

HUMOR AS AN OPPOSITION TO ENEMY PROPAGANDA IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE STRUGGLE FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF UKRAINE (20TH -21ST CENTURIES): HISTORICAL AND LINGUISTIC ASPECTS

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Abstract: The article examines the peculiarities of the use of linguistic and visual means of humor in the texts of letters to the enemy, created with the aim of countering Russian propaganda in the context of the struggle for Ukraine's independence in the 20th and 21st centuries. For this purpose, the text "Letter of the Zaporizhzhians to the Turkish Sultan" (1676) and nine letters, which are its variations, created in different periods of the liberation struggle of Ukrainians against Russia, were studied. In particular, texts from the period of the Bolshevik-Ukrainian war of 1917–1921 and the Russian-Ukrainian war of the 21st century were analyzed. Visual means of representing texts in the form of pictures and illustrations were also studied. Part of the sources discovered by researchers in archival repositories is being introduced into scientific circulation for the first time. As a result of the conducted research, it was found that in the analyzed texts, there is a generalized image of the addressee, who is the enemy. The concept of the ENEMY is represented in the persons of heads of Russian state, for example O. Kerensky, A. Hitler, V. Putin, or in the person of lower-level officials: commissars or a separate administrative body. The most popular linguistic means of comic creation are the traditional use of Ukrainian folklore: a) vocabulary with dehumanizing semantics, mostly with zoomorphic characteristics; b) words with the semantics of pointing to physical defects of the opponent; c) phraseological units; d) abusive words and obscene vocabulary; e) curses; e) connotative proper names and connotonymous derivatives; f) conceptual metaphors. The creation of paradoxes and the use of homonyms as a basis for a play on words are also recorded. A feature of the texts devoted to the modern Russian-Ukrainian confrontation (2014–2023) is the use of means that mock the negative peculiarities of the Russian reality. In particular, the following narratives were recorded: a) backwardness of Russian regions; b) violation of democratic rights and freedoms in Russia; c) lack of quality roads in Russian regions; d) Russian military losses; e) looting of Ukrainian houses by the Russian military.

Keywords: discourse of information war; language means of suggestive influence; concept; conceptual metaphor; narrative; struggle for independence of Ukraine; Cossacks; Central Ukraine; Ukrainian revolution; "Zaporozhka Sich"; Zaporozhians; lexical and grammatical means of the Ukrainian language.

1 Introduction

The current stage of Ukraine's stay in the state of repelling enemy aggression has proven the ability of civil society to actively join the fight against the enemy. The information bridgehead of modern military conflict has become no less important than the direct conduct of hostilities, and has demonstrated the active use of linguistic and visual means of humor in order to counter enemy propaganda. The successful use of certain words, compounds, expressions, as well as visual forms can neutralize harmful informational influence or at least reduce its effectiveness. In particular, the creation of folklore and post-folklore texts that reflect the specifics of the course of a conflict, as well as the attitude of the addressees to the described events or persons, becomes important. Therefore, the study of such means of countermeasures is now becoming particularly relevant. The use of linguistic means in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian information conflict has been studied in the works of many linguists. In particular, N. Kostusiak, N. Shulska, and N. Kostyrytsia devoted their works to this topic [16, p. 60–65] – they investigated the metaphorical verbalization of the WAR concept in the headlines of the Ukrainian media. Such a

phenomenon as the "language of victory" is explored in the investigations by V. Suprun [24, p. 131–142]. Linguistic innovations of the discourse of the Russian-Ukrainian information war are studied by S. Hrytsenko [11, p. 9–13], H. Vusyk and N. Pavlyk [26, p. 52–57], M. Zhulinska and O. Kruglii [29, p. 103–110], I. Bozhko [4, p.89–99], O. Volyanyuk [25, p. 47–52], I. Shakhovska [23, p. 111–114]. Peculiarities of linguistic reflection of the armed conflict in post-folkloric texts were studied in the works of O. Kyryliuk [13, p.32–49; 14, p. 162–167; 16, p. 212–242]. The author analyzed in detail the texts of online folklore in the context of resistance to Russian aggression, in particular, regarding the use of humorous means. It is also important to compare modern countermeasures with those used in the context of previous stages of the Ukrainian struggle for independence, which makes it possible to follow traditions and dynamics in the use of linguistic and visual means of humor.

The study of Ukrainian humor has its own historiographical tradition. At the beginning of the 21st century, Doctor of Historical Sciences Viktor Brehunenko initiated the publication of a series of popular science publications entitled "About Ukraine with Honor and Humor", and in the book "Brotherly influx". Wars of Russia against Ukraine of the 12th – 21st centuries", the historian analyzed the use of linguistic and visual means of humor on the example of leaflets of soldiers of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army [5, p.180]. Elements of the analysis of Ukrainian humor in the circle of insurgents during the liberation struggle of 1917–1922 can be found in the pages of Yuri Gorlis-Gorskyi's novel "Cold Yar". The author of memoirs, written in the form of a fictional novel, repeatedly verified by historians, cited many cases related to the use of humor among the Holodnoyarsk rebels in the conditions of the struggle against the Bolshevik occupiers [10, p. 54–55]. Historians Volodymyr Chop and Ihor Lyman in the books "The Free City of Berdyansk" and "Makhno Rebels of the Northern Azov region" analyze episodes related to the means of humor of the Makhnovists, soldiers of the Partisan-Insurgent Army of Ukraine named after N. Makhno [17]. Alla Demicheva analyzed modern political humor as a multifunctional phenomenon. She investigated various forms and functions of political humor [8, p. 96–100]. Among historians, the role of humor in the context of opposition to the official ideology of the Soviet era was expertly analyzed by Professor Yuriy Kaganov. In the article "Laughter through Tears: Soviet Ukraine in the Mirror of a Political Joke", he called this genre of humor a protective mechanism and a form of official opposition to propaganda. Kaganov also proposed directions for further study of the problem, in particular, the study of the role of the anecdote in the formation of Ukrainian national identity [12, p.106–109]. One of them, according to the authors of this publication, is the tradition of using the "Letter of the Zaporozhians to the Turkish Sultan" by participants in the liberation struggles of the 20-21st century.

The analysis of linguistic means of this letter, related to the context of the struggle for the independence of Ukraine in the 20-21 centuries, is the object of the authors' research. The revival of interest in this source was facilitated by the discovery of the historian Taras Chuhlib. In 2019, he managed to discover the Polish version of the "Letter of the Zaporozhians to the Turkish Sultan" in the manuscripts department of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Krakow. The problem of verification of the specified source, its historical reliability, is currently debatable. The American scientist Daniel Waugh assessed the "Letter of the Zaporizhzhians to the Turkish Sultan" as a forgery and connected its appearance with the process of formation of national Ukrainian self-awareness [27, p.169]. Currently, the question of the historical authenticity of the source (original or fake) and the time of its appearance remain debatable, although this document immediately after its publication and distribution (we currently have several versions of it), became the object of research and

discussion among historians. Mykola Kostomarov expressed uncertainty about the historical authenticity of this letter: "It is difficult to decide whether such an answer was really sent, or whether it is a fiction, but an old, Zaporozhian one", while Dmytro Yavornytskyi, a well-known specialist in the history of the Ukrainian Cossacks, noted in his work on Ivan Sirk that the letter, perhaps, is not real, but composed in the spirit of the Zaporizhia Cossacks [28, p. 335–342].

