interaction of this double constitution exists the functioning of all ideology, ideology being nothing but its functioning in the material forms of existence of that functioning."(ibid. 129).

Since the subject by Althusser himself is produced through ideology, it permeates the entire body of the social, depriving itself of its own external: insisting on the practical denial of its own ideological nature, ideology translates all that is happened in social reality into the format of its own worldview: "ideology has no outside (for itself), but at the same time that it is nothing but outside (for science and reality)" (ibid. 131). The individual is unable to be in the social reality, without recognizing him or herself as a subject and not performing rituals of ideological recognition, i.e. not acting purely ideologically. Hence for Althusser there are two significant circumstances in understanding what ideology means: "1. ideology is nothing insofar as it is a pure dream (manufactured by who knows what power: if not by the alienation of the division of labour, but that, too, is a negative determination); 2. ideology has no history, which emphatically does not mean that there is no history in it (on the contrary, for it is merely the pale, empty and inverted reflection of real history) but that it has no history of its own "(ibid. 121-2). In this connection, poststructuralism rejects the

entire dimension of an ideology along with the general structuralist pathos of criticism of the subject's idea and such a form of its constitution. In this case, "post-ideology" expresses the transition to the "post-subject" philosophizing, where an individual turns out to be an ensemble of practices, not necessarily tied to the central apparatus of the ideological impact on society: the subject is no more constituted ideologically, but basically decentered.

What is clearly opposed to ideology for Althusser is a science that can become that point from the outside, from which a detached view of the very nature of ideology, or opposition to the ideology, is possible (ibid. 131). In this case, one can agree with T. Blake's assertion that in the case of Althusser we must understand ideology in the tripartite sense as "(1) the Other of science (dualism knowledge-illusion), (2) an eternal and universal structure of misrecognition (dualism lived relation to the world-truth) and (3) a system of ideas (dualism superstructure-base)" (Blake 2015). However, even at this point, poststructuralism criticizes Althusser's position, not recognizing the extra-ideological status of science itself. As F. Lyotard emphasizes, "a science that has not legitimated itself is not a true science; if the discourse that was meant to legitimate it seems to belong to a prescientific form of knowledge, like a "vulgar" narrative, it is demoted to the lowest rank, that of an ideology or instrument of power. And this always happens if the rules of the science game that discourse denounces as empirical are applied to science itself"(Lyotard 1993, 38). Denying the claim of science to be the only expression of the "Will to Truth", poststructuralism suggests in this case to perceive it only in the context of all other practices of signification and

thereby to establish an order in which ideology no longer has its constitutional meaning. In this case, "post-ideology" starts to be understood as a global rejection of the ideological dimension of reality, its transfer to a different mode of functioning: as a world in which no one ideology, be it political, whether scientific, no longer has the place as the main principle of establishment the reality. Up to almost complete ignorance of the use of this concept in the texts of poststructuralist thinkers and their practical abandonment of ideological struggle against the so-called "ultraliberal ideology" (Stiegler and Petit 2013).

Naturally, such an understanding of the "post-ideological" world as the completely outside of the zone of ideological influence and, in fact, of the political one, causes serious objections both on the part of those who are sufficiently close to poststructuralism and mostly post-Marxist authors. The already mentioned Australian researcher Terence Blake emphasizes that poststructuralism does not abandon thinking about ideology as such, it simply tends to express its criticism of frameworks, discourses and social practices in other terms, aiming at criticizing primarily such an influential ideology of modernity as scientism: "My historical hypothesis concerning the quasi-disappearance of the word 'ideology' in the texts of Deleuze, Foucault, and Lyotard is that these philosophers, despite the relative effacement of the word "ideology", do not abandon the concept of ideology nor the battle against it. (…) In trying to free themselves from the Althusserian notion of ideology, they produce and elaborate a different set of concepts in order to deconstruct the famous Althusserian binary opposition between science and ideology"(Blake 2015). In particular, he sees certain parallels between the

Deleuzean concept of rhizome with its notion of assemblages, dogmatic image of thought, plane of organisation, transcendence, desire machines and the dimension of ideology as such, in this case understood as "inextricably structuring desiring assemblages". Indeed, it is difficult to disagree that the whole project of Schizoanalysis in the famous work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (Deleuze and Guattari 1977) is permeated with the anti-ideological pathos of emancipating the subject and criticizing the totalitarian impact of the repressive practices of the state and society aimed at the production of neurotic paranoiac individuals. In this regard, it can be argued that we are dealing not so much with the rejection of a dialogue about the ideological as such, but rather with the transfer of the discussion to another level and in another language.

The famous Slovenian philosopher, Slavoj Žižek is one that more than others insists on this reinterpretation of ideology in the context of the non-acceptance of its disappearance in the "post-ideological" world. Actually, ideology for him is something that permeates the structure of reality itself as "a set of explicit and implicit, even unspoken, moral-political and other positions, decision, choices, etc., which predetermine our perception of facts, what we tend to emphasize or to ignore, how we organize facts into a consistent whole of a narrative or a theory" (Žižek 2013). The ideology here is not a complex of ideas or explicit ideological statements, nor it is "a simple mystification obfuscating the hidden reality of domination and exploitation" but rather a common framework or set of positions and practices that lie at the basis of the emergence of similar ideas in an individual. They are where

the Real breaks into the entire body of ideology through its inconsistencies, gaps, etc.

In this case, the ideology for Žižek ceases to be an illusory representation of reality, but it "*is a social reality whose very existence implies the non-knowledge of its participants as to its essence* - that is, the social effectivity, the very reproduction of which implies that the individuals 'do not know what they are doing'" (Žižek 2008, 15-6). This constitutes the ideological as a "double illusion". On the one hand, as a symptom: a certain naiveté of a subject, who does not realize his/her immersion in the ideological reality, does not see the distance between social reality and its distorted representation. On the other hand, ideology manifests itself as a fantasy, the level at which reality itself is structured with the help of ideology, and human activity is guided by fetishist inversion: "The mask is not simply hiding the real state of things; the ideological distortion is written into its very essence" (ibid. 25). People, realizing this, are still doing so as if they did not know.

Ideology as a fantasy structures our social relations and disguises the unbearable and incomprehensible realm of the Real. "The function of ideology is not to offer us a point of escape from our reality but to offer us the social reality itself as an escape from some traumatic, real kernel" (ibid. 45). Only an appeal to the proper Real, claiming itself in this ideological dream, is capable of challenging its power. However, such a step is difficult to accomplish, given the fragility of the individual's relationship to his/her own Real and the practical set of the ideology "*on effacing the traces of its own impossibility*", as Žižek argues, based on the Lacanian perspective (ibid.

50). In this form, ideological fantasy continues to permeate the sphere of consciousness of modern human and does not allow her or him to escape the influence of the ideological, even with a rather skeptical attitude to ideologies as such. In this case, the ideological field is here at hand in an analogical way as the constituting of the desire field in Lacanian psychoanalysis, where the individual never stay in a mode of confidence that his/her desire belongs to properly him/her but is not something imposed from the outside.

Žižek suggests that the transition to a "post-ideological world" at the level of discourse became possible in the light of the advent of the epoch of the Cynical Reason, proclaimed by Peter Sloterdijk (Sloterdijk 1988). If earlier ideologies, and above all totalitarian ones, claimed to be the truth, that is, they created a system of lies that would be experienced as truth and taken seriously by people, now the situation has changed. Even the creators of ideological narratives no longer assume this attitude, counting on the manipulative and instrumental nature of the ideology that individuals accept not for its apparent truth, but under ordinary violence and promises of profit. At the same time, such a cynical attitude toward ideology does not at all overcome its fantasy dimension of existence: "If our concept of ideology remains the classic one in which the illusion is located in knowledge, then today's society must appear post-ideological: the prevailing ideology is that of cynicism; people no longer believe in ideological truth; they do not take ideological propositions seriously. The fundamental level of ideology, however, is not that of an illusion masking the real state of things but that of an (unconscious) fantasy structuring our social reality itself. And at this

level, we are of course far from being a post-ideological society" (Žižek 2008, 30).

The ironic detachment of the cynical reason, therefore, remains within the ideological framework of consciousness, so neither it nor the recourse to practices of everydayness, as a medicine against ideology, becomes an effective means of overcoming an ideology that turns any reasons against itself into arguments in its favor. This was the case for example in the Nazi Germany, where everyday practices of communicating with a Jewish or communist neighbor did not in any way abolish the effectiveness of the Nazi ideological machine, convincing that all inconsistencies between ideology and reality are only additional evidence of the meanness and deceit of the enemies of the Reich. Therefore, for Žižek it is obvious that the ideological practices cannot be canceled by the apparent elimination of ideology as the dominant discourse from the social field. Analyzing this phenomenon with the means of politicized Lacanian psychoanalysis, he uses a language that describes the area in an alternative set of categories, "allowing us to grasp contemporary ideological phenomena (cynicism, 'totalitarianism', the fragile status of democracy) without falling prey to any kind of 'postmodernist' traps (such as the illusion that we live in a 'post-ideological' condition) " (ibid. XXXI).

It is obvious, however, that Žižek here is criticizing not so much the rejection of the traditional interpretation of ideology and the absence of its former positions in society as the attitude to recognition of the complete disappearance of the ideological from the sphere of social reality: the post-ideological as a world without ideology, or where ideology does not make

sense more. At the same time, it can be argued that Žižek insists on a revision of the phenomenon itself without changing its name, although it speaks not so much of ideology in the former sense as of fantasies and perversions of a social imaginary, not always rational in its essence.

