



Constructing Ukraine's public space through preserving the memory of the fallen in the Russian-Ukrainian war

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Abstract. Russian aggression, which has been ongoing since 2014, has led to the deaths of both military and civilian citizens of Ukraine. For this reason, the perpetuation of the memory about the fallen in the Russian-Ukrainian war at the present stage of historical development is an important tool for shaping the future generations' historical memory. The purpose of the study was to provide a comprehensive and holistic analysis of the peculiarities of constructing Ukraine's public space by preserving the memory of the fallen in the Russian-Ukrainian war. The research was conducted on the basis of a wide range of general scientific (analysis, synthesis, objectivity) and special methods that allowed to analyse the policy and practices of commemorating the memory of the fallen during the Russian-Ukrainian war. The research results indicated that in the period from 2014-2021, the public space was dominated mainly by the practices of commemorating military personnel and individual cases of civilians. It is noted that a significant number of memorial sites after the large-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia were occupied or in the combat zone, and therefore are probably destroyed and will no longer perform its main function of preserving the memory of the Russian-Ukrainian war. After the large-scale Russian invasion, there is a certain spontaneity in the commemoration of the fallen soldiers and civilians in the Russian-Ukrainian war, especially in the public space. It had been found that the public space practically does not reflect the genocidal dimension of the war, associated with massive Russian missile attacks on civilians, as well as the ways of commemorating the tortured Ukrainian citizens in the discovered torture chambers in the de-occupied territories. The research results are applied in nature, as they can be used by central and local government authorities to make adjustments to the current memory policy and launch a new series of fundamental researches related to the development of a new concept for perpetuating the memory of victims of the genocidal Russian-Ukrainian war

Keywords: memorialisation; national identity; civic consciousness; civic initiatives; memory policy

Introduction

Years of Russian aggression have led to significant fatalities among Ukrainian citizens, not only among the military, but also other categories of civilians, such as doctors, volunteers, journalists, public and political figures, etc. As a result, more and more new practices of preserving and perpetuating the memory of the fallen during

the Russian-Ukrainian war began to appear in the public space. They are currently being implemented both at the level of state policy and at the level of civic initiatives, and often have a spontaneous, unorganised character. At the same time, such trends should still have a certain logic and consistency. According to the work "The

Suggested Citation:

Kotsur, L. (2024). Constructing Ukraine's public space through preserving the memory of the fallen in the Russian-Ukrainian war. *Society. Document. Communication*, 9(1), 48-58. doi: 10.69587/sdc/1.2024.48.



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collective memory" by M. Halbwachs (2020), who is rightly considered the founder of the scientific field of historical collective memory studies, the location of objects and symbols in public space plays a key role in shaping the collective memory of entire generations, as "the location of these objects is largely explained by the ties that bind us to different groups". The author also emphasises that "each object, properly placed within the whole, resembles a way of life common to many people", and as a result, the objects that surround us "stand around us as a mute and immobile society" which "impose a comforting image of their own continuity on the group". Moreover, such public space researchers as R. Rose-Redwood *et al.* (2017), M. Azaryahu (2020), H. Nosova (2021) and others have concluded that through the appropriate filling of public space with various objects and symbols, the country past is constructed, national identity and self-awareness of citizens are formed. American researcher B. Schwartz (2015) also drew attention to the fact that the procedure of preserving memory gives historical events and individuals extraordinary importance and creates a "register of sacred history", leads to the formation of a new public space that demonstrates not only a certain version of history, but also contributes to the emergence of a new cultural production of the common past. In turn, A. Shanken (2022) points out the role of memorial infrastructure in the life of modern society, which is extremely important in the process of forming a national memory policy.

Today, it is possible to see that among foreign and domestic researchers, the first developments are emerging regarding the policy and practices of perpetuating the memory of the fallen during the Russian-Ukrainian war; to the forms and methods of memorial practices, their aesthetic and ideological significance, ideological superstructure, etc. In particular, the article by A. Glew (2021) is noteworthy, in which the author initiates a discussion on the most appropriate way to place memorials to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. C. Gironi (2022) draws attention to how the war has affected Ukrainian memory politics, especially in the context of urban spaces such as monuments and topography (Gironi, 2022). Particularly interesting is the interdisciplinary comprehensive study of 2021 headed by T. Martsenyuk *et al.* (2021), in which a group of researchers tried to summarise existing practices of commemorating the fallen soldiers in the Russian-Ukrainian war in eastern Ukraine. At the same time, it should be noted that the study covers the period before the large-scale Russian invasion, so it does not reveal the whole complex of the problem. Other researchers generally only briefly touch upon the outlined issues. For example, V. Ivanenko & V. Kryvoshein (2022) in their study examine the state policy of memory in modern Ukraine in the context of the information war. The analytical report authors of the National Institute for Strategic Studies V. Yablonskyi *et al.* (2019) consider the policy of historical memory in

the context of Ukraine national security, V. Masnenko & Yu. Prysiazhniuk (2024) approach the study of this issue from the perspective of the formation of the modern, Ukrainian tradition of military formations honorary names. S. Nabok (2018) analysed the transformations in the image of "war" and "warrior" in the context of the latest Russian-Ukrainian war. A. Kyrydon (2020) partially touches upon the above topics in the context of the general study of historical memory and commemorative practices, and M. Zubar (2024) examined this issue exclusively from the perspective of changing the landscape of the city memory in Mariupol in the period from 2016 to 2022. In addition, it should be noted that in their studies, the authors attempted to investigate mainly commemorative practices related to the victims of the Russian-Ukrainian war until 2021. However, the policy and practices of perpetuating the memory of the fallen after the large-scale invasion have not yet become an object of study among both domestic and foreign scholars.

