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RUSSIAN DISCURSIVE TRANSITS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RUSSO-UKRAINIAN WAR

ABSTRACT   The article analyzes the contemporary aspects of discursive transit that the Russian regime performs in the context of the need to legitimate its war effort during the crisis of domestic media. This paper attempts to study the problem of which patterns of the discourse of hostility the Russian regime seeks to transfer into Western media discourse on the Russian war in Ukraine to legitimize it. The study of the interview of Vladimir Putin with Tucker Carlson was performed using discourse analysis methods. The interview was studied as an example of the discursive transit of the Russian wartime hostility discourse into the Western media sphere to gain sympathy and legitimize the war course. This problem is relevant in the context of contemporary qualitative political communication research, in understanding the core ideas that the Russian wartime discourse built. This moment is especially interesting in light of the EU-Ukraine cooperation and the constant development of the EU legislation in media regulation and security.

Keywords: conflict, media, the discourse of hostility, Russian aggression, war in Ukraine, information sovereignty

1. INTRODUCTION

The Russian regime actively uses the opportunities of its presence in the Western media to legitimize its actions in a form of presentation that is understandable and familiar to the Western recipient. Discourse as a set of symbols can be an element of the system of symbolic violence. Symbolic violence, on the other hand, is a system of incorporation of values through their legitimized multiple representations.[1] In this study, we will adhere to the idea of discourse as a special set of symbolic entities serving the political interests of the beneficiaries of that discourse. Russo-Ukrainian war is not only an armed conflict but also an information conflict. Information plays a crucial role in building an effective strategy.[2] The conflict operational definition we will use in this study comes from the functional theory of conflict developed by Lewis Coser and the theory of conflict society developed by Ralph Dahrendorf.[3] Those theories are necessary due to the following. Coser described a conflict as a clash of mutually exclusive interests. Coser highlighted that conflict always carries a set of functions that serve to resolve the issue connected to the interests of opponents. Dahrendorf added that the moment of opposition is the main feature of conflict as a situation of interaction between subjects. These aspects are relevant in terms of the formulation of the definition of information conflict itself.

Information conflict in the context of the Russo-Ukrainian war is a special situation of the supremacy-gaining attempt of one state or group of states' media sphere over the media sovereignty of another state or group of states. Moreover, this type of conflict has the specific feature of being a situation of opponents exercising mutually exclusive/opposite interests as an element of struggle. In this paper, discursive transit comes as a practice of struggle in information conflict. In an information conflict, the interests of one side cannot exist without significant damage to the interests of the other side of the conflict. This struggle has the characteristics of the use of various media tools, especially discourse transits.[4] In the context of information conflict between Russia and the West, discursive transit is a Russian regime's attempt to transfer its core ideas regarding the legitimation of invasion in Ukraine and the goals of this invasion to the Western audience through media actors. It should be noted that for this role of transit, the Russian political regime chose Western journalists for several reasons: accessibility and knowledge of Western audience preferences. Discursive transits are focused on avoiding the fact of the unacceptability of certain discourses by the domestic media by using controversial outlets.

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[1]   J. Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 6, no. 3 (1969), pp. 167-191.

[2]   L. Floridi, "Why Information Matters," *The New Atlantis*, no. 51 (2017), pp. 6-16.

[3]   R. Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*, Stanford 1959; L. Coser, *The Functions of the Social Conflict*. New York 1956, p. 8-16.

[4]   G. Trufanov, "The European Integration as a Strategic Source for the Ukrainian Democratic Media and the EU in Countering Russian Propaganda," Journal of Advanced Military Studies, vol. 16, no. 1 (2025), pp. 109-132.

Media, in this case, serves as an intermediary structure between state bodies and media product consumers; this aspect of media is widely described in media studies and other disciplines.[5] Media, in this case, is the integral tool in the information conflict.

In this study, the discourse of hostility in Russian media has the following operational connotation due to the limitations of the volume of the study. The Russian wartime discourse of hostility in the media is a special social formation.[6] In this case, it represents not only the summary of intentions, ideological concepts, and historical perceptions of Putin's regime but also describes the whole era of Putin's reign through the prism of the political understanding of the role of Russia in the modern world. Since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, Russia has struggled with the deprivation of positive media representation in the Western media.[7] Russian war discourse and the positive will of the Kremlin found themselves underreported. This forced Russia to seek new relevant tools for the political discourse transition to gain approval and continue to make an impact on Western media recipients. This impact is essential for Russia to make a tool for fighting the Western critical narrative to create a positive image of the Russian state's decisions, the ineffectiveness of Western sanctions, and the support of Ukraine.

Moreover, all those aspects may result in polarization of views in social groups. Discursive transit is the most relevant Russian instrument for making such an international impact on audiences in many countries. The transit of discourses represents the effect of the presence of the same semiotic structure and text in different national discourses at the same time.[8] A striking example of the transit of the Russian discourse of hostility and paternalism into the Western media space is Putin's interview with Tucker Carlson on February 6, 2024, in Moscow.[9] It is the first interview of the Russian leader with a Western media outlet. The main goal of the interview with Putin was to explain and provide a detailed description of the Russian goals in the war with Ukraine. Furthermore, Carlson attempted to focus on Putin's perception of the key determinants of the invasion. The interview itself gained over 20 million views as of November 2024. This fact marks that the attempt of discursive transit is relatively successful.

The aspect of discursive transit in the context of the Russo-Ukrainian war is an understudied field of modern social studies and media studies. Discursive transit represents

[5]   A. Michailidou, H.J. Trenz, "The Media as Public Intermediaries of Knowledge in Europe: From Deliberation to Democratic Legitimation," in *The Media as Public Intermediaries of Knowledge in Europe*, London (2017), pp. 171-191; A. Waldherr, "The Mass Media as Actors in Innovation Systems," in J. Bauer, A. Lang, V. Schneider (eds), *Innovation Policy and Governance in High-Tech Industries*, Berlin–Heidelberg 2012, pp. 77-100.

[6]   T.A. Van Dijk, *Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach*, Cambridge 2008, p. 120-127.

[7]   O. Brusylovska, I. Maksymenko, "Analysis of the Media Discourse on the 2022 War in Ukraine: The Case of Russia," *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, vol. 15, no. 1 (2023), pp. 222–236.

[8]   M. Sebba, "Discourses in Transit," in A. Jaworski, C. Thurlow (eds), *Semiotic Landscapes: Language, Image, Space*, London 2010, pp. 59-76.

