Framing the Holocaust Online: Memory of the Babi Yar Massacres on Wikipedia

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Abstract: The article explores how a notorious case of Second World War atrocities in Ukraine – the Babi Yar massacres of 1941-1943 – is represented and interpreted on Wikipedia. Using qualitative content analysis, it examines what frames and content features are used in different language versions of Wikipedia to transcribe the traumatic narrative of Babi Yar as an online encyclopedia entry. It also investigates how these frames are constructed by scrutinizing the process of collaborative frame-building on discussion pages of Wikipedia and investigating how Wikipedia users employ different power play strategies to promote their vision of the events at Babi Yar.

Keywords: Holocaust, Wikipedia, digital memory, Ukraine, Russia, digital media

Babii Iar is a ravine in the north-western part of Kiev, between the Luk'ianovka and Syrets districts. Babii Iar is known worldwide as the locus of mass shootings of civilian population – mainly Jews, Roma, Kievan Karaims and Soviet prisoners of war – organised by the German occupational forces and Ukrainian collaborators in 1941' ('Wikipedia: Babii Iar' 2017). The above paragraph opens the article about Babi Yar, an iconic Holocaust site in Ukraine, in the Russian Wikipedia. It offers a concise – albeit not unquestionable in terms of historical accuracy – interpretation of one of the notorious cases of Second World War atrocities in Eastern Europe with a description of the site's location, a rough timeline of the events, and, importantly, the identification of the identities of victims and perpetrators of the massacres.

In this article, I examine how interpretations – or frames – of war atrocities are constructed on Wikipedia, and how these interpretations influence and are influenced by traumatic memories of the Second World War in both Russia and Ukraine. Reese defines frames as 'organising principles that are socially shared and persistent over time' (2001: 5); while

these principles can serve different goals, their main purpose is to allow individuals and societies to structure the social world around them in a meaningful way. This multi-dimensional process involves numerous variables, including memories of the past, which, as Philips argues, 'both constitute our sense of collectivity and are constituted by our togetherness' (2004: 3). However, up to now, interactions between cultural remembrance and framing as well as the ways in which these processes are affected by digital technologies remain under-investigated.

An investigation of these interactions is particularly urgent considering the large number of intersections between framing and cultural remembrance. Both concepts are intrinsically related to each other: memory is an integral condition for making frames persistent over time, whereas frames, as Nieger, Meyers and Zandberg (2011: 5) argue, constitute a major element of multidirectional memory construction. Both memories and frames are distinguished by 'the[ir] selectivity and perspectivity' (Erll 2008: 5) in interpreting social reality according to the current needs, and both are focused on structuring both the present and the past through symbolic forms of expressions. Furthermore, mass media have a definitive impact both on framing and cultural remembrance, serving as essential tools for the 'social construction of meanings' (Johnson-Cartee 2005: 4) – i.e. framing – and the 'coding of life experiences' (Erll 2011: 113) – cultural remembrance.

The current study attempts to advance the understanding of the complex relationships between frames and cultural memories by examining how one case of Second World War atrocities is framed on Wikipedia. Babi Yar is not only an iconic Holocaust site, but also an essential focus of 'mutual competition' (Rohdewald 2008: 181) between specifically Jewish and national remembrances, which until now has been at the root of marginalisation and appropriation of Holocaust memory in post-socialist countries[1]. A telling example of these processes is the ongoing debate in Ukraine concerning the commemoration of Babi Yar, in particular the construction of a memorial center at the site. Such a commemorative act is being construed as a threat to Ukrainian national security, due to it being funded also by pro-Russian oligarchs, and because of the memorial's potential to incite anti-Ukrainian attitudes (Kostiuk 2017; 'Muzei "Babyn Iar"' 2017; Siruk 2017; 2017a).

The choice of Wikipedia as a case platform is driven by the growing impact of digital media on framing and remembering, particularly for wars and conflicts (Hoskins and O'Loughlin 2010: 116). The distribution of digital technology has fundamentally transformed 'modes of witnessing, feeling and remembering violent and traumatic events' (Kuntsman 2010: 2), and created an environment for 'social and cultural self-expression' (Kukulin 2013: 112) which is particularly relevant for countries like Russia and Ukraine, where citizens often have limited influence on the public sphere. Wikipedia is an exemplary case of such an environment both because of its popularity – it is the 7th most popular website in Ukraine ('Top sites in Ukraine' 2017) and the 10th in Russia ('Top sites in Russia' 2017) – and because of its format which enables collaborative frame-building (Oboler, Steinberg and Stern 2010). Together, these features make Wikipedia an influential outlet for representing the past and the present alike; hence my decision to make it the focus of this study.

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[1] For more information on Holocaust remembrance in post-socialist states see works by Himka and Michlic (2013), Rapson (2015), Andersen and Törnquist-Plewa (2016), Baer and Sznaider (2017).

Literature review

Digital media and framing

Entman defines framing as the process of selecting certain aspects of one's perceived reality, and foregrounding these in a way that 'promote[s] a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation' (1993: 52). In this way, frames – socially shared and persistent principles of the organisation of social reality – 'shape and alter audience members' interpretations and preferences' (Entman 2007: 164) vis-à-vis the issue being framed. Scheufele (1999) suggests a further distinction between media (i.e. central organising ideas giving meaning to the sequence of events) and individual frames (i.e. clusters of ideas which determine how information is processed on an individual level); however, as D'Angelo (2002: 873) notes, in practice both types of frames are interrelated, given that the prior knowledge individuals have is essential for processing the information conveyed in media frames.

Frames constitute an important element of all social and political processes. As Noakes and Johnston note, frames 'indicate what is going on and why it's important' (2006: 2), and, by doing so, determine the preferences and expectations of individuals and collectives. Frames acquire particular importance in times of conflict, when they determine not only how the causes of the strife are understood, but also what is thought to be the appropriate response (Hammond 2007: 18). A number of studies[2] suggest that framing can have a profound impact on the course of conflicts: in some cases, as Bratic (2008) argues, it can lead to the peaceful transformation of strife by promoting reconciliation; in others, as Hamelink (2008) notes, a particular selection of frames can exacerbate tensions and aggression.

A significant number of works examine the role of framing in the context of recent conflicts, such as the war in Afghanistan (Griffin 2004; Edy and Meirick 2007), the Second Gulf War (Griffin 2004; Schwalbe, Silcock and Keith 2008; Parry 2010) and the war in Syria (Greenwood and Jenkins 2015; Cozma and Kozman 2015; Sacco and Gorin 2017). Some of these works also address the question of framing of war atrocities, for instance in Syria (Merz 2014; Mast and Hanegreefs 2015; Sacco and Gorin 2017). However, as Sacco and Gorin (2017: 210) note, mainstream media often tend to avoid discussing the human toll of a conflict, refraining, for instance, from broadcasting graphic images which can lead to potential reputation losses for the outlet.

The dissemination of digital technology, however, has led to profound changes in conflict framing. The growing reach and influence of digital media has facilitated the rise of citizen journalism, which, as Mast and Hanegreefs (2015) demonstrate, releases more graphic images, and allows for the proliferation of frames related to war atrocities. The growth in the scope of reproduction and dissemination of conflict-related frames has been shown in studies by Schwalbe, Silcock, and Keith (2008) and Neumann and Fahmy (2012). Hamdy and Gomaa (2012), in their study of the 2011 civil unrest in Egypt, also argue that digital media have a higher participatory potential than mainstream media, making them a significant means for framing conflict and strife.