This opinion of a well-known expert on the customs and mentality of the Cossacks is important for connecting the linguistic means used by the unknown author of the letter with the traditions of Ukrainian folklore and post-folklore. When translated from Ukrainian to another language, this letter loses its flavor and connection with the environment of its appearance or the authors' associations with this community. In the future, the descendants who associated themselves with the Zaporozhians used and continue to use the traditions of this letter as a linguistic means of fighting the enemy. The study of various aspects of analysis and use of the "Letter of the Zaporozhians to the Turkish Sultan" has not lost the interest of modern historians. V. Sayenko analyzed the historical authenticity of this document, highlighting the tradition of interpreting this letter in the context of mythologizing [24, p. 418–420]. Historian Y. Mytrofanenko drew attention to the use of linguistic means of Ukrainian historical folklore by the participants of the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1921, who associated themselves with the historical heritage of the Zaporizhzhya Cossacks [21, p. 253–258]. In the Central State Archive of the Higher Authorities of Ukraine, he managed to find a letter-reply of the "Zaporizka Sich" soldiers to the Russian Red Army, based on the example of text of Zaporozhians' letter to the Turkish Sultan [6, p. 104].

An important place in the context of resistance to enemy aggression is occupied by the creation of a narrative of correspondence between Ukrainians and the enemy. Such correspondence is represented mainly within the framework of humorous discourse and has the form of an "open letter", that is, a public appeal, aimed not so much at a specific enemy, but at society. Such texts mainly contain a large number of means of creating a comic effect, and are also examples of fixation of linguistic means at a certain stage of development of society and its language. So far, we have not recorded works that presented the dynamics of the use of such humor during the struggle for Ukrainian independence in the 20-21st century. This determines the relevance and, accordingly, the purpose of our research.

2 Materials and Method

Language units and visual means of creating a comic effect became the material of the research, and the source of analysis was the texts of 10 letters of Ukrainians to the enemies in different periods of the liberation struggle for Ukraine's independence, in particular: the primary "Letter of the Zaporozhians to the Turkish Sultan" (1676), "Answer to Hetman Petlyura" (1919), "Cossack response to the order of the Revolutionary Council of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army" (1919), "Letter of the partisans of the N detachment to Hitler" (1943), "Letter of ATO¹ fighters to Putin" (2014), "Letter to Putin from Zaporozhian Cossacks" (2014), "Letter of Cherkasy Cossacks to Putin" (2014), "Letter of Zaporozhian Cossacks to the Moscow devil" (2018), "Letter of Ukrainian deputies to Putin" (2018), "Letter of the Dnipro City Council to the administration of the Russian city of Kremenka" (2023). Also, visual humorous means in paintings and illustrations are analyzed: I. Repin's painting "Zaporozhians writing a letter to the Turkish Sultan" (1891), an illustration in the magazine "Gedz" (1917) [9, p. 4].

These documents were found among the ego-sources of the participants of the events, in museum collections and archival repositories. One of the sources - a letter-reply to the Red Army from the soldiers of the "Zaporizka Sich" division of the Active

Army of the Ukrainian People's Republic in 1919 ("Cossack response to the order of the Revolutionary Council of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army") - was first introduced into scientific circulation [6, p. 104]. Linguistic and visual sources of the modern Russian-Ukrainian war are also used in the study.

During the research, the authors used interdisciplinary methodical optics. To identify the peculiarities of the use of these letters by the participants of different periods of the struggle for independence, we applied the principles of historicism, used a critical approach to the analysis of historical sources, applied comparative analysis, approaches of comparative studies, historical hermeneutic analysis, and the historical-typological method.

Linguistic methods of material research were also used, in particular: the component analysis of the discursive sample of word usage; seminal component analysis was used to determine the main methods of influence; the method of conceptual analysis helped to establish the concepts actualized in the texts; the method of contextual analysis was used to study changes in the connotative components of the word's semantics.

The purpose of the presented research is to investigate the peculiarities of the use of linguistic and visual means of humor in the texts of letters to the enemy, created with the aim of countering Russian propaganda in the context of the struggle for Ukraine's independence in the 20th-21st centuries.

The research sets the following tasks: 1) to identify a set of linguistic means of humor in the analyzed texts; 2) to classify the selected array of words and compounds that create a comic effect; 3) to determine folklore and post-folklore features of the studied texts; 4) to compare the use of linguistic means of humor by different generations of independence fighters in the 20-21st century.

The object of the study is the discourse of "correspondence with the enemy" in the context of the struggle for Ukraine's independence in the 20-21st century - in particular, the "Letter of Zaporozhians to the Turkish Sultan" and its interpretation by the participants in the struggle for independence of the 20th-21st centuries.

The subject of the study is the use of linguistic means of creating a comic effect in the researched discourse in the context of the struggle for the independence of Ukraine in 1917–1921 and 2014–2023.

3 Results and Discussion

It is expedient to consider the analyzed texts within four historical eras: 1) the era of the Cossacks, to which the original letter refers (17th century); 2) the period of the Ukrainian Revolution (1917–1921); 3) World War II (1939–1945); 4) the Russian-Ukrainian war (2014 – present).

I. The age of the Cossacks (17th century).

Source No. 1. The original "Letter of Zaporozhians to the Turkish Sultan" (1676).

The document, which historians called the "Letter of Zaporozhians to the Turkish Sultan", was made public by researchers in the 19th century. In the 1870s, during the period of active development of Ukrainian folkloristics under the influence of 19th-century romanticism, archaeologist and folklorist Yakiv Novytsky discovered a strange letter dated 17th century and signed by Ivan Sirk, the Kosh chieftain. It was not the original, but a draft or copy in appearance with a very cheeky and witty content. Currently, several versions of this document are known. The historical basis of its origin is the Zaporozhian wars with the Ottoman Empire, which were particularly fierce in the 17th century. According to a historical legend, the Turkish Sultan sent a letter to the Society of the Zaporizhzhya Army in which he demanded to obey him. In response, the Zaporozhians sent him an answer in the form of a parody of a diplomatic letter,

¹ ATO (anti-terrorist operation) - the name of the actions of the Ukrainian army against Russian and pro-Russian military formations in the East of Ukraine from 2014 to 2018

full of folk humor and swearing. Below, there is one version of this letter (see Figure 1 below).

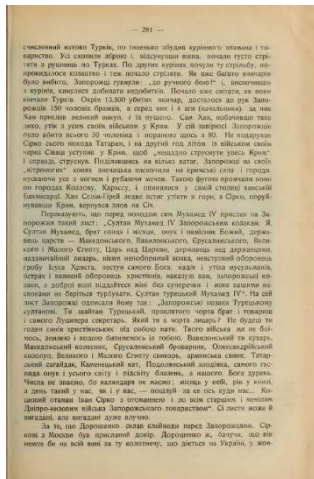


Figure 1. Photo from the book by M. Arkas "History of Ukraine-Russia" (1912)

The comic effect in depicting the enemy was achieved in the analyzed text thanks to the use of several linguistic means:

1. 'Depreciation' of the sultan's personality due to naming him by lexemes to denote: a) professions typical of the common strata of the population (*свинопас, колесник, кухар, козолуп, блазень*) (pig herdsman, wheelwright, cook, goatherd, jester); b) dehumanizing vocabulary (*шайтан, чорта брат*) (shaitan, devil brother); c) a combination of dehumanizing vocabulary with words used to denote professions (*люцифера секретар*) (Lucifer's secretary); d) substantive adjectives (*поганий, пюгавий*) (bad, dirty); e) the use of the pronoun *ти*, which in the Ukrainian tradition of communication is a sign of contempt or familiarity; e) abusive language (*гаспид, дурень, срака, в чорта*) (asp, fool, asshole, to hell).
2. Preservation of traditional epistolary formulas at the end of the letter, but their complete content leveling (for example, instead of indicating the number, year and month, we record the phrase "The years were not counted, the moon is in the sky, the number is in the calendar").

