

ZeMKI-Forschungskolloquium

ZeMKI Research Seminar

Linzer Str. 4, Room 60.070, 28359 Bremen, DE

25.01.2023, 16.15 – 17.45 (CET)

Dr. Artem Zakharchenko

(Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine)

Is it possible to make a peace agreement with Sauron? Offensive and defensive strategic narratives in Ukraine during the war with Russia

Abstract:

Russia started full-scale aggression against Ukraine on February 24, 2022. The Kremlin hadn't reached its goal to take Kyiv by storm in three days: this goal is not achieved as of September 2022. One of the reasons for this is the significant resilience and will to fight, demonstrated by the Ukrainian military and civilians. It is an outcome of informational warfare as a part of the hybrid military confrontation. Thus, the course of the invasion has shattered both the myth of the Russian military might and the Russian propaganda and propagandists' effectiveness. I provide the structural narrative analysis of both strategic narratives used in the ongoing war in Ukraine and deployed in the Ukrainian information space: offensive pro-Russian and defensive Ukrainian. My analysis has shown one of the reasons why the Ukrainian army and people are so highly motivated by the resistance. The Ukrainian strategic narrative is much more powerful than the Russian one because the second narrative is not coherent, has a poor set of characters, and a set of imperatives, and finally was disproved by new events. Ukrainian strategic narrative had no such disadvantages. It is shown that both sides of the war apply irreconcilable stories. Ukrainian strategic narrative can be compared with Tolkien's story about the «Middle-Earth war», and the pro-Russian narrative – with the «Crusade» story.

Bio:

Dr. Artem Zakharchenko is scholar, writer, media-analyst from Kyiv, Ukraine. He has a PhD in social communications. He has 17-year experience in practical journalism in Ukraine. Since 2016 he changed his profession became a research director in the Center for the Content Analysis – leading Ukrainian media analysis and media consulting organization. Also, after receiving a PhD in 2010, worked as an associated professor in the Institute of Journalism in the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. In 2018-2019, as a visiting scholar supported by Fulbright foundation in the New York University. Since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion to the Ukraine in February 2022, Dr. Zakharchenko launched the volunteering group CAT-UA: Communication Analysis Team – Ukraine. It works as a civil intelligence service in the information war in Ukraine. Right now he is a Visiting Fellow from June 2022 to May 2023 at the ZeMKI. The fellowship is hosted by Prof. Dr. Christian Katzenbach and his lab "Platform Governance, Media, and Technology" and funded by the Volkswagen Foundation.