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[2] See, for instance, works by Butler (2012), Olmastroni (2015), Janicki (2015), Briggs, Soderlund, and Najem (2017).

The majority of such studies, however, focus on the use of social media, in particular social networking sites such as Facebook (Hamdy and Gomaa 2012; Seo and Ebrahim 2016; Surzhko-Harned and Zahuranec 2017) or VKontakte (Gaufman 2015; Makhortykh and Sydorova 2017). By contrast, the use of digital reference works such as Wikipedia remains largely overlooked, in spite of the fact that online encyclopaedias have significant potential for frame-building. The dynamics of selection and accentuation of certain subjects is an essential part of digital encyclopaedias' functionality. Their participatory potential makes them fertile grounds for prosumption and transmediation practices that, as Cheong and Lundry note, allow 'alternative texts to enter into sociopolitical discourse to open up possibilities for cultural understanding and transformation' (2012: 503). Finally, analogue and digital encyclopaedias are distinguished by their high degree of credibility that further contributes to their framing potential[3].

There has been growing recognition of Wikipedia's frame-building potential, resulting in a number of studies on the topic (Oboler, Steinberg and Stern 2010; Ferron and Massa 2011; Wolniewicz-Slomka 2016; Twyman, Keegan and Shaw 2016). According to Oboler, Steinberg and Stern (2010: 268), that potential lies in the way the platform's model of content production blurs the line between individual and media frames. Twyman, Keegan and Shaw suggest that Wikipedia's accessibility and encyclopaedic scope facilitate the multidimensional representation of social movements to wider audiences, thus resulting 'in framing and narrative generation processes unlike those found in other social computing systems' (2016: 1409). A similar assessment is offered by Ferron and Massa, who argue that the encyclopaedia offers 'a unique opportunity' (2011: 1328) for studying the formation and negotiation of traumatic events and their interpretations, as in the case of the Arab Spring. The current article builds on these works to examine how the above mentioned features of Wikipedia affect frame-building in relation to Second World War atrocities.

Digital media and cultural memory

The process of transcription of the past across different media – also known as the remediation of memory (Erll 2011: 141) – is an integral part of individual and cultural remembrance. Assmann and Conrad (2011: 2) note that images of the past and constructions of cultural memory are closely related to the processes of production and circulation of media cultures. Consequently, as Erll points out, media 'are more than merely passive and transparent conveyors of information' (2008: 3); rather, they have significant impact on the ways the past is interpreted and understood, and they set the agenda for future acts of remembrance.

The development of information and communication technologies has thus had significant impact on cultural remembrance, including memories of wars and conflicts. Winter notes that the development of media technologies in the 1960s and 1970s led to a 'memory boom' (2000) that transformed Second World War memory, and in particular Holocaust remembrance. Decades later, as Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2010: 131) argue, the development of digital technologies has resulted in a new memory boom – the third one, according to Winter's timeline – which has radically changed the way contemporary conflicts are remembered. The reasons for this can be traced to 'a far greater intensive and extensive connectiv-

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[3] An illustrative example is in recent survey results, according to which Wikipedia is viewed as a source of trustworthy, even if not entirely accurate, information (Shen, Cheung and Lee 2013).

ity' (Hoskins 2009: 40) between the forms, agents and discourses of memory which blurs the line between personal and public remembrance.

This 'connective turn' (Hoskins 2011) in remembrance has a number of immediate implications for framing of contemporary wars and conflicts. The pervasiveness and accessibility of communication technologies allow for instant memorialisation of ongoing warfare, and for the rise of more varied and diffused commemorative practices. These practices expand the range of actors able to communicate their vision of the conflict to a wide audience, and to express their disagreement with dominant narratives, all of which, as Knudsen and Stage argue, has a 'democratising effect' (2013: 432) on war commemoration. At the same time, as the production of memories becomes less directed and more unpredictable, the likelihood for previously unknown or hidden materials to emerge increases, leading to more rapid transformations of 'what was known or thought to be known' (Hoskins and Tulloch 2016: 7).

Digital media now have the potential to influence the way past wars are perceived as well. Even while conflicts such as the First World War have already been through the process of memorialisation in the analogue age, Sear (2016: 69) argues that the advent of digital memory practices has had significant impact on their remembrance today, both in the reinforcement of existing tropes and the introduction of new creative or disruptive practices. Similarly, Pfanzelter (2015) notes that digital technologies can be used to produce innovative forms of remembrance in relation to past conflicts which can evoke performative and participatory empathy from web users, as has been the case with the Henio Zytomirski project on Facebook[4].

These processes of digital war remembrance, as Rutten and Zvereva (2013) note, have developed with particular intensity in the post-socialist space, which is currently characterised by a disproportionate politicisation of digital and memory environments, often giving rise to discursive online conflicts about the past. The outputs of these turbulent memory practices have been a subject of academic debate, with existing assessments noting either the establishment of more inclusive narratives which challenge hegemonic interpretations of the past (Trubina 2010), or the propagation of mutually exclusive interpretations of traumatic pasts which provoke and sustain disagreement between their respective adherents (Nikiporets-Takigawa 2013).

Wikipedia and war remembrance

Wikipedia is a digital platform increasingly being recognised for its impact on cultural remembrance. Pentzold suggests that the production of Wikipedia articles can be viewed as a 'discursive construction of the past' (2009: 264), involving a transition from communicative memory, debated on the encyclopaedia's discussion pages, to cultural memory, in the form of encyclopaedia articles. Dounaevsky (2013) supports this argument, suggesting that Wikipedia facilitates the production of 'a special type of historical knowledge' characterised by polyphonism and uncertainty. Similarly, Ferron and Massa (2014), in their own study on

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[4] The project was initiated in 2009 by an employee of a Polish cultural center who created a Facebook profile for Henio Zytomirski, a Jewish boy from Lublin murdered in the Majdanek concentration camp in Nazi occupied Poland. The profile was then updated with excepts from family letters and postcards, as well as alleged quotes which had been in fact invented with the help of the boy's cousin. For more information on the project see works by De Bruyn (2010) and Pfanzelter (2015).

Wikipedia and traumatic memories, demonstrate that the encyclopaedia is used for performing functions commonly associated with cultural remembrance, such as the expression of grief and commemoration of the deceased.

A number of studies examine the interactions between Wikipedia and specific instances of cultural remembrance: from biography writing (Callahan and Herring 2011; Keegan and Brubaker 2015) and the historicisation of social movements (Ferron and Massa 2011; Twyman, Keegan and Shaw 2017) to the commemoration of terrorist attacks (Pentzold 2009) and nuclear disasters (Ferron and Massa 2014). A number of scholarly works discuss the use of the encyclopaedia for remembrance of both historical and recent conflicts, from the War of 1812 (Jensen 2012) and the Vietnam War (Luyt 2015), to the Balkan Wars (Rogers and Sendijarevic 2012) and the 2006 Israeli-Lebanese conflict (Hardy 2007). Among these, however, a special place is reserved for the Second World War, which remains the most common subject of academic inquiry in the field of Wikipedia and war remembrance[5].