Regardless of whether such a letter is real, it can be stated that its linguistic means correspond to the general Ukrainian folklore tradition, in particular with regard to the functioning of the swearing vocabulary traditional for the Ukrainian language, oriented to the use of words and phraseological units with zoomorphic semantics (pig's face, pig), and also a mention of evil power (demon, devil and derivatives).

The letter became widespread among the Ukrainian scientific community. Historians and poets have used it many times. In particular, the literary version of the letter authored by Stepan Rudanskyi is known. However, painting "Zaporozhians writing a letter to the Turkish Sultan" by I. Repin, painted at the end of the 19th century, under the influence of the text of the initial letter of the Zaporozhians, which was introduced to him by the historian Dmytro Yavornytskyi, brought the greatest popularity to this source (Figure 2). Mykola Arkas added this letter to the list of sources on the history of Ukraine and used it on the pages of the popular book "History of Ukraine-Russia", which was published in 1912 [2, p. 281].

Source 2. Painting by I. Repin "Zaporozhians writing a letter to the Turkish Sultan"



Figure 2. "Zaporozhians writing a letter to the Turkish Sultan" by I. Repin Taken from https://zn.ua/ukr/HISTORY/zaporozhchishut-lista-tureckomu-sultanu-zahoplive-minule-y-povchalne-sogodennya-282414_.html

II. The period of the Ukrainian revolution and struggle for independence 1917-1922

The primary letter, as a kind of manifestation of national identity, gained popularity among Ukrainian lovers, so it is not surprising that in the conditions of the revival of the Ukrainian nation and the processes of restoration of Ukrainian statehood in 1917, it was mentioned again - this time during the conflict between the Ukrainian and Russian revolutions and its governing bodies, the Central Rada and the Provisional Government. The Russian authorities ordered the Ukrainians to recognize the authority of the Provisional Government over Ukraine. In the context of the political struggle between the Central Rada and the Provisional Government, the Ukrainian satirical magazine "Gedz" offered its version of this letter (Source No. 3) using political terminology of the time. Using a well-known plot from the Ukrainian past, recreated by I. Repin on the canvas "Zaporozhians write a letter to the Turkish Sultan", the artist of "Gedz" created a humorous cartoon in which, instead of Zaporozhians, the leading figures of the Ukrainian revolution were depicted: members of the Central Rada and the General Secretariat, who responded to the wishes of Alexander Kerensky, head of the Provisional Government of Russia, to preserve a united and indivisible Russia, and prepared an answer in the style of the Zaporozhians. The picture is supplemented by the text of an unknown author under the pseudonym "Mr. Kotskyi", who expressed his attitude towards the Russian authorities in numerous paraphrases, stylized according to the original text of the letter: "*шайтан кадетський*" ("cadet devil"), "*буржуйський кухар*" ("bourgeois cook"), "*більшовицьке опудало*" ("Bolshevik scarecrow"). In the text, we find a decisive and categorical answer to the overthrown head of the Provisional Government: "*Не вартий ти українців під собою мати!*" ("You are not worthy of having Ukrainians under you!"). The artist puts these words into the mouth of a person who enjoyed unlimited authority among Ukrainian citizens - the "father of Ukrainian cooperation" Mykola Levitskyi. Linguistic means of humor are complemented by visual ones. On the cartoon of the well-known picture of I. Repin, in the image of Zaporozhians, we see figures of the Central Rada and the General Secretariat [9, p. 4]. (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Taken from https://zn.ua/ukr/HISTORY/zaporozhchishut-lista-tureckomu-sultanu-zahoplive-minule-y-povchalne-sogodennya-282414_.html

In 1919, Zaporozhians' letter to the Turkish sultan was used several times as a language tool to fight against enemies. In the conditions of the second war of Bolshevik Russia against the Ukrainian People's Republic (1918–1921), in the winter of 1919, the communists, with the help of populist propaganda, managed to attract to their side Ukrainian insurgent leaders and their numerous units: Zeleny, Grigoriev, Kotsur, Khimenko, Makhno [19]. Vasyl Bozhenko's Taraschan Division also fought on the side of the Bolsheviks. This "red captain" was born in the territory of Central Ukraine, in the Cossack village of Berezhinka. A significant part of the fighters of the Taraschan Division, formed at the end of 1918 in the neutral zone in Chernihiv Oblast, were Ukrainians. Bozhenko considered himself a Ukrainian by nationality, he communicated with his soldiers in the Ukrainian language. His unit, together with the Bohun Division of Mykola Shchors, took part in the capture of Kyiv by the Bolsheviks in February 1919 [20].

In April 1919, the command of the Bolshevik Ukrainian Front, headed by Volodymyr Antonov-Ovsienko, received a letter from the military leadership of the Ukrainian People's Republic, which urged them to stop the war in Ukraine in order to save the lives of the soldiers. In response, the "red captains" V. Bozhenko, M. Shchors, V. Primakov, K. Kvyatyk, the heads of the divisions of the Red Army, decided to respond to the soldiers of the Ukrainian People's Republic, using the traditions of Ukrainian historical folklore.



Figure 4. "Answer to Mr. Hetman Petlyura" (1919). Taken from the website istpravda.com.ua

The authors of the text (Figure 4) use constructions that connect it with the already well-known letter of the Cossacks ("As in the old days, as Zaporozhians to Sultan, so we answer you"). For the same purpose, the concept of COSSACKS was used, the representatives of which are the words: Cossacks of the Red Army.

The comic effect in portraying opponents is achieved thanks to the use of the following linguistic means:

- 'Depreciation' of the person of the addressee (Petlyura) by using: a) a lexeme with zoomorphic dehumanizing semantics (*собака, собача брехня*) (dog, dog lie); b) epithets (*собака, собача брехня*) (damned), c) the pronoun *ти* (*ми тобі відповідаєм*); d) abusive language (*брехун*) (liar); e) phraseological units (*з розуму звихнувся, боки напарили*), e) connotative proper names (*Иуда*) (Judas).
- Creating vivid visual images (*руки ... досягають до горла твого; не доноси ти ішанів до цього літа*) (hands ... reaching for your throat; you will not manage to wear pants this summer).

The text of the letter is built with the use of suggestive means of influencing the recipient, in particular, an implicit antithesis is built within the binary opposition of *own - alien*. This organically represents the general grand narrative of Bolshevik ideology, in which the mentioned opposition is represented in the concepts of *БІДНІ – ПАНИ* (POOR – MASTERS). The following words and compounds become verbalizers of the concept *БІДНІ* POOR (that is, own): poor peasants, working poor, poor peasantry, poor hungry people, working poor people of Ukraine, poor workers, free peasantry, Cossack peasants, Russian workers, free Hungary. *MASTERS* are placed in the category of alien. In the text, the concept of *ПАНИ* (MASTERS) is verbalized by the following linguistic units: (*пан, польські пани, поміщики, чужинці* (*французькі, грецькі, румунські цуки*), *жадні узурпатори, кривоніці, кулаки, польське шляхетство, українські живоглоту кулаки, царські генерали, французькі буржуї, пан-гетьман буржуїне французької та польської милости*, etc.) (pan, Polish pans, landlords, foreigners (French, Greek, Romanian pikes), greedy usurpers, bloodsuckers, kulaks, Polish nobility, Ukrainian gluttonous kulaks, tsarist generals, French bourgeois, pan-hetman bourgeois French and Polish mercy, etc.). In this way, the conceptual metaphors *POVERTY* as *VIRTUE*, *WEALTH* as *DEFICIENCY* were formed. In order to have a suggestive effect on the reader, the authors resort to the technique of connection, which consists in introducing the word-seme, which was not present in its systemic meaning, by introducing the word into a certain micro-context [3, p.86]. In particular, the word representative of the addressee (Petlyura) is assigned a negative seme, since words with negative connotations are used both for him and for his surroundings.

