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Short Note / Değerlendirme Yazısı

Looking at the Russian-Ukrainian War from Lithuanian point of view: Ideology, media and the 'Russian world'

Rusya-Ukrayna Savaşına Litvanya'nın bakış açısından bakmak: İdeoloji, medya ve 'Rus dünyası'

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Abstract

This short note deals with the clash of ideologies and communication in the media under conditions of war, with reference to global and local phenomena. It covers the Russian-Ukrainian War and its reactions in Lithuania. The concept of the Russian world as a kind of 'hard' ideology is analysed. Thesis are as follows: 1 There is no society without any ideology that forms the identity of a community different from other communities. 2 The clash of ideologies leads to political conflict and war. 3 There are 'soft' and 'hard' ideologies; during war the 'soft' ideology turns into 'hard' and as a result the conflict increases. The commentary uses media reports as well as historical and philosophical analyses of the Russian-Ukrainian War. In conclusion, when analysing the Russian-Ukrainian War, it is possible to say that in the post-truth era European values are in direct conflict with a Russia-centred ideology. This juxtaposition of opposing value systems becomes a focal point for understanding the complexity of contemporary geopolitical conflicts. The research contributes to understanding of the complex dynamics between war, ideology, media, rhetoric, and the elusive nature of truth, and offers insights into the challenges of the coexistence of different ideologies in the modern era.

Keywords: Communication, war, ideology, media, post-truth

Öz

Bu kısa not, küresel ve yerel fenomenlere atıfta bulunarak savaş koşulları altında medyada ideolojilerin ve iletişimin çatışmasını ele almaktadır. Çalışma, Rusya-Ukrayna Savaşını ve Litvanya'daki tepkilerini kapsamaktadır. Bir tür 'sert' ideoloji olarak Rus dünyası kavramı analiz edilmektedir. Bu yazının ana tezlerini ise şöyle sıralamak mümkündür: 1. Diğer topluluklardan farklı bir topluluğun kimliğini oluşturan herhangi bir ideolojisi olmayan toplum yoktur. 2. İdeolojilerin çatışması siyasi çatışma ve savaşa yol açar. 3. 'Yumuşak' ve 'sert' ideolojiler vardır; savaş

sırasında 'yumuşak' ideoloji 'sert'e dönüşür ve sonuç olarak çatışma daha da artar. Bu yorum yazısında, Rusya-Ukrayna Savaşı ile ilgili olarak medya raporları ile beraber tarihsel ve felsefi değerlendirmeler de kullanılmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, Rusya-Ukrayna Savaşı'nı incelerken, post-truth çağında Avrupa değerlerinin Rusya merkezli bir ideolojiyle doğrudan olarak çatışma içinde olduğunu söylemek oldukça mümkündür. Öte yandan zıt değer sistemlerinin bu yan yana gelişi, çağdaş jeopolitik çatışmaların karmaşıklığını

anlamada bir odak noktası haline gelmektedir. Araştırma böylece savaş, ideoloji, medya, retorik ve hakikatin anlaşılması zor doğası arasındaki karmaşık dinamiklerin daha iyi anlaşılmasına katkıda bulunmakta ve modern çağda farklı ideolojilerin bir arada var olmasının yarattığı zorluklara dair de çeşitli örnek ve bilgiler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: İletişim, savaş, ideoloji, medya, post-truth

Introduction

> Why rave ye, babblers, so — ye lords of famous wonder?
> Why do such anathemas 'against Russia do you thunder?
> What moves your idle rage? Isn't Lithuania's fallen pride?
> 'T is but Slavonic kin among themselves contending,
> Ancient household strife, oft judged but still unending,
> A question which, be sure, you never can decide.
>
> Alexander Pushkin 'To the slanderers of Russia'

The poem by the Russian poet Alexander Pushkin, "To the Slanderers of Russia," was written in 1831 during the Polish-Lithuanian uprising; it is characterized by the attitude of the Russian intelligentsia (or part of it) to the repressive policy pursued by the authorities: it is a Slavic dispute, and you, Westerners, do not interfere unless you want to find a place in a Russian cemetery. The influence of an official Russo-centric ideology undoubtedly shapes this view. We can also say the opposite: The poet's words strengthened this ideology through emotional content. In other words, we face a hermeneutic circle. It is no coincidence that another poet, Adam Mickiewicz, who considered himself a Lithuanian but wrote in Polish, considered it a betrayal of the (Western) ideas of freedom, appealing not as much to the nations enslaved by Russia as to the captivity of very Russians (his friends) after the suppressed Decabrist uprising (Mickiewicz, 1920).