This scholarly interest towards memory remediation on Wikipedia is attributable not only to the platform's prominence in our contemporary information infrastructure, but also to its potential role as a prism for understanding how diffused memory practices work in different cultural contexts. Being an 'online laboratory where history is continuously being written and rewritten' (Dounaevsky 2013: 130), Wikipedia provides insights into the processes of collaborative production of the past, whilst being guided by a set of platform-specific practices and community-based norms. The central norm – and the organising principle of the encyclopaedia – is Wikipedia's adherence to the principle of the neutral point of view (NPOV): the major goal of Wikipedia is to represent 'fairly, proportionately, and, as far as possible, without editorial bias' ('Wikipedia: Neutral point of view' 2017) all views on a certain issue which are deemed reliable. The actual implementation of the NPOV principle, however, often shows significant variations across different language versions of the encyclopaedia, leading to claims that Wikipedia actually promotes a 'linguistic point of view' (Massa and Scrinzi 2013) rather than a neutral one. The probability of encountering language-specific differences is particularly high in the case of controversial subjects such as war atrocities, the commemoration of which, as Dounaevsky (2013: 130) notes, is often instrumentalised for purposes of national self-assertion on the local level and of self-representation to the outside world.

All the above mentioned factors thus make Wikipedia an important outlet for the articulation of regional identities in the post-socialist space, especially in relation to traumatic memories of the 20th century[6]. Kaprans demonstrates that the production of Wikipedia articles discussing relations between the Soviet and Nazi regimes is often driven by small groups of 'geopolitically and nationally inclined individuals' (2016a: 169) who advocate for specific interpretations of events derived from the official historical perspectives propagated by regional actors. Similarly, Fredheim, Howanitz, and Makhortykh (2014) argue that different regional versions of Wikipedia tend to transmit local narratives of the Second World War, perpetuating and reinforcing hegemonic memory narratives.

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[5] See, for instance, works by Fredheim, Howanitz and Makhortykh (2014), Pfanzelter (2015), Wolniewicz-Slomka (2016), Kaprans (2016), Makhortykh (2017).

[6] See, for instance, works by Dounaevsky (2013), Fredheim, Howanitz, and Makhortykh (2014), Kaprans (2016), Wolniewicz-Slomka (2016), Makhortykh (2017).

At times, however, Wikipedia articles dealing with traumatic post-socialist memories may also go beyond national hegemonic narratives. As Dounaevsky (2013) notes, Wikipedia is used not only for the articulation, but also for the negotiation of identities, which can result in the production of pluralistic and non-hegemonic historical knowledge. Wolniewicz-Slomka (2016: 45) also argues that the representation of war atrocities on Wikipedia, and particularly of the Holocaust, does not necessarily follow the collective historical narratives of the respective societies the article's compilers stem from; rather, the encyclopaedia promotes a narrative which is established and standardised under the influence of Wikipedia community norms. This study therefore further investigates the complex interplay between hegemonic and polyphonic tendencies in the discursive construction and transmission of traumatic memories online by examining how the Babi Yar massacres are framed on Wikipedia.

Historical background

The massacres at Babi Yar: 1941-1943

On September 19, 1941, the German army captured Kyiv, after more than two months of heavy fighting with the Soviet forces defending the city. Before retreating, Soviet military engineers, with the help of the NKVD (the Soviet secret police) mined several parts of the city (Berkhoff 2004: 30). On September 20, the first explosion destroyed the former arsenal near the Kyivo-Pechers'ka Lavra (the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves), killing several German officers and soldiers. Four days later, a series of explosions rocked the city center, followed by a massive fire. Despite German attempts to extinguish it, the fire raged for several days, resulting in massive destruction and a large number of deaths. According to Berkhoff (2004: 31), between 10,000 and 25,000 people lost their homes, around 200 Germans were killed, and the number of Kyivite victims remains unknown.

The explosions instigated a retaliation campaign by the German troops, which led to mass arrests of Communists and Jews. Many of these – around 1,600 according to Nakhmanovych (2011: 114) – were killed immediately. On September 26, the German command made a joint decision with the SS concerning Kyiv Jews: instead of establishing a Jewish ghetto, as had been done in other occupied cities, Jews were to be murdered. The ravine of Babi Yar, where Soviet prisoners of war had previously been executed following the seizure of Kyiv (Nakhmanovych 2004), was chosen as the site for the new mass killing. On September 28, a now infamous proclamation addressed to 'All Jews of the city of Kyiv' was distributed across the city, demanding that all Jews gather near the Jewish cemetery in the vicinity of Babi Yar on the following morning.

On September 29, columns of Jews headed to the requested place, where they were stripped, beaten, and forced to descend into the ravine, where they were shot at close range. The killings continued for two days; the total number of victims, documented by the Germans, counts no fewer than 33,771 people (Berkhoff 2004: 33). According to several studies (Berkhoff 2004; Koval' 1998), the Ukrainian auxiliary police was responsible for receiving, undressing and abusing Jews on the way to Babi Yar; other scholars (Nakhmanovych 2007;

Kot 2012) deny this, blaming Soviet propaganda for producing evidence against the Ukrainian police.

After the most intensive period of massacres on September 29-30, the killings continued – albeit on a lesser scale – from the beginning of October to the second half of November. The majority of victims were Jews and Communists; in addition, though, Germans used Babi Yar for the occasional executions of saboteurs and robbers (Nakhmanovych 2004). The selection of victims was soon extended to include a number of other groups: in October 1941, patients from the Kyrilivs'ka hospital for the mentally ill were brought to Babi Yar, followed by large numbers of Kyivite hostages taken by the Germans. Between the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942, a number of Ukrainian nationalists who had been deemed unreliable by the Germans were also sentenced to death (Nakhmanovych 2004); among the victims were Olena Teliha, a prominent Ukrainian poetess, and Volodymyr Bagazii, the first head of the Kyiv City Administration under German occupation (Kot 2012)

In the spring of 1942, the Syrets concentration camp, a subsidiary of the Sachsenhausen camp, was opened in the vicinity of Babi Yar. The camp was reserved for Soviet prisoners of war, Communists, partisans, and Jews; all of them were forced to work until they were either killed or they starved to death (Evstaf'eva 2004). Prisoners were regularly abused by camp guards and especially the camp commandant, Paul Radomski, who ordered the most severe punishments for even minimal infractions. According to Soviet estimates, around 25 thousand prisoners died in the Syrets concentration camp between 1942 and 1943, including several Dynamo Kyiv football players. The deaths of the latter inspired the post-war Soviet myth of the Match of Death[7].

In September 1943, Germans began to evacuate prisoners from Syrets to other camps. Some prisoners, however, were left behind and forced to exhume and burn the bodies of the people who had been killed at Babi Yar over the years. Even throughout the exhumations, the Germans continued to use Babi Yar for mass killings; victims included Communists who turned themselves in to the occupation authorities and Kyivites who tried to escape from the forced evacuation of the city (Nakhmanovych 2004). On September 29, the prisoners tasked with the exhumations revolted, and approximately a dozen out of three hundred managed to escape (Evstaf'eva 2004). These survivors produced testimonies which were later used by the Soviet commission responsible for collecting evidence of Nazi atrocities soon after the Red Army seized Kyiv on November 6, 1943.