[9]   T. Carlson, *Exclusive: Tucker Carlson Interviews Vladimir Putin*, 6 February 2024, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOCWBhuDdDo, 10 February 2024.

the most crucial process. Here we can list crises of the media and a deep political crisis. Russian pro-regime media cannot effectively operate with essential symbols and create enough impact on audiences without the inclusion of hatred, strong emotions, and labeling. Wartime legitimation discourse is very controversial and hard to cover in the media; hesitations, distrust, and counter/alternative opinions are problematic in this environment in Russian media work. Moreover, accessibility of the internet gives media recipients in the West unlimited opportunities to read and browse through Western or non-Western resources. Moreover, the EU and Ukraine are countering Russian propaganda in a well-planned and maintained manner. The cooperation-based instruments of propaganda have developed well since the beginning of the war.[10] In contrast, Russia relies on massive disinformation cluster distribution, troll commentators, and repression of independent journalists who work in Russia. Radio Liberty/RFE journalist Alsu Kurmasheva was unlawfully detained in Kazan, Russia, on October 18, 2023. Moreover, on March 29, 2023, Wall Street Journal reporter Ewan Gershkovich was arrested in Yekaterinburg, Russia. The repression of journalists is a systematic, structural, and symbolic violence against the free press in Russia. Furthermore, those detentions of journalists allow Russia to exchange media workers for its own intelligence or military operatives. Russia has chosen the way of journalism enforcement to maintain crisis management. The regime in Moscow needs to defend itself from renegades (journalists work freely and do not rely on repressive wartime laws against journalism) in journalism and make every detention an example. Hatred in the media often marks dysfunctions of the media, even with the strong support of the state. Russian pro-regime media took over the domestic media sphere and occupied it, however, they failed to provide enough support for pro-regime political interest information operations.

The problem of the research is the following. Which patterns of the discourse of hostility does the Russian regime seek to transfer into Western media discourse on the Russian war in Ukraine to legitimize it? The object of the study is the Russian discourse of hostility in media in the context of the interview of Vladimir Putin with Tucker Carlson. The subject of the research is patterns of the Russian discourse on war that were covered in that interview to legitimize and make the war perceived as rational and determined by the West and Ukraine. The relevance and significance of this study are defined through the following aspects. Firstly, there is a gap in the current research on the topic of Russian discursive transits and definitions that Russia puts in values that are being transferred through symbols of hostility. This study presents the first academic attempt to study Putin's interview with Tucker Carlson as a discursive transit in the context of understanding the Russian highest echelon of power aspirations about the war in Ukraine. Russian wartime discourse of hostility is under-researched as a vital and complex aspect of hybrid warfare. However, we should first understand what is behind the Russian wartime discourse to create any protective measures. It is crucial to understand which values are the key elements of Russia's highest-ranking officials' way of understanding the

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10   J. Kalenský, T. Osadchuk, *How Ukraine Fights Russian Disinformation: Beehive vs. Mammoth*, Helsinki, 24 January 2024, at https://dfrlab.org/2024/01/24/how-ukraine-fights-russian-disinformation-beehive-vs-mammoth, 30 March 2025.

invasion of Ukraine – the Elite's concepts underlying the pro-regime propaganda. Russian wartime hostility discourse should be the basis of any propaganda countering measure development. Putin's interview as an object of research allows us to analyze separate aspects of the Russian hostility discourse as dehumanization tactics. Russian one-sided propaganda is not just a reference to the USSR and the specific isolated storytelling on the destiny of Russia in world politics. It serves as a legitimation of the course of politics of oppression, the narrative of the Cold War's revival of Russian hostility, and a tool of influence on Russian-speaking communities in many countries of the post-Soviet realm. Those aspects make the Russian wartime media discourse of hostility a global information threat to political stability and national independence.[11] This study will be beneficial for a variety of researchers in the fields of propaganda countering, social studies, and political studies.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Perform a critical discourse analysis and scientific description of the patterns of the Russian wartime discourse of hostility in the interview of Vladimir Putin with Tucker Carlson in connection to discursive transit.

The course of the research is the following. The methodology part describes approaches in discourse analysis and methods used for this research, with elaboration on approaches and their essence in the context of this study. The research context part presents an overview of the literature in the sphere of media studies with a special focus on the aspect of media use in information conflicts. Then we continue with the part Crisis in the Russian pro-regime media, which is meant to theorize the demand of Russian elites for discursive transit in light of the deep crisis in the Russian media. This part includes data visualization and a scientific description and explanation of the deep historical and political origins on Russia's national level that are used in Putin's rhetoric for invasion advocacy aimed on international and especially Western communities. Afterwards, we move to the discursive analysis of Putin's interview presents the set of ideas on war in Ukraine legitimation the Russian highest political echelons are trying to implicate in the Western media sphere. The conclusion is the final part of the research with the main outcomes and provisions for further research.

3. METHODOLOGY

For this research, we have applied various approaches. The first one is a qualitative critical discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is applied to the study of social and political aspects in connection with text or speech. This method was necessary due to the study

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[11]   E. Locoman, R.R. Lau, "Narratives of Conflict: Russian Media's Evolving Treatment of Ukraine (2013–2022)," *Media, War & Conflict*, vol. 18, no. 3 (2024), pp. 325-347.

of Putin's interview as a complex communicative event with references to the war, and symbols as big and complicated structures coming from politics and history. This interview is of extreme relevance for this research due to the following reasons. This is the Russian leader's first public interview with a Western media outlet. Putin's explanation and thorough account of Russia's objectives in the conflict with Ukraine were the primary objectives of the interview. Carlson also made an effort to concentrate on Putin's understanding of the main factors that led to the invasion. As of November 2024, the interview had received over 20 million views. This fact indicates that the discursive transit attempt was comparatively successful.

Other methods applied in this research are content and discourse analysis. Discourse analysis differs from content analysis due to its focus on figures of speech, symbolic structures, and speech manners in rhetoric, with their connection to cultural and contextual aspects.[12] While content analysis seeks to examine the factual nature of speech elements. Many researchers use this method, and it is widely described in many scientific works.[13] Van Dijk gave critical discourse analysis the following definition: Critical discourse analysis is a type of discourse analysis that first and foremost examines how the abuse of power, domination, and inequality are established, reproduced, and countered in text and conversation in political and social contexts.[14] Discourse analysis focuses on extracting information from text in the context of interaction. We can find connections within symbols, historical references, and cultural interpretations of elements of life. The background of the text, speech has a strong impact on the message produced. Moreover, discursive analysis is a good multipurpose methodological platform for interdisciplinary research. It allows us to interpret and scientifically describe social and political processes in the framework of other disciplines.[15] This was very relevant for making a connection between Putin's speech on the historical role of Russia and the prerequisites of the Russian people's orientation on the revival of the strong state, sympathy towards Imperialism found in sociological surveys, which data is presented in Graph №1 in the context of Putin's interview analysis.