Before analyzing these issues, let us consider Pushkin's 'mistake.' This not only reflects the concept of Lithuanian people at that time, the residents of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The Russian poet considers Lithuanians to be Slavs. Otherwise, they cannot

be attributed to 'us,' who are subject to the rules of the Russian house, i.e., the Russo-centric ideology. Isn't Europe fed by Russian gas and oil also 'ours'?

Scholars investigate different aspects of communication in the media under the conditions of war. On the other hand, some scholars interpret the clash of messages as a kind of information war. In both cases, ideology plays a vital role. Firstly, ideology justifies the war. Secondly, ideology feeds the difference of messages that confront. Aday et al. (2005) analyze the television coverage of the 2003 Iraq War. The authors found that objectivity in the media is defined more by culture and ideology than by events. Hariman & Lucaites (2003) deal with the collective memory of the United States of America (USA) after the Vietnam War. The authors interpret the famous photograph of a naked girl running down from the napalm. They analyze the image as an influential emotional resource for moral deliberation and democratic dissent. Perry et al. (2020) analyze the aspects of ideology and distrust for news media during the pandemic. Hromadžić and Popović (2022) interpret the public media discourse during the pandemic. Besides, they show the connotations of it with power relations and ideology and pay attention to its war and military character. Ugarizza (2009) analyses the ideologies (nationalism, fundamentalism, and socialism) in the post-Cold War, as well as the role of the media in it. Barabash et al. (2019) analyze the aspects of information war in the media. The authors pay attention to the growth of xenophobia, as well as extremist ideology.

Last but not least, the authors use the case of Russia before the war against Ukraine. Al-Ghazzi (2019) investigates the social media environment and news media in the case of the Syrian conflict. His focus is on children mediated as archetypical witnesses in the war. Kosiuk (2022) analyses military journalism using the case of the Russian-Ukrainian War. Besides, he compares the global (world) and local (Ukrainian) mass media. Lipkan & Artymyshan (2022) analyze the Nazi ideology and its use in the information war during the Russian-Ukrainian War.

The short note is original by combining the issues of information war, post-truth, communication in the war, and the clash of ideologies. Besides, it uses the recent cases of the Russian-Ukrainian War. Finally, it covers media studies, philosophical reflections, and historical analysis.

The clash of ideologies

Hans-Georg Gadamer, a representative of German hermeneutic philosophy, argued that the most extraordinary prejudice is the belief that we can dispense with prejudices (Gadamer, 1975). Is not the most significant ideology that we can dispense with ideologies? However, this assumption does not mean that we are fighting with new ideologies against ideologies. We have an ambiguous situation in Lithuania: On the one hand, it is officially declared that ideologies associated with the Soviet past are being abandoned; on the other, historical narrations are created as a new ideology. One is the narration of shameful non-resistance in 1940; another is the narration of heroic partisan resistance in 1945–1953. The role of history and its interpretation (understanding) is significant here. Pushkin bases his idea on 'do not interfere, Westerners' by appealing to history. He speaks about the events several decades ago (during the war with Napoleon's France) and several centuries ago (during the war with Poland-Lithuania) when Moscow burned down.