Babi Yar: 1943-2017

The first attempts to commemorate the Babi Yar massacres started after the Soviets re-captured Kyiv at the end of 1943. In addition to the work of the Extraordinary State Commission for the collection of evidence of Nazi crimes in Kyiv, Burakovskiy (2011: 373) lists a number of commemorative activities which were initiated in the second half of 1940s. These un-

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[7] The myth, introduced in the post-war Soviet press, claimed that a football team made of Dynamo Kyiv players had been forced to play against a team of German soldiers in 1942. Despite death threats from the Germans, the Soviet players won the match, and were immediately murdered for demonstrating their unbeatable Communist spirit. In fact, however, the players were arrested several days after the match (which had ended with Soviet victory), and it was only a few players who were targeted, under suspicion of cooperation with NKVD. Because of these reasons, a number of contemporary works (Evstaf'eva 2004, 2012; Ginda 2013) suggest that the arrests were unrelated to the mythicised football match.

dertakings varied from a memorial meeting at Babi Yar planned for 1944 to a monument proposed by Miletskii, and a 'Baby Yar' symphony composed by Khlebanov. All these proposals were however proscribed by the Communist Party and either not implemented (the case of the monument) or remained silenced for long time (the case of the symphony); according to Nakhmanovych (2011: 117), the silencing of Babi Yar memory – and of the Holocaust in general – was related to the growing anti-Semitism at the end of 1940s, and the concurrent emphasis on the suffering of Slavic people, who, according to the Soviet war narrative, had experienced the largest losses in the struggle against Nazism.

The situation began to change in 1961, when Babi Yar attracted significant attention for two reasons. On 13 March, a mudslide occurred in the Kurenivka borough near Babi Yar, when the dam securing the loam pulp dump of a brick factory failed. A wave of mud hit the residential area and the nearby tram depot, resulting in a large number of deaths. The official Soviet count included 146 deceased, but contemporary studies cite a higher number of 1500 (Evstaf'eva 2004a). Following the mudslide, on 19 September, Yevgeny Yevtushenko published a poem titled 'Babi Yar', which, as Burakovskiy (2011: 373) argues, caused 'quite a sensation' in the Soviet Union. The poem, as Rapson (2015: 87) notes, played an important role in increasing awareness about the Babi Yar massacres as well as about anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union.

In 1966, Anatoly Kuznetsov, a Soviet writer and eyewitness to the Nazi atrocities at Babi Yar, published his testimony in the form of a novel entitled 'Babi Yar' in the journal 'Yunost' (Burakovskiy 2011: 375). Despite the Soviet censorship's removal of parts of the novel, 'Babi Yar' attracted significant attention from Soviet readers. One year later, a spontaneous commemorative event took place at the site, followed by the instalment of the first official marker at Babi Yar. Nine years later, in 1976, the first monument was established; however, as Rapson (2015: 87) notes, the monument did not specifically address the subject of the persecution of the Jews. Instead, it referred to slain Soviet citizens.

The Soviet politics of silencing of Babi Yar memory continued until 1991, when the 50th anniversary of the massacres was commemorated on an official level (Burakovskiy 2011: 378). A week-long series of commemorative events took place in Kyiv, including the instalment of a bronze Menorah dedicated to the Jews killed at Babi Yar. On October 5, thousands of Kyivites, together with hundreds of international guests, took part in a large open-air ceremony which included the reading of Yevtushenko's poem and a speech from the first Ukrainian president, Leonid Kravchuk, who called for admitting past errors and asked Jewish people for forgiveness (Burakovskiy 2011: 379).

In the following years, a number of monuments dedicated to the various groups of victims appeared at Babi Yar. The first of them – a wooden cross dedicated to Ukrainian nationalists – appeared in 1992. In 2000, another cross for the Orthodox priests killed at Babi Yar was raised near the Menorah, and several other monuments followed. Some of these monuments were devoted to individual victims (for instance Olena Teliha and Tetiana Markus), whereas others commemorated groups (murdered children, the Ostarbeiters, the mentally ill, German prisoners of war, Roma, and others). According to Burakovskiy (2011: 379), however, the transformation of Babi Yar into a fraternal grave of different groups of Nazi victims actually entrenched the 'unwillingness to understand Babi Yar within the broader context of

the genocide of European Jews', and contributed to the continued disparagement of Holocaust memory in Ukraine.

The 75th anniversary of the September massacres sparked another round of debates in Ukraine concerning the remembrance of Babi Yar. The proposal to establish a Holocaust Memorial Center 'to pay tribute to the victims, to tell the story of their lives and to explain the relationship between Jews and non-Jews in Kyiv and Ukraine' ('BYHMS: About project' 2017) was met with fierce criticism by several Ukrainian historians ('Muzei "Babyn Iar"' 2017). Criticism was directed at many aspects of the proposal, including the suggestion to locate the Center on the grounds of a former cemetery. The main criticism, however, was related to the potential use of the Center for propagating 'neo-Imperialist ideas of a "Russkii Mir"' ('Muzei "Babyn Iar"' 2017), and the proposal's purported dismissal of the suffering of other victims besides the Jews. In light of these recent developments, the current research asks how framing the Babi Yar massacres on Wikipedia interacts with ongoing 'memory wars' (Blacker, Etkind and Fedor 2013) in Ukraine.

Methodology

For the implementation of this study, I compared English, Russian, and Ukrainian articles on Babi Yar. The comparison of Russian and Ukrainian versions is justified not only because of the special significance of Babi Yar and Second World War memory for both countries, but also in light of the particularly tense relationship between Ukrainian and Russian Wikipedias which has been noted in earlier studies on regional digital memories[8]. The English Wikipedia was included because of its global reach, which makes it a suitable reference point for the comparison between regional versions (Rogers and Sendijarevic 2012; Wolniewicz-Slomka 2016). In all three cases, the article versions from October 17, 2017 were used.

The analysis of framing of the Babi Yar massacres was implemented in two stages. In the first stage, I analysed framing of the event on the article pages. For this purpose, I began by identifying thematic content features common for Babi Yar narratives on Wikipedia, followed by the examination of their distribution across the articles. I used the inductive coding approach (Thomas 2006) for identifying thematic content features; the distribution of the features was estimated with a variation of summative content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005) used by Wolniewicz-Slomka (2016) in an earlier study on Holocaust memory on Wikipedia.

The above mentioned variation uses word count as a measurement of distribution: for this purpose, the text of the Wikipedia article is divided into fragments which are coded according to the presence of a specific content feature. The overall number of words is then calculated for each feature. Despite some problematic aspects of the use of this method, including

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[8] Dounaevsky (2013) notes that Ukrainian editors make significant contributions to the Russian Wikipedia – almost 40 percent of all edits – which makes the platform a major space for negotiating collective identities, including the discussion of historical controversies, between users from the two countries. Similarly, Fredheim, Howanitz and Makhortykh (2014) in their study of memory about Stepan Bandera on Wikipedia show that Ukrainian and Russian articles tend to share the larger number of common editors and sources compared to other regional versions (e.g. the Polish one).

its dependency on the morphological structure of a language and reductionism[9], this approach allows to quantify the use of different features. Consequently, I agree with Wolniewicz-Slomka (2016: 31), who argues that it can be used to identify 'a contrast between the importance given to this particular category' which is particularly useful for comparing the distribution of content features and thematic frames across different texts.