The purpose and objectives of the research are to comprehensively analyse the process of constructing public space in Ukraine through preserving the memory of the fallen in the Russian-Ukrainian war. The study was conducted on the basis of a wide range of general scientific and special methods (analysis, synthesis, objectivity, classification, typology, etc.) that allowed to analyse the policy and practices of commemorating the fallen during the Russian-Ukrainian war in the public space. Using the method of classification and typology of data and the chronological method, the results of the discussion were divided into two sections, which allowed to distinguish between the existing practices of commemorating the fallen in the Russian-Ukrainian war before and after 24 February 2022, as well as to distinguish between the practices of commemorating military and civilians. The comparative method made it possible to trace the differences in the practices of perpetuating the memory of the fallen civilians and military before and after the large-scale Russian invasion. The systematisation method allowed to summarise the existing experience of perpetuating the memory of the fallen in the Russian-Ukrainian war in the public space and identify gaps in existing commemorative approaches. Factor analysis allowed to identify a number of factors (before and after the large-scale invasion) that influenced the practice of commemorating the fallen during the Russian-Ukrainian war, with the identification of causal relationships that influenced the change in specific practices of commemorating in public space.

Perpetuating the memory of military personnel and civilians in the public space of Ukraine in 2014-2021

Russian invasion of Ukraine on 20 February 2014 resulted in more than 13,000 deaths of this aggression victims in the first 5 years alone, that included more than 4,000 Ukrainian military personnel and more than 5,000 representatives of other security forces, the rest were

civilian victims (The sixth anniversary..., 2020). Following the large-scale Russian invasion in February 2022, these figures have increased many-fold and have not yet been made public. It is quite logical that the deaths of so many people affect the natural desire of society to preserve the memory of the fallen in the Russian-Ukrainian war. As a result, this has also affected the design of public space in Ukraine (public squares, parks, beaches, courtyards of multi-storey buildings, etc.) In 2014-2024, a number of both traditional and new commemorative practices perpetuating memory, not only of the military but also of civilians, can be seen in public spaces, including memorial plaques, monuments, bas-reliefs, alleys of glory in honour of fallen warriors, honorary naming of streets, gardens, parks, squares, schools, houses, military units, creation and distribution of other commemorative symbols (coins, badges, chevrons), opening of new institutions (museums, galleries), etc. A new practice for Ukraine (after 2022) was the spontaneous formation of centralised military cemeteries, as well as the writing of murals related to the topic. Since the issues under study chronologically reflect the ten-year period of the Russian-Ukrainian war, cover different categories of citizens, and take into account the methods of warfare, the results of the study are presented in separate subsections that allow to identify how effective these practices are in terms of preserving the national memory of the Russian-Ukrainian war in the future, and what approaches to perpetuating the memory of the dead citizens on genocidal grounds that have not yet been reflected in the public space can be taken.

As soldiers and other representatives of the defence forces lay down their lives on the battlefield for Ukraine independence and territorial integrity, their memory is reflected in the public space the most. The most complete picture of these practices is provided by the non-governmental website *"Book of Remembrance for Those Who Fell for Ukraine"* (hereinafter referred to as the Book), which was created on 22 July 2014 with the support of the National Military History Museum of Ukraine to document, record and organise data on the losses of Ukrainian servicemen in the Russian-Ukrainian war. The authors are Maksym Popov, the founder and editor of the book, Yaroslav Tynchenko, Herman Shapovalenko, Serhiy Kovalenko and Svitlana Vihovska. Interestingly, the Book is dedicated to different categories of Ukrainian citizens who died during the Russian-Ukrainian war during the period from 2014 to 2021. Its value lies in the fact that it not only provides brief information about the deceased, but also allows to identify how the memory of this person is preserved in public space, such as plaques, monuments, insignia, street names, etc (The book of memory..., 2024).

Revealing the problematic aspect of the study, taking into account the chronological approach, it is worth starting with the annexation by the Russian Federation of the Ukrainian peninsula, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, on 20 February 2014. Despite the widespread

Russian myth that "Crimea was surrendered without a single shot being fired", it should be recalled that the Ukrainian military in Crimea did resist the Russian occupation. According to Ukrainian journalist M. Koshelev (2017), in response, Russian special forces stormed the "disobedient", opening fire on barracks windows, throwing stun and gas grenades, tying up and beating them (for example, Ukrainian marines in Feodosia). In particular, during one of these assaults, namely on the 13th Photogrammetric Centre in Simferopol on 18 March 2014, Russian military killed a warrant officer Serhii Kokurin, the head of the Centre's warehouse. Then the soldier was buried in his native Simferopol, and the mapping centre was relocated to Odesa. A year later, his comrades-in-arms unveiled a *memorial plaque* at the new location in memory of the first soldier killed during the annexation of Crimea. In addition, by Presidential Decree No. 599/2014 of 19 July 2014, the hero was awarded the Order for Courage, III class. The memorial is also commemorated on the "Wall of Remembrance of the Fallen for Ukraine" memorial in Kyiv, section 1, row 1, place 5. The second Ukrainian serviceman to die in Crimea during the occupation of the peninsula was Major Stanislav Karachevskiy of the Naval Forces of the AFU, killed on 6 April 2014 and buried in Berdiansk. His memory is perpetuated on the memorial "Wall of Remembrance of the Fallen for Ukraine" in Kyiv, section 1, row 1, place 7, and he was awarded the Order of Honour of the city of Berdiansk (posthumously). A memorial to him was opened on the wall of the school №5 in Berdiansk (Karachevsky..., 2024).