Žižek's position that any attempt to go beyond ideology is a form of our enslavement to it, echoes Saul Newman, who criticizes the "poststructuralists" for trying to break away from the dimension of ideology, undermining the essential identity of the subject and dissolving it in a variety of discourses and practices, but in fact coming to the point that ideology is everywhere. "'Poststructuralism', then, in holding that we must abandon the whole problematic of ideology because it presupposes a non-ideological essence that does not exist, is performing two contradictory operations simultaneously. It is attempting to step outside ideology while, at the same time, denying us a place outside. What this amounts to is a reaffirmation of ideology despite or, more precisely through, one's attempts to elude it" (Newman 2001, 319). The paradoxical nature of such an attitude, according to Newman, lies in the logic of structuralism, which post-structuralist thinkers continue to follow: since this logic claims that the individual as a matter of fact has no shelter from the influence of ideology, that it exists everywhere, so it turns the ideology itself into a losing all concrete meaning: ideology is everything and nothing at the same time. In this perspective, ideology is not something that disappears in a poststructuralist perspective, but is rather depreciated and rendered meaningless as a construct, and then such a crisis of interpretation of ideology leads to a statement of the "post-ideological" state of the world. A way out from this paradox could be,

according to Newman, the discovery of "a non-essentialist extra-ideological point of departure" from ideology as the basis of modern criticism of ideology, the roots of which relationship one could see in the spectral reconfiguration of the ideological subject by M. Stirner with his accent on the topic of insurrection of the individualized ego. Nevertheless even this decline from the ideology, according Newman, is not final, but only temporary way out for the subject (ibid. 328-330).

In the situation of this predominant criticism of the use of the concept of "post-ideology" in the modern context, there are also attempts at an alternative interpretation of "post-ideology" as a distinctive state of the ideological dimension of politics in the modern world. The foundations of this approach one could found in the works of P. Bourdieu, C. Mouffe and E. Laclau. Thus, Bourdieu speaks of the loss by politics today of its actual content in the former sense under the influence of the doctrine of neoliberalism, which produces effects very far from those that previously produced former ideologies. "First is the destruction of all the collective institutions capable of counteracting the effects of the infernal machine, primarily those of the state, repository of all of the universal values associated with the idea of the public realm. Second is the imposition everywhere, in the upper spheres of the economy and the state as at the heart of corporations, of that sort of moral Darwinism that, with the cult of the winner, schooled in higher mathematics and bungee jumping, institutes the struggle of all against all and cynicism as the norm of all action and behaviour" (Bourdieu 1998). The move towards a neoliberal utopia of a pure and perfect market in this case, according to Bourdieu, undermines any

collective structures, ranging from nations and ending with the family, questioning the possibility of any regulatory policy at any level of sociality. Moreover, this leads us to a post-ideological and post-political state that does not allow us to make strategic decisions or to resist the economic logic of our collective existence.

Expressing her solidarity with the negative perception of such a "utopia" of our collective future, C. Mouffe explicitly states, "thanks to globalization and the universalization of liberal democracy, we can expect a cosmopolitan future bringing peace, prosperity and the implementation of human rights worldwide. I want to challenge this "post-political" vision" (Mouffe 2005, 1). Thus, she believes that the entire series of similar categories, such as "dialogical" and "cosmopolitan" democracy, "global civil society", "absolute democracy" and "cosmopolitan sovereignty", establish that in fact anti-political view of the world, which denies the antagonistic dimension of the "political" and dissolves any opportunities for competitive political action in a homogenized social field. One of the main signs of the weakening of modern politics, Mouffe believes, is its "moralization": "instead of being constructed in political terms, the "we/they" opposition constitutive of politics is now constructed according to moral categories of "good" versus "evil" (ibid. 75).

Such a "moral register", included in politics, leads to the fact that normal agonistic competition in this sphere is replaced by a confrontation between "good" and "bad" rhetoric: politics turns into demagogy and situational decision-making against the background of a desire to gain a tangible moral victory over the rival. Against the backdrop of the global

domination of the doctrine of liberal democracy, as Mouffe suggests, we are increasingly losing the opportunity for ideological opposition in politics, decision-making in the context of rival political positions and views, and we are increasingly sliding into the logic of exclusion: if someone does not accept the idea of a liberal economy and democracy as an institution of formal equality, he or she by definition falls into the stigmatized camp of "bad guys" and becomes someone alien or hostile to the actual political field, displaced being outside its margins.

Another effect of erasure of the political due to the dominance of neoliberalism is the transformation of politics into a simple technical decision-making tool. It is assumed that with the demise of communism and the socio-economic transformations of the information society, as well as against the background of globalization, all antagonisms from politics disappear, and it starts now to be possible as a "win-win politics" where solutions could be found that favored everybody. "This implies that politics is no longer structured around social division, and that political problems have become merely technical" (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, xiv-xv). However, for Laclau and Mouffe, such a non-alternative nature of the concept of globalization and the "neoliberal orthodoxy" supported by global markets must be overcome by means of establishing a new radical hegemony as a return of the political in spite of the rhetoric of the global world: "This argument takes for granted the ideological terrain which has been created as a result of years of neo-liberal hegemony, and transforms what is a conjunctural state of affairs into a historical necessity. Presented as driven exclusively by the information revolution, the forces of globalization are

detached from their political dimensions and appear as a fate to which we all have to submit. So we are told that there are no more left-wing or right-wing economic policies, only good and bad ones! To think in terms of hegemonic relations is to break with such fallacies" (ibid. xvi).

One could argue that in the case of criticism against neoliberalism by P. Bourdieu, and in the case of the joint argumentation against it by C. Mouffe and E. Laclau, we are dealing with a statement of a new dimension of the existence of a political, or rather "post-political" world where under the influence of neoliberal and globalization strategies the traditional dimension of politics proves to be superseded, and the liberal economy and the diffuse ideological concept of the world come to replace politics as such. Summarizing this vision of contemporary post-ideological policy through the optics of these authors, E. Brighi and L. Giugni singled out in it three constitutive elements: "the strategic framing of ideologies as 'old' ways of understanding politics vs. the 'new' ways of pragmatic problem-solving; a penchant for technical rather than principled solutions and for extreme personalization bordering on populism; the acceptance of the late logic of capitalism and neo-liberal interdependence as non-negotiable facts" (Brighi and Giugni 2016, 27).

On the example of the actual policy of the Italian "post-communists" in the case of Matteo Renzi, these authors demonstrate how much the landscape of modern European politics is drifting towards the "realm of post-ideology", which unites political programs, partisan ideologies and public orientations into a single vector, where "ideology lies at an intermediate, porous level which however does not in itself guarantee an effective or

straightforward mediation of the other levels – ideational levels are not always aligned and ideological goals can be ambiguous, divisive or not particularly explicit" (ibid. 18-19). This, according to the authors, makes statements about the "end of ideology" groundless, although they require clarification of their own understanding of what is ideology today in its actual "post-ideological" format of existence as applied to the discourse and policy of European countries. Similar elements of the development of the actual policy are noted, however, also in the East Slavonic context by M. Minakov, saying that "instead of increasingly complex political communication conditioned by ideological competition and by an evolving political logic, we have seen ideological simplification, diverse forms of political reasoning and worldviews reduced to a single semantic field" (Minakov 2011, 47).

It can therefore be argued that such statements of the "post-ideological" dimension of modern politics, or the state of "post-politics" as a loss of the traditional political dimension, are characteristic not only for the current policies of the EU countries or USA. However, the matter is not a simple parallelism, of course. In my article "Post-Politics in Belarusian way: Towards the Establishment of Meaning in Politics," I tried to demonstrate that such phenomena are also well-known in the post-Soviet space, where the post-political state of modern public policy reliably manifests itself under the guise of classical authoritarian regimes. In this case, "post-politics" was understood "through the interconnection of two tendencies - the desacralization of space and des-investment of desires" (Barkouski 2010) as the loss of the political dimension of its distinctive status in the eyes of

society and the inflation of expectations from this sphere of life, not motivating more to invest in itself articulated and unarticulated expectations of individuals. As it was for example at the end of 80th - beginning of 90th XX century. A similar interpretation of post-politics as a transition from a "value policy" to a modern "real politics" is demonstrated by the extreme right-wing Russian thinker A. Dugin, speaking of it as an "ideology of minimal humanism" or an ultramodern (postmodern) way of actualization of politics: "Post-politics is not a denial of politics, but rather an *absolutization of politics as a process of modernization*. This process of modernization consists in the disontologisation of the Political" (Dugin 2003, 470). In this case, the matter is in one way or another the "mediatizing" of the political, the turning it into a show and power of the mediacracy, the eliminating of obvious goals and the playing of "empty" signifiers as a way to implement "politics without politics." It sounds like the post-Marxist critics of contemporary politics of western countries that we discussed previously and similar to the main theses of the Guy Debord's "The Society of the Spectacle". This makes it possible to talk about the current state of "post-ideology" as an ideological level of the embodiment of post-politics on a global scale, where post-ideology no longer means the disappearance of an ideological dimension as such, but its emergence into a different way of self-collecting and influencing a person.

If we are talking about the strategic plan for constructing the newest political discourse, it seems that the main elements of its filling today are numerous post-ideological practices (which can also be defined as "second generation ideologies"). They imply the cognitive format of the "new

mythology" in respect to the organizing of the space of social action. This format differs from the previous one primarily in that the new mythology as a descendant of the old ideology does not seek to establish the selected rational system of values, define its conceptual order and organize the activities on this basis, but constructs such a model for world's interpretation, which is based in part on mythological principles or carries the constitutive features of mythological thinking. The latter implies the use of such structures of signification that build the obvious binary oppositions "ours/others", "light/darkness", "truth/lie", "good/evil", etc., based on partly emotional-irrational myths of historical social, psychological and other kind. This in turn generates a closed logic of the functioning of the discourse, which does not react in any way to external criticism or counterexamples.