The same approach was used to assess the distribution of different frame categories; here, however, I employed pre-determined categories instead of inductive coding. I used the same four categories which were identified by Wolniewicz-Slomka (2016) according to the major frame functions described by Entman (1993): 1) definition of the problem: frames dealing with the general definition of the issue (e.g. in this case, the historical and political context of the massacres); 2) causal interpretation: frames for identifying the forces behind the issue and establishing causal relations between agents involved (e.g. the reasons behind the involvement of specific parties in the massacres); 3) moral evaluation: frames offering a moral assessment of the issue and of the actors involved (e.g. moral judgements concerning the involvement of the Ukrainian police in the massacres); and 4) treatment recommendation: frames which suggest how an issue should be treated (e.g. treating the Babi Yar massacres as an episode of the Holocaust).

After identifying the different categories of frames in the articles, I focused on the thematic content features used in the frame category of causal interpretation. Through inductive coding, I identified features related to the perpetrators and victims of the Babi Yar massacres. I focused on these particular features since earlier studies (Fredheim, Howanitz and Makhortykh 2014; Wolniewicz-Slomka 2016) have identified them as sources of major disagreements in historical interpretations across different Wikipedia versions; I also assumed that the identification of victims and perpetrators carries particular significance for determining causal relationships in the case of war atrocities.

Following the analysis of framing on the article pages, I moved forward to the second stage and examined the process of frame-building on Wikipedia. Through the discussion pages of the Babi Yar articles, I explored how Wikipedia editors used different content features and frame categories in the collaborative article production. I employed the same categories of content features and frames as before; however, because of the disproportionately large size of many commentaries, I used the number of discussion page posts as a unit of measurement instead of word count.

Finally, I examined how Wikipedia editors used power play strategies to influence the outcomes of discussions with other editors[10]. Kriplean et al. (2007: 172) define a power play as 'an attempt by an individual or a group to claim legitimate control over an article'; how-

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[9] Because of this dependency, the comparison between languages with different morphological structures will not necessarily be meaningful; consequently, instead of using rough word counts, I relied on the comparison of ratios – i.e., the percentages of word count that a certain category/frame occupies within a specific article. The problem of reductionism (i.e. the reduction of a complex text to small sets of categories that allows estimating the distribution of these categories in the text) is a more complex one and remains a subject of debate in the academic field of content analysis.

[10] It is worth noting that the discussion of interactions between editors does not include a discussion of the editors themselves. The reasons for such choice are related to Wikipedia's anonymity policy, which allows its contributors either stay anonymous or construct identities different from their 'real' ones. Under these conditions, as Rosenzweig notes (2006: 125), personal leanings of individual users have lesser impact on Wikipedia than community-based practices or communication strategies that regulate how the content for the platform is to be produced.

ever, in this study I used a broader definition of the term which takes power plays as discursive strategies for developing the article's narrative from a specific angle. I used the following classification based on the typology of power plays suggested by Kriplean et al. (2007: 172): 1) article scope: a comment delineating what is central or peripheral content; 2) prior consensus: a comment which refers to past decisions on the platform, presented as absolute and uncontested; 3) power of interpretation: a comment referring to Wikipedia rules and practices; 4) legitimacy of the contributor: a comment that refers to traits of other contributors; 5) threat of sanction: a comment that threatens to use sanctioning mechanisms (e.g. a ban); 6) practice on other pages: a comment which refers to content organisation in other articles; 7) legitimacy of the source: a comment that refers to the traits of a source; 8) none: a comment which does not relate to any of the types of power play listed above.

Findings

Frequency of content features

I started my analysis by examining the distribution of content features related to the Babi Yar massacres. Using inductive coding, I identified seven major categories of content features: most of these categories were defined according to a chronological principle and were related to different episodes in the site's history (e.g. the massacres of 1941, the Kurenivka mudslide) and commemorative processes (e.g. remembrance in Soviet and in post-Soviet time). The general information category was an exception to this rule: it included data on the site's geographical location and various details unconnected to the massacres (e.g. other sites of interest nearby).

Table 1. Distribution of thematic content features on discussion pages (general).

Type	English	Russian	Ukrainian
General information	46 (2%)	102 (3%)	42 (3%)
Pre-1941 history	81 (3%)	207 (6%)	52 (3%)
1941 murders	1415 (52%)	1276 (35%)	465 (28%)
1942-1943 murders	808 (30%)	460 (13%)	211 (13%)
Kurenivka mudslide	91 (3%)	324 (9%)	320 (19%)
Soviet commemoration	16 (1%)	494 (14%)	285 (17%)
Post-Soviet commemoration	264 (10%)	757 (21%)	298 (18%)

Source: Mykola Makhortykh

As Table 1 demonstrates, the distribution of content features occurred unevenly across different articles. Out of three articles, only the English one placed the main emphasis on the massacres, dedicating 82 percent of its word count to the discussion of the atrocities committed in 1941-1943. By contrast, the Russian and Ukrainian articles dedicated 48 and 41 percent of their word count to the massacres. Both articles instead devoted significant attention to Babi Yar remembrance during Soviet and post-Soviet times and to other traumatic episodes in the site's history, in particular the Kurenivka mudslide and, to a lesser degree, the use of the ravine in the context of the Stalinist repressions prior to 1941.

The detailed examination of the Kurenivka tragedy is an illustrative example of how differently the English and Russian/Ukrainian Wikipedias approached the subject. In all three cases, the Babi Yar article included a hyperlink to the article about the mudslide in the respective languages; however, the Russian and Ukrainian versions dedicated a significant portion of the Babi Yar article to the discussion of Kurenivka as well. Such a decision can be given several reasons, starting from a desire to emphasise the traumatic legacy of Babi Yar for the non-Jewish population of Kyiv, or to offer a generalised interpretation of Babi Yar as a place of suffering, or responding to an inclination to present both the Nazi and Soviet regimes as perpetrators against the Ukrainian people, or even to equalise war and post-war traumas. In any case, this approach to Babi Yar memory falls in line with what Burakovskiy has described as a transformation of Babi Yar into 'a fraternal grave for many groups of Ukrainian people' (2011: 385), ultimately acting to reduce the importance of Holocaust memory in the post-socialist space.

Another feature which distinguished the Russian and Ukrainian articles was the extensive discussion of post-war commemoration of Babi Yar. While such a feature can again be explained by different reasons, including the attempt to criticise the Soviet Union for its dubious politics towards Holocaust remembrance, I suggest that it can be seen as simply a different way of approaching Babi Yar, specific to Russian and Ukrainian memory practices. Unlike the English article, which mostly interpreted Babi Yar as an episode of Holocaust history, the Russian and Ukrainian articles discussed its role as a collective place of memory. By doing so, both articles offered a broader interpretation of the site and opened a space for the debate of Babi Yar's place in contemporary Ukrainian society, thus turning Wikipedia into a place for self-expression in relation to both the past and the present.