Like any concept, 'ideology' has evolved. Although both elements of this compound word are of Greek origin, the term "ideology" was coined by the French philosopher Destutt de Tracy in 1796 (Kennedy, 1979), who, along with other ideologists of the French Revolution, sought a higher, socially engaged form of knowledge cleansed of the prejudices of feudalism. Thus, the emergence of the concept was marked by two things: (1) the opposition of novelty to the tradition by distancing from prejudices and (2) the social engagement inherent in the Enlightenment. On the one hand, ideology claims a higher, universal knowledge. Conversely, ideology is inseparable from the interests and preferences of a particular society, more precisely, its rulers. Thus, from the beginning of the concept, its controversy arises: by claiming to be the queen of universal knowledge, it becomes a servant of the ruling politicians. In other words, its social claim to impartiality makes it biased. This is illustrated by the change in ideologies, changing the ruling ones (classes or parties) and the social environment. The questions arise here as follows. What is the relationship between different ideologies in changing configurations of political power? Does the changing ideology change the ideology of the ruling parties under the circumstances of democracy? Or is ideology beyond party bias? What is meta-ideology's content and attitude, i.e., discussing ideologies? Where is meta-ideology, not another ideological claim to cover what is not covered, i.e., incommensurable political discourses?

The change in the concept of ideology and the different (negative or positive) connotations are illustrated by its further development. In the French post-revolutionary period, full of Napoleon's activities, marches, and wars, ideology is stigmatized as a theory of 'dreamers and doctrinaires' beyond political reality. Such an assessment is already a kind of ideology presupposed by a different political environment. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (2017) have revived the concept of ideology, which also falls into contradiction. On the one hand, they argue that behind the ideology of the dominant ruling class lies a superstructure, that is, a particular social and political system based on an economic base. On the other, by calling the working class to destroy this structure in a revolutionary way, they presuppose another – communist – ideology. As history has shown, this was an ideology far more jealous and intolerant of other ideas than the one it has changed, forcing a new political (totalitarian) environment.

Herbert Marcuse (1991) points out two things. On the one hand, as different socio-political systems fight each other, ideologies become similar, and man on both sides of the Iron Curtain becomes one-dimensional. On the other, consumerism and pursuing material well-being eliminate ideological tensions between the ruling and the ruled. Similarly, Antonio Gramsci (1973) speaks of the prevailing hegemonic ideological perspective. With the establishment of performative Postmodernism (Lyotard, 1984) and, in particular, with the fall of the Iron Curtain (i.e., one more change of political reality), it was argued that ideology had died. Different perspectives of different views and approaches have replaced it. Along with the death of ideology, the post-truth era (Lewandowsky et al., 2017) has paradoxically arrived when the imposition of one truth is associated with relict ideological ambitions.

Finally, Russia's war with Ukraine has turned things upside down again. The roots of the war are in Pushkin's Russo-centric ideology: It is our business, the Slavs, who will interfere in our home dispute and regret it. The war is 'ours' both because we are defending our people beyond the border and because Ukraine was created by 'us,' the Soviets, so we can now annex it for our security reasons. By the way, this war has a historical parallel. The beginning of the war of Russia against Poland-Lithuania in 1654–1667 was the decision of the Moscow Duma to accept 'own' Ukraine under the tsar's hand. However, this war forced the consolidation of countries (not only in Europe and the European Union (EU)) while opposing the European values to the Russo-centric ideology. Can the first be called (anti-)ideology? Should an anti-ideology be as reckless as an ideology to overcome the latter?

By the way, European consolidation came after a pandemic, with clashes of different ideologies in different countries concerning individual rights under the social threat, and Western societies seemed more disunited than ever before. This period has shown that every ideology (in this case, one of vaccination and subordination of the individual to society) is accompanied by anti-ideology (not only as much anti-vaccination as of the priority of the individual in society). The war suddenly canceled these tensions, consolidating the West under the banner of anti-ideology. Lithuania is not a Slavic land, Ukraine is not a disobedient child of the Kremlin, and Europe is not a hostage to Russian gas.