At the same time, characterizing the post-ideological as the basically mythological thinking, we are forced to remember those constitutive features of the latter, which are noted in his study by the well-known structural anthropologist C. Lévi-Strauss: "Divergence of sequences and themes is a fundamental characteristic of mythological thought, which manifests itself as an irradiation; by measuring the directions and angles of the rays, we are led to postulate their common origin, as an ideal point on which those deflected by the structure of the myth would have converged had they not started, precisely, from some other point and remained parallel throughout their entire course. As I shall show in my conclusion, this multiplicity is an essential characteristic, since it is connected with the dual nature of mythological thought, which coincides with its object by forming a homologous image of it but never succeeds in blending with it, since

thought and object operate on different levels. The constant recurrence of the same themes expresses this mixture of powerlessness and persistence. Since it has no interest in definite beginnings or endings, mythological thought never develops any theme to completion: there is always something left unfinished. Myths, like rites, are "in-terminable"" (Lévi-Strauss 1969, 5-6). In this sense, contemporary post-ideologies, being new mythologies, are not really too concerned with developing a single consistent image of the world, even falsified one, rather they create the general framework of a "fantastic" reality in which the individual's consciousness fills the missing volume itself, populating it with chimeras from its subconscious.

One could dispute the acceptability of the interpretation of "second generation ideologies" in such archaic ways of thinking, if the works of, specifically, R. Barthes (1991) did not convince us that the mythological consciousness did not at all outdo itself within the limits of modern social practices. Moreover, in their sensational Dialectic of Enlightenment, M. Horkheimer and T. Adorno (2002) did not demonstrate that the unrestricted structures of the myth and their unconscious authority dominate the entire scientific and political ideology and practice of European thinking, which is influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment. Therefore, we can rather speak about the productivity of such an optics of the view on the nature of post-ideologies, which allows us to reveal some of their noteworthy features.

Unlike the old ideologies the post-ideologies as new mythologies are determined primarily by their hybrid, syncretic character, that is, the possibility of reconciling within their confines the components of mature, i.e. traditional ideologies of very different spectrum (for example, as the actual

Russian experience shows: ultra-left National Bolshevism with neo-conservatism and right-wing traditionalism) and the accession to them of various elements of values, concepts with a general for the post-political situation lack of semantic depth and hermeneutical nihilism. The old ideologies were based in part on a certain pseudo-scientific theory (for example, of racial superiority, the invisible hand of the market or class struggle), which was supposed to justify the convincingness and the only correctness of this ideology, putting irrational elements of social psychopathology (hatred of Jews, contempt for social losers or persecution enemies of the people) in the form of continuation of the theoretically grounded position.

Being hybrid in the way of their constituting, post-ideologies as new mythologies let to create on their own basis conglomerates of basic myths that combine with each other and allow themselves to be coordinated with regard to a variety of political situations. If we take as an example the analysis of the events of the "Ukrainian crisis" (non-declared War between Russia and the Ukraine since 2014), we can in particular see the creation of a conglomerate of such two basic elements of new mythologies, prevalent mainly in the Russian-language politicized sphere, like "Gayrope" and "banderovtsy" (which does not deny the possibility of joining to them other mythological parts in specific cases). The first myth is based on the identification of the internal and external policies of the European Union countries with a separate successful tendency to struggle for the rights of sexual minorities in them as a substitute for the traditional idea of Europe by the simulacrum of Europe of "unconventional values" ("Gay-Europe"),

creating the image of "tolerast Europe" (it combines "tolerant" and "pederast" in one word). This myth allows the functioning of regional authoritarian-state and soil-patriotic models of identity as custodians of traditional, autochthonous values and an original way of life and thinking (including the political one).

The second mythological figure deliberately distorts the level of the presence in the political space of Ukraine of the ultra-nationalist component and demonizes the "fascist" image of the figures of the national liberation movement of the Ukraine in the early and middle of the twentieth century, thereby reducing all manifestations of the national identity of the East Slavic peoples to stigmatized models of the fascist-chauvinistic type in spite of the only possible Great Russian (imperial-cosmopolitan) identity. Of note, the phenomenon of "fascism" has in the post-Soviet (especially Russian) tradition characteristics of a long-practiced peculiar national mythology, where the demonic image of National Socialism is thought almost in the religious sense as an absolute evil and the embodiment of all negative intentions of man, as hostile to everything right and light, purely destructive desire of zombified humanity for general annihilation, which heroicizes its own victory over fascism as the victory of the forces of light over the army of darkness (the theatricalization of the "V Parades", their invariably exalted status, pretentious rhetoric of leaders - the signs of this mythological setting). Therefore, the definition of something in the categories of "fascism" had, both in Soviet and in the post-Soviet context, the meaning of an absolutely discredited and in need of final and ruthless eradication, whether it is a political program or social activism. This is due, inter alia, to the

peculiarities of the policy of memory established in the Soviet Union and inherited by its successors. As the Ukrainian researcher, M. Minakov emphasizes, "The dialectic of collective memory is based on the fact that the memory of trauma does not find direct realization and sublation in actions motivated by ressentiment. The irrational memory that bears the pain is always topical, renewed, and self-fortifying. This also strengthens the irrationality of political life, which manifests itself in the dominance of ideological constructs that require the least critical thought or public display of substantive elements of social life"(Minakov 2011, 45).

In this regard, the use of the mythologeme of the "fascist" image of Ukrainian politics can occur with total disregard for historical specifics, the use of a distorted picture of the submission of facts and even inattention to the meaning of names: in parallel, the bearers of this mythology use the names "banderovtsy", "benderovtsy" and even "binderovtsy" (without attention to the original sounding of the name of Stepan Bandera and with some comic allusions), which indicates the ignoring of the initial facts of the phenomenon itself (this is generally unimportant for mythology). When it comes to "banderovtsy", it is a consolidated name for a whole group of similar lexical units used within the framework of this mythological set (for example, "Ukrainian punitive forces", "Maidowns", "Maidanjugend", "Ukrainian neo-Nazis", etc.[3]) The symbiosis of these mythologemes accordingly generates the cumulative effect of manipulating the consciousness of individual citizens or communities, creating a bipolar

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[3] See the usage of these concepts as elements of the Russian information war in articles (Sazonov and Müür 2017; Furgacz 2016; Khaldarova and Mervi 2016; Bolin et al. 2016).

model of the universe (we/they, Russian Slavs/alien Europeans-Americans, local nationalism as fascism / Great Russian nationalism as common Slavic identity, an empire of good / empire of evil, and Russophile / Russophobe, etc.). Of course, this is only a single example of the formation of a conglomerate of myths, and they are inherent not only in the modern Russian Federation[4], or broader in the Eastern European region. Although it is in this case that the typical philistine mythologies are clearly transformed into a type of mass media technologies aimed at global manipulation of consciousness and reformatting the political field.

It can also be argued that similar effects of post-ideological influence are also present on the Western policy screens, often being spiced with a fair share of populist rhetoric. For example, the well-known and popular one, thanks to the speeches of the former US President George W. Bush, is a mythologeme about the so-called "Axis of Evil" conjugated with the mythology of the demonic Taliban and other incarnations of the terrorist threat. The fact that the "Axis of Evil" is a mythological figure does not at all deny the existence of a threat of terrorism for the same American or world society. But in the form in which this image is used in official political rhetoric and popular notions, it engenders a grotesque picture of the world where whole countries and peoples are stigmatized as the embodiment of the demonic element of Chaos and destruction, a mortal threat to humanity even contrary to the facts. Or, on the contrary, thanks to the "facts", successfully confirming the given picture of the world (as it was with

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[4] See a study of the rhetoric of Ukrainian and European politics around the theme of the "Ukrainian crisis" in the article (Goriacheva 2016).

"bacteriological weapons" of Saddam Hussein). However, this side of American foreign policy and its post-ideological rhetoric has repeatedly been criticized both by internal and external critics. Among the most consistent and principled ones, one can clearly identify S. Žižek and J. Baudrillard.

The first has repeatedly criticized the phantasmal nature of both US domestic policy, which produces torn images of reality, leading the enchanted subject to the social imaginary plane farther from the dimension of the Real, and external policy as well – especially in the plane of "humanitarian interventions". "One does not need to know the brutal reality that sustains such interventions, the cynical pursuit of economic and political interests obfuscated by humanitarian concerns, to discern the falsity of such interventionism—the inconsistencies, gaps and silences of its explicit text are tell-tale enough", stresses the Slovenian thinker (Žižek 2013). Here, in his opinion, we are faced with a visible contradiction, which nevertheless is easily combined in the proposed black and white picture of the world. So in the case of Afghanistan, Žižek argues, we cannot ignore the fact that the Taliban itself is a product of the US intelligence services that are responsible for the fundamentalization of this country, that "we (the global liberal system) created the fundamentalism" and in general the notorious "Axis of Evil" (Žižek 2010), but this does not preserve the public western policy from moral arrogance about the terrorist nature of this country itself and the allegedly primordial threat emanating from it. Such a reluctance to bring together the cause and effect can rather be correlated with the mythological way of thinking, rather than the rationalized ideological discourse. However, even classical ideologies found the resource for such 180-degree turns (for

example, the breakdown of relations and the subsequent war between former allies - the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany in 1941, turning the former "brothers in arms" into "sworn enemies"), but then they did it at least in stages, not at the same time.

The second passionate critic of such a post-ideological hypocrisy of Western politics, French thinker Jean Baudrillard, who already in the early 90's publicly harshly opposed the virtual nature of the Gulf war, whose simulated essence of the new media-war covered the cynical aims of "real politics" (Baudrillard 1995), continued to reveal the whole truth of the "Triumphant globalization battling against itself" in the early 2000's. In his understanding, the "Axis of Evil" itself is the construction "of the America's unconscious and realizes by violence what was merely a fantasy and a dream thought" (Baudrillard 2003, 62), where the model anticipates the event itself, and the war becomes "continuation of the absence of politics by other means" (ibid. 34). Islam here acts as a trigger, initiating a policy of simple solutions and reliance on something that does not even exist in reality. "This is terror against terror – there is no longer any ideology behind it. We are far beyond ideology and politics now. No ideology, no cause - not even the Islamic cause - can account for the energy which fuels terror. The aim is no longer even to transform the world, but (…) to radicalize the world by sacrifice" (ibid. 9-10), emphasizes Baudrillard, thus demonstrating the post-ideological and post-political dimension of the world after 9/11.