Moreover, discourse analysis is relevant for this study for researching and describing patterns of the language of hostility, like ethnic slurs, speech constructions as elements of culture, and the history of relations or conflicts between nations. For discourse analysis

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[12]   Z.S. Harris, "Discourse Analysis," *Language*, vol. 28, no. 1 (1952), reprint in J.A. Fodor, J.J. Katz (eds), *The Structure of Language: Readings in the Philosophy of Language*, New Jersey 1946, p. 355.

[13]   T.A. Van Dijk, "Discourse and the Denial of Racism," *Discourse & Society*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1992), pp. 87-118; T.A. Van Dijk, *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, London–Thousands Oaks 1998; T.A. Van Dijk, *Discourse and Power: Contributions to Critical Discourse Studies*, Basingstoke–New York 2008; J.P. Gee, *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, New York 1999, p 176; J.M. Atkinson, J. Heritage, *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis*, Cambridge 1984, pp. 440-446.

[14]   T.A. Van Dijk, "Critical Discourse Analysis," in D. Tannen, D. Schiffrin (eds), *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, Oxford 2001, pp. 352-372.

[15]   N. Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*, London 1995, p. 265; H. Janks, "Critical Discourse Analysis as a Research Tool," *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, vol. 18, no. 3 (1997), pp. 329-342.

of the Russian wartime hostility discourse patterns presented in Putin's interview, we applied a formal discourse analysis model.[16] We especially focused on the analysis of the course of Putin's speech, interaction with the interviewer, the type of responses, and how Putin obtained the initiative or high ground in the interview through casual reactions like jokes and questions. We paid special attention to the historical interpretations and manipulations given by Putin, symbols of hatred. Moreover, the essential aspect of the discourse is that it is a complex communication event of a subject-object nature. Discursive transit beneficiary objectifies the audience and its perception; they implicate their frames and ideas. Moreover, object-subject connotations analysis is essential for understanding the basis of the relationship between the person telling the story and the subject of the story (Russia/Ukraine). It was extremely important to highlight what discursive transit is in terms of societal norms, a theatre-like presentation of new ideas based on previous ones in the context of idiosyncratic history connotation given in the interview with Putin.[17] Discourse is not an isolated element; its morphology is intratextual.[18] Putin's interview is not a single phenomenon; it's a compressed element of the intratextual formation that Russian wartime propaganda is. Discursive transit is a specific situation of intratextuality of propaganda. When discourse immigrates to spheres other than the domestic media sphere. Narrative takes over through different forms, texts, and media outlets. Russian wartime aggressive discourse practices are tools of social mobilization and legitimation.[19] Among other methods involved, we can list the following. To perform discourse analysis of the pattern of the discourse of hostility in the interview of Vladimir Putin with Tucker Carlson, we applied close reading and scientific description of transcripts of the interview on YouTube. Moreover, we used the approach of data visualization and description of sociological surveys and polls in the section on the research context.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

To start with, to move to the role of media in conflict, we should look at the contemporary concepts of the role of media in general. The media is functional in terms of the dissemination of narratives. This role of the media is a key aspect of media functions as an intermediary between Russian wartime discursive practices and the Western media space. War, especially in Ukraine, is a key moment in crystallizing the most essential interests in politics for the opponents of Russia and their supporting groups. The media works as a reflection of political aspirations and is aimed at representing the reality we

[16]   R. Vogt, "Zwei Modelle zur Analyse von Diskursen," in *Über die Schwierigkeiten der Verständigung beim Reden: Beiträge zur Linguistik des Diskurses*, Opladen 1987, pp. 17-37.

[17]   D. Maingueneau, *Nouvelles tendances en analyse du discours*, Paris 1987, p. 137.

[18]   A. Lecomte, J.M. Marandin, "Analyse du discours et morphologie discursive," *in Research in Text Connexity and Text Coherence: A Survey*, Hamburg 1986, pp. 61-100.

[19]   J.R. Searle, F. Kiefer, M. Bierwisch (eds), *Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics*, Dordrecht 1980.

live in.[20] Other researchers in contemporary media studies think that the media has lost its objectivity and given up its independence in the representation to the stakeholders, and a deep crisis of representation in the media is going on.[21] In contrast, the role of social networks in the distribution of narratives and storytelling is vital too. Discourse dissemination is a key factor in its life as a complex communication event. Interpretations given by the audience are crucial for the constant movement of the story inside social groups and the intergroup distribution of the story. Multipurpose digital platforms allow people to make an information product, distribute it, leave comments under posts of different creators, and share information products like videos or photos. Today we live in the era of the new media-media of participation, and self-creation of information products is a routinized practice (like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube).[22] Moreover, social networks have a remarkable potential for social mobilization due to their dialogical model and the opportunity for the audience to participate in discussions and the creation of media materials.[23] That's why the Russian regime has agreed on the YouTube format for the interview of Vladimir Putin with Tucker Carlson. The YouTube platform would allow this interview to circulate on the internet without any rigorous restrictions from the state regulators in many countries around the world. Moreover, some researchers concluded that populism plays an integral role in the media coverage of ambiguous events or concepts due to the 'sensational nature and absolute' novelty of content.[24] The intensity and charisma of the anchor when speaking, the lack of formal rules of how to perform journalist duties, or vulgar language/ inappropriate style of speech. All of those aspects may serve a positive role when the audience has no expertise in the story they are being told. The choice for Tucker Carlson may have another

[20]   M. Leighninger, "Can Journalists Use New Technologies to Build a Trusting, Sustaining Relationship with Their Audiences?," *National Civic Review*, vol. 112, no. 4 (2024), pp. 17-22; G. McLaughlin, "Journalism, Objectivity and War," in *The War Correspondent*, London 2016, pp. 33-62; M.S. Tucker, "Objectivity – Does It Exist?," *ETC: A Review of General Semantics*, vol. 69, no. 4 (2012), pp. 413-424.