This text can be considered an indicator of the embodiment of the narratives of the Bolshevik occupation of Ukrainian territories. It coincides with the modern Russian narrative, built within the boundaries of the division of peoples and countries according to the category of *own - alien*, where Russia and Hungary are represented as *own*, and Poland, France, Greece, Romania - as *alien*, foreign. Also units of Soviet slang, in particular, the language of hostility (*буржуїни, кулаки*) (bourgeois, kulaks) is used. In favor of the fact that the text was created on the basis of the Russian Bolshevik ideology, the existence of its Russian-language version also testifies (Figure 5).

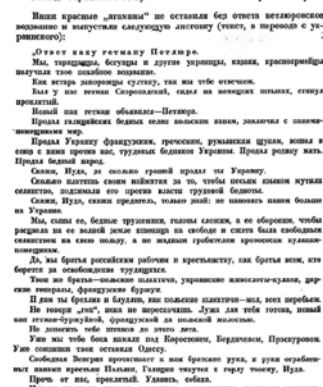


Figure 5. Russian-language version of the letter (taken from V. Antonov-Ovsienko's book "Notes on the Civil War". Book 3. <http://irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/ulib/item/UKR0008752>

It is also important to focus attention on individual formulations and refute false information from this source of Bolshevik propaganda:

1. “Був у нас гетьман Скоропадській, сидів на списах німецьких” (“We had a hetman of Skoropadskiy, sitting on German spears”) - in this line, the authors hint that the allies of the hetman of the Ukrainian State P. Skoropadskiy were German and Austro-Hungarian troops.
2. “Продав [Петлюра] Галиційських бідних селян польським панам. Змовився з ними...” (“He [Petlyura] sold Galician poor peasants to Polish lords. Conspired with them...”) - manipulation of the Bolsheviks. In 1919, Petlyura did not conclude an agreement with the Poles regarding Galicia. In 1919, the Army of the People's Republic of Ukraine fought against the Poles in Volyn.
3. “Заключив договір з поміщиками” (“Concluded an agreement with the landlords”) - false information. Petlyura was a socialist, so he did not enjoy the support of the wealthy strata (bourgeoisie) and did not introduce laws in favor of entrepreneurs and landlords (large landowners).
4. “Продав рідну Україну чужинцям – французьким, грецьким, та румунським цукам, зробив зв'язок з ними проти нас, працюючого бідного люду України. Продав рідну неньку, продав бідний голодний люд” (“He sold his native Ukraine to foreigners - French, Greek, and Romanian pikemen, and made a connection with them against us, the working poor people of Ukraine. He sold own mother, he sold poor, hungry people”) - a manipulation of the Bolsheviks. Petlyura did not conclude any agreements with France, Greece, or Romania regarding military aid.
5. “Твої ж брати – польське шляхетство, українські живоглоти кулаки, царські генерали, та французькі буржуї” (“Your brothers are the Polish nobility, Ukrainian kulaks, tsarist generals, and the French bourgeoisie”) - Bolshevik manipulation. In 1919, the Ukrainian People's Republic led by Petlyura fought in Volyn against Poland; Russian generals - Denikinians, supporters of a single, indivisible Russia - considered Petlyura their bitter enemy. The French did not provide any support to the UNR, which was headed by Simon Petlyura.
6. “Пану-гетьману Петлюри” (“To Mr. Hetman Petlyura”) - false information, because Petlyura never used the term “hetman” in relation to his position.

Source No. 5. “Cossack response to the order of the Revolutionary Council of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army” (1919).

On June 10, 1919, during the war with the Russian Bolsheviks in Ukraine, the Cossacks of the “Zaporizka Sich” division (formed by Ataman Yukhym Bozhko in January 1919) received an order from the Reds to lay down their arms. In response, the soldiers of this unit, who tried to adhere to the traditions of the Zaporizhzhya Cossacks, sent a letter to the Russian Red Army [18, p. 57–63]. Its content also confirms the use of means of Ukrainian historical folklore: “Letter of Zaporozhians to the Turkish Sultan” [6, p. 104]. The text is presented below:

«Брехали Вашого московського батька сини та ж ви з ними. Українська армія під проводом батька Петлюри за 15 днів дійшла з боєм від Кременця аж до Деражні 200 верстов із гаком. Далеко кущому до зайця, ватажків повстанських не вам, невмивакам розстрілювати, бо на славній Україні, де грак – там козак, а де байрак, там сто козаків.

Які Ви в дідька трудящіся, Ви коли і трудитесь над тим, щоб пограбувати Український люд! Але й воша певно пріє, коли смокче людську кров.

Не вам, пройдиштям, нам козакам видавати накази, бо негодні ви цілувати нас там, звідкіля ноги ростуть. Не Петлюра брехав та обманював нас, то ви, собачня, брешете на нашого батька. Та гаразд. Ми за це це не раз натовчемо вам пику.

Не дождати вам, хлопці, щоб козаки вийшли з білим прапором. З грабіжниками переговорів не ведуть, зброї не кладуть, а, піймавши, мов собаку, б'ють.

З московської влади (подумаєш, яка пишна пані) сміємося, а її червоної армії з комісарами та чревичайками не боїмося. Щоб ви так дихали, як стара собака після падала бздить, коли насрав хто-небудь!

Свою козацьку старшину ми добре знаємо, з нею в купі хліб і сіль споживаємо і вас, харцизяк, разом з нею чухраємо...

Отже, раз і назавжди знайте, що наказів ваших виконувати ми й не гадаємо на чуба вашу злодіяцьку «раду» на вуха, на спину і те місце, що нижче від спину натягаємо, шомполами одчухраємо. Помилювання нікому не буде.

Ваш наказ ми уважно прочитали, крім дурниць нічого в ньому не знайшли і вам на нього відповідь склали – дурно часу не гайте, наказів не висилайте, цупкіше штани підтягайте та з України, куди очі глядять утікайте – нам таких дурнів не треба.

А папірець на якому Ви цей наказ друкували присилайте. Чистий спробували й наче нічогенький, м'яккий, цупкий і не рветься для козацької потреби пригодиться.

Запоріжського війська старшина та козацтво».

“The sons of your Moscow father lied, and you along with them. The Ukrainian army under the leadership of Petlyura's father in 15 days reached with a battle from Kremenets all the way to Derazhna over 200 versts. It is far from a lame to hare, the leaders of the rebels are not for you, unwashed people, to be shoot, because in glorious Ukraine, where there is a rook, there is a Cossack, and where there is a bairak, there are a hundred Cossacks.

What kind of working men you are, when you work hard to rob the Ukrainian people! But a louse also probably sweats when it sucks human blood.

It is not for you, rascals, to issue orders to us Cossacks, because you are not fit to kiss us where our legs grow from. It wasn't Petlyura who lied and deceived us, you, bitch, are lying about our father. That's okay. For this, we will repeatedly beat your head.

You guys will not see the Cossacks to come out with a white flag. We don't negotiate with robbers, we don't lay down our weapons, but when we catch them, we beat them.