However, in the public area there are quite enough direct accusations that the essence of the policy of "humanitarian interventionism" is not at all in fulfilling the moral mission and eliminating the terrorist threat, but in the

completely mundane pragmatic interests of the "energy war" masked by the concern for ensuring the order and democracy worldwide, where the struggle against the "Axis of Evil" was originally conceived as a battle for the "Axis of Oil"[5]. In this case, post-ideology is revealed as the desire to link the pragmatic interest of the state or international coalition with the metaphysics of lofty goals and ideals, where both these levels, divergent in their pathos and ratio, become a point of support for each other. Certainly many commentators reveal various sides of these inconsistencies of the declared goals and selected means, the proposed picture of the world and rough reality.

Summing up this criticism of the contemporary post-ideological policy of liberal democracies, one can refer to the example of the following argument by A. Atkinson-Bonasio: "I would argue that America is forever looking into a Lacanian mirror, constantly seeing themselves and their nation as a reflection that is far better, more noble and pure than reality. Yet they continue to hold on tightly on to the illusion that the reflection is a true representation of reality rather than a manifestation of projected desire. The contrast between the illusion of what America represents to Americans and what it represents to those that look at its actions from an outside perspective is extremely telling of this disparity of perceptions" (Atkinson-Bonasio n.d., 12). This image of the mirror where the desired and the actual is mixed together without any apparent difference, where the "Axis of Evil" becomes the projection of the old idea of the "Empire of Evil" as a complex archetype of the American soul, enchanted by the strong moral and religious

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[5] The example of such an accusatory critics (Duthel, 2011).

discourse of Satan's confrontation, which goes back to the origins of Puritan culture of the Founding Fathers, it becomes the point of collecting the post-ideological that prevails in modern American politics. Within this imagined confrontation with the terrorist threat as war against Satan, Muslims are imperceptibly transformed in American incarnation of German "Jews" of the Second World War (ibid. 5). In general, similar versions of explanations also arise when trying to uncover the reasons for the revenge of the right-wing and ultraconservative policies and its inherent demagogic rhetoric in the European Union and the United States, the same notorious "the Trump phenomenon"[6].

To the above, we can add that post-ideologies as new mythologies appeal to total acceptance of the proposed model of the world and complete defamation of alternative models, which generates the effect of social hysteria (i.e. mass fixation on certain topics with the leading role of emotion) and escalation of ethnic, religious, moral and mental feelings. The latter presumes an increased sensibility to the "sensitive subjects", for example, to "Russophobia" as a distinctive characteristic of the politics of the mostly part of world countries against Russia in the consciousness of many Russian people. This can also be observed in the framework of the post-ideological matrix of the so-called "Russkij mir" ("the Russian world"), from the general outline of which, usually, specific discursive statements of the actual Russian "myth-politics" are produced. As Vladimir Sazonov observes: "While Western media and politicians often regard Putin's national idea (Pax Russica) as a new phenomenon, it is actually not new. Russia's ideology is, to a great

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[6] See, for example (Brady and Rivers, 2016).

extent, an irrational mix of older systems – i.e. Byzantium, the Golden Horde, the Grand Duchy of Moscow, the Slavophile legacy from the beginning of the 20th century, the Soviet system and its ideological elements, and some ideas from Orthodox Christianity. Nevertheless, Putin's state philosophy is strongly influenced by nationalism, chauvinism, clericalism, orthodoxy, xenophobia, imperialism, and autocracy. In addition, the whole concept is decorated with ideological inventions and myths from the 'glorious' Soviet times"(Sazonov 2017, 27). This syncretism of the ideology of the "Russian world" allows, in the opinion of the author, to combine in it contradictory phenomena and ideas (for example, communist ideology and Orthodoxy being ideological twin brothers) as an effective propaganda tool and information weapon.

Similar effects as an element of the basic destruction of the images of "truth" and "reality" (their total indistinctiveness at the world of post-truth) are also noted by other studies devoted to the Russian-Ukrainian information war. For example, Irina Khaldarova and Mervi Pantti argue with respect to the topic of "fake news" that this is a conscious element of modern Russian propaganda: "Strategic narratives carried by Channel One's journalistically dubious stories can be seen aiming, in the first place, to appeal to emotions and to "blur" the border between what is real and what is not: in other words to form a context in which other messages can be communicated with greater ease" in the context of the fact that "strategic communications are conditioned by the diffused media ecology in which narratives become evaluated and discussed by various political actors and the general public" (Khaldarova and Pantti 2016, 900).

A similar idea is also contained in Peter Pomerantsev's article: "But insisting on the lie, the Kremlin intimidates others by showing that it is in control of defining 'reality.' This is why it's so important for Moscow to do away with truth. If nothing is true, then anything is possible. We are left with the sense that we don't know what Putin will do next—that he's unpredictable and thus dangerous. We're rendered stunned, spun, and flummoxed by the Kremlin's weaponization of absurdity and unreality" (Pomerantsev 2014). In the author's opinion, the goal of the new propaganda is no longer to convince someone, but to keep the viewer hooked and distracted, stunning and denying the ability to make critical judgments about the subject of the conversation. In other words, the effects of post-ideology, including the distortion of the picture of reality in the syncretic image of the world, the destruction of the boundary between truth and lies, violence and peace, real and unreal, are easily and universally introduced means of propaganda and information war. Moreover, they have their effect not only at the level of state propaganda, but also at the grassroots level of vernacular communication[7].

Nevertheless, just at the level of propaganda, i.e. its conscious manipulative usage, post-ideology today is certainly widely applicable and

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[7] See on the influence of political rhetoric on the ways of thinking and the actions of Russian inhabitants in the article (Arkhipova 2017). It emphasizes separately the idea that such a situation should be thought much broader than a simple propaganda effect: "we cannot see in this action a simple "reflection" or "imprint" of propaganda. State TV channels and newspapers of 2014-2015 years did not teach citizens to advertise "Obama's entry is forbidden" on the stalls and did not call for sticking "Obama chmo" on the cars" (ibid. 114).

acts as an information weapon in the contemporary consciental wars[8]. If we briefly touch on the topic of using post-ideological practices in modern propaganda, we can start by saying that the goal of the latter, according to the authoritative researcher in the field, French intellectual J. Ellul, is "no longer to change adherence to a doctrine, but to make the individual cling irrationally to a process of action. It is no longer to lead to a choice, but to loosen the reflexes. It is no longer to transform an opinion, but to arouse an active and mythical belief" (Ellul 1973, 25). Propaganda affects not only the individual's consciousness space, but tries to modify all of its surroundings. In essence, the latter should work to produce an integral system of explaining the world and generate incentives for action as a specially organized myth that attempts to take over a personality, explains Ellul. Well-made propaganda always focuses on those collective myths that are shared by society, for example, the myth of the nation, the hero, the happiness, but one can continue to assert that in the long run, propaganda can itself work to create new collective myths: for example, for our region it is a myth about the Slavic unity - a triune people, an original way of development of the "Slavic civilization", etc., - that began to be laid down since the time of the Russian Empire. When propaganda contains elements of collective mythology, basic stereotypes of society, it is perceived as natural and corresponding to the general outlook of a person.

Although propaganda is "acting" primarily at the level of emotions and subconscious attitudes, nevertheless, according to Ellul, it is apt to appeal to

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[8] On the phenomenon of "consciental wars", propaganda and ways of avoiding manipulation by informational forms of influence on the consciousness and psyche of a person, see more in my article (Barkouski 2016).

reason and life experience when it provides information and manipulates facts. This does not mean that it must be rational at its core to satisfy the individual's thirst for facts in a case of actions and decision-making, so its task is to give an irrational answer to what has rational and factual elements in its basis: its credibility is not based on correspondence of facts on their own, but on their "correspondence on reality", more precisely to that vision of reality created by propaganda with the help of their manipulations. Propaganda can avoid direct deception, but it disguises the truth under false or compromised interpretations. However, the individual will act with reliance not on the facts themselves, but on "the emotional pressure, the vision of future, the myth" (Ibid. 86), explaining himself his own actions by their supposedly rational-factual validity. Therefore, modern propaganda, relying on post-ideology as its foundation, is not obliged to take care of its consistency or the fidelity of some specific ideology: it can create conglomerates of various and even contradictory ideological elements, for the individual will make the final rationalization of the worldview for it.

Propaganda no longer tends to remain in line with this or that ideology, besides, today there are practically no clear ideological frameworks in the political field. According to J. Ellul, modern propaganda is not based on a certain ideology, rather the latter is nothing more to it than a material or a means to which the propagandist cynically "does not believe", promoting his message on the screen of mass consciousness: "More and more, the propagandist is a technician using a keyboard of material media and psychological techniques; and in the midst of all that, ideology is only one of the incidental and interchangeable cogs" (ibid. 197). The propagandist

creates from ideologies or a set of incentive words, like "social justice," "democracy," "state," etc., to evoke a certain kind of reactions, or mythologemes to justify the proper kind of action, where action is always primary, but meanings of the words are changeable.

Propaganda almost does not create new myths, but it well exploits the already existing ones, changing and modifying them to suit their needs. This becomes possible due to the so-called "horizontal propaganda", carried out at the level of the social group, and not hierarchically. Propaganda attacks the principal symbols of culture, its attitudes, which shape the world outlook and consciousness of individuals. As a means of conducting a consciental war, it can both work to preserve and protect the necessary myths and stereotypes in culture, and consciously distort and modify these myths and stereotypes, thereby affecting identity, and doing the same as with one's own culture, and with a strange one. Therefore, it is very difficult for an individual, even a reflexive one, to resist propaganda that post-ideologically manipulates ideologies, myths and cultural norms, and does so at a level where rational criticism and argumentation are all too often ineffective.