[21]   C. Barnes, "Citizen Journalism vs. Traditional Journalism: A Case for Collaboration," *Caribbean Quarterly*, vol. 58, no. 2/3 (2012), pp. 16-27; R.V. Ericson, "How Journalists Visualize Fact," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 560 (1998), pp. 83-95; H. Kennedy, W. Weber, M. Engebretsen, "Data Visualization and Transparency in the News," in H. Kennedy, M. Engebretsen (eds), *Data Visualization in Society*, Amsterdam 2020, pp. 169-186.

[22]   A. Housiaux, "Existentialism and Instagram," *The Phi Delta Kappan*, vol. 101, no. 4 (2019), pp. 48-51; K.D. Sadof, "Finding a Visual Voice: The #Euromaidan Impact on Ukrainian Instagram Users," in U.U. Frömming, S. Köhn, S. Fox, M. Terry (eds), *Digital Environments: Ethnographic Perspectives Across Global Online and Offline Spaces*, Bielefeld 2017, pp. 239-250; S.P. Caldeira, S. De Ridder, S. Van Bauwel, "Exploring the Politics of Gender Representation on Instagram: Self-representations of Femininity," *DiGeSt. Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2018), pp. 23-42.

[23]   S. Hogue, "De cyberguerre à guerre TikTok: mobilisation de la participation numérique dans l'effort de guerre ukrainien," in D. Simonyi, F. Côté (eds.), *Le Canada à l'aune de la guerre en Ukraine: penser la sécurité et la défense dans un monde en émergence*, Sainte-Foy 2024, pp. 165-184.

[24]   P. Gounari, "Authoritarianism, Discourse and Social Media: Trump as the 'American Agitator'," in J. Morelock (ed.), *Critical Theory and Authoritarian Populism*, vol. 9, London 2018, pp. 207-228; S. Akbaba, "Re-narrating Europe in the Face of Populism: An Analysis of the Anti-immigration Discourse of Populist Party Leaders," *Insight Turkey*, vol. 20, no. 3 (2018), pp. 199-218.

reason than just accessibility. The Russian leader didn't have the opportunity to choose from many options on where to deliver a speech. However, Carlson is a very ambiguous figure in the American media sphere. This interview may have been aimed at the polarization of the agenda inside both American and Western media spheres by imposing hatred and imbalanced emotions.

Some researchers in the field of media studies consider the media a crucial element of influence on an audience of opponents in an information conflict.[25] The emergence of research in this area is dictated by the level of impact the media has had on conflicts. Major conflicts like the Russo-Ukrainian war have strong transformation potential, impacting the political process and economics.[26] The media is especially significant during deep social and political crises in an autocratic state, when the already weak freedom of speech is further censored, the deficit of information opens an unlimited opportunity for manipulation with stories and creating a new reality.[27] The most relevant cultural aspect of Russian propaganda is language. The Russian language figure as a cultural aspect of the war has been a speculative concept since 2014. Russian propaganda used it as a symbol of justification for the protection of Russian-speaking people in Ukraine through the invasion of Donbas in 2014 and the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The Russian language has been serving as an identity symbol for the creation of the binary system us versus them and the use of the myth of Ukrainian Nazism and oppression against Russian-speaking communities. A media researcher from Ukraine, Mykola Polovyi, made the thesis that pre-war Russian propaganda has been implicating soft symbolic systems in media. Russian propaganda applied positive

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[25] G. Wilde, J. Sherman, "Russian Information Doctrine Under Putin," in Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 4 January 2023, pp. 6-12, at https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2023/01/no-waters-edge-russias-information-war-and-regime-security?lang=en, 30 March 2025; P. Jolicoeur P., Seaboyer A., "L'intelligence artificielle russe comme outil de désinformation et de déception en Ukraine," in D. Simonyi, F. Côté (eds), *Le Canada à l'aune de la guerre en Ukraine: penser la sécurité et la défense dans un monde en émergence*, Sainte-Foy 2024, pp. 143-164.

[26] M. Menkiszak, "Why War Came to Ukraine," in *Russia's Long War on Ukraine*, German Marshall Fund of the United States, 1 February 2016, pp. 2-8; A.H. Cordesman, G. Hwang, *The Ukraine War: Preparing for the Longer-Term Outcome*, [report], Center for Strategic and International Studies, 14 April 2022, at https://www.csis.org/analysis/ukraine-war-preparing-longer-term-outcome, 30 March 2025; A. Libman, "A New Economic Cold War? The Future of the Global Economy After the War in Ukraine," *Horizons: Journal of International Relations and Sustainable Development*, no. 21 (2022), pp. 148-159; B. Frederick, S. Charap, S. Boston, S.J. Flanagan, M.J. Mazarr, J.D.P. Moroney, K.P. Mueller, "Pathways to Russian Escalation Against NATO from the Ukraine War," RAND Corporation Perspectives, July 2022, at https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PEA1900/PEA1971-1/RAND_PEA1971-1.pdf, 30 March 2025.

[27] J.J. Wiatr, "Autocratic Leaders in Modern Times," in *Political Leadership Between Democracy and Authoritarianism: Comparative and Historical Perspectives*, Leverkusen–Opladen–Berlin–Toronto 2022, pp. 74-116; M. Higashijima, "A Theory of Autocratic Elections," in *The Dictator's Dilemma at the Ballot Box: Electoral Manipulation, Economic Maneuvering, and Political Order in Autocracies*, Ann Arbor 2022, pp. 32-74; L. Faesen, T. Sweijs, A. Klimburg, C. MacNamara, M. Mazarr, "Case Study: Responding to Russian Disinformation in Peacetime," in L. Faesen, T. Sweijs, A. Klimburg, C. MacNamara, M. Mazarr (eds), *From Blurred Lines to Red Lines: How Countermeasures and Norms Shape Hybrid Conflict*, Hague 2020, pp. 16-31.

soviet legacy, unity, and nostalgic models oriented to the Russian-speaking community of Ukraine. It was made to legitimize aggression and present it as the protection of Russian-speaking communities in Ukraine.[28] Information confrontation opens new opportunities for myth maintenance. In the Russian case, the pro-state media became the regime's myth disseminator. Stories about the invincibility of Russia and hatred towards stigmatized groups like LGBTQ people fill the symbolic space in Russia to leave no space for any uncontrolled storytelling. Hatred, stigmatization, and constant repression are not meant to be a choice, but an order.[29]

5. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEW OF VLADIMIR PUTIN WITH TUCKER CARLSON