The subsequent Russian aggression that unfolded in eastern Ukraine in April 2014 also led to the first serious losses in the ranks of the Ukrainian security and defence forces. Of course, the considerable losses at the initial stage of the war could not leave the public indifferent to the fate and memory of the fallen, so almost immediately after the first losses, ideas began to emerge to perpetuate the memory of the defenders in the public space.

For instance, one of the first extremely important locations for perpetuating the memory of soldiers killed in the Russian-Ukrainian war was the *"Wall of Remembrance of fallen for Ukraine"* (hereinafter – the Wall of Remembrance), which is located in Kyiv on the walls of St. Michael's Cathedral. It was unveiled on the first anniversary of the Ilovaisk tragedy on 29 August 2015. The Wall of Remembrance consists of sections with photos of fallen soldiers dating back to 2014. Before the large-scale invasion, there were 4,300 photos. In this case, it is worth noting the symbolism of the location of the Wall of Remembrance, the St. Michael's Cathedral. After all, it is worth recalling that during the Revolution of Dignity, the Cathedral became a refuge for Euromaidan participants who suffered at the hands of security forces. It was one of those places where the strength for further struggle was forged, where medical care was provided to the injured on Euromaidan. St. Michael's Cathedral has become a symbol of the indomitable Ukrainian spirit and

purity of thought, so it is not surprising that after the Russian invasion, the Ukrainian “heavenly army” rallied around the Cathedral.

The most common practice of perpetuating the memory of fallen soldiers in public places are *plaques, monuments, memorials*, etc. Today, their number is estimated at over a hundred. In particular, after a wave of vandalism related to attacks on monuments to Ukrainian defenders shook the country in 2019, journalist of the online publication “OTAK.NEWS” A. Konyk (2020), using information from the “Book of Remembrance for Those Who Fell for Ukraine”, tried to analyse how many monuments were unveiled in honour of fallen Ukrainian soldiers. From this study, we see that she counted more than 120 monuments in different regions of Ukraine. She found out that Donetsk region had the largest number of memorials (over 40) erected in honour of the victims of the war, and the largest number of personalised signs associated with the place of death of specific soldiers. For example, the Memorial sign at the site of checkpoint No. 1 “Rybkhoz” (Sloviansk), the Memorial sign “Sorrowful Angel” at the site of the crash of the AN-30B aircraft and the death of the 15th Boryspil Transport Aviation Brigade (Pryshyb village), the Memorial in honour of the crew of the MI-2U helicopter (Malynivka village), the Memorial Cross in honour of Major General Serhii Kulchytskyi and his comrades-in-arms (Chervonyi Molochar village), etc. At the same time, it should be noted that the author did not take into account memorial plaques and busts unveiled in honour of individual soldiers. We also see that the Book of Remembrance does not reflect all objects, especially those that were unveiled, in particular in the next year 2021. Moreover, the year and time of the opening of the structures often needs to be clarified. For example, additional analysis revealed that the memorial to the fallen ATO heroes in Kropyvnytskyi was unveiled on 8 May 2015; on 22 December 2015, a memorial to 15 soldiers in the form of a Cossack cross, which symbolises the fallen defenders of Ukraine in the ATO zone, was unveiled at the Kherson city cemetery. It is believed that one of the first monuments unveiled in honour of soldiers fallen in the ATO zone was the monument erected in Kryvyi Rih on 19 March 2016, and on 4 November 2016, a monument to soldiers fallen in the ATO zone was unveiled in Odesa. It is also worth mentioning the sword monument, which was unveiled in honour of ATO participants in Kyiv on 15 August 2017; the memorial sign to the fallen ATO soldiers and the fallen participants of the Revolution of Dignity, which was unveiled on 12 October 2018 in Katerynopil, Cherkasy region, etc. It has already been mentioned that a number of new monuments appeared in 2021. In particular, on 25 June 2021, a monument to ATO heroes and a renovated Walk of Fame were unveiled in Pokrovsk, Donetsk region; on 27 June 2021, a monument to Ukrainian intelligence officers was unveiled in Solomianskyi district of Kyiv; on 22 August 2021, a monument to the Defenders of Ukraine was

unveiled in Andrushivka, Zhytomyr region; on 29 August 2021, in Kyiv, at the corner of Hrushevskoho Street and Petrivska Alley, a Memorial to the fallen Kyiv residents participating in the ATO/JFO was unveiled; on the same day, a monument to the fallen defenders of Ukraine was unveiled in Verkhnodniprovsk, Kamianskyi District, Dnipro Region; on 14 October 2021, a monument to the Defenders of Ukraine in the War against the Russian Aggressor was unveiled in on the same day, a memorial to the soldiers-heroes of the Anti-Terrorist Operation was unveiled in the Oleksandr Koshytsia Park in Kyiv and in Stryi, Lviv region; on 10 December 2021, a monument to ATO soldiers was unveiled in Zolotonosha, and on 24 December 2021, a monument to the fallen heroes of the ATO/JFO was unveiled in Novomoskovsk, Dnipro region.