In conclusion, we can say that post-ideologies as new mythologies inherent in the heroizing of their cosmos with the creation of a polar image of a monster, world Evil, the struggle with which is a sacred duty and obligation for the bearer of these post-ideologies. In some ways, the new mythologies resemble the exalted versions of the radical religious perception of the world with jihad / crusades against the infidels, absenteeism of heretical views of opponents, their demonization. In this sense, post-ideologies can in some ways be considered as a mental return

from modernity to the medieval worldview system, where new ideologies assume the role of aggressive secular religions. This allows us to explain in part their high potential for social mobilization and their spread on the waves of artificially created social hysteria as a mode of faith and unconditional acceptance. Post-ideologies partly resist the strategies of "direct" action and "restoring" the meaning of political categories and values, since they themselves use the resources of the post-political organization of the social field and reject rational social constructivism (see: Barkouski 2010). In this regard, we need the resources of a new social analytics (see: Barkouski 2014) to be able to adequately describe and systematize such post-ideologies (new mythologies) by specifying the main mechanisms and processes of their aggregation (creating conglomerates), as well as functioning on the screen of a mass consciousness. This also becomes possible through the extensive use of methods of discursive analysis and hermeneutic procedures.

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BETWEEN FRUSTRATION AND MOBILIZATION:

EMOTIONAL DISPOSITIONS OF THE HUMANITIES SCHOLARS IN THE

CONDITIONS OF "*OUR*" WARTIME

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Abstract. *The article is devoted to the ability of the humanities scholars to contribute to the demilitarization of our life-world. The starting point of the analysis is the recognition of the affective conditionedness of any thinking/statement about the war in Ukraine. In this connection, the question of a heuristic potential of the humanities as well as that of a social role they play in "our wartime" arise. The first part of the article outlines the polar affective regimes which determine perception of the war in Donbas by citizens of Ukraine in the current socio-political context. The second part considers a possibility of non-coincidence of the emotional dispositions of reflection developed in the humanities with the affective field outlined in the first part (the field "between frustration and mobilization"). Combining the approaches of the "affect theory" and phenomenological hermeneutics, the author shows interconnection between the performative heuristic of utterances produced in the humanities and a politics of affect carried out by these utterances. Focusing on the ability of utterances produced by the humanities scholars to create a new situation in the context of*

our wartime (to change the blunt mode of perception of the war, to disavow propaganda, to bar aggression, to free from fear), the author characterizes such utterances in terms of political poiesis. The last one includes the ability of thinking developed by the humanities scholars to mediate the new politics of affect, which is at odds with both the propaganda modulating of the mood of the 'masses' and the prevailing emotional landscape of the militarized social field.

It is argued that the war in Ukraine has revealed that the traditional (modern) way of linking rationality with affect within such a political community as nation has been radically put in question. Reflection developed by the humanities scholars is able to detect and analyze such shifts, while having been affected by them. The author comes to the conclusion that today a social significance of the humanities is connected not only with their ability to enlighten people and to criticize ideology. What the humanities scholars have to respond to is the need of people to find a new coordinate system that will allow them to re-embody the connection between the reason and the affect (logos and pathos) through various forms of living together.

Key words: frustration, mobilization, "new war", propaganda, thinking in the humanities, emotional disposition, politics of affect, nation.

Full version of this article is available in Russian.

THE IMPACT OF THE ARMED CONFLICT IN THE EAST OF UKRAINE ON RELATIONSHIPS AMONG SCHOLARS OF UKRAINE ACROSS EUROPE

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Abstract. *This paper aims to explore the ways in which the Euromaidan, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and the armed conflict in the Donbas region have affected relationships among scholars based in Western Europe and Ukraine who focus on Ukraine in their work. This study draws upon the idea that knowledge production is never an individual endeavour, hence the effect of political crises on scholarly communities may be particularly traumatising, leading to a polarisation within the intellectual field. Drawing upon a series of interviews with social scientists and humanities scholars specialising on Ukraine, I discuss the ways in which negative changes expressed themselves, the connections that were perceived as particularly affected, ideas of positive changes, reconciliation, and the development of new ties and collaborations.*

On the one hand, the conflict has had a strong impact on relationships within the field of Ukrainian Studies and beyond, in terms of disrupting both local and transnational connections in the real and virtual spaces of universities, conferences, and social media discussions. Increasingly militant language has

been used to describe the shifts in academic relationships that have happened over the recent few years. Typically, relationships with Russian scholars are mentioned as being particularly affected. While opinions on perspectives of traveling to Russia vary, not crossing its borders often becomes a political decision. The language used by the researchers to describe changes includes emotionally and politically charged descriptions of academics, mostly centred on the ideas of "taking sides".

On the other hand, the destructive effect has been far from universal. The ideas of reconciliation and reformatting of problematic relationships amongst researchers seem to be discussed by an increasing number of scholars. These discussions focus on the new transnational ways of conducting research, struggles to maintain the connections, establishing new contacts, drawing upon political solidarity, rather than differences, and thinking about the need to (re-)establish a dialogue on a larger scale in the future.

Keywords: Ukraine, Russia, scholars, research communities, social relationships.

Framing the case

My first thoughts on the topic of challenges faced by researchers studying large-scale social protests and armed conflicts arose during the Euromaidan, the annexation of Crimea, and the first months of the armed conflict in Donbas. Some articles have already been published where researchers specifically discuss the problematic issues of defining the boundary between "involvement and objective expertise", and the dynamics of ethical approaches to the politics of writing and expression in the changing political circumstances (Likhachev, 2014); or explore the challenges posed by researcher positionality while conducting fieldwork during the protests (Malyutina, 2016).

However, thus far, reflections on the impact of the conflict on relationships among academics that have been published, or otherwise articulated by researchers and other commentators have been sparse and not very detailed. For instance, Hrytsak (2014, p. 227) criticises the views on Ukraine dominant in Russian academic discourse that draws upon a "widespread belief that Ukraine as a "failed/nationalized state" has no future and no modern subjectivity". Zhuk (2014) traces and questions his positionality as framed within (and as opposed to) the Russian-focused historiographical scholarly community in the US. Portnov (2015, p. 723) observes, from within German academia, the challenges and limitations of local Ukrainian studies that persist in the field and reveal "the strength of historical stereotypes and conventional categories of explanation".

Elsewhere, he argues: "The attitude to these events [the Maidan, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and war on part of the territories of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts] and the language employed to describe these, have turned into an identification mark of political affiliation, even beyond the boundaries of Eastern Europe. Emotional and ideological tension is also evident in academic publications. In these, facts are often selected to fit pre-determined conclusions; information sources are often not verified; certain statements in social media are neither contextualised nor called into question; descriptions of a dynamic socio-political situation are frequently static and subject to essentialised categories of "identity"; and serious transnational and transregional comparisons remain rare" (Portnov, 2016, p. 103). Turkova (2016) reviews the impact of the war on professional connections between Russian and Ukrainian linguists, arguing that "scholars find it impossible to rise above the fray and engage in pure, disinterested analysis", which has led to mutual isolation of research communities, and has limited the opportunities for research on linguistic processes during the armed conflict.

This interview-based study of scholars of Ukraine, and the challenges that they have been facing in their work since the Maidan, suggests that the conflict has, indeed, had a strong impact on relationships within the field of Ukrainian Studies and beyond. Both local and transnational connections have been affected. Politics has seeped into research communities, universities, and conferences. Increasingly militant language has been used to describe the impact of the conflict on academic relationships. Typically, relationships with Russian scholars are mentioned as being particularly

affected. On the other hand, the destructive effect has been far from universal. Concerns about disruption of relationships are often accompanied by reflections on adaptation strategies; and ideas of reconciliation and reformatting of problematic relationships amongst researchers seem to be discussed by an increasing number of scholars, even if it has been happening in informal conversations rather than in analytical papers. How exactly the conflict has influenced relationships amongst fellow researchers and what are the implications of its impact for their work, are the questions that need a detailed exploration if we are to understand how to produce academic knowledge on, during, and in the midst of an armed conflict.

Methods

This study is empirically based upon 20 semi-structured expert interviews with researchers that were conducted via Skype and in person between November 2016 and November 2017. Skype was chosen because the interviewees were geographically dispersed across six different countries. The easiest way to access them was via this increasingly popular medium for qualitative research that combines a "face-to-face experience with the flexibility and "private space" elements offered via telephone interviews" (Hanna, 2012, p. 241). Respondents were recruited from personal acquaintances and colleagues with elements of snowballing technique. This strategy seems most appropriate for this study which represents the first stage of a planned larger-scale research. The interviews were conducted in Russian and English and lasted between forty minutes and one and a half hour each. Later they were transcribed verbatim and analysed using

MAXQDA software. The analysis included development of a system of codes and bringing them together in more general categories, which helped identify a number of key themes.

In selecting and approaching my respondents, I intended to keep the sample diverse in terms of disciplinary backgrounds, research interests, and origins of the subjects. The early nature of this research phase, time constraints and concerns about generalisability, required the imposition of some limitations. For example, the representation of Russian and US scholars was low; the majority of the respondents are based in Western European countries and Ukraine.

At the time of the interviews three of my subjects were based in Austria, one in Israel, three in the UK, seven in Ukraine, two in France, one in Estonia, two in Romania and one in the US, working in universities, research centres and think tanks; one was a Master student. Not all of them were involved exclusively in academic activity. More than half of them don't live in their countries of origin, which include Ukraine, Russia, the UK, Germany, Moldova and Belarus. Two of the Ukrainian respondents are from Crimea and Donbas, having had to either abandon the idea of going to the annexed territory again, or leave their home city when the war started. There were 11 women and nine men in the sample. Their disciplinary fields of expertise include sociology, political science, history, literature and culture, philosophy, development studies and policy analysis. Among their research interests are topics as diverse as the far right, memory politics, gender, social movements, migration, ideologies, and cultural memory (to name just the major ones). For the purposes of this paper, the respondents are anonymised.