The crisis in the Russian pro-regime media was a situation that created a demand for a discursive transit to be made in the context of legitimation of the war discourse. Jürgen Habermas believes that a crisis is a pivotal moment in the life of a political system.[30] Freidrichs highlighted that uncertainty and tension are integral characteristics of crisis.[31] The crisis is a deep-rooted demand for change that may occur when the system malfunctions in effective decision-making. Other researchers believe that a crisis is a universal concept in any political formation.[32] The multipurposeness of violent media representation became a high demand for Russian media actors during wartime. The dichotomy constructs built on them are simple to make, deliver, and understand. The appearance of the discourse of hostility in media products indicates the transition to an aggressive form of information distribution, which is realized through practices associated with the discourse of hostility/discourse of the 'alien'. The crisis in Russian media is a continuous destruction of media as an institution and its transition into the political corporate body of the autocratic regime of Putin. Furthermore, there exists a special set of tools for the creation of media products targeted at special features of the group the media intends to produce stories for. Media outlets take into account the following features of social groups: profession, gender, age, period of free time for leisure, etc.[33] War ideology in modern Russia has infiltrated every part of the social and political spheres of life; it has

28   M. Polovyi, "Exploitation of the Right to Freedom of Expression for Promoting Pro-Russian Propaganda in Hybrid War", *Politeja*, vol. 18, no. 2 (71) (2021), pp. 171-182.

29   J. Heath, "A Defence of Stigmatization," in *Cooperation and Social Justice*, Toronto 2022, pp. 163-199.

30   J. Habermas, "What Does a Crisis Mean Today? Legitimation Problems in Late Capitalism," *Social Research*, vol. 40, no. 4 (1973), pp. 643-667.

31   D.O. Friedrichs, "The Legitimacy Crisis in the United States: A Conceptual Analysis," *Social Problems*, vol. 27, no. 5 (1980), pp. 540-545.

32   M. Freeden, "Crisis? How Is That a Crisis?!: Reflections on an Overburdened Word," *Contributions to the History of Concepts*, vol. 12, no. 2 (2017), pp. 12-28.

33   J. Galtung, M. Holmboe Ruge M., "The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in Four Norvegian Newspapers," *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1965), pp. 64-90.

become the cult of war/violence as action for the sake of action. Russo-Ukrainian war shows us that pro-regime media in Russia are the only media actors allowed to interpret the official discourse of war in the frames and context given by the state apparatus. Discursive transit is an extension of information operations in seeking legitimation of the war effort from a broad audience around the world. Moreover, the crisis in the Russian media sphere in terms of finding actual symbols for the legitimation of the war effort in Ukraine is very deep. Pro-regime media outlets' performance becomes so ideologized and propaganda-predisposed that media actions are being performed for the sake of action to deliver the wartime agenda in any circumstances, even if inappropriate. Media manifests the cult of action for the sake of action.[34] However, there is a lack of relevant symbols for an explanation of the war effort in Ukraine, even in the case of positive prerequisites such as imperialistic trends and positive reminiscence of the USSR's past in the media sphere.

Graph №1. In your opinion, what objectives of the military operation have been achieved so far? (OPEN QUESTION). Russian field, 2024.
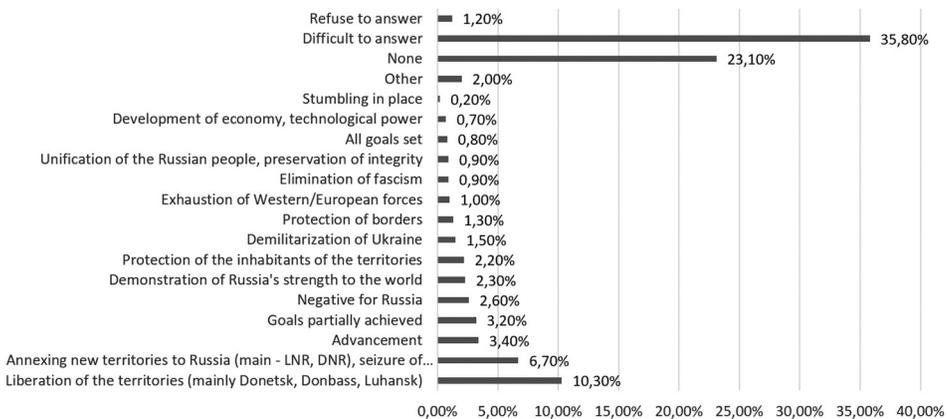
Note. The graph. In your opinion, what objectives of the military operation have been achieved so far? (OPEN QUESTION) is based on a recent national survey, 2-9 February 2024, by the Russian field. URL: https://russianfield.com/dvagoda

The Graph: In your opinion, what objectives of the military operation have been achieved so far? (open question). This graph represents the All-Russian initiative telephone survey from February 2-9, 2024. The quality control of data collection was carried out with the help of audio recordings of interviews for 100% of the array. 1662 respondents. The sample is representative by gender and age within the Russian Federation and federal districts in particular. The maximum size of the error with a probability of 95% does not exceed 2.45%. Here, we see a clear trend of a significant gap between the declaration of high military results and economic successes in the media

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34   U. Eco, *Cinque scritti morali* [*Five Moral Essays*], Saint Petersburg 2003, pp 70-72.

and how people perceive the current situation in Russia. The media focuses on creating a fragmented perception of the event and creating a situation of stress and dependency on the outcome of this or that event, which is not fully realized by the audience. So, over 35% of respondents have no particular opinion on the outcomes of the war effort in Ukraine. 23.1% believe no goals are achieved, and less than 1% think that denazification is a realistic goal. People in Russia do not understand the fundamental objectives of the war effort in Ukraine. Russian media has built an uncertain, fragmented picture of reality, and manipulative storytelling is subject to change and depends on specific achievable or already achieved results to represent (like the annexation of Luhansk and Donetsk as a core idea of the manipulative discourse to be built).

In 2021, the year before the invasion of Ukraine, Russia's Peace Index was 2.993, ranking it 158th out of all 163 countries represented in the ranking.[35] In the first year of the war, Russia's index dropped from 158th place to 160th.[36]

Here, the study comes to an analysis of the interview of Vladimir Putin with Tucker Carlson.[37] In this paper, we are going to use both the original video of the interview with Putin on Tucker Carlson's YouTube channel and the script of the interview on the Kremlin's website. The main topic of the interview is the clear reasons for the war in Ukraine from the perspective of Vladimir Putin: Carlson – how it started, what is happening, and how it might end.