We laugh at the Moscow government (imagine what a “magnificent lady”), but we are not afraid of its Red Army with its commissars and special forces. We wish you breathe like an old dog barks after a carrion when someone shits!

We know our Cossack foreman very well, we eat bread and salt in heaps with it, and we eat you together with it...

So, know once and for all that we don't want to carry out your orders and do not think about your thieving “council” on the forehead, on the ears, on the back and the place that is lower from the back, we pull it open with ramrods. There will be no pardon for anyone.

We carefully read your order, found nothing but nonsense in it and wrote an answer for you - don't waste time, don't send orders, pull up your tighter pants and run away from Ukraine as far as you can see - we don't need such fools.

And send the paper on which you printed this order. We tried the clean one, and as if it were rather good, soft, pungent and does not tear, it would be useful for Cossack needs.

Foreman and Cossacks of the Zaporizhzhya army”.

In this text, there is also a Cossack theme, in particular, it is telling that all the authors of the analyzed letters call themselves Cossacks. The means of the comic are also common. In particular, abusive language was also used in relation to the opponent (брехати, дурні, пройдисвіти (lying, fools, scoundrels)), lexemes with zoomorphic semantics were used (собачня, стара собака, воша (dog, old dog, louse)). The authors also resort to expressing the text with idioms (куди очі глядять; натовчемо вам пику; далеко кущому до зайця; де грак – там козак, а де байрак, там сто козаків) (where the eyes look; we'll give you a pike; the lame is far from the hare; where a rook is a Cossack, and where a bairak, there are a hundred Cossacks)). Moreover, this letter uses curses traditional

for Ukrainian folklore, which was not recorded in the two previous letters (*Щоб ви так дихали, як стара собака... (Wish that you breathed like an old dog...)*). At the same time, the representatives of the categories *own - alien* are different from the text of the previous letter. In particular, the “own” category is represented by the concepts of the Ukrainian army, Petlyur’s father, and the “alien” category by the concepts of the *московська влада, московського батька сини, червона армія, комісари, чрезвычайки, злодіяцька «рада»* (Moscow government, the sons of Moscow father, the Red Army, commissars, emergency forces², the thief “council”³).

The authors of both letters use the connection method. The negative semes in this text are imposed to the concept of the Revolutionary Council of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army. For example, the representatives of this COUNCIL as a concept are the words *зrabіжники, невмиваки (robbers, scoundrels)*, etc., and the epithet *злодіяцька (thief)* is used in relation to the council itself.

In 1920, we again notice an attempt to use the humor of Ukrainian historical folklore as a means of Russian political propaganda. In the 19th century, when the linguistic and visual version of the original letter appeared, the Russian authorities formed a narrative that the Zaporozhians were part of not only Ukrainian, but also Russian history. Russia tried to appropriate the history of the Ukrainian Cossacks, so it used a fragment of Ukrainian folklore for its own political propaganda, understanding its powerful potential. But the Russians used only the picture of I. Repin, while they could not use the text, probably, realizing that during the translation into Russian, Ukrainian historical folklore will lose its strength and color. In 1920 and 1926, we have two interpretations of I. Repin’s painting “Zaporozhians writing a letter to the Turkish Sultan” (Figures 6-7). In the first case, it was used as an illustration of the answer of the Bolshevik authorities to the English diplomat Lord D. Curzon during the discussion of the border issue between Bolshevik Russia and Poland. And the second one concerns answer to Chamberlain in 1926. In both cases, we see an attempt to use the visual version and the recognition of the inability to offer a version of the letter in Russian.



Figures 6-7. The cartoons of 1920 and 1926 are taken from https://zn.ua/ukr/HISTORY/zaporozhci-pishut-lista-tureckomu-sultanu-zahoplive-minule-y-povchalne-sogodennya-282414_.html

III. The period of the Second World War

Source No. 6 “Letter of partisans of the H detachment to Hitler” (1943).

During the Second World War, many Ukrainians fought in the ranks of the Red Army and were members of the resistance partisan movement. The Ukrainian identity of one of the Polissia partisan units was revealed, in particular, in the writing of a letter to Adolf Hitler, the Führer of Nazi Germany, following the example of the message of Zaporozhians to the Turkish Sultan. This letter to the enemy, dated July 1943, was written by “partisans of the N detachment” in the Zhytomyr region. We offer for analysis one of the versions of this letter [7, p.1].

² *Emergency forces* - formed from the name of the Russian punitive body: the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage (Extraordinary Commission, Cheka)

³ The Revolutionary Council of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army is a variant of the name of the Russian Red Army

The concept of ENEMY (*БОГОЙ*) in this text is verbalized by the anthroponym *Hitler*. The comic effect in portraying the enemy is achieved by using the following linguistic means:

1. ‘Depreciation’ of the enemy’s personality due to calling him with the following means: a) lexemes with a derogatory connotation (*посіпака, пелька; несусвітній ти теплень; дурний, як пень!*) (*apostate, erysipelas; you are an utter fool; stupid as hell!*), b) words with zoomorphic semantics (*скажений собака, кобиляча твоя голова, свиняче рило, осячі вуха, задрипана собака, хоч сказися*) (*a mad dog, your mare’s head, a pig’s snout, donkey’s ears, a shabby dog, stomping and screaming around*); c) obscene vocabulary (*скурвий сину, арийська ти залуна, та й мати твою вйоб!*) (*you dirty son, you’re an Aryan scumbag, and your mother is a bitch!*), which we did not record in previous letters.
2. The use of curses traditional in Ukrainian folklore (*осиновий кіл тобі в спину; побажаєм тобі від щирого серця, сто болячок у реберця, сто чортів у твою пельку, щоб ти швидше ліг в земельку, в осиковий гроб; щоб тебе громом убило*) (*an aspen stake in your back; I wish you from the bottom of my heart, a hundred sores in your ribs, a hundred devils in your mouth, an aspen grave; wish that you are killed by thunder*).
3. Creation of paradoxes. For example: in the sentence (*кланяємось тобі голим задом і просимо вас поцілувати в сраку нас*) (“*we bow to you with our bare backs and ask you to kiss us in the ass*”), the paradoxical effect is achieved thanks to the combination of tokens with a touch of officiality (*кланятися, просимо*) (bow down, please) and words to indicate a part of the body traditionally used in Ukrainian insults (*зад, срака*) (*ass, asshole*).

Moreover, traditional similes are used (*як води з моря не випити, як вітру в полі не спинити, так і нас партизан ... – не здолати*) (*like drinking all water from the sea is not possible, like stopping the wind in the field is not possible, and we partisans... - cannot be defeated*), which also indicates the creation of texts on the basis of Ukrainian folklore.

IV. The period of the Russian-Ukrainian war (2014 – present).

In the conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war, which began in 2014, Ukrainians again began to use the means of Ukrainian historical folklore as an original way of countering Russian information propaganda. We recorded 5 texts that stylistically imitate the original Zaporozhian’ letter. The addressee in all these letters is Russian President V. Putin.

Source No. 7. “Letter of ATO fighters to Putin” (2014).