Ideology is firmed in different ways. One is through public art, with monuments in the squares telling about whose 'truth.' In this way, two bunnies are shot: on the one hand, the artists (intellectuals) are made accessories of the regime, and on the other, the ideology becomes more suggestible. However, this communication also provokes anti-ideology. For example, the removal of the regime and the change of ideology are marked by the demolition of the monuments of 'leaders of the people.' Lithuania is no exception, where Lenins were removed from the pedestals during the Singing Revolution (1988–1990). It is symptomatic that it takes several decades to fill the empty places. The question is, is this the same as speaking about the ideologies? Does removing one ideology take several decades for another to emerge?

The cleansing of Soviet artifacts or signs of the time in public places by erasing the occupation environment is associated with a wave of anti-ideology. Does this contribute to anti-ideological education? Or is it just the continuation of Bolshevik cleansing and demolition? Is not anti-ideology an ideology as well? Does the anti-ideology form resistance to an imposed ideology?

After all that has been said, let us return to whether an ideology was consciously formed in Lithuania after 1990, when the independence was re-declared. First, we must remember the negative connotations of ideology while connecting it with the imposition of viewing in a totalitarian state. This hindered the formation of national ideology and did not allow calling the cherished national (historical) narratives as ideology. Second, the formation of ideology was hindered by the ambiguity of narratives after the 1990s: the national narrative was accompanied by a European and transatlantic orientation, i.e., coexistence in a new union. Third, the excesses over monuments without explicit Soviet references have shown that the Bolshevik ideology of destroying tradition has survived, directed against Soviet artifacts in this case.

Speaking about ideology, we should consider the theory of limited effect. Paul Lazarsfeld (1972) has shown in his empirical research in the USA during World War II that propaganda has a very limited or even opposite effect. The result of Soviet ideology is disappointment, suspicion concerning the government, and disbelief in official knowledge. This creates an environment for informal communication (rumors) that is easy to manipulate. This heritage has been alive for more than thirty years after 1990.

Paradoxes of ideologies

We should start with the negative connotations of the word 'ideology.' As mentioned, ideology is primarily associated with the indoctrination of the totalitarian state. The oppressive memories of Soviet reality undoubtedly contributed to the negative evaluation of ideology. The question is how to fight against the ideology of neighboring totalitarian states. Should we talk about contra-ideology (anti-ideology)? Or is the antidote to ideology the freedom of speech and public debate? In general, intellectuals are opposed to any ideology. However, freedom of speech and the press already presupposes different views and attitudes toward ideology. How do we react to the propaganda spread by an aggressive state? Is ideology the imposition of a single official opinion? How can this be reconciled with a change of governments and opinions in a democratic environment? Does ideology presuppose intolerance, hostility to a different opinion (ideology), and militancy towards it?

There are several paradoxes about ideology. The first is the paradox of the protagonists of ideology: by pushing an ideology, they herewith incite hostility to their ideology, thus increasing the probability of its removal. This paradox illustrates the theory of limited effect mentioned above. Thus, proponents of contra-ideology or anti-ideology face the same risks as holders of ideology. The biggest threat is the end of democracy itself. For example, the hunt for red witches in the post-war USA restricted freedom of speech and formed a "one-dimensional man" (Marcuse, 1991).

On the other hand, an illusion, prejudice, or even an ideological attitude would be the belief that society can exist without any ideology. The narratives of the heroes of the past or a negative evaluation of the precedents of non-resistance already shape some ideologies. We should pay attention here to conflicts of values, herewith of ideologies in a democratic country where freedom of expression presupposes a diversity of views and, presumably, ideologies.

The second is the sustainability paradox: one dominant ideology does not increase but decreases political sustainability in the state. One ideology shows the totalitarian ambitions of the rulers. In other words, by suppressing freedom of the press and speech and eliminating public debate, the government is provoking a compressed society to the spring effect, mass demonstrations, and unrest that could be accompanied by violence. Besides this, the theory of limited effect suggests that one ideology is unaffected. It is no coincidence that religion is not tolerated as a competitor under the conditions of one ideology. In today's militaristic Russian society, the Orthodox religion has merged with the ideological narration when the patriarch is blessing war machines. This is another aspect of unsustainability after the Russian Orthodox Church has condemned itself to isolation from Ukrainian, Greek, Romanian, and other Orthodox communities that distance themselves from it.