In addition to monuments, a number of *parks, gardens, alleys, squares, streets*, etc. have been named in honour of the fallen soldiers over this period of time. For example, on 15 October 2019, an Alley of Remembrance was opened in Khrystynivka, Cherkasy region, in honour of the Christian soldiers who died in eastern Ukraine. In Kyiv, in 2021, the Hero of Ukraine Maksym Shapoval Garden was opened. In 2021, in Poltava, the community set up a park in memory of the Heroes of Ukraine on the site of the former Lenin Square. The pedestal that remained from the Lenin monument, which was demolished in 2014, was replaced with a 50-metre flagpole. In addition to these practices, it is also worth mentioning the Park of Heroes (Kryvyi Rih), the ATO Heroes Park (Irpin, Medzhybizh), the Alley of Hero Cities of the Russian-Ukrainian war (Ternopil), the opening of the Alley of Glory and the Park of Memory and Glory of Heroes participating in the ATO in Haisyn, and the Alleys of Heroes in various cities of Ukraine, etc. On the Google map of Ukraine, you can see the names of streets named after individual soldiers (for example, General Kulchytskyi Street) and generalised names such as Heroes of Ukraine, ATO Heroes, Defenders of Ukraine, Debaltseve, etc. You can even find Viiskova Street (Mykolaiv) and Cyborgs Street (Volyn region).

Special attention should be paid to the commemoration of those who died saving lives on the battlefield – *military medics, paramedics and other medevac participants*. The most complete practical experience of perpetuating the memory of fallen military medics until 2022 is demonstrated in the already mentioned electronic Book of Remembrance (2014-2021), and in particular, the section “The Fallen by Target Groups”, tab “Medics”. It shows that in the public space, the memory of military medics is preserved by placing portraits of fallen medics on the memorial “Wall of Remembrance of the Fallen for Ukraine” in Kyiv; streets have been renamed in honour of individual soldiers, and they have been awarded the title of honorary citizen of a city or district; they have been awarded orders and medals by local governments; memorial plaques, annotation boards, bas-reliefs in educational and medical institutions were unveiled; information was posted on billboards; there are also cases of opening

leisure centres; holding All-Ukrainian charity festivals; painting, unveiling of individual monuments, etc. At the community level, the commemoration of medics with monuments is less common. In particular, on 8 October 2018, a monument to fallen military doctors was erected on the territory of a military hospital in Mariupol; on 16 June 2019, a memorial to the medics who died in the war was unveiled on the territory of the Vinnytsia Medical College of Academician Zabolotnyi; on 6 December 2019, a memorial sign "Faces of War" dedicated to medical service personnel killed in the combat zone was unveiled on the territory of the Kyiv National Military Medical Clinical Centre "Main Military Clinical Hospital" (NMCC); on 14 October 2020, a Memorial in honour of the fallen military medics was unveiled on the territory of the 59th Military Mobile Hospital in Sievierodonetsk. At the same time, as noted by L. Kotsur and Ya. Zinkevich (2024) "approximately 40 per cent of all fallen military medics still do not have any non-governmental commemorative insignia or individual memorials, except for an order and a photo on the Wall of Remembrance in Kyiv or general monuments".

On the whole, the analysis findings demonstrate that in the period from 2014–2021, the practice of commemorating servicemen and military medics in the public space of Ukraine was not uncommon. At the same time, the research drew attention to the fact that a significant number of memorial sites after the large-scale invasion were occupied or in the combat zone, and therefore are likely to have been destroyed and will no longer fulfil their primary function. According to M. Gabowitsch (2023), in this way "Russian aggressors demonstrate their cultural superiority". It is also noteworthy that a significant number of sites are located on the territory of specific locations (such as medical institutions, educational institutions) or in non-public places (somewhere on the outskirts of the city centre or town). As a result, without proper tourist routes and a state policy of national memory, such commemorative practices will only have local success.

Alongside the military personnel, many other categories of our fellow citizens have been killed by Russian aggression. Over the 10 years of occupation in Crimea, 60 dead members of the resistance movement and those who disagreed with the occupation authorities have been documented, 28 of whom were representatives of the Crimean Tatar people. Since the bodies of most of the missing activists have not yet been found, there is no way to perpetuate their memory in the public space, except for the Virtual Museum of Russian Aggression, which publishes extensive information and hosts various exhibitions related to resistance to the occupation (Virtual Museum..., 2024).

Approximately 3,000 more civilians who died in certain areas of the southeastern regions of Ukraine before the large-scale invasion are to some extent immortalised in public space. The most illustrative in this regard is the figure of 15-year-old Kharkiv activist Danylo Didyk,

who died in a terrorist attack organised by Russians on 22 February 2015. On his Wikipedia page, one can count about thirty different ways of commemorating Danylo – from paintings, plaques, monuments up to street renaming. Specifically, his figure is depicted on a memorial sign that was installed in Kharkiv on 22 February 2016 on Petro Hryhorenko Avenue (near the site of the terrorist attack). The dedication states: "On this very spot, on 22 February 2014, Kharkiv residents disrupted a separatist congress, defending the unity of Ukraine. On 22 February 2015, during a peaceful march on the anniversary of these events, a mine explosion planted by pro-Russian terrorists killed patriots of Ukraine, Kharkiv residents: Danylo Didyk (15 years old), Mykola Melnychuk (18 years old), Vadym Rybalchenko (37 years old), Ihor Tolmachov (52 years old). Glory to the Heroes!" (A memorial sign..., 2016).