The text is as follows: «*Якщо ти, надлюка, сюди прийдеши, ми тобі дамо копняка під зад. Разом із мишкою своїм, Жириком твоім паршивим і всією твоєю армією. А Яника, собаку цю, – на палю. Або віддай нам – ми його на кіл посадимо. А опосля на ялинку посадимо. На йолку! Постскриптум. Ла-ла-ла-ла-ла*» (August 29, 2014; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LsB29AJSqNU>)

(“*If you, bastard, come here, we will give you a kick in the ass. Together with your bear, your lousy Zhiryk and your entire army. And Yanika, this dog - to the stake. Or give it to us - we will impale him. And then we will put him on the spruce. On the spruce [written as it sounds in Russian – yolka (ёлка)]! Postscript. La-la-la-la-la*”)

This text was written by soldiers of the 95th Separate Mechanized Brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. In the text, the concept of МИШКА (BEAR) (a toy-symbol of the “Russian world”) is updated. Also, the authors mention as negative characters Zhiryk (the nickname of the Russian politician Volodymyr Zhirynovsky, who supported aggression against Ukraine), Yanyk (the nickname of the ex-president of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich, who fled the country in 2014 and

appealed to Putin with an official letter to introduce Russian troops into the territory of Ukraine).

Means of comedy in the analyzed text are used against Putin and his henchmen: a) abusive and other vocabulary with the semantics of disdain (*падлюка, паршивий*) (*scum, lousy*); b) lexemes with zoomorphic semantics that have a dehumanizing effect (*dog*); c) traditional phraseologized threats (*дамо коняка під зад, на кіл посадимо*) (*we'll give a kick in the ass, we'll impale*); d) modernized threat "*посадити на ялинку / на йолку*" ("*to put on a spruce*") (related to a comical situation when during a speech V. Yanukovich forgot the Ukrainian word *ялинка* and after a long pause used the Russian lexeme *ёлка*). This word quickly became a meme and to deepen its comic nature, it became to be written in the Ukrainian transliteration "*йолка*" "*yolka*", hinting at the low level of education of the ex-president.

The text also contains a euphemistic replacement for an obscene lexeme. In 2014, after Ukrainian football fans shouted "Putin - hu#lo! La-la-la-la", the nickname "Hu#lo" was attached to the President of Russia. The fact that it was publicly voiced by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, A. Deshchytisa, and quoted by world publications testifies to the popularity of this catchphrase and the nickname it gave rise to. This fact was also reflected in online folklore: «*Цитую "Гардіан" по суті / Усе прозоро ніби шкло / Andriy Deshchytisia: who is Putin? / Khui!o!*» ("The Guardian literally quotes / Everything is transparent like glass / Andriy Deshchytisia: who is Putin? / Khui!o!") (account of "Cox Kwasiński" on facebook.com). In the analyzed list of warriors, in replacement of lexemes Hu#lo, only another part of the chant was used - La-la-la-la, that nevertheless should be understood like a hint on the obscene nickname of the Russian president.

Source No. 8. "Letter to Putin from Zaporizhzhya Cossacks" (2014).

The text is as follows: "*Вовану Путлеру, хану Московському. Гей ти, хан Вован, не вчиняй у нас дерибан. Не будеш ти, сучий сину, під собою гордих українців мати, а будеш ти, піджавши хвоста, від нашого війська тікати. Землею і водою будемо битися з тобою... Так, як в ООН твій Чуркін балака, в нас на болоті жаба квака. Тому до біса твої натяжки, Вова, у нас найкраща у світі мова. І як на дупі чиряки, потрібні нам кисельови й жирики та інші москальське трепло. Щоб у них у горлі пір'я поросло. Не потрібні нам поради усліякі. Засуньте їх собі, вибачте, до дупи. ... Це тобі сказали козаки та показали дулі от такі. Сиди тихенько, московський сич, не то розсердиш Запорозьку Січ*" (April 30, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=091cjWHPIZU>).

("To Vovan Putler, Khan Moskovsky. Hey, Khan Vovan, don't organize embezzlement in us. Son of a bitch, you will not have proud Ukrainians under you, but will you bite your tail and run away from our army. We will fight with you on land and water... Just as your Churkin is a chatterbox in the UN, in our swamp the frog quacks. So to hell with your hints, Vova, we have the best language in the world. And like a teal on the ass, we need kiselovs and zhiryks and other moskal slur. Wish them feathers grow in their throats. We don't need all kinds of advice. Shove them, sorry, up your ass. ... That's what the Cossacks told you and showed you their butts. Sit quietly, Moscow owl, otherwise you will anger the Zaporozhian Sich")

The means of comedy in the text are lexemes indicating a contemptuous attitude towards the addressee. In particular, the rough (*Вован*) or familiar (*Вова*) form of the name Volodymyr is used in relation to him. The following lexemes and compounds become representatives of the PUTIN concept: a) with zoomorphic semantics - clearly expressed (*сучий син, московський сич*) or implicit (*піджавши хвоста тікати*); b) with the semantics of Nazism (*Путлер* (*Putler*)) is a contaminated name from Putin + Hitler); c) rhyming pseudo-label compound (*хан Вован* (*Khan Vovan*)); d) persuasive

constructions with the semantics of intimidation (*сиди тихенько*).

The similarity with the previous text also lies in the fact that the letter contains references to persons who have become symbols of Russian lies, for example: the above-mentioned V. Zhiryynovsky (Zhuryk), the Russian journalist-propagandist Dmytro Kiselyov and the representative of Russia at the UN (in 2014) Vitaly Churkin. The mention of the first two persons is given in the form of generic names in the plural form (*кисельови й жирики*). So, it is about full appellation, that is, writing the surname and nickname with a lowercase letter due to the negative connotations of these words as a result of a negative assessment of the activities of their carriers. In relation to these persons, the following means of creating a comic effect were also used: a) a comparison with an animal (*Так, як в ООН твій Чуркін балака, в нас на болоті жаба квака*); b) the use of traditional folk curses (*Щоб у них у горлі пір'я поросло*); c) abusive language (*москальське трепло, засуньте ... до дупи*).

Source No. 9. "Letter of Cherkasy Cossacks to Putin" (2014).

The text is as follows: "*Ти, фюрер кремлядський, чорт московський і проклятого Гітлера брат і товариш, самого люцифера секретар. Не будеш ти, сучий сину, синів українських під собою мати. Твого війська кайнового не боїмося. Землею і водою будемо битися з тобою. Кайн ти проклятий Богом, висерок ти сталінський, сухумський, грузинський злодій, південноосетинський козолуп, клятий вбивця дітей і матерів Беслана, глядачів у "Норд-Ості", моряків «Курська», усього світу блазень, Геббельса подобець, самого антихриста онук, нашого лалалала гак, свиняча ти ботоксна пика, кобиляча срака, дика фашистська собака, антихристів лоб... Ось таке тобі українські воїни й черкаські козаки висловили, карлик ти шизоїдний. Тепер кінчамо, числа не знамо, календаря твого фашистського не мамо. Місяць у небі, рік у книзі, а день такий у нас, як і у вас. Поцілуй у дупу нас*" (September 21, 2014; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McbSwSAudF8>).

("You, the Führer of the Kremlin, the devil of Moscow and the brother and comrade of the cursed Hitler, the secretary of Lucifer himself. Son of a bitch, you will not have Ukrainian sons under you. We are not afraid of your army of Cain. We will fight with you on land and water. Cain you are cursed by God, Stalin' shit, Sukhum, Georgian thief, a South Ossetian scapegoat, a cursed killer of children and mothers of Beslan, spectators in "Nord-Ost", sailors of "Kursk", a buffoon of the whole world, a Goebbels imitator, the grandson of the Antichrist himself, our lalalala hook, you swine and botox face, a mare's magpie, a wild fascist dog, an antichrist's forehead... This is what Ukrainian soldiers and Cherkasy Cossacks have said to you, you schizoid dwarf. Now let's finish, we don't know the date, we don't have your fascist calendar. The moon is in the sky, the year is in the book, and the day is the same with us as it is with you. Kiss our ass")

The analyzed text, unlike the previous two, is full of allusions to the events in which the authors consider V. Putin to be guilty. In particular, the periphrasis to Putin "*клятий вбивця дітей і матерів Беслана*" ("a cursed murderer of children and mothers of Beslan") is an allusion to the events of September 1, 2004, when hostages were taken at a school in the city of Beslan (North Ossetia - North Caucasus Federal District of the Russian Federation). During the assault, 334 hostages (mostly children) died. The phrase "*клятий вбивця глядачів у "Норд-Ості"*" is an allusion to the events with the hostage-taking during the viewing of the musical "Nord-Ost" in Moscow; in the assault, an unknown gas was used, as a result of which 130 to 174 hostages died, according to various sources. The paraphrase "*клятий вбивця моряків "Курська"*" is an allusion to the situation when the Russian submarine "Kursk" sank. The mass media have repeatedly accused the Russian authorities of delaying the rescue of the sailors. All crew members of the submarine died.