Similarly, the dominant Russo-centric ideology condemns economic self-isolation, bankruptcy, or even a collapse after the rouble is devaluated. An elementary form of resistance to ideology is laughing and spreading political anecdotes. Satire and irony are culture's response to the dominant ideology; in other words, it is already an anti-ideology.

On the other hand, War exposes the truth in the post-truth age: except for the aggressive country's society or part of it, misled by militaristic ideology, the societies of democratic countries suddenly become clear about who is right. However, this 'facilitation' of a search for the truth also hides the danger. For example, it can presuppose attacks on people of Russian nationality and Russian culture. The latter is precisely what can resist a militaristic ideology. On the other hand, bringing the 'truth' to light increases the risk of ideologizing public discourse by eliminating any debate, thus resembling a hostile camp that violates freedom of speech and the press. The one-dimensionality mentioned by Marcuse threatens not only the mirror-like assimilation of ideologies but primarily the disappearance of shades of truth by restricting public debate and free speech.

In management, we face two principles: 'hard' and 'soft' control (Bilton, 2007; Ford & Gioia, 2000). The first is associated with strict accounting of working time and results, and the second is associated with the order without specifying how it will be realized. The first is associated with the 'slavery' of industrial society, and the second is associated with the freedom of the creative society, although with uncertainties. Shouldn't we

discuss a 'hard' and a 'soft' ideology? The first is associated with militaristic intolerance and the inflexible and unsustainable course of society, and the second is associated with the discussions within a flexible and tolerant environment. As mentioned, there is no society without ideology. Shouldn't we choose a soft ideology instead of a hard one? It is associated with cherished historical narrations and public debates on relevant issues, while the participants in its formation are all free-speaking citizens. What is more worrying is not the more brutal ideology in a hostile militarized society but our response by introducing the state of emergency and, with it, the restrictions on freedom of expression and making the soft ideology.

Despite the etymology of Ukraine's name, which refers to the rims and the borders, it is now the center of Europe because of the struggle for European values. Let us use an analogy between Ukraine and Greece in the historical narration. The latter is significant in shaping Europe. By the way, the poles of ancient Greece, like the European states of today, were very different despite the similarities in language, culture, and art of life. Nevertheless, they united in the face of a threat, such as an attack by Persian troops. Withstanding them has just allowed shaping Europe with its values. The Ukrainian army is a platoon of Leonidas' troops trying to stop the Persians at the pass of Thermopylae. When King Xerxes of Persia, at the forefront of the 100.000-strong army, demanded to give up his arms, Leonidas replied: "Come and take it." Leonidas could not stand and did not stand up to the Persians. However, because of betrayal, the Persians were shown a secret pass, and Leonidas had to fight on two fronts. Is not the Belarusian 'batya' (daddy) the traitor that allowed Ukraine to attack from behind? Let us ask differently: Would it not be Europe's betrayal to choose a 'hard' ideology instead of a 'soft' one with enough room for freedom of speech and the press?

On the ideological front, there is a war of words and a war because of words. The very word 'war' obliges to regard 'ius belli,' war conventions, and international obligations. Meanwhile, the phrase 'special operation' legitimizes the killing of civilians, the use of vacuum and cluster bombs, and other killing machines – a game without rules to test the latest machinery of mass destruction. Is this a triumph of technology over humanity? It has been mentioned that the technological approach in training specialists is dissociated from the moral attitude. Can this be called a confrontation between morality and technology? What is the role of morality in an era of post-morality that depends on agreement, more precisely, on the relationship of power? We face a clash of values: on the one hand, democracy, freedom to speak and to travel, respect for the other, and

a soft ideology; on the other, national security interests go beyond the limits of rationality and annex the region of 'other,' along with a 'hard' ideology.

Rhetoric instead of argumentation

Good communication and long speeches are incompatible. The most encouraging is the threat. The exemplary posture of Volodymyr Zelensky is noteworthy here: being with the people, a personal example, and a demonstration of courage. Besides this, the nation needs heroes to tell stories and create songs about it. A paradox arises: what is needed is not philosophical sophisms about the relativity of values but straightforward, persuasive speeches, i.e., rhetoric instead of argumentation—another paradox: the dictators, including Adolf Hitler and Vladimir Putin, used rhetoric instead of arguments.