In addition to this case, in February 2018, a memorial sign was unveiled in Kramatorsk to those killed in shelling in the Donetsk region. The memorial consists of a shell that landed in the city on 10 February 2015, killing 17 people, and a glass cube with the names of the victims of the shelling and the inscription: "How many more people must die?". Several memorial plaques have also been unveiled to civic activists who resisted the Russian occupiers and were eventually tortured. For example, in October 2021, a memorial plaque was unveiled in Sloviansk to Yurii Dyakovskiy, who was tortured by Russian terrorists in 2014. The plaque was placed on the SSU building next to the memorial plaques of other tortured people, such as Volodymyr Rybak and Yurii Popravka. At the end of 2021, a monument to Stepan Chubenko, a 16-year-old football player who was tortured by three militants of the so-called "DPR" in 2014, was also unveiled in Kramatorsk. The sculpture of the boy is full-length, tinted bronze and made of reinforced polymer granite.

The volunteer movement, which unfolded in Ukraine with the beginning of Russian aggression in 2014, also left its mark on commemorative practice, as in December 2016, a monument symbolising the unity of the volunteer movement was erected in a park in Kyiv on the corner of Strategic Highway and Nauky Avenue. A similar idea to erect a monument to the volunteers who helped and continue to help Ukrainian defenders resist the Russian invaders arose in Lviv civic activists in 2021, but it has not yet been implemented (In Lviv..., 2021).

Consequently, prior to the large-scale Russian invasion, the public space of Ukraine was dominated by practices of commemorating the military and medical personnel who died as a result of Russian aggression. At the same time, the memory of civilian victims was not properly perpetuated.

The perpetuation of the memory of military personnel and civilians in the public space of Ukraine, after 24 February 2022

The large-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022 resulted in massive losses,



especially among the military. Since the walls of St Michael's Cathedral are not endless, and the losses in the war are significant, with the onset of the new aggression, the Independence Square in Kyiv began to play an extremely important role, where, according to Diana Klochko, the "Lawn of National Remembrance" gradually grew – a nameless memorial made of blue and yellow flags to those who died in the Russian-Ukrainian war (Klochko, 2023), as well as Askold's Grave, where the Hero of Ukraine, commander of the special unit "Da Vinci Wolves" Dmytro Kotsiubailo (call sign "Da Vinci") was recently buried.

These new practices of constructing public space resulted in the Government approving the organisation of measures to create the Ukrainian National Pantheon in Kyiv (Order..., 2021). And the emergence of mass graves of servicemen at the local level put the need for a national military cemetery on the agenda. The relevant state institution, the National Military Memorial Cemetery (NMMC), was established by a Cabinet of Ministers resolution of 4 October 2022. In addition to the cemetery itself, the future memorial complex should include a museum to perpetuate the memory of the fallen defenders (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1115, 2020; Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 37-p..., 2022; The National Military Memorial..., 2024).

However, these large-scale nationwide measures to shape public space have not yet been implemented, so the perpetuation of the memory of soldiers takes place primarily at the level of individual communities. For example, one of the most common practices is the creation of "Alleys of Heroes" in public places in settlements, "Alleys of Heroes" in cemeteries, especially in cities, the unveiling of monuments and memorials in almost every settlement, etc. Other practices also occur. For example, on 16 July 2022, a memorial sign "Cossack Cross" was unveiled in Kryvyi Rih, which states: "To the soldiers who died for Ukraine". On the pedestal itself are engraved the words of Taras Shevchenko: "We will never forget that glory of the Cossacks". Besides, it should be mentioned that on 26 August 2022, the first memorial to the Territorial Defence Forces in Ukraine was erected in Irpin, Kyiv region, in honour of volunteer soldiers; on 14 October 2022, the Alley of Glory with portraits of countrymen who died in the war with Russia since 2014 was opened in Radomyshl, Zhytomyr region; on 25 February 2023, a monument to Lieutenant Colonel Hennadii Matuliak, who at the beginning of the large-scale Russian invasion led a downed plane away from the village near Hostomel, was unveiled near the village of Hlibivka in Kyiv region; in early 2023, the construction of the "Angels of Victory" memorial dedicated to the memory of soldiers who died during the full-scale invasion of Russian troops in February-March 2022 was initiated in the village of Moshchun of the Gostomel settlement territorial community; on 20 March 2023, in the village of Mykolaivka, Bucha

district, Kyiv region, a monument to fallen soldiers was unveiled and consecrated on the site of a destroyed chapel; on 28 April 2023, the Alley of Remembrance of the Border Guard Heroes was opened in Boryspil, Kyiv region; on 3 July 2023, a memorial sign in honour of the fallen Navy servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the war against the Russian aggressor was unveiled in Kyiv in the territory of the Park of Sailors; on 30 October 2023, a memorial sign (with a drone) to the fallen scouts was installed near the village of Nyzhnia Syrovatka in Sumy region; on 8 November 2023, several communities in the Kyiv region installed memorials in honour of the Heroes of Ukraine, pilots of the 40th tactical aviation brigade, known as the "Ghost of Kyiv", who died in the winter and spring of 2022, defending the skies over the capital and the region from Russian aircraft; on 16 November 2023, a memorial to the soldiers who laid down their lives for the freedom, independence and integrity of Ukraine was unveiled in Chop; on 25 November 2023, the memorial complex "The Heroes Defenders of Ukraine" was unveiled in Nizhyn, with a monument to Oleksandr Matsievskyi, who was shot by the Russians for saying: "Glory to Ukraine". On 6 December 2023, a number of other monuments were unveiled, including an exhibition in Kyiv, also dedicated to the Hero of Ukraine Oleksandr Matsievskyi; the Memorial of Eternal Glory was unveiled in the village of Myrne, Maloliubashanska community, Rivne region; on 24 February 2024, a memorial "Cross of Heroes" was unveiled in Vyshhorod, Kyiv region, dedicated to the soldiers who sacrificed their lives defending Ukraine; on 11 March 2024, a monument to the soldiers of the 60th separate infantry brigade who defended the Kochubei community during the Russian army's invasion was unveiled in Kherson region, etc.