The text also contains compounds that make fun of the physical characteristics of the Russian president: *ботоксна пика* (*botox*

face) (an allusion to the narrative widespread in the media discourse that V. Putin allegedly does cosmetic procedures), *карлик шизоїдний* (*schizoid dwarf*) (the second lexeme is a hint of short stature, and the first – on the behavior of the Russian president). There are also lexemes indicating the closeness of Putin's person with the Soviet dictator Stalin (*висерок ти сталінський*) (*Stalin shit*), as well as with the Nazis Hitler (*фюрер, проклятого Гітлера брат*) and Goebbels (*Геббельса подобець*). The epithet *кремлядський* is also used, which is a contaminated derivative from two creative bases: the adjective *Kremlin* and Russian obscene lexeme.

Source No. 10. "Letter of the Zaporizhzhya Cossacks to the Moscow devil" (2018).

The text is as follows: "Ти шайтан, чорт московський, проклятого дідька брат і товариш, і самого Люцифера секретар. Який ти в біса лицар, якщо ти навіть з голою сракою їжака не вб'єш... Не будеш ти, скурвий сину, над козацькими синами панувати. Війська ми твого не боїмося. Землю і водою будемо битися з тобою. Щоб у тебе срака попереk тріснула, а при ходьбі ляскала! Вавилонський кухар, македонський колесник, ерусалимський пивохльоб, александрійський козолуп, худобина ти пітерська, великого й малого Єгипту скотиняка, татарський сагайдак, хай вищипне тебе в пуцьку рак, кам'янецький кат, усього світу й підсвіту блазень, гаспидо онук і поросячого пруття кряк, собача ти морда, кобиляча срака, півень гамбурзький... Отак запорожці тобі написали. Не будеш ти навіть свиней наших пасти, не те, щоб над Україною панувати. Тепер кінчасмо, бо числа не знаємо, календаря не маємо. Місяць у небі, рік у книзі. А день такий у нас, як і у вас. І поцілуй у сраку нас!" (October 14, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD3U3So0eXg>)

"You are the devil, the demon of Moscow, the brother and comrade of the devil, and the secretary of Lucifer himself. What the hell kind of knight are you, if you don't even kill a hedgehog with your bare ass... You, dirty son, won't rule over the sons of the Cossacks. We are not afraid of your troops. We will fight with you on land and water. So that you have a crack across your back, and when you walk, it claps! A Babylonian cook, a Macedonian charioteer, a Jerusalem beer-drinker, an Alexandrian goatherd, you are the cattle of St. Petersburg, a cattleman of Great and Little Egypt, a Tatar quiver, may the crayfish bite you in the butt, the executioner of Kamianets, the jester of the whole world and the underworld, the grandson of asp and the hook of a pig's rod, you are a dog's face, a mare's bitch, a Hamburg rooster... That's how the Zaporozhians wrote to you. You won't even herd our pigs, not to rule over Ukraine. Now we finish, because we don't know the date, we don't have a calendar. A month is in the sky, a year in the book. And our day is like yours. And kiss us in the ass!"

In this text, despite the preserved stylistics of the original version, we see the verbalizers of modern concepts. In particular, the authors point to the origin of V. Putin with the help of a zoomorphic characteristic in combination with a relative adjective: *худобина* and *пітерська*. The lexeme *пітерська* is an indication of V. Putin's hometown - Peter (St. Petersburg). Also, the verbalization of the concept of PUTIN is the slang compound *півень гамбурзький* with a hint of contempt, used in particular to denote a person at the lowest level of the prisoners hierarchy.

In the represented text, language means related to the names of parts of the human body are used. The most common is the image of the buttocks, which is represented four times in a reduced version - *срака*. However, while this lexeme was also recorded in previous texts, in this version of the letter there are already two mentions of genital organs: *хай вищипне тебе в пуцьку рак*, *поросячого пруття кряк*, where *пуцька* and *прутень* are the names of the male genital organ.

Source No. 11. "Letter of Ukrainian deputies to Putin" (2018)

The well-known story was also used by members of the Ukrainian parliament. They published photos in the style of the famous painting by I. Repin and published the text, which is almost identical to the original letter, only the addressee has been changed. In particular, the lexeme *president* is used, which is not recorded in the previous versions: "Ти, президент, чорт московський, і проклятого чорта брат і товариш, самого Люцифера секретар!" ("You, the president, the demon of Moscow, and the brother and comrade of the cursed devil, the secretary of Lucifer himself!") (November 7, 2018, account "Alexey Goncharenko" on facebook.com <https://www.facebook.com/alexeygoncharenko/posts/pfbid0kTbcY96LiG4exuQUqGcL yUMK9NVRVxpVwjNTa9xy2agfmRNpABzpzAbuj7FcYdgyI>)

All these letters were presented in the form of a staged action that resembled the well-known painting by I. Repin. Famous Ukrainian personalities, including singers and actors, took part in some of these productions.

Source No. 12. "Letter of the Dnipro City Council to the Administration of the Russian City of Kremenka" (2023).

Within the defined topic (correspondence with the enemy), it is appropriate to consider the text of the official response of the Dnipro City Council to the open letter of the administration of one of the Russian cities. Although the answer has an addressee of a lower level than the head of state, by its nature it is aimed at a generalized image of the enemy and contains linguistic means of creating a comic effect, with the help of which narratives with a mocking content are formed.

At the beginning of 2023, the Russians published an "Open letter to the mayor of the city of Dnipropetrovsk Filatov B.A." (see Figure 9), in which they expressed dissatisfaction with the dismantling of monuments to Russian figures in the city of Dnipro. They noted that such monuments can "пробудить національне самосознание, любовь к своей родине, уважение к ее истории и культуре" ("awaken national self-awareness, love for one's motherland, respect for its history and culture"), and therefore offered to hand over these monuments to them "в обмен на дрова для гражданского населения Украины" ("in exchange for firewood for the civilian population of Ukraine"). In this phrase, there is a mocking semantics as a reaction to the fact that the Ukrainian population was forced to be without heat and light due to Russia's missile strikes on critical infrastructure. The reaction to this appeal was the official response of the Dnipro City Council, in the text of which humor was used (see Figure 10).