Attention should be paid to the irrationality of ideology. Putin's conclusion that the Bolsheviks created the Ukrainian nation does not correspond to any historical data but is in line with the Russo-centric ideology. It does not matter here that the Ukrainian nation began to form during the two hundred years of being part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and especially in the Polish-Lithuanian confederation, where the Cossacks had freedoms but also the duty to defend the rims (hence the name Ukraine) of the republic. By the way, the Lithuanian period (in Ukrainian литовська доба) (1320–1569), to which the term Pax Lithuanica is associated (Rowell, 1994), was characterized by a 'soft' ideology, when the Lithuanian dukes accepted the local religion without destroying established social relations. On the other hand, it allowed members of the Ukrainian nobility to integrate into the society of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, where they held high positions (for example, the great Hetman of Lithuania, Konstanty Ostrogski). Thus, the Bolsheviks did not create but suppressed Ukraine's mature independence.

Although the war started by Putin is irrational revenge, it is also possible to talk about rational aspects. Let us remember Heraclitus: War is the father of things. On the one hand, modernity with the rationality of the Enlightenment gives birth to the progress of technology, including weapons and the corresponding ideology. On the other hand, Postmodernism gives birth to perspectivism with the relativity of values and pluralism of opinion, i.e., anti-ideology. However, war, the irrational pretext, shocks Postmodernism by forcing it to choose "either, or" (Kierkegaard, 1992). There is also a collective memory of resistance works, regardless of ideology or even thanks to imposed hostile ideology. Lazarsfeld's (1972) theory of limited effect can be transformed into

the theory of opposite effect when the effect of a 'hard' ideology is quite the opposite. We should consider it while speaking about the opposition to hostile ideology.

First, we should pay attention to the fact that in contemporary Lithuania (as in other Baltic states), two contradictory ideas (ideologies) compete: one of the national states and one of coexistence in the EU. The latter denies the former but paradoxically supports it. After all, successful defense is only collective, being in the family of EU countries or under the flag of the NATO. In other words, the ideology of the national state is possible only by understanding its limits. This is the case of a flexible ideology.

Before examining the sociological surveys in Lithuania, let us compare two refugee crises: several thousand migrants from Iraq and almost one hundred thousand Ukrainian refugees. The latter is already ten times more, but it does not arise as a problem; on the contrary, it is an opportunity. Hundreds of millions of euros have been spent trying to deal with the first crisis (the construction of the border alone costs around two hundred million, and the accommodation of Iraqi migrants several tens of millions). The shelter of Ukrainians, who will soon be ten times as significant, is not considered a crisis at all, and there is little need for state funding since volunteers gladly accommodate the refugees. Where does this disproportion in identifying 'crises' come from? What has changed? Does the attitude towards 'our' Ukrainians do not reflect the typical European home in which we share common values while living with them? The same cannot be said of strangers, not 'our' Iraqis. Let us ask again: What about our 'national' values if they do not have a currency, that is, if they cannot be shared in our European homes? Are not 'national' values the most susceptible to inflation during crises? This inflation is evidenced by the unjustified imprisonment of Iraqi migrants (literally, some of them were closed in former prisons for a year) without a court order. Are we ready to betray European ideas of freedom and justice while protecting our national identity? The war in Ukraine has changed attitudes towards many things but has not released imprisoned 'not our' migrants.

Let us remember Kant's (2015) argument for God's existence, which is needed as a regulator of our activities, a guideline based on the moral imperative to "behave in such a way that your conduct becomes a universal maxim." Suppose we have a post-ideology or me-ideology analogous to me-communication and me-journalism in the post-truth age. Are the maxims no longer universal in the background of this ideology? Moreover, what about those twenty thousand volunteers from many countries ready

to die for Ukraine, for their own and its democracy, for their own and its freedoms? Is Putin testing Kant's imperative in this way?