These observations on the use of content features across versions fall in line with earlier works (Rogers and Sendijarevic 2012; Kaprans 2016) suggesting that the same set of platform-specific norms does not necessarily result in a similarity of interpretations between different Wikipedias. Various Wikipedia communities maintain different approaches towards remembering war atrocities, and these approaches appear to be dependent on the dominant memory practices in their respective societies. The lack of standardisation observed by Wolniewicz-Slomka (2016) in the case of Holocaust narratives in the Polish and Hebrew Wikipedias, can be viewed not only as evidence of the significant politicisation of digital memory landscape in Ukraine and Russia, but also as an argument supporting Dounaevsky's (2013) suggestion that Ukrainian and Russian users can be viewed as a 'digital diaspora' sharing common ways of approaching the past.

Frame frequency

Following the analysis of the use of thematic content features, I moved on to examine the frequency of frames used in the articles. Table 2 indicates that in all three Wikipedias, the definition of the event/phenomenon and causal interpretation frames were predominant. The first category of frames mostly dealt with the site's historical background – often going back to medieval times – and the general topic of the Nazi killing campaign. This category also included information on post-war commemoration of Babi Yar, in particular in the Ukrainian and Russian Wikipedias. The causal interpretation category mostly concerned what Wolniewicz-Slomka (2016: 45) refers to as 'the forces behind the events': namely information about the different groups of perpetrators and victims of Babi Yar, as well as the reasons behind their behaviour.

Table 2. Frequency of frames on article pages (by purpose).

Type	English	Russian	Ukrainian
Definition of the problem	1236 (49%)	2144 (62%)	852 (52%)
Causal interpretation	985 (39%)	1246 (36%)	795 (48%)
Moral evaluation	111 (4%)	66 (3%)	0 (0%)
Treatment recommendation	184 (7%)	22 (1%)	0 (0%)

Source: Mykola Makhortykh

Similar to the Holocaust articles in the Hebrew and Polish Wikipedias (Wolniewicz-Slomka 2016), the Babi Yar articles made limited use of moral evaluation and treatment recommendation frames. These categories were usually introduced through quotations from speeches of public personalities, such as prominent cultural or religious figures; such an approach allowed editors to integrate evaluative statements without violating the platform's principles of encyclopaedicity and neutrality. An example of this was found in the Russian article, which included an emotional reaction of the creator of the first Babi Yar memorial, Anatoly Ignashchenko, who criticised the Soviet politics of Second World War remembrance, claiming that it denied Babi Yar victims their place in 'national memory'.

The treatment suggestion frame in the English article occurred in a quote by Anatoly Kuznetsov, author of the 'Babi Yar' novel, in which he argued against treating Babi Yar as a locus of exclusively Jewish suffering. The Russian article suggested a different treatment, using a quote by Victor Nekrasov, who noted that while not only Jews had been murdered at Babi Yar, only the Jews had been murdered simply for being Jews. Such a difference in the use of the treatment suggestion frame can be explained by the influence of platform-specific practices on the framing process, in particular the impetus to include 'all significant views' on a certain issue ('Wikipedia: Neutral point of view' 2017). In practice, this policy often results in brief references to views which oppose the main interpretation offered in the article (e.g. the uniqueness of Jewish suffering in the English Wikipedia, or the generalisation of

suffering in the Russian Wikipedia); these references are not treated extensively enough to actually challenge the main argument, but their presence is sufficient to claim that the article represents different views fairly and proportionately.

The limited use of the treatment suggestion frame is particularly interesting in view of the extensive background discussion of commemorative practices in relation to Babi Yar in the Russian and Ukrainian Wikipedias. This discussion, however, was mostly informative in nature and tried to avoid recommendations or suggestions; thus, it was attributed to the problem definition frame rather than to the treatment suggestion one. Furthermore, neither of two articles discussed the recent debates in Ukraine concerning the Babi Yar Memorial Center. The simplest explanation for the absence of such a discussion is a lack of attention on part of the Wikipedia editors towards recent developments in Babi Yar remembrance. This observation suggests that frames established through Wikipedia are not necessarily up to date, but can in fact be rather static, contradicting the notion of changeability/velocity often associated with the use of digital media for framing/remembering.

Despite a similar distribution of frame categories across the English, Russian and Ukrainian articles, these frames were not necessarily used in the same way. An example of these differences is in the use of content features related to victims and perpetrators in the causal interpretation frame. As Table 3 shows, all three articles approached the question of victimhood in relation to Babi Yar differently. In the English and Russian articles, for instance, Jews were presented as the main category of victims, but both articles also dedicated significant attention to the category of Soviet civilians. At the same time, the English and Russian versions showed different approaches towards the category of Soviet prisoners of war: in the English article, this category was the second largest, whereas in the Russian article its presence remained relatively low. This distinction can be explained by the taboo status of the subject of Soviet prisoners of war in Soviet times[11]; even today, this subject remains controversial in Russia (Erin 2004).

The Ukrainian article showed a different approach to the question of victimhood in the context of Babi Yar. Unlike the other two articles, it placed major emphasis on the suffering of Soviet civilians, often referred to as Ukrainian civilians; by contrast, Jews were presented as the second most common category of victims. The Ukrainian version also dedicated significant attention to framing Ukrainian nationalists as victims of Babi Yar: this category was the third most common, together with the Soviet POWs. The emphasis on the suffering of Ukrainians can be viewed as an element of the earlier mentioned 'mutual competition' (Rohdewald 2008: 181) between national and Jewish suffering in post-socialist countries, where Holocaust memory is often perceived as a threat for national narratives of victimhood, and is therefore frequently marginalised.

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[11]This taboo status, as Markwick (2017:146) notes, was related to the popular contempt for Red Army POWs, often labelled – and persecuted – as betrayers of the Motherland during the Second World War and in the post-war years. Memory of the Soviet POWs thus remained supressed throughout the Soviet period, coming forth in public discussion only during Perestroika.

Table 3. Frequency of thematic content features (victims).

Type	English	Russian	Ukrainian
Germans	0 (0%)	27 (2%)	0 (0%)
Jews	353(36%)	401 (34%)	223 (23%)
Karaites	0 (0%)	31 (3%)	0 (0%)
Mentally ill	16 (2%)	35 (3%)	23 (2%)
Roma	51 (5%)	69 (6%)	99 (10%)
Soviet civilians	207 (28%)	379 (32%)	288 (30%)
Soviet POWs	277 (21%)	95 (8%)	163 (17%)
Ukrainian nationalists	70 (7%)	135 (12%)	166 (17%)

Source: Mykola Makhortykh

Another example of significant differences in framing the Babi Yar massacres between Wikipedias is the use of content features related to the perpetrators. Table 4 indicates that Germans were presented as the main perpetrators in all three articles; however, the Russian and Ukrainian versions also dedicated significant attention to the involvement of Ukrainians in the massacres. The emphasis on Ukrainian guilt was particularly pronounced in the case of the Russian article, constituting 37 percent of the word count for that subject.

Table 4. Frequency of thematic content features (perpetrators).