Here are the patterns of the Russian discourse of hostility that are the subject of discursive transit.

The presentation of selective and fragmented turns of historical events is meant to serve as the symbol of the historical prerequisites of invasion and historical determination for the claim of Ukrainian lands. The logical manner of excursus is meant to empower the truth and build trust in the recipient of this media product in the West. Putin uses the opportunity not to educate the audience because it is impossible to do so professionally in the time frame of a genre interview, without scientific competencies in History. He is trying to present a bigger picture of events beneficial for himself and overload recipients with irrelevant information to the topic of the interview. Here, we see the attempt to transfer the pattern of idiosyncratic history connotation, which is beneficial to Russia. The main topic of the interview is the clear reasons for the war in Ukraine from the perspective of Vladimir Putin: Carlson: "How it started, what is happening, and most presently how it might end" (timecode: 0:18). A long historical excursus into the events of the past and their determinants, which many years later determine the course of many aspects of international relations, Putin asked *Let's look where our relationship with Ukraine started from. Where does Ukraine come from?*[38] On the one

35   Institute for Economics & Peace, *Global Peace Index 2021: Measuring Peace in a Complex World*, [report], Sydney, June 2021, at http://visionofhumanity.org/reports, 18 February 2024.

36   Institute for Economics & Peace, *Global Peace Index 2022: Measuring Peace in a Complex World*, [report], Sydney, June 2022, at http://visionofhumanity.org/resources, 18 February 2024.

37   T. Carlson, *Exclusive: Tucker Carlson Interviews...*

38   President of Russia, "Interview to Tucker Carlson," 9 February 2024, at http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/73411, 31 March 2025.

hand, this element of the discourse plays a legitimizing and explanatory role; on the other hand, the narration of multiple events and enumeration of dates is intended to demonstrate Putin's intellectual abilities as a leader and his 'phenomenal' memory and how effectively he operates with events and dates (Knyaz Rurik, timecode: 2:50). This is done to build the image of a president 'able to govern'. It is also an unambiguous hint at the inability of Putin's main political opponent in the West, President Biden, to hold long intellectual conversations without a script. It should be noted that historical facts are presented fragmentarily and cannot be presented in a 2-hour interview, presenting a complete picture of the events of the distant past. Putin referred to many events and gave them connotations without any relevant reference to scientific research. For example, he states that: *the word 'Ukrainian' meant that a person was living on the outskirts of the state, near the fringe, or was engaged in border service. It didn't mean any particular ethnic group.* (timecode: 7:34)

The historical excursus was fragmented with a special emphasis on the facts that were of use in the context that Putin wanted. He possessed initiative, and the prolonged excursus was a long prologue. Russian elites are trying to fill the national symbolic space. The lack of relevant symbols to gain wide national support leads to the necessity of the use of archetypes. The Russian leadership is looking for a strong Russia in various historical timelines where military success, strong leadership, and traditions were the basis of power. Moreover, those times are given connotations of struggle, perseverance, and unionization and unification of the whole nation around the idea of struggle. The intratextuality of Russian propaganda can be described through those references; Putin's interview is not an exception. Archetypal constructs instead of modern ideology are a common and old process.

Putin is constantly implicating the authoritative monologue-ultimatum pattern of interaction with any opponent of his course. Carlson tried to put the interview on a track of discussion of the reasons for the Russo-Ukrainian war: *I am not sure why it's relevant to what's happened two years ago.* (timecode: 9:26) However, Putin insisted on the continuation of his excursus. He presents his clear position of no compromise with the Western aspects of NATO, Ukraine. He controls the process of the interview and is annoyed when interrupted. Russia, during Putin's presence, made a long way from the attempt for demarginalization in 2007 (Munich speech of Putin) to the ultimate position of no return in 2023. Munich speech of 2007 was the pivotal moment when Russian diplomacy attempted to balance between the ambitions of the Soviet Union and the democratization of Russia at the same time. During this speech, Putin criticized the Western approach towards Russia as 'humiliating' and expressed his concerns about NATO expansion. Putin gives us an understanding that he wants to negotiate on his conditions; his recent rigorous ultimatum to the West and Ukraine during the Swiss Peace Summit 2024 proves this point. In the context of legitimizing connotations within the historical excursion, Putin also went over the most controversial aspects that the world community considers to be the fault of the Soviet Union; he subjected them to revision. Putin questioned the role of the USSR and Germany in the outbreak of World War II in 1939. In his opinion, the war started because of Poland's

provocation against itself. Putin expressed the following: *Before World War II, Poland collaborated with Hitler, and although it did not yield to Hitler's demands, it still participated in partitioning Czechoslovakia together with Hitler, as polls had not given a Danzig corridor to Germany, pushing Hitler to start World War II.* (timecode 13:12) The definition of the USSR was used in his long historical monologue only a few times. The USSR is often referred to as Russia. The USSR consisted of many republics, and Russia was one of them, meant to emphasize Russia's special role in all events. This oversimplification of the multinational and multicultural nation was necessary to highlight the parallels between the USSR and modern Russia.

The image of a strong and courageous leader (macho) was widely used by Putin. He led the conversation and imposed topics that were not so relevant to Carlson and served as answers to specific questions, but were convenient for him to represent and impose his opinion. He joked from the very beginning of the interview: *Are we having a talk show or a serious conversation?* (timecode: 0:02) Such jokes reinforce his strength on the issue and the range of issues that concern the recipients of information products worldwide. Putin seems invincible in his manner of speech, applying foul language in Russian when talking about NATO, which should serve to identify him with the people he represents. This person should look strong, rough, decisive, and have a strong will. These strong expressions had a special connection to the idea of Putin's reign from his first day as president. It was not only a manner of speech, but a specific form of the discourse morphology and speech performance of the Russian president. Strong language is meant to build and maintain the multispectral image of the president as a competent and strong leader who is a reference to the ordinary Russian, or he possesses the collection of national traits that the Russian people appreciate so much.