Finally, I would like to clarify my position as a researcher in this study. I am a scholar who has been working on Ukraine-related themes since the beginning of the Euromaidan (namely, on the topics of Ukrainian migrants' protest activism in London and the challenges faced by Russian migrant journalists living in Ukraine), and have been actively involved in some common academic activities (conferences, academic publications). Furthermore, I have been engaged in the Ukrainian communities in London, and have lived in Ukraine for a few months. I believe that this experience has provided me ample grounds for developing rapport with most of my respondents (many of whom I had already known personally). However, this does not preclude some issues potentially arising in the future, for example, when interviewing figures who are less known to me personally, or significantly more senior scholars. Nevertheless, my experience of interviewing researchers as a researcher has proved to be a largely smooth and engaging process.

Research community

The Euromaidan, the annexation of Crimea, and the ongoing armed conflict in the East of Ukraine have had a strong impact on the relationships among the scholars and public intellectuals focusing on Ukraine-related topics. "People have quarrelled", a respondent briefly stated at the beginning of his reflections on this issue. However, this statement has to be disentangled. In the following sections of this paper I will concentrate on the descriptions of changes in relationships experienced by my informants. These include the ways in which these negative changes expressed themselves, connections

that were perceived as particularly affected, and ideas of positive change, reconciliation, or development of new ties and collaborations.

Militant language. As suggested by Yurchuk and Marchenko (2018, p. 142), against the background of an armed conflict, predictably, "the questions of betrayal, loyalty, patriotism and treason came to the forefront of [Ukrainian] intellectuals' discourse". Scholars are not an exception.

The language that the respondents use to talk about the changes in their relationships with fellow researchers is far from neutral. One of the respondents argues that the protests, the revolution and the conflict have led to a noticeable fragmentation within the field, where previous contacts and groupings have disappeared. But new coalitions based upon research interests as well as political views have emerged at the same time: "this is not just one frontline", she stresses. Conflicts and disagreements with those who were previously considered as colleagues are mentioned by the majority of my respondents. Strikingly, often these are described using a particularly militant language that employs metaphors like "frontline".

The expressions used by the interviewed researchers while talking about the impact of the conflict on the relationships with fellow scholars that they have engaged with and observed, include emotionally and politically charged descriptions of academics as subjects occupying particular spaces and engaging in certain practices that emerge as peculiar to the current situation. Thus, the "enemy" metaphor is commonly used by a number of other respondents speaking about the transformation of relationships among researchers. Scholars also describe particular

colleagues or generalised academics as being "pro" or "anti" (e.g. Ukraine), *regime apologists*, *traitors* or *dissidents*, being *partisan* or *unflinching* (in the face of possible political persecution). For example, a political scientist speaks about the disappearance of a research community where "colleagues stop being colleagues":

> [...] because they are either on one side of the frontline, or on the other. [...] When colleagues become either companions in arms, or the enemy's associates, it is the end of a research community.

The spatial metaphors include *information battlefields, barricades*, *watersheds*, *camps*, *dividing lines*, but also *in-between* (the opposing *camps* or *sides*). *Taking sides* and *positions* are frequently brought up. Another political scientist says:

> Many people have quarrelled. When the Yanukovych regime really started to suppress the protesters, it was a watershed moment. I thought that after that people who focus on Ukraine in their research and have lived in Ukraine cannot stay neutral. It does not matter if they were researchers or observers. This is a moment when you need to state clearly, if you are for or against something. There's a need to establish a kind of barricade and to understand who is on which side.

Scholars in these circumstances are described as engaging in a variety of practices. In terms of practices going beyond the academic space, such as public political statements and media appearances, these may be characterised as *protecting/defending* (e.g. Ukraine), *participation in/contribution to information war*, e*ngaging in propaganda*, *whitewashing* (a

regime) and *engaging in disreputable ties*. While speaking about activities that are more related to particular relationships within the communities of researchers, respondents mention *attacks*, *clashes*, *stigmatisation, manhunt* or *reprisals*.

There are also a few metaphors of a less negative nature, or signifying some positive dynamics, such as talking about *not crossing the line* or *not having direct clashes* with colleagues or describing some members of their academic community *sobering up*.

Even those who do not speak about actually severing ties with other scholars describe the polarisation within the academic space, where ideological divisions become increasingly prominent, and discourse turns more radical. Ukrainian Studies as a field is criticised by many of my respondents for the increase of such polarised discourse and intensification of 'patriotic' tone: it has "become pro-Ukrainian", argues a scholar who identifies herself as a relative newcomer to the field. Another person speaks about reluctance to participate in some discussions:

> Sometimes I just don't want to participate in discussions, because it's impossible, everything is so heated. […] There's this dichotomous perception, "zrada-peremoha" ['betrayal-victory', a Ukrainian meme reflecting the polarisation of public discourse]. If you're not promoting peremoha, you must be part of zrada. My research has never succumbed to this dichotomy.

The increased politicisation of topics like memory politics, the far right, or the Russian language in Ukraine has occasionally limited some of the scholars' participation in discussions on the topics. A number of scholars

propose that those who do not belong to the Ukrainian institutionalised academic community and/or are not Ukrainian citizens "might feel more freedom [...] no one can expect patriotism from us", or "explicit opposition to the other side". "You can't really talk about [Ukrainian] patriotism of foreign researchers, but there is a trend of a normative support of Ukraine", says a non-Ukrainian researcher.

Also, some researchers mention the intensified tension between scholars with different political leanings; in this context, the terms *left* and *right* are sometimes used to underline and explain the worsening of relationships. For example, a left-wing sociologist speaks about a number of other scholars, who, in his view, have been diminishing the role of the far right during the Maidan. Whilst describing the change to his increasingly negative attitude towards them he sums up: "They are right-wing, I am left-wing. [...] There is some political dishonesty, intellectual dishonesty on their part". A political scientist, on the other hand, speaks about not being able to preserve "normal relationships", among others, with scholars of "left-wing or radical left views who turned to denigrating the "fascist junta".

In this respect, splits in the academic relationships often coincided with some existing differences in political views which resulted in what, as another academic describes, is a "visualisation of the ideological affiliations of this or that colleague: those who rather had [...] right-wing or far left orientations mainly tended to have a more pro-Russian position [...] the moderate left [...] were mainly on the other side". Although such generalisations may seem to present a binary and somewhat simplistic interpretation, they suggest that, often, break-ups of academic relationships

and radicalisation of discourse related to reactions to the developments in Ukraine have interwoven with and intensified the existing differences in scholars' political views: "the existing dividing lines have become crystallised", a respondent notes. This is not to suggest that the splits have been completely pre-determined by the scholars' positioning at different ends of the political spectrum: if that were the case, none of these would have been seen as something surprising, unexpected, or disappointing. Rather, this points to the scholars establishing links and continuities between academics' views on the situation in Ukraine and their wider political views, as well as alliances or oppositions based on these, with an attempt to explain further polarisation of the intellectual field as something that has already been prone to divisions.

The idea of maintaining boundaries within scholarly communities reflects in a practice that has long been described as one of the key features of intellectuals. Bourdieu argues that "a central property of the intellectual field" is that it "is the site of struggles over who does and does not belong to it". (Wacquant, 1989, p. 4). Suny and Kennedy (1999, p. 404) suggest that intellectuals may attempt to delegitimise others by denying them the intellectual distinction. Similarly, some of my respondents, while commenting on their relationships with other scholars, discursively deprive others of 'proper' scholarly qualities. This includes accusations of "intellectual dishonesty", speaking about "colleagues who stop being colleagues", but also mentioning former colleagues in a context where, for them, the respondent "stopped being a scholar or a researcher, in their view,

because they thought I was whitewashing the "Kyiv junta" during the Maidan".

One of the respondents very vividly criticizes a researcher who, in his opinion, "has received a completely inadequate amount of attention from a part of the liberal audience in Ukraine as a super-expert […] uses very dubious methods of argument often drawing upon random coincidences […] has gained notoriety among some scholars […] draws upon some complicated conspiracy theory […] is inclined towards categorical assertions, exaggerations, search for traitors". At the same time, later he accuses the same person and others of "not using their expertise when it's most needed […] in order to promote a particular political position". Yet elsewhere he claims that the described subject has a "low academic productivity" and lacks publications in "serious academic journals" with high impact factors. Short of aiming to validate or counter these assumptions, it is rather interesting to look at the variety of arguments that might be employed (usually selectively, but sometimes, like in this case, simultaneously) in order to strip someone of the status of a 'serious' scholar: there is critique of methods and ideas, presentation as opposed to or even ridiculed by 'proper academics', accusations of pursuing political rather than intellectual aims, and derogation of purportedly not fulfilling the necessary academic criteria (publications).

Such statements represent a form of not only political but also intellectual boundary-setting, establishing a distinction between scholars specifically. If, according to Bauman (1992, p. 81), "any attempt to accord or deny the status of an intellectual is an attempt at self-construction", they

also become part of "self-production and self-reproduction" (Ibid., 1992, p. 81) of some scholars, where delegitimisation of others also becomes an attempt at self-legitimisation. Besides, such claims also help justify taking any further discussion with or about the subject of critique beyond scholarly polemics, resorting to mockery or particularly aggressive language use, and complete severing of the ties.

The delegitimisation of other scholars also refers to the discussions and arguments with some colleagues as having become devoid of 'academic' qualities and the resultant lamentable loss of academic confrontation. In such cases, interaction including confrontation is described as either completely disappearing, or turning into non-academic opposition. This is not limited to verbal accusations and complaints: sometimes, the consequences are more tangible.

Spaces of conflict. In terms of practical implications of splits in the research communities, people talk about *inability* to share common physical space with some (former) colleagues, such as attending the same events together. Respondents commonly describe such situations along the lines of: "we could stand next to each other and diligently try not to notice each other". One of the scholars talks about appearance of "non-handshakable colleagues": "these are the people who would not get invited to a research seminar, while everyone else would. […] They have become marginalised". People talk about avoiding participation in conferences "because I know who organises them", and relying more on communication with more closely-minded colleagues (one respondent calls this "support networks of

academics"). While most of the respondents admit there has been "nothing dramatic" in the changes of their relationships which were limited to avoiding particular people and situations, yet a number of scholars use harsher metaphors, pointing at emergent perceptions of others as enemies, and at inability to have "academic confrontation" at events that turn into "information battlefields" instead. A political scientist recalls his former PhD examiner:

> [He] always used to be a somewhat apologetically minded commentator of the Putin regime, and decided to follow this path now. [...] We often see each other at conferences, and have known each other for many years, and I'm indebted to him in a way [...] I don't communicate with him anymore.