First of all, it is worth considering actualized concepts and narratives that create a comic effect:

1. The narrative of the backwardness of Russian regions has been actualized with the help of the concepts of *КРИПОЧЕ ПРАВО* and *ИНТЕРНЕТ*. For example, the authors of the text question whether information about the abolition of serfdom could have reached the administration of a small Russian settlement: "Почти уверен, что новость об отмене крепостного права также достигла ваших околиц". In particular, the compound "почти уверен" "almost confident" is used, where the word "почти" ("almost") means "so that a little is not enough for something". That is, the addressee expresses doubt that the generally known information reaches the Russian addressees in time. The narrative of the backwardness of the regions is embodied in the sentence "Письмо пришло к нам по электронной почте, поэтому просим принять искренние поздравления с тем, что в ваш рабочий поселок дотянули интернет" ("The letter came to us by e-mail, so please accept our sincere congratulations on the fact that the Internet reached your working village").
2. Narrative of violation of democratic rights and freedoms in Russia, in particular regarding prohibition of well-known social networks. This narrative is embodied with the help of a combination of the concepts *ФЕЙСБУК*, *ИНСТАГРАМ*, and *ЗАБОРОНА*: "Надеюсь, вы даже

успели застать такие соцсети, как «Фейсбук» и «Инстаграм» до их запрета Роскомнадзором” (“I hope you even managed to catch such social networks as Facebook and Instagram before they were banned by Roskomnadzor”).

- The narrative of the lack of high-quality roads in Russian regions. The authors put a mocking meaning in the sentence “А нормальные дороги, судя по фото Вашей деревни, к вам еще не дотянули” (“But normal roads, judging by the photo of your village, have not reached you yet”).
- The narrative of the destruction of the Russian cruiser “Moskva” by the Ukrainian army. To embody this narrative, a language game based on the onyms of different categories was used. In particular, the catchphrase “Москва не сразу строилась” (“Moscow was not built at once”) with the meaning “everything happens gradually” is taken as a basis, which is analogous to the saying “Rome wasn't built in a day”: “Но, как у вас там говорится, и Москва не сразу строилась, и утонула, кстати, тоже не сразу” (“But, as you say, Moscow was not built at once, and it drowned, by the way, not immediately either”). The comic effect is achieved by using the verbs “строилась and утонула” in relation to one name Moscow. In the compound “Москва строилась” the proper name becomes a toponym, that is, it denotes a settlement, while in the compound “Москва утонула” the onyme passes into the category of an ergonym - it denotes the proper name of a ship which, according to information released by an official representative of the US Department of Defense, was hit by a Ukrainian missile (washingtonpost.com, April 15, 2022).
- Narrative of the robbery of Ukrainian houses by the Russian military. The basis for this abusive narrative was the repeated testimony of Ukrainian citizens that the Russian military had stolen household appliances and plumbing fixtures from their homes, including toilets. The letter states that the monument to the Russian writer Gorky in the city of Dnipro has received the popular name “Горький на унитази” (“Gorky on the toilet”) because of its appearance (Figure 8).



Figure 8 Monument to M. Gorky (photo from the website www.dsnews.ua, February 04, 2023)

The administration of the Ukrainian city offered the Russians to exchange this monument for firewood, however, a part, called by the people a toilet bowl, for the greater course than the very sculpture of a writer, and commented it as follows: “поскольку мы с вами вместе понимаем, какую ценность представляют унитази для каждого россиянина” (“because we together understand how valuable toilet bowls are for every Russian”). In the above fragment, the authors go as far as to create the conceptual metaphor УНИТАЗ (toilet bowl) as ЦІННІСТЬ (value). Such a metaphor also deepens the narrative of the backwardness of Russian regions.

The administration called for the exchange of “Горького без унитаза или унитаза без Горького, в зависимости от того, какая именно часть памятника более лучше способна “пробудить национальное самосознание, любовь к своей родине, уважение к ее истории и культуре” у жителей

Вашего муниципального образования” (“Gorky without a toilet bowl or a toilet bowl without Gorky, depending on which part of the monument is better able to “awaken national self-consciousness, love for one’s homeland, respect for its history and culture” among the inhabitants of your municipality”). This part of the fragment is a direct quotation from the Russian letter, and such its introduction into the context forms conceptual metaphors: TOILET BOWL as WAKENING OF NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS, TOILET BOWL as AWAKENING OF LOVE FOR THE FATHERLAND, TOILET BOWL as AWAKENING OF RESPECT FOR HISTORY AND CULTURE.

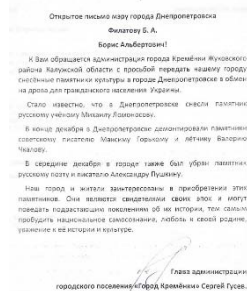


Figure 9. The text of the letter from the administration of the Russian city (photo from the Facebook page of the secretary of the Dnipro City Council, O. Sanzhara)

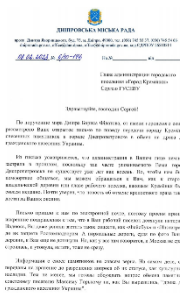


Figure 10. The text of the reply letter (from the page of the secretary of the Dnipro City Council O. Sanzhara on the Facebook network)

4 Conclusion

The analysis of researched material gives reason to draw a number of conclusions.

Communicating with the enemy in a mocking humorous context is an ancient tradition of Ukrainians and is always relevant during various military conflicts. “Letter of Zaporozhians to the Turkish Sultan” becomes the basis for the creation of a separate epistolary discourse, saturated with a large number of linguistic and visual means of creating a comic effect in communication with the enemy.

In all analyzed letters, we record a generalized image of the addressee - the enemy, represented in the person of the immediate heads of state, for example, the Turkish sultan, the Bolshevik commissar, the leader of Nazi Germany A. Hitler, the president of the Russian Federation V. Putin, or in the person of lower-level officials or a separate administrative body.

Some lines from the original letter are repeated almost verbatim or with minor variations in later texts. The most productive means of comic creation are the traditional use of Ukrainian folklore: a) vocabulary with dehumanizing semantics, mainly with zoomorphic characteristics; b) words with the semantics of pointing to physical defects of the opponent; c) phraseological units; d) abusive words and obscene vocabulary; e) curses; e) connotative proper names and decononymous derivatives. Less often, authors resort to the use of conceptual metaphors.

The date a text was written also has an imprint on the linguistic means used in it. Despite the use by the authors of almost identical constructions as allusions to the original letter, we still note the peculiarities of the reflection of linguistic units relevant in a certain era and the then political terminology of the period of the Ukrainian liberation struggle of 1917-1922 (*cadet devil*, *Bolshevik scarecrow*). In particular, only in the letter of 1943, do we record the use of obscene vocabulary. Similar language units are also presented in the texts of 2014. In some letters, there are such tools as creating paradoxes and play on words. In some cases, lingual means of humor were complemented by visual ones. In 1919, we meet the only attempt to translate the Zaporozhians Letter to the Turkish Sultan into Russian. The translation turned out to be unsuccessful, so similar attempts were abandoned in the future. In the 1920s, the Russian Bolsheviks used visual interpretations of I. Repin's painting "Zaporozhians write a letter to the Turkish Sultan", without even trying to translate the text into Russian.

Five out of ten analyzed texts were written during the modern Russian-Ukrainian war. Their common feature is the means of mockery, with the help of which the President of Russia and people close to him were ridiculed, and his comparison with representatives of Nazi Germany was made. We also record a significant number of means of marking the male genital organ as representants of the person of the Russian president. In addition to comic means, we also note the desire of the authors to use language units that indicate the commission of crimes by the head of Russia.

In the letter of 2023, special attention was paid to the coverage of widespread narratives with a mocking content, which point to the negative features of the Russian reality and the inadequate behavior of the Russian army in Ukraine. In particular, the following narratives were recorded: a) backwardness of Russian regions; b) violation of democratic rights and freedoms in Russia; c) lack of quality roads in Russian regions; d) the destruction of the Russian cruiser by the Ukrainian army; e) looting of Ukrainian houses by the Russian military.

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