In addition to these practices, it is worth mentioning the unveiling of memorial plaques on the houses where the fallen soldiers lived, renaming streets in their honour, installing banners with portraits and names of fallen soldiers; planting trees – "Alleys of Remembrance of Heroes"; installing state flags on the graves of Ukrainian defenders; commemorating the Ukrainian defenders who died in the struggle for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine with a minute of silence; introducing a new tradition of burying Ukrainian defenders, etc.

All this demonstrates that during the two years of the large-scale Russian invasion, in addition to traditional practices, new approaches to perpetuating the memory of defenders in public space have emerged in Ukraine. Obviously, these approaches are primarily related to the massive number of soldiers killed on the battlefield ("Lawn of National Remembrance"). At the same time, it is noticeable that at the local level, instead of mass graves (as of the beginning of May 2024, there is only one practice of centralised burial of servicemen in a mass grave in Chernivtsi), *local military cemeteries* are actually being formed, supplemented by Alleys of

Glory in the central squares of settlements, and it is not yet clear whether these objects in the future can become a full-fledged part of the NMMC. Moreover, this spontaneity of public space formation prompted the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance (together with its partners) to develop in 2023 and publish on the UINR website "*Methodological recommendations for local executive authorities, local governments and public organisations on measures related to the preservation and commemoration of the memory of participants, victims and events of the Russian-Ukrainian war*" (published on the UINR website on 6 February 2024) (Methodological recommendations for local..., 2024), which contain a number of constructive tips for the improvement of public space.

The large-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 also resulted in the emergence of the phenomenon of mass deaths of civilians who became victims of the war, both as a result of the resistance movement to Russian aggression and as a result of war crimes. Nowadays, in addition to the officially published data, information about different categories of victims is provided by the digital Platform of Memory "Memorial". An important feature of this Platform is that it has actually created a Memorial to civilian victims of the war, those killed by shelling, as well as those who helped bring our victory closer and died (rescuers, medics, firefighters, police officers, volunteers, railway workers, resistance movement members, drivers, entrepreneurs); it has a separate section on the deceased children. Quite heartbreaking is the section "Alone" dedicated to the loved ones of the fallen Heroes and other initiatives. However, the Platform does not contain complete information on the practices of commemorating civilians killed by Russian aggression in public space. Perhaps this is because there are not many such practices (especially when it comes to rescuers and power engineers). That is why this section attempts to chronologically reflect the existing practices of commemorating civilians killed in public space after 24 February 2022 and to identify unfilled gaps in this part of the national memory policy.

For instance, one of the first attempts to perpetuate the memory of civilian victims and those who resisted the Russian occupation was the unveiling of the stele "Hero Cities of Ukraine" on 21 May 2022 in Kamianets-Podilskyi, Khmelnytskyi region. The goal is to "honour the heroism of those who have defended and are defending Ukraine, those who innocently sacrificed their lives, those who are currently defending, volunteering, and working". (The stele "Hero Cities of Ukraine" ..., 2022).

Below you can see several practices of perpetuating the memory of railway workers – people who, in the absence of air traffic and transport collapse, played an important role in the evacuation and internal displacement of citizens. It is known that in 2022 alone, 353 railway workers were killed and another 819 Ukrainian railway workers were injured. In particular, 42 employees of the

Odesa Railway were killed in Odesa region. It is in the Odesa region that the first practices of perpetuating the memory of railway workers can be seen. For instance, on 4 November 2022, a monument to Odesa Railways employees who died at the battlefield was erected on the territory of the locomotive depot in Podilsk. The memorial was made of rails and pieces of a missile used by the Russians to attack the railway infrastructure. Also, on the first anniversary of the great Russian invasion (24 February 2023), a memorial stone in honour of the railway workers who died as a result of Russian aggression was installed at Kyiv Central Railway Station.

Children are the most vulnerable category of our citizens. As of the beginning of April 2024, more than 1818 children have suffered as a result of Russia's large-scale armed aggression. Among them, 538 children were killed and more than 1280 sustained injuries of varying severity. Most children were affected in the following regions: Donetsk – 524, Kharkiv – 344, Kherson – 149, Kyiv – 130, Dnipro – 130, Mykolaiv – 103, Zaporizhzhia – 100 (Bohdanyok, 2024). The first memorial composition dedicated to the subject of children and on the occasion of the 1st anniversary of the release of Kyiv region from Russian occupation is the art sculpture "Girl in the Sun", which was unveiled on 2 April 2023 in the centre of Borodianka. The sculpture symbolises the invincibility of Ukrainians who continue to live and fight despite the trauma of the war unleashed by the Russian Federation. At the same time, the Kharkiv region, which ranks second among the dead children, went further. On 4 June 2023, on the "Day of Commemoration of Children Who Died as a Result of the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine" (Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine No. 1490-IX, 2021), a monument to children who died from Russian missiles and bombs was unveiled in Kharkiv. The monument consists of figures of two children flying over a granite block representing an explosion. Sculptor Mykhailo Yatchenko depicted the children as angels with burnt wings. The monument also bears an inscription: "*To the little angels who met human cruelty so early and, unfortunately, would never become adults...*". It should also be noted that since 2023, on Children's Remembrance Day, Ukraine has been holding the All-Ukrainian action "Bells", which was initiated by the First Lady Olena Zelenska. It involves hanging bells on trees to honour the memory of young Ukrainians.