While conference discussions seem to have become increasingly tense and the space for calm, constructive discussions on politically sensitive topics has narrowed, according to the researchers, quarrels and arguments usually take place in the online social space rather than during personal encounters. Unfriending or banning someone on Facebook is a practice that most of the respondents recall having resorted to, or being affected by. "I knew [a researcher] virtually, but in winter 2014 he decided I was a traitor and unfriended me", one of the respondents recalls.

Participating in heated discussions in the social media is also something that most of the scholars talk about – most commonly, mentioning that they could have engaged in such discussions more at the beginning of the Maidan but trying to avoid it now. "I think in the heat of the Maidan, there were quite a few discussions on Facebook and social media

that got pretty heated. […] my personal policy is that I don't find those kinds of discussions too productive, so I don't partake in them", a respondent says. Another admits: "There was a period when I took part in [online discussions] more. […] Then I saw it all primitive and get predictable […] I thought there was no point [in continuing]".

Relationships with Russian scholars. Relationships of Ukraine- and Western Europe-based scholars with Russian researchers are worth particular noticing: when asked about the impact of the conflict on research relationships, respondents frequently start talking about Russian (ex-)colleagues without being specifically prompted. Stories about actual break-ups and impossibility of further collaboration feature most prominently in the narratives of those whose research concerns contemporary politics. A Ukraine-based political scientist says:

> There was a certain bifurcation in relationships with Russian colleagues, those of them who are still finding justifications for the Putin regime, and "Krymnash" in particular, contributed to this bifurcation.

Some seem to question the very possibility of discussion between Ukrainians and Russians, arguing that the language for dialogue is yet to be elaborated. Concerns have been expressed about the potentially destructive impact of the war on links with Russian academia as such, and the consequent decline in the level of expertise on Russia.

While analysing the place of disenchantment (understood as

disillusionment related to a feeling of betrayal) in statements and arguments of four prominent Ukrainian public intellectuals (two of whom are also scholars), Yurchuk and Marchenko (2018, p. 157) observe: "although Russia is often mentioned in the intellectuals' narratives it is not an object of disenchantment since there were no traces of enchantment in the first place". Clearly, there are differences between what scholars say in public statements and in face-to-face interviews, or when individual scholars exchange their views. However, the changes in attitudes described by my interviewees suggest a more intricate situation. While there has been no sign of enchantment with Russia as a state, a number of scholars speak with regret about losing the opportunity to engage with Russia both professionally and emotionally.

For instance, a researcher based in Britain, admitting that he used to be "a big fan of the Russians", talks about finding it "really hard to be enthusiastic about just Russia more generally", and feeling "a little bit disappointed with Russian culture, or cultural responses to what's happening". Disappointment also stretches to colleagues studying Russia but "not quite appreciating how shocking it is that this has happened, and how this is not acceptable".

People recall developing reluctance, or reconsidering their attitude to exploring Russia-related topics. "I did some research in Russia before 2014 […] Now I don't understand how I could possibly write about Russia", a Ukrainian scholar who lives and works in Western Europe says, pointing at the emotional impact of the developments of the last years. Another respondent, while also mentioning the emotional difficulties connected with

research in Russia, speaks critically about the distance created by reluctance to study the country that impedes the "understanding of [the Russian] society".

Notably, while Russia (as a research topic and as a location of research institutions and colleagues) is mentioned frequently when the respondents discuss the impact of the conflict on scholarly communities; this does not in all cases mean that the relationships with Russia-based scholars have been affected more or less than those with others. A number of people do not even have established contacts with Russian researchers. Rather, it prompts that for at least half of my respondents, the topic of tensions and divisions in academia that are associated with the Maidan, the annexation of Crimea, and the war, immediately invokes reflections on relationships with Russian colleagues.

However, some of my interviewees recall situations where they witnessed Russian scholars holding views and saying things that are interpreted as one-sided and uncritically pro-Ukrainian. For instance, one of the researchers describes witnessing a dialogue between scholars from Russia and Western Ukraine, where the latter "almost had to defend this Donetsk-Luhansk formation" while his opponent, as observed by the respondent, put all the blame on Russia while ignoring "the more complex social, economic, and regional mechanisms". A Ukrainian historian based in Western Europe talks about how some Russian colleagues are "inclined to idealise some of what is happening in Ukraine, and I feel sad to dissuade them, because these are all sweet illusions".

Beyond the level of personal connections, academic relationships with Russia also seem to be affected in other ways. Some of the respondents mention criticism by Ukrainian colleagues for the (potential) decisions to publish in Russia, or of going to academic events there. Generally, concerns about going to Russia on fieldwork or to participate in conferences are widespread. Among my respondents, these quandaries have often resulted in making decisions not to go to Russia, sometimes even when this had been initially considered necessary for their ongoing research. The reasons for not going to Russia can be summarised as physical threats, psychological discomfort and instrumental issues.

Physical safety concerns as such are not necessarily the main issue in this sense, while these are often mentioned, for example, by the researchers of the far right (who also describe these as traditional in their research field), political scientists, and/or those who have a certain amount of publicity, combined with a highly critical stance towards Russia. For instance, one political scientist notes that he felt "not only a psychological but a very real physical threat that if I went to the territory of the Russian Federation [...] there is non-zero threat to my own safety".

Not all of my respondents are active and recognised public intellectuals, though. More commonly, the motives of not going to Russia are described in terms of feelings of uncertainty, lack of predictability, and personal discomfort. One of the researchers has cancelled an already planned research trip to an archive in Russia after the Ukrainian Foreign Minister warned Ukrainians against travelling to Russia in relation to the latter's detainment and accusations of espionage of the Ukrainian journalisst

Roman Sushchenko (Ukrinform.ua, 2016). "If the Foreign Minister issues this statement, maybe this should be taken seriously. I thought so. I felt really uncomfortable about going [to Russia]. I didn't want to check out myself whether it was safe or not", says the scholar, who also went through an uneasy email conversation with the archive. Furthermore, the general concerns about going to the country waging war against Ukraine and facing the increasingly authoritarian regime are mentioned by a number of researchers. A scholar that last went to Russia for fieldwork in 2014 recalls: "It was so hard, and unexpectedly hard, because I had done research in Russia before and it was fine. [...] It was hard to hear things that I heard, I mean the propaganda effect... I realised that I was not ready, and I had to leave".

Increasing difficulties of a more technical nature are also described by scholars, in addition to concerns about threats and risks. These include being unsure whether to use Ukrainian passport if crossing the border and arranging research interviews, to communicating with research institutions and local scholars, community gatekeepers and potential research subjects. A researcher doing a project on WWII veterans talks about difficulties of finding access to respondents in Russia and struggling with gatekeepers who "did not want to put me in touch with the veterans". "It's not only safer but also easier [to work on Russian or Soviet history] in Kyiv than in Moscow now", she concludes.

In general, at the time of the interviews, nine out of 20 respondents said they would rather not go to Russia in the present circumstances, for reasons that have been outlined above. One was uncertain. For five people, the question did not seem relevant, either because their work did not require

going to Russia, or they had few Russian colleagues (or met them outside Russia), or they were Russian citizens themselves. However, for five scholars, travelling to Russia did not seem to be a significant problem. It would be fair to say that the impact of the conflict on transnational academic relationships has made scholars reconsider their connections and ideas of joint academic practices, and made them more sensitive towards their and others' words, rather than only talk about the disruptive effect.

New connections and concerns of reconciliation. The impact of ideological divisions amongst academics can be quite distressing and hampers the processes of collaborative knowledge production and maintenance of cross-border academic connections. However, while respondents speak more about tensions than cooperation, the situation is not described only in negative terms.

While recollections of break-ups and politicised arguments have been frequent, at the same time many of the respondents speak about not having lost significant connections with colleagues. These reflections are usually focused on small-scale networks and connections between individual scholars. This is explained by initially belonging to particular groups and networks that have presumably been less likely to split up for ideological reasons, sharing opinions on political developments, where the differences "remained within the normal range", or at least where the "opportunity to have a constructive dialogue" has not been lost. Some new connections have also emerged, according to the scholars who speak about *gains* rather than *losses*.

There are also frequent mentions of being *lucky* or *in a fortunate situation* not to lose some of the contacts, or, more specifically, of being pleasantly surprised at Russian colleagues "who have not supported *Krymnash* ['Crimea is ours', Russian meme]". For example, a Ukraine-based political scientist talks about Russian researchers who turned out to be "even more unflinching than I expected and do not accept *Krymnash* and this whole Putin's political course. [...] My respect for these people has even increased". A few respondents also stress how they managed to maintain their relationships with Russian colleagues, at the same time noting that this might be partly because the latter live and work in the West: "I can't quite position them as Russians anymore". At the same time, *Russian-ness* of colleagues and fellow researchers is not necessarily objectified as a precondition for arguments and disagreements. Most of the scholars mention that it's a person's political views that matter rather than citizenship; some of them also point at hybridity of one's own identity and connections with Russia beyond academia.

Sometimes, respondents mention connections that seem to have been maintained and keep functioning across borders. In these cases, impossibility or hesitation about travelling and meeting personally/conducting research in the same physical space, nevertheless, does not rule out research plans and ideas about collaboration as such, but rather tweaks them. For example, the scholar who decided to cancel her trip to an archive in Russia notes: "I really wanted to cooperate with them, and they wanted me to give a talk... I think I still will cooperate with them, it's just I won't go there". A Ukrainian researcher based in Western Europe speaks about having previously

researched Ukraine-Russian borderlands, and while admitting that going to Russia might be problematic for her now, thinks about the possible ways of conducting field research in collaboration with a Russian colleague. Another Europe-based scholar who used to find it hard to think about going to Russia after a difficult experience in 2014, talks about the need to look for cooperation with Russian colleagues, "because I feel I'm more ready now, and I have to do [research in Russia], and I don't want to do it alone".