Type	English	Russian	Ukrainian
Germans	959 (80%)	361 (53%)	230 (50%)
Soviets	72 (6%)	72 (10%)	114 (25%)
Ukrainians	164 (14%)	254 (37%)	115 (25%)

Source: Mykola Makhortykh

While the participation of Ukrainians was also extensively discussed in the Ukrainian article (25 percent), this was to deny their involvement in the Babi Yar killings, while the Soviet Union was presented by the Ukrainian article as one of major perpetrators in the context of Babi Yar. The article first referred to Soviet responsibility for the Holodomor, discussing the burial of Ukrainian victims in the vicinity of Babi Yar, then went on to mention the Soviet 'anti-Semitic campaign' ('Wikipedia: Babyn Iar' 2017) in the later 1940s which had resulted in the silencing of Babi Yar memories. Finally, the Ukrainian article explicitly blamed the Soviets for the Kurenivka mudslide, which had caused numerous deaths among Kyivites.

Unlike the distribution of thematic elements, the categories of frames were mostly consistent across articles. All three versions placed more emphasis on defining the events and discussing the agents behind them, in line with the encyclopaedic function of Wikipedia. By

contrast, emotional judgements and suggestion of ways to treat the massacres – tasks considered beyond the encyclopaedia's scope – occurred only occasionally and indirectly. This observation suggest that Wikipedia standards have a significant impact on the way memories are presented on the platform, even as specific choices (for instance, which episodes to include and which interpretations to mention) vary significantly between versions.

Frame-building on discussion pages

After the analysis of the frames, I focused on how these were built. I started by examining the use of thematic content features on the discussion pages, using the same set of features identified earlier. A comparison of Table 5, which summarizes the distribution of content features across discussion pages, and Table 1, which does the same for the articles themselves, points out certain similarities. As in the article pages, the subject of the 1941 murders was the most prominent topic on the discussion pages; in the Ukrainian article its presence was even more pronounced. Almost the same frequencies were spotted for many other cases, such as Soviet commemorative practices in the English and Russian articles, the pre-1941 history of Babi Yar in the English article, and the topic of the 1942-1943 killings in the Russian one.

Table 5. Distribution of thematic content features on article pages (general).

Content feature	English	Russian	Ukrainian
General information	67 (26%)	12 (13%)	5 (21%)
Pre-1941 history	4 (2%)	24 (25%)	3 (13%)
1941 murders	142 (56%)	36 (38%)	16 (67%)
1942-1943 murders	27 (11%)	12 (13%)	0 (0%)
Soviet commemoration	11 (4%)	12 (13%)	0 (0%)
Post-Soviet commemoration	3 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Source: Mykola Makhortykh

While the participation of Ukrainians was also extensively discussed in the Ukrainian article (25 percent), this was to deny their involvement in the Babi Yar killings, while the Soviet Union was presented by the Ukrainian article as one of major perpetrators in the context of Babi Yar. The article first referred to Soviet responsibility for the Holodomor, discussing the burial of Ukrainian victims in the vicinity of Babi Yar, then went on to mention the Soviet 'anti-Semitic campaign' ('Wikipedia: Babyn Iar' 2017) in the later 1940s which had resulted in the silencing of Babi Yar memories. Finally, the Ukrainian article explicitly blamed the Soviets for the Kurenivka mudslide, which had caused numerous deaths among Kyivites.

One category which had a significantly higher presence on the discussion pages in all three articles was the general information category. Its significance can be explained by the platform's encyclopaedic form, which prioritises the provision of proper definitions of the

subject, thus often giving rise to discussions on how to approach key aspects of an article. In the case of Babi Yar, a recurring subject was the article's language: one debate, for instance, concerned the transliteration of the name of Babi Yar; another revolved around the appropriateness of using words like 'Kikes' for translating the Ukrainian/Russian word *zhyd* ('Yid').

Another category which attracted significantly more attention on the discussion pages was the pre-1941 history of Babi Yar. In the Russian and Ukrainian articles, this category of features occupied 6 and 3 percent of word count respectively, whereas on the discussion pages it included, respectively, 25 and 13 percent of all posts. The majority of these posts discussed the relation of Babi Yar to Stalinist repressions; the major subject of the debates in both articles' discussion pages was whether or not victims of the Holodomor had been buried at Babi Yar, and how reliable the sources connecting Babi Yar to the Soviet repressions were.

The comparison of the use of content features also indicated certain categories which did not provoke discussions. None of the three discussion pages referred to the Kurenivka mudslide or the subject of post-Soviet commemoration. Such an absence can be construed as evidence of a general consensus between the editors on these subjects – as well as on the degree of the visibility of these subjects in the three versions, which differed significantly between the English and Russian/Ukrainian articles. It also implies that editors responsible for the English and Russian/Ukrainian articles rarely interacted with each other, and focused instead on framing the issue within their own language version of the encyclopaedia.

Following the examination of content features, I investigated the use of frames in the discussion pages. Table 6, which summarises the distribution of frame categories on the discussion pages, points out a number of differences compared to the article pages. In all three articles, a significant part of the discussions was related to the treatment recommendation frame – i.e., how the subject of massacres should be treated – a topic mostly absent on the article pages. The topics discussed varied from debates on the scope of the massacres (e.g. whether the article should describe only the massacres of 1941, being the most notorious ones) to the arguments concerning the representation of the victims (e.g. how appropriate it is to mention Ukrainian victims if the majority of the victims were Jews). The subject of Holocaust denial was a prominent part of the discussions in all three versions, where calls often appeared to remove 'Bolshevik lies' ('Obsuzhdenie: Babii Iar' 2017) or to add arguments effectively denying the Holocaust to the article.

Table 6. Frequency of frames on discussion pages (by purpose).

Type	English	Russian	Ukrainian
Definition of the problem	92 (36%)	52 (54%)	6 (25%)
Causal interpretation	84 (33%)	20 (21%)	5 (21%)
Moral evaluation	31 (12%)	7 (7%)	0 (0%)
Treatment recommendation	47 (19%)	17 (18%)	13 (54%)

Source: Mykola Makhortykh

The debates concerning the treatment of Babi Yar were particularly prominent in the Ukrainian Wikipedia. The reasons for it can be related to the special significance of Second World War memory for national identity-building in Ukraine (Portnov 2013). Even while the article denied the involvement of Ukrainians in the Babi Yar massacres, the discussion page included a number of comments criticising editors for referring to this involvement in the first place. According to these comments, such references demonstrated the article's anti-Ukrainian stance and followed Russian propaganda; in order to counter this propaganda, the commentators requested to put more emphasis on the use of Babi Yar during the Holodomor and to elaborate on the Soviet Union's role as perpetrator in the context of Babi Yar. Most of these requests were dismissed as unreasonable and discarded.