Medics who save lives both on the battlefield and in the rear also suffered serious losses after 24 February 2022. It should be recalled that before the large-scale invasion, more than 70 doctors, heads of medical services, paramedics, pharmacists, laboratory technicians, nurses, medical instructors, and combat medics were killed in the combat zone, but it is difficult to imagine the scale of losses among medics after 24 February 2022 due to the lack of published data. To commemorate them, on 27 July 2023, officials unveiled a memorial wall on the territory of Kyiv's Hospital No. 4, dedicated to the



160 medics who died during the large-scale Russian invasion (Rybalska, 2023).

Naturally, Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 led to the emergence of a phenomenon known as the mass movement of resistance to Russian aggression among the civilian population. In fact, it manifested itself in several forms: 1) mass peaceful rallies against the occupiers; 2) armed resistance in the ranks of territorial defence; 3) open statements by individuals against the occupation; 4) sabotage activities behind enemy lines; 5) volunteering, etc. For example, in the first days of the aggression, Ukrainians could be seen massively protesting against columns of Russian equipment in Kherson, Enerhodar, Nova Kakhovka, Melitopol, Bardiivsk, Slavutych, Horodnia, Konotop and other cities. Hundreds of local residents joined the ranks of territorial defence and fought desperately against the enemy, for example, in Irpin, Okhtyrka, and other places. Nowadays, the Internet is full of stories about the courage and bravery of individual citizens who have resisted the Russian occupation. However, there are still few commemorative practices in public space that would emphasize the specificity of this resistance. For example, it is possible to single out only the opening of the sculpture "Resistance" on 24 August 2023 in Irpin, Kyiv region, dedicated to all those who defended the city from Russian troops in February-March 2022. "On the one hand, there is a man with a courageous strong-willed face, a confident look, and strong arms. On the other hand, there is a person wearing an ugly mask of facelessness, indifference, cruelty, and lies, who is trying with all his might to put the same mask on others" (Baranivska, 2023). Also, on the second anniversary of the release of Irpin from occupation, on 31 March 2024, the monument "WILL" was unveiled in the Public Garden dedicated to the fallen police captain Serhii Blyzniuk, made from the remains of Russian missiles that flew at the city at the beginning of the full-scale invasion. The sculpture is dedicated to the heroic resistance of Irpin to the occupiers. The monument contains the inscription "This metal is not enough to break our will" with a translation into English. At the same time, when it comes to *volunteers* whose lives were also in danger, and more than a hundred cases of Ukrainian and foreign volunteers have been reported, the only current initiatives to perpetuate the memory of volunteers include the launch in November 2023 of the Ukrainian Volunteer Service's "Killed Volunteers" project (for the international community), dedicated to the memory of fallen volunteers.

In exploring the above-mentioned issues, it is evident that the existing practices of perpetuating the memory of civilians in public space are rather superficial, and the genocidal dimension of the war is virtually overlooked. For example, it is well known that over the past two years, there have been many cases of Russian missiles hitting objects with massive crowds (Vinnytsia, Kremenchuk, Nova Poshta in Kharkiv, the village of

Hroza, Dnipro, the railway station in Kramatorsk, Chernihiv, Odesa, etc.), which indicates the genocidal dimension of this war. However, among the current initiatives that would perpetuate the memory of these events in public space, it is worth highlighting the city of Vinnytsia, where in May 2023, urban planning documentation was approved for the installation of a memorial sign to those who died as a result of those events. Also in March 2024, it was reported that the local authorities of Kremenchuk also plan to create a monument "DNA of Remembrance", which would be dedicated to the participants and victims of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The decision was prompted by the fact that on 27 June 2022, Russia launched a missile attack on a shopping centre in Kremenchuk, killing more than 20 people. However, these initiatives have not yet been implemented.

Recently, there is also an urgent need to properly perpetuate the memory of Ukrainian civilians tortured by the Russian occupiers, both at the national and local levels. Over the past ten years, it is possible to trace many cases of torture against people, both individually and in specially created "torture chambers" (Torture, 2024). It should be reminded that such torture chambers were (and still remain) set up in almost every place in the Kherson, Kyiv, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, and other regions. In particular, in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, in February-April 2022 alone, the Russians set up more than 20 torture chambers. In December 2023, Ukrainian law enforcement officers discovered 104 torture chambers in 8 regions of Ukraine in the territories released from the occupiers. The largest number was found in Kharkiv region – 25, Zaporizhzhia – 18, Kherson – 11, Donetsk – 10 (The Prosecutor General..., 2023). Furthermore, international lawyers have pointed out that the existing Russian torture chambers in the de-occupied territories worked as a single mechanism and looked like part of a well-thought-out system to destroy Ukrainian identity. As of 2024, only a few cases of perpetuating the memory of those tortured in public space can be observed. For example, one of the most horrific places of torture and murder of civilians is the town of Izium, Kharkiv region, where the bodies of more than 400 people were found after the de-occupation. Only in a house under the rubble at 2 Pershotravneva Street 44 people died. Therefore, it is not surprising that after the release of the city in December 2022, the community carried out a number of renaming of Soviet street names. In January 2023, Pershotravneva Street itself was renamed into Pamiati Street (Remembrance) to honour the victims, and an improvised memorial was created near the house with photos of residents. Also on 1 July 2023, an installation in memory of the townspeople tortured by Russian terrorists was unveiled in Bucha, Kyiv region. The monument, located at the entrance to the city park, consists of four structures with metal plaques engraved with the names of 501 people who died. However, so far, these practices are not enough to fully perpetuate the