Ukraine's independence and its will as a separate and independent state is a mistake of history in the eyes of the Russian president, not the current reality of the world we live in today: *In 1922, when the USSR was being established, the Bolsheviks started building the USSR and established the Soviet Ukraine, which had never existed before.* (timecode 16:53) His remark on Ukraine being constructed with the pieces of other states, like Romania, Hungary, made Ukraine an *artificial state*. (timecode 19:55) Here, we can find the revisionist pattern of the concept of national independence of Ukraine established after the fall of the USSR. Ukrainian identity is a fake ideology. What relation do the activities of historical figures of the distant past, such as Rurik, have in the context of today's architecture of safety in Europe. Here, the archetype of Russia's greatness and special destiny has been activated, which is relevant to today's events in Ukraine. Speciesism (hatred against the representative of your kind) as the basis of logic is constantly presented in this interview. Hatred for everything that develops, not in the logic of Russia's interests. The state structure and political regimes of some states also become an object of criticism and hostile evaluation (fake American democracy). Putin repeatedly expresses Soviet hostile beliefs about the weakness of the opponent and the dysfunctional nature of the political system of the rivalry. In his speech, he mocks America and its allies; however, he made an interesting propagandist maneuver in his

speech. While mentioning the West, the USA, and Ukraine, he made the enemies look strong enough not to be destroyed easily, but weak enough to be destroyed in general. The uncertainty of this rhetoric is beneficial for him. In the course of the interview, it was still unclear when Russia would win the war with Ukraine, according to Putin.

The dichotomy of the 'us versus them' pattern has appeared throughout the interview. Putin sees almost everything as a result of the opposition. War was inevitable, and Russia was provoked by the collective West. Ukraine and Russia, NATO and Russia, and the West and Russia. The dichotomy of concepts presented by Putin in the course of the interview has remained hostile. There were only relations of opposition, not partnership, for him. Putin has always mentioned Russia as a betrayed and unwanted partner for the West. His rhetoric looked like legitimation of invasion due to the enormous number of provocations from the Western partners and reflection on old wounds (NATO expansion, Russian aircraft interceptions when they are close to the borders of the NATO state members). Here comes the controversy: Russia is always strong, but always betrayed by the West.

The special and sacred role of Russia is one of the key hostile patterns. This aspect is an antithesis and is described through the following speech construction. Putin was performing contraposition and negation to the Western idea that Ukraine is on the right side of the story, no matter the result of the war, during the interview in many situations. He also applies the stigma of being 'swindled' by the West in terms of the NATO expansion since 1991: *You tricked us*.[39] On Tucker's question about who is responsible for the explosion on the pipeline Nord stream, Putin answered: *You*, implying that the US is involved directly. (timecode: 1:11:38) Putin was trying to present to the Western media not just an alternative point of view on the conflict, but a counter ideology of an anti-Ukraine or bad Ukraine. This idea, in his opinion, should have served to legitimize the war effort and Russian image maintenance. In the course of the interview, Putin relied on his personal experience. He mentioned traveling across Ukraine by car. Then he told Carlson that all traffic signs and plates with the names of the cities and villages *were in the Russian language, not Ukrainian*. (timecode 21:38) Moreover, in this case, he mentions the Hungarian language too as a reference to his idea of the 'unrealistic' Ukraine. This aspect leads us to the ongoing cultural element of the Russian hostile wartime discourse in media that took place in 2014 with the invasion of Donbass. Russian language-speaking communities of Ukraine were always used for several reasons in Russian propaganda. They were used as Ukrainian artificial identity cancellation and legitimation of invasion. Putin applied historical parallelism: the invasion of Ukraine has the same reasons as the occupation of Germany at the end of WWII – *prohibition of all Nazi movements*. (timecode 54:11) Putin implies that the current Ukrainian president supports Nazism by tolerating cases like: *applauding in the Canadian parliament* to a Nazi veteran. Moreover, this moment leads us to prove that the main explanation and advocating basis for the symbolization of invasion in Russian propaganda is the destruction of 'Nazis'. Putin repeats this term many times, emphasizing it; it has served as

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[39]   Ibid.

a main explanation of the war for the Russian audience since the beginning of the war, and now Putin seeks the opportunity to transfer it.

The devaluation of Ukraine's war effort and the help of Western allies was also used. Putin presents the current conflict in Ukraine as a result of the failure of Western politics regarding Russia after the fall of the USSR in 1991. He developed the talk on Ukraine as part of this crisis in the context of territorial gifts from Russia. In the course of his speech, he always put Ukraine in the situation of a big political game where Ukraine is a passive object of position trades between major countries like the US or Russia. The frame of devaluation of Ukraine and its war effort migrates from passage to passage, exemplifying the intratextuality of all the theses not only that Putin gives, but that all Russian propaganda represents. The sub-context of this devaluation is aimed at giving the West an understanding that Russia is not weak anymore, as it was during Eltsyn's reign. His message to the West is built around symbols of power – he gave a sign that Russia will not retreat like it did in Prishtyna. In this case, Ukrainians' current national identity is 'artificially created' and imposed by other states. Ukraine and Ukrainians as a nation are always mentioned as objects, not subjects of politics. To support his point of view, the Russian president described a story about the dying Ukrainian soldiers screaming: *We Russians do not surrender*, and *they still identify themselves as Russian*. (timecode: 2:05:36) In many cases throughout the interview, Putin applies the figure of speech 'our people', 'to protect our people'. Alienation was needed to diminish the role of the Ukrainian war effort to defend the country and make it look like a worthless waste of resources and people's lives because Russia is not an enemy, but a 'savior'.

5.1. The reception of the interview of Tucker Carlson with Vladimir Putin in the West.

Putin's main goal in this interview was to overcome the information isolation built by the West. The choice to use an American journalist demonstrates Putin's desire to have an informational impact on audiences in the West. Putin's main strategy in this interview was to bring the internal Russian discourse of legitimizing the invasion of Ukraine to a Western audience, to stir up interest in the Russian agenda, and in the Russian leader personally. In the context of the reaction to this interview in the Russian media, it can be said that Carlson's arrival generated a strong interest and hope to break the Western information blockade. Tucker Carlson is a rather controversial figure in the context of American journalism. However, Putin did not have much choice in terms of either the interviewer or the media platform where this interview would have been posted.