Another category with significantly more presence on the discussion pages of the English and Russian Wikipedias was the moral evaluation frame. A number of discussion posts in these two versions offered moral assessments of the events at Babi Yar, in particular concerning the perpetrators. The English discussion page, for instance, contained a series of posts that claimed it was immoral to mention Ukrainians among the victims, because, as one user wrote, the only Ukrainians who died there were those 'too drunk after shooting the Jews and [who] fell into the ravine by accident breaking their necks' ('Talk:Babi Yar/Archive 1' 2017). In the Russian version, a user who called himself Mstitel [Avenger] passionately requested to 'call to answer the fascists who still occupy a place in this world (example - the butcher Dem'ianiuk)' ('Obsuzhdenie: Babii Iar' 2017). The only reaction to his call, however, was a comment advising Mstitel to stop grumbling from the sofa and start making practical moves in his search for revenge.

Despite a number of differences in the use of frames, both discussion and article pages shared one common feature, which was the absence of references to recent political developments (e.g. the debates about the Holocaust Memorial Center or the Ukraine crisis). Despite occasional attempts to represent Babi Yar as a tool for hostile propaganda, in particular in the context of the treatment recommendation frame, none of the discussion posts tried to connect Babi Yar to the ongoing events in Ukraine. This observation seems to support the earlier suggestion concerning a lack of awareness – or interest – towards recent developments around Babi Yar among Wikipedia editors. It also demonstrates that the lack of an engaged editorial community can make online frame-building for a certain issue a rather static process, and eventually diminish the platform's potential for framing the issue in terms relevant to the present.

Power play strategies

After examining the distribution of frames and content features on the discussion pages, I scrutinised the use of power play strategies in the process of frame-building. As Table 7 suggests, all three articles shared a number of similarities in power play strategies. Four strategies out of seven – the article scope, prior consensus, practice on other pages, and threat of sanction – were under-represented in all three cases. The reason for this unequal distribution could be that the first three under-represented strategies require solid knowledge of existing practices in relation to the subject; consequently, it can be viewed as an indicator of the lack

of such practices in the Holocaust articles on Wikipedia, or the lack of knowledge from the side of editors involved in the discussion of the Babi Yar articles.

Table 7. Power play strategies on discussion pages.

Type	English	Russian	Ukrainian
Article scope	3 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Prior consensus	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Power of interpretation	36 (14%)	30 (31%)	3 (13%)
Legitimacy of contributor	121 (51%)	28 (29%)	10 (42%)
Threat of sanction	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)
Practice on other pages	1 (0%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)
Legitimacy of source	47 (19%)	25 (26%)	5 (21%)
None	38 (15%)	10 (10%)	6 (25%)

Source: Mykola Makhortykh

In all three articles, three strategies – power of interpretation, legitimacy of contributor, and legitimacy of source – were the ones most commonly used. In the case of the Ukrainian and English articles, the most common strategy involved questioning the legitimacy of a contributor; while its exact implementation differed between posts, it often involved direct attacks on other contributors, who were framed as Jewish agents, Ukrainian Nazis, anti-Ukrainian propagandists, or historical revisionists. The purpose of the strategy was to discredit opponents and, by doing so, dismiss their interpretations of the Babi Yar massacres. The prevalence of this strategy points to the importance of personal attacks in frame-building practices on digital media, where the process of anonymous defamation is often viewed as an effective way of countering framing efforts.

The legitimacy of contributor strategy was also frequently used in the Russian article, but the power of interpretation strategy was the one which appeared most frequently in this context. This strategy relied on referring to Wikipedia policies in order to sway or silence opponents. The majority of policies referenced were related either to the use of sources (e.g. the 'No original research' or 'Identifying reliable sources' policies) or to interactions between editors (e.g. the 'Civility' and 'Assume good faith' policies). Unlike the more universal approach of questioning the legitimacy of other contributors, the power of interpretation strategy is more platform-specific, and requires in-depth knowledge of Wikipedia practices. Its prevalence in the Russian article suggests the involvement of more experienced Wikipedia editors; however, in the majority of cases these references served the same gate-keeping purpose as personal attacks in other versions.

The above-mentioned variations in the use of power play strategies were contrasted by similarities in terms of their effectiveness. In all three cases, the power of interpretation and legitimacy of source strategies seemed to be the most effective means of frame-building. This observation can be interpreted as evidence of the importance of community-based norms and

platform-specific practices, the knowledge of which is integral for memory production on Wikipedia. At the same time, it also supports the earlier suggestion by Kaprans (2016a) that the construction of the past through the platform is disproportionately influenced by small groups of experienced editors, who can use their knowledge of Wikipedia practices both to moderate the discussions and to promote their personal points of view.

Conclusions

'Babyn Iar is a ravine at the north-western outskirts of Kyiv. It stretches from the Kyrylivs'ka street in the direction of the Mel'nykova street between the Kyrylivs'ka Church and the Olena Teliha street... Babyn Iar is known worldwide as a place of mass shootings, mainly of Jews, in 1941-1943, organised by the German occupational command during the Second World War' ('Wikipedia: Babyn Iar' 2017). This paragraph opens the Ukrainian Wikipedia article about Babi Yar, the iconic Holocaust site in Ukraine. Similarly to the Russian article, which was cited at the beginning of the study, it describes the site's location, provides a rough time-line of events, and reveals the identities of both the victims and the perpetrators of the massacres. However, its interpretation of the massacres is vastly different from the one provided in the Russian Wikipedia.

Despite all the disagreements concerning the representation of Babi Yar (particularly the identities of perpetrators and victims), both the Russian and Ukrainian articles interpret it in a fundamentally different way from the English Wikipedia. The latter approaches Babi Yar as a Holocaust site and focuses on the history of the massacres, whereas the Russian and Ukrainian articles present it as a generalised site of suffering, and place significant emphasis on its commemoration. Both articles discuss not only the murders of 1941-1943, but also the Kurenivka mudslide of 1961, thus favoring the interpretation of Babi Yar as a shared grave of war and post-war victims of both the Nazis and the Communist regimes.

The difference in interpretations can be explained by the significant politicisation of memory in post-socialist spaces, particularly in the digital sphere, where the past does not only stay 'as alive as the present' (Rutten and Zvereva 2013: 5), but is also never neutral. Digital media – such as Wikipedia – not only serve as spaces for cultural and political self-expression, but are also often used for the process of establishing collective identities through selective interpretations of the past and the present. Often, these interpretations are determined by existing cultural practices, which, as in the case of Babi Yar, leads to the instrumentalisation (e.g. by framing Ukrainians as Holocaust perpetrators in the Russian Wikipedia) or disparagement (e.g. by putting emphasis on non-Jewish victims in the Ukrainian Wikipedia) of Holocaust memory.

At the same time, cultural practices are not the only factor influencing framing on Wikipedia. The presence of the large number of similarities in frame distributions across all three Wikipedia versions points to the influence of platform-specific norms on the way issues are framed. The predominance of problem definition and causal interpretation frames, also noted in Wolniewicz-Slomka's earlier study of Holocaust memory on Wikipedia (2016), stems from the platform's encyclopaedic approach, which strives to avoid moral evaluations and treatment recommendations. The existence of policies and norms supporting this approach not only results in general similarities in all three versions (if only in representation,

not necessarily in interpretation), but also prevents the use of Wikipedia for the propagation of views of Holocaust deniers or highly subjective interpretations of the past in general.

In addition to the influence of platform-specific norms and policies, frame-building on Wikipedia was found to exhibit two other major features: a significant time lag between new developments related to the framed issue and changes to those