memory of the victims of the Russian-Ukrainian war (Russian torture centers ..., 2023).

In summary, Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine has not only caused massive deaths of Ukrainian military and civilians, but has also significantly affected the change in urban landscapes and the construction of public space in almost all settlements. It is clear that the 'wounds' of the war are likely to continue to be reflected in public spaces and various commemorative practices. At the same time, it is important for Ukraine to reflect the tragedy of this terrible page of Ukrainian history as objectively and impartially as possible and to make it look orderly.

■ Conclusions

Consequently, the results of the study show that in the period from 2014-2021, many practices of perpetuating the memory of servicemen and civilians in public space were recorded in Ukraine, among which the practices of memorialising the memory of defenders prevail. At the same time, it is noted that a considerable number of memorial objects are located in separate locations or in non-public places, which, without proper tourist routes, could only be locally successful in terms of memory policy. Moreover, it has been noted that a significant number of memorial sites after Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine were occupied or in the war zone, and therefore are likely to be destroyed and no longer fulfil their primary function of preserving the memory of the Russian-Ukrainian war. For this reason, a state programme for preserving the memory of the Russian-Ukrainian war, before the large-scale invasion, should be developed at the state level today. It is shown that after 24 February 2022, in addition to traditional practices, new approaches

to perpetuating the memory of defenders in public space have emerged in Ukraine, such as the formation of local military cemeteries, which are complemented by Alleys of Glory in the central squares of settlements. The practice of perpetuating the memory of civilians who died as a result of Russian aggression – children, medics, railway workers, members of the resistance movement - has become more common. It is emphasised that in order to implement this policy, local communities can use the Methodological Recommendations developed by the UINP, which will help to preserve and honour the memory of participants and victims of the Russian-Ukrainian war. At the same time, it is noted that the public space hardly reflects the genocidal dimension of the war, associated with massive missile attacks by the Russian Federation on the civilian population, as well as the ways to perpetuate the memory of tortured Ukrainian citizens in the discovered torture chambers in the de-occupied territories. The same concerns the category of Ukrainian citizens who are in Russian captivity and detention and are subjected to inhuman torture and abuse by Russians. In general, the results of the study are not only scientific, but also applied, as they can be used by central and local government authorities to make adjustments to the current memory policy. The study also shows that fundamental research can be initiated among researchers to develop a new concept of perpetuating the memory of the victims of the genocidal Russian-Ukrainian war.

■ Acknowledgements

None.

■ Conflict of Interest

None.

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Конструювання публічного простору України через збереження пам'яті про полеглих у російсько-українській війні

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Анотація. Російська агресія, яка триває з 2014 р. призвела до загибелі як військових, так і цивільних громадян України. Тому, увічнення пам'яті про полеглих у російсько-українській війні на сучасному етапі історичного розвитку є важливим інструментом формування історичної пам'яті у майбутніх поколіннях. Мета і завдання дослідження полягали у комплексному та всебічному аналізі особливостей конструювання публічного простору України шляхом збереження пам'яті про полеглих у російсько-українській війні. Дослідження проведене на основі широкого комплексу загальнонаукових (аналізу, синтезу, об'єктивності) та спеціальних методів які дозволяють проаналізувати політику та практики увічнення пам'яті полеглих під час російсько-української війни. Отримані результати проведеного дослідження показали, що у період з 2014-2021 рр. в публічному просторі переважали здебільшого практики увічнення пам'яті, військовослужбовців і поодинокі випадки цивільних громадян. Відзначено, що значна частина меморіальних об'єктів після широкомасштабного вторгнення РФ в Україну опинилася під окупацією чи у зоні бойових дій, а тому скоріше за все знищена і вже не виконає своєї основної функції – збереження пам'яті про російсько-українську війну. Після широкомасштабного російського вторгнення помітна певна стихійність увічнення пам'яті полеглих військових та цивільних у російсько-українській війні, особливо в публічному просторі. Виявлено, що у публічному просторі практично не відображений геноцидний вимір війни, пов'язаний із масовими ракетними атаками РФ на цивільне населення, а також способи увічнення пам'яті закатованих українських громадян, у виявлених катівнях на деокупованих територіях. Результати проведеного дослідження мають прикладний характер, оскільки можуть бути використані центральними та місцевими органами державної влади з метою внесення корективів у чинну політику пам'яті та започаткувати нову серію фундаментальних досліджень, пов'язаних з розробкою нової концепції увічнення пам'яті жертв геноцидної російсько-української війни

Ключові слова: меморалізація; національна ідентичність; громадянська свідомість; громадські ініціативи; політика пам'яті