Several surveys concerning defense were conducted in Lithuania. For example, in 2017, at the request of the Baltic Institute of Advanced Technology (BPTI), the center of public opinion market research, Vilmorus, surveyed 1.306 Lithuanian residents (Vilmorus, 2017). According to the survey, only 18% saw a threat that another state would attack Lithuania. 71% believed that the NATO would defend the Baltic states. 54% would support the Lithuanian army by various civilian means. 64% replied that we should take armed resistance. 52% are convinced of society's ability to resist in the case of war. However, only 34% see themselves or closed people as contributing to the resistance.

In 2018, at the request of the Ministry of National Defence and the Centre for Eastern European Studies, Spinter Research surveyed 1.007 country residents (Spinter, 2018). According to the study, 44% of respondents believe that Russia's policy poses a direct threat to Eastern European countries. Interestingly, after Russia and Belarus (23%), the USA is in third place (14%). This has to do with Donald Trump's statements. 63% replied that Russia poses a threat to Lithuania. However, this survey shows that only 24% would contribute to armed resistance. Only 14% believed that the Lithuanian army was adequately prepared to defend the country, and only 24% supported the defense budget increase.

2020, the same company interviewed the Lithuanian population again (Spinter, 2020). According to the survey, 73% trust the Lithuanian army. 65% support the decision of close people to perform initial military service voluntarily. 87% welcome Lithuania's membership in NATO and 66% support allocating 2% of Gross Domestic Product for national defense funding. By the way, while comparing these three surveys, we should pay attention to the different formulations of the questions ("Do you see yourself or closed people as resistents?", "Would you contribute to armed resistance?" and "Would you support the closed people's decision to volunteer for military service?") and different 'institutional' interpretations of the answers.

In the background of these surveys, the question arises – what is the future of the national state's idea (and ideology)? Clustering into political, economic (as the EU is), and defense (as NATO is) alliances to resist political threats inevitably corrects the idea

of a national state. Is not the idea of a national state what poses the greatest threat to the state itself? Instead of this ideology being popular in the interwar period and revived in the early 1990s, the idea or ideology of coexistence, of being in an alliance and union, of collaboration. Communication and consultation are essential for cherishing mutual respect and assistance, openness, tolerance, human rights, and freedom of speech. Recently, these values have experienced at least three trials: a pandemic, a migrant crisis, and the war in Ukraine. In the first two cases, the test was not passed. In the first case, under the pretext of health security, the attitudes of the majority were imposed on a minority and opposed the sides of society. In the second case, the imprisonment of migrants without court demonstrated disrespect for human rights and freedoms – if it was a provocation of a totalitarian regime, it succeeded. A promising sign is that the war in Ukraine has allowed Europe to unite on the base of the mentioned values and that war refugees from Ukraine (although their number is much higher) are not at all associated with the migrant crisis.

The media against ideologies

Speaking about 'imposed' values, we already have a history of fighting them. In 2018, the Lithuanian Radio and Television Commission (LRTK) suspended the retransmission of the Russian television channel *'RTR Planeta'* for a year on the grounds of incitement to national hatred and militaristic content related to the events in Ukraine, creating tensions between Russian-speaking and Ukrainian-speaking people and spreading hatred. Before that, the LRTK had suspended the retransmission of this Russian channel for three months in 2015 and 2016. The Russian State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company replied that it would not be a censor of its broadcasts, although it could listen to Lithuania's position. The European Commission (EC) has acknowledged that Lithuania's measures against the Russian state channel are non-discriminatory and proportionate. However, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has indirectly criticized Lithuania's measures as restricting press freedom and leading to censorship (OSCE, 2015, p. 60–61).

The response is similar now: Lithuania and other Baltic countries are closing Russian channels. By the way, the target of Russian channels is exclusively Russian speakers in Lithuania (as well as in Latvia and Estonia). In this way, society is divided. The question remains open: Should we fight against an ideology with the help of prohibitions and other (counter) ideologies? Or perhaps a more successful tool in the fight against 'imposed' values is information and discussion, including on hostile ideology?