People talk about new and ongoing collaborative research. Where ideological divisions have not emerged amongst scholars, but instead solidarity, this has provided ground for working together. For example, there are the narratives from the scholars with feminist or left-wing views who present these as a basis for transnational anti-war and anti-oppression solidarity. One of the respondents stresses that collaboration may continue not only because of the commonality of research topics, but also because "the fact of continuing this collaborative work and generating some common viewpoint [against the war] — this is equally politically important for us".

Finally, there is some reflection on the future of academic collaboration, along the lines of having to develop an (academic) dialogue at some point after the end of the war. One of the respondents says:

> I think it will get worse […] the space for […] neutral dialogue is constantly narrowing down, every conversation starts with "identification questions" like, "Who does Crimea belong to?" And then there's arguments, "enemies", and so on. But I also think it's a necessary stage, and it will pass.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have briefly explored the impact of the Maidan, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine, on relationships among scholars who focus on Ukraine in their research. According to my interviewees, polarisation of the academic discourse and research communities has been the key challenge. Their reflections point not only at its impact on the scholars, but also at the ways in which scholars themselves may engage in polarising practices.

The language used by the researchers to describe changes in relationships is telling. It includes emotionally and politically charged descriptions of academics as subjects occupying particular spaces and engaging in certain practices pertaining to the current political situation. These are mostly centred on the idea of taking sides, aggressively defending political views, engaging in confrontations and presenting these as opposed to what is seen as 'proper' academic activities. The latter implies a discursive delegitimisation of opponents by means of denying them the qualities of 'proper' scholars and thus setting boundaries in the processes of intellectual distinction and self-legitimisation, which is exacerbated by the political and military developments.

The spaces of conflict include public events such as conferences, but mostly are described as taking place in social media, where the intensity of heated discussions and willingness of respondents to participate in them is said to be declining.

It is predominantly relationships with Russian scholars and Russian academic institutions which are mentioned first when the scholars are asked about particular cases of break-ups. More broadly, Russia-related parts of researchers' lives that are presented as being significantly affected include damaged personal connections with Russian scholars, a reluctance to focus on Russia-related research topics or go to Russia for fieldwork or academic gatherings. The reasons for not going to Russia can be summarised as physical threats, psychological discomfort, and instrumental issues such as technical difficulties of conducting research.

At first glance, the conclusions might seem quite predictable — indeed, the most obvious hypothesis would be that during armed conflict, scholars' relationships become increasingly based upon ideological differences, and that the connections between Ukrainian and Russian scholars suffer the most. A more detailed look at the (still limited) interview data suggests: firstly, while describing changes in academic networks and communities in emotional and politicised ways, respondents also occasionally use expressions related to the idea of reconciliation. They also point out that tensions have not been completely new and sometimes coincided with (and were reinforced by) existing differences in scholars' political views. Secondly, new relationships have also developed, and not all existing ties have been severed. Moreover, Ukrainian-Russian relationships (at least on the level of individual scholars) have not necessarily always suffered, whether they were present before the conflict or in the cases where no meaningful relationships had existed (and therefore there was nothing to break up).

While the idea of academic quarrels and break-ups is very much in the air as something that is talked about, observed, and often experienced, when it comes to individual stories, the situation is more complicated. When analysing the ways in which large-scale protests and armed conflicts might influence the relationships of the scholarly communities and individual researchers whose work is related to the affected country, it makes sense to focus not only on break-ups, but also on the new transnational ways of conducting research, struggles to maintain the connections, establishing new contacts, drawing upon political solidarity, rather than differences, and thinking about the need to (re-)establish a dialogue on a larger scale in the future.

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HERMENEUTICS OF WITNESS

AS A PROGRAM OF INTERPRETATION OF WAR

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Abstract. The article attempts to create preliminary features of the hermeneutics of witnessing as a program for interpreting the war aimed at finding new paradigmatic conditions and methods for conceptual description of the war which make it possible to overcome its inevitability. The author proposes a martyrologic perspective of understanding the witnessing which justifies the possibility of an auctor-witness position. Based on the works of R. Girard, J. Agamben and A. Badiou, the author gives a descriptive reconstruction of the paradoxical of the witness of the war.

The hermeneutics of witnessing as a reflexive practice puts forward a number of requirements for a position of interpretation, such as not only cognitive, but also social interest directed towards the universal normative horizon and manifested in the concomitant affective side of the interpreter as auctor-witness to the event of the war.

Key words*: witness, the paradox of a witnessing position, war in Ukraine, hermeneutics of witnessing.*

Full version of this article is available in Russian.

INTERNAL ENEMY IN THE INFORMATION WAR

(DONBAS IDEOLOGICAL PALIMPSEST)

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Abstract. What if the information war is not just a smoke screen behind which the true intentions of a side are concealed, but an imaginary veil that establishes reality for that side? According to Žižek, social reality is based on such key fantasies: "Fantasy is the original form of narrative, the purpose of which is to hide a hopeless situation". This kind of questioning makes us look at the example of Donbas as an instructive ideological palimpsest, the most important layers of which are the realities of the Soviet catch-up modernization: the struggle against the backwardness of the Soviet workers (laxity) and flirting with the petty bourgeoisie (fashion for money). "Enemies of the people", "fascists", and its contemporary analogue "Ukro-fascists" to a considerable degree function as fantasmatic projections of an internal enemy inscribed in the complex ideological palimpsest of the original laxity reinforced by the fashion for money.

Key words: information war, ideological fantasies, internal enemy, projection, cinema, dialectics of the Soviet catch-up modernization.

Full version of this article is available in Russian.

HOW LANGUAGE REACTS TO THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR

(POLITOLOGICAL AND SOCIO-LINGUISTIC OBSERVATIONS)

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Abstract. The subject of this article is the language of war (Russian-Ukrainian), language of authoritarianism, as part of the official propaganda. In the center of the work is the Belarusian language and how it responds to a war that takes place outside the country, how it describes the war, and transmits the ideological orientation of different political forces. The study covers the internal dimension: how the Belarusian language, more precisely Belarusian-speaking residents, create new words and idioms that describe authoritarianism, and often make fun of it. The language of war is being investigated through the prism of national stereotypes, which in radical conditions turn into hate speech and may lead to war. However, the article touches on an unexpected dimension: under the influence of the activity of Russian radical groups that are conventionally dubbed "Russian world" the Belarusian language became the object of attacks, criticism, the real victim of propaganda and war. Finally, the study included experience of similar cases both in historical and geographical perspectives. For example, the experience of the Ukrainian, the Kurdish, the Bosnian or the Tajik languages at

the present stage and that of the French, the Belarusian and the Russian languages in a historical perspective.

The issue of language, politics and nationalism in the context of authoritarianism remains central to the understanding of international military conflicts and often is underestimated in official social and humanitarian science. Conversely, alternative science helps to renew and analyze similar cases and, possibly, to help avoid their repetition.

Key words: Language and propaganda, language of war, language of authoritarianism, national and linguistic stereotypes, hate speech, linguistic alienation, Russification.

Full version of this article is available in Belarusian (see at the Russian and Ukrainian versions of IPJ website).

TO AVOID WAR:

TRUST AS A BET AND TARGET FOR INFORMATIONAL WAR

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the substantiation of the legitimacy of the use of concepts of trust and social becoming that was proposed by P. Sztompka in the context of the practice of media consumption. The purpose of this article is to outline the existing lack of trust as a social phenomenon in the Belarusian media space, which creates problems for the building of a culture of trust in the society as an alternative to a culture of mistrust and cynicism. The article is based on the approaches to the understanding of the concept of trust by P. Sztompka, Z. Bauman, L. Donskis, S. Žižek, etc. The issue of trust is considered in the context of information warfare that takes place in the media space and the main objectives of which are: 1) trust; 2) loyalty and 3) solidarity.

First, it is more likely to create and maintain trust, if there is the possibility of repeated communication when repeated relations are not incidental and happen regularly in the future. Secondly, loyalty is able to maintain trust when there is a low level of misunderstanding between the communication partners. Loyalty to the source of information cannot be infinite, a situation of

misunderstanding can strengthen the suspicion, which has all chances to be transformed into frontier line. Third, the solidarity serves as the advantages of common interests over private, as the possibility of mutual benefit. In the context of information warfare it can be shown by the example of the language: to preserve the credibility of the language as a socio-cultural value, to maintain loyalty to it and to expand the use as evidence of solidarity in practice and not in words.

***Key words**: culture, trust, media, information security, space, cultural identity, dependence.*

Full version of this article is available in Belarusian (see at the Russian and Ukrainian versions of IPJ website).

THE WAR OF DISCOURSES

ON THE BORDER OF THE PRIVATE AND THE PUBLIC

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Abstract. The article analyzes the communicative practices of citizens carried out in the social space of Minsk and marking the territory by means of special signs, as well as expressing a special attitude to the addressee in the inscriptions on the asphalt. The speech clichés and patterns used in these situations are often subjected to ironic rethinking and discursive transformations. It allows to transform creatively social functions of the dwelling territory, the yard and the street, turning them from social spaces into public. At the same time, language games are realized as "the war of the worlds", clash of interests of different individuals and groups, discursive practices of which constantly conflict with each other.

To study this phenomenon the author uses the methods of sociolinguistics and semiology as the already established traditions of urban texts research, pointing to internal differences and hidden conflicts in the sphere of communication between different social groups. This process is

developed as "the war of languages" (Roland Barthes) or "the conflict of interpretations" (Paul Ricœur), which may not be manifested in the sphere of a direct social interaction. Rather, symbolic means of communication help to solve the problems of distribution of resources and opportunities through the collision of different speech formulas and clichés, without bringing it to a real confrontation.

Key words: discursive practices; social, private and public space; urban activism.

Full version of this article is available in Russian.