The interview elicited a mixed response in the Western media sphere, but the world is still talking about Russia and Putin. It should be emphasized that even the critical interpretation of Putin's words in the interview with Tucker Carlson still contributed to the dissemination of the Russian agenda in the information space of the West. Some Western media perceived this interview as a very effective attempt by Russian propaganda to break out of information isolation. CNN analyst Oliver Darcy notes in his

text that such an interview gives Putin long-term benefits in manipulating the discourse on the war in Ukraine. And this interview with Carlson is *a massive propaganda victory for Putin*.[40] The BBC has attempted a fact-checking operation on Putin's speech. They invited renowned experts on the history of ancient Russia to deconstruct Putin's historiographical narrative. Professor Ronald Suny of the Michigan University highlighted that: *This mythology was crystallized in Moscow to justify their imperial hold over Ukraine*.[41] Margaret Sullivan of *The Guardian* said that the interview with Putin: *wasn't journalism. It was sycophancy*.[42] The German media stated that the interview was a success of Russian propaganda being celebrated in Russian media.[43] Some media outlets in the EU stated that the interview was made to 'educate' the Western audience about Russian objectives in the Russo-Ukrainian war.[44] The reception of the interview showed that it was essential for the Western-US relations agenda. Some media outlets in the West were deeply concerned that the spreading of this interview agenda could have affected the upcoming presidential elections in the US, and this could affect Europe too.[45] The Washington Post highlighted Putin's strategy of supporting a pro-Republican agenda during the interview in the hopes of negotiating the course of the conflict regulation in Ukraine with the new American administration after the elections of 2024: *the Kremlin has long sought to exploit divisions in American society and interfere in U.S. politics, including through the use of internet troll farms*.[46]

José Miguel Alonso-Trabanco, columnist of the Modern Diplomacy, implied: *Putin was likely addressing his professional colleagues in the American intelligence community and US politicians who seek to reorient the country's foreign policy in accordance with the prescriptions of the Realist school in the near future*.[47] The journalist emphasized that the

[40] O. Darcy, "Putin Walks Away with Propaganda Victory after Tucker Carlson's Softball Interview," *CNN*, 8 February 2024, at https://edition.cnn.com/2024/02/08/media/vladimir-putin-tucker-carlson-interview-reliable-sources/index.html, 31 March 2025.

[41] I. Vock, "Tucker Carlson Interview: Fact-checking Putin's 'nonsense' History," *BBC*, 9 February 2024, at https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-68255302, 31 March 2025.

[42] M. Sullivan, "Tucker Carlson's Putin Interview Wasn't Journalism. It Was Sycophancy," *The Guardian*, 9 February 2024, at https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/feb/09/tucker-carlson-putin-interview-journalism-sycophancy, 31 March 2025.

[43] "Wie russische Medien Putins Interview feiern," *ZDFheute*, 2024, at https://www.zdf.de/nachrichten/politik/ausland/carlson-putin-interview-propaganda-sieg-russland-100.html, 31 March 2025.

[44] "Die Putin-Verstehen-Show," *Tagesschau*, 9 February 2024, at https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/europa/putin-interview-108.html, 31 March 2025.

[45] E. Hartog, S. Goryashko, "Tucker Carlson's Putin Interview: 9 takeaways," *Politico*, 9 February 2024, at https://www.politico.eu/article/9-takeaway-vladimir-putin-interview-tucker-carlson/, 31 March 2025.

[46] "Putin Interview with Tucker Carlson Shows Kremlin Outreach to Trump's GOP," *The Washington Post*, 7 February 2024 at https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/02/07/tucker-carlson-putin-russia-ukraine/, 31 March 2025.

[47] J.M. Alonso-Trabanco, "The Hidden Meaning(s) of Tucker Carlson's Putin Interview," *Modern Diplomacy*, 19 February 2024, at https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2024/02/19/the-hidden-meanings-of-tucker-carlsons-putin-interview/, 31 March 2025.

interview with Putin carries hidden essential messages for those who listen carefully. Putin's speech is addressed to Western elites and carries a script for reorienting Western policy toward Russia and the war in Ukraine. Thus, Alonso-Trabanco believes that the discursive transit had two target audiences: ordinary Western viewers and the political elites of the West.

The interview was set to create a zone of controversy inside the Western media sphere, not only about aspects of the Russian invasion explanation, but to raise concern and anxiety about the political future of the West after the possible election of President Trump. The polarization of the opponents' positions in the media discourse in the run-up to the elections could serve as an excellent pre-requisite for various provocations. As is clear from the examples above, the interview with Putin triggered a wave of discussion, interpretations, and connotations of Russian discourse on the war in Ukraine and the conflict with the collective West. Discourse exists and spreads through the interpretations of its recipients, who are largely responsible for its further dissemination.

6. CONCLUSION

Subjectivism and servilism lead the Russian media into a state of deep crisis, characterized by a growing array of intolerant attitudes represented in the media sphere through a discourse of hostility and a violation of the media function. Nobody can predict when the conflict in Ukraine will end. However, the research community can do its best to study aspects connected to the information operations of Russia. The Russian pro-regime media crisis led to a growth of demand for discursive transit as a method for seeking international approval and sentiment.

In the course of the research, we attempted to solve the question of which patterns of the discourse of hostility the Russian regime sought to transfer into Western media discourse on the Russian war in Ukraine to legitimize it. This research addressed solving this problem with a positive effect on the following relevant factors: the need for the construction of an effective propaganda-countering strategy in the EU and Ukraine, legislation on information and media regulations improvement in the EU and Ukraine, and understanding the core ideas of the Russian wartime hostile discourse. We performed a discourse analysis of the interview of Vladimir Putin with Tucker Carlson to find key patterns that the Russian regime is seeking to transfer into the Western media sphere; moreover, this analysis allows us to take a look at the complex picture of how the Russian leader perceives conflict and sees the determinants from his subjective point of view. The patterns are the following. The basic pattern that serves as the ideological basis for other ones presented in the conversation with Putin is an idiosyncratic historical connotation. This pattern creates a counter idea of the bad Ukraine to the Western thesis that Ukraine is on the right side of history. Other transferring patterns like parallelisms, the sacred role of Russia, and dichotomies all along with devaluations, are contextual supporting elements for the speech. He wanted

to negotiate and cooperate with the West on his conditions only, which was proven by his ultimate proposition on conflict regulation in the Russo-Ukrainian war during the Swiss Peace Summit.

Propositions for further research. Information and hybrid operations of Russia should be the focus of the researchers, as they pose a threat to the EU and NATO integration aspirations and political independence not only of Ukraine but of the list of states. Further research should develop the aspects connected to the understanding of how beneficial discursive transits are for the Russian regime in the context of the constant development of EU media regulations legislation in the context of the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) - Regulation (EU) 2024/1083 and collective EU-Ukraine counter-propaganda operations. I believe that it would be beneficial to study how Russia affects countries with a strong EU orientation and with a certain amount of pro-Russian sentiment and unresolved territorial integrity problems like Moldova or Georgia. This moment is essential due to the recent adoption of the Russian-like law on foreign agents in Georgia.

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