By the way, Ukraine's communication success is noteworthy: dead Russian soldiers are counted, but not Ukrainian; images of the bombing of the peaceful population are shown; the Red Cross is invited to gather the dead enemy soldiers and to transfer them over to Russia, thus showing that Russia does not care about its living and the dead. What concerns the burial of the dead has a parallel in Ancient Greece. During the Peloponnesian War, despite the victory, Athens strategists were convicted for leaving the bodies of those killed at sea after the battle and the storm. Russia's defense minister issued an order to destroy the bodies of dead Russian soldiers. Who will judge the instigators of war and the desecrators of soldiers' bodies in Russia?

Although Russia denies the state of war, this does not prevent it from destroying the remnants of speech and press freedom in Russia. Thus, the Russian war finally turned against its citizens. This ideological fierceness testifies to a communicative defeat, while Ukraine is supported unanimously in the West. Another sign of defeat is the flight of not only potential conscripts but also intellectuals from Russia (the case of theatre critic Marina Davydova). On the one hand, we are facing Russia's reckless external attack; on the other hand, internal defense (entrenching) on ideological and economic fronts. Are information and public debate about both the insufficient means of counter-propaganda? Here, we can add another powerful tool – the mockery that Zelensky makes excellent use of.

The attacks on Russian speakers and Russian culture are entirely counterproductive. For example, some Lithuanian pop culture representatives favor removing Russian culture from the cultural treasure. What about Alexander Pushkin, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Dmitry Shostakovich? They and many others can do well against the militaristic Russo-centric ideology of Russia. Although Pushkin's case is different (characterized as an illustration of ideology), Dostoevsky's (2003) statement from the Brothers Karamazov is worth mentioning: "The happiness of the whole world is not worth one tear on the cheek of an innocent child." The context of this utterance is Ivan Karamazov's discussion with his brother Aliosha, who was educated in an Orthodox monastery (i.e., by a particular ideology). Ivan argues that the goal does not justify measures. Imagine Russia's imaginary goal of expanding the Russian world and bombing schools, kindergartens, and hospitals to achieve that goal.

Shostakovich's Leningrad Symphony is also instructive. First, the Russian army takes the example of the Nazis who occupied the then Leningrad: civilians trying to escape from the siege of Mariupol and other cities were shot by Russian soldiers. Second, the

symphony's premieres have been performed worldwide in support of the attacked country. Similarly, a wave of support for Ukraine has covered the world from Poland to Japan. Third, the symphony premiere in 1942 in Leningrad, surrounded by shots, forced people to believe in victory. Similarly, Ukraine's resistance and the recklessness of the Russian government and army have forced the Ukrainians to believe in victory. These are counter-ideological examples from Russian culture.

Finally, let us ask about Pax Rossica (In Russian русский мир). Is not the ambiguity of the Russian word 'mir,' which means both peace and world, confusing all of Russia's neighbors? Will not a Russo-centric ideology bury itself?

Last remarks

This short note shows the massive role of history and its interpretation while shaping an ideology. Two ideologies are analyzed, namely 'hard' and 'soft'. Democracy is at risk when our response to a 'hard' hostile ideology leads to restrictions on freedom of speech and expression, i.e., it becomes another 'hard' ideology. There is no society without any ideology that nourishes the identity of a nation or region. In the case of the Russian-Ukrainian War, we face a clash of European values and Russo-centric ideology. An illusion, prejudice, or even an ideological attitude would be the belief that society can exist without any ideology. The Russian-Ukrainian War exposes the truth in the post-truth age: except for the aggressive country's society or part of it, misled by militaristic ideology, the societies of democratic countries suddenly become clear about who is right. However, this 'facilitation' of a search for the truth also hides the danger since it can presuppose attacks on people of Russian nationality and Russian culture. The one-dimensionality mentioned by Marcuse (1991) threatens not only the mirror-like assimilation of ideologies but primarily the disappearance of shades of truth by restricting public debate and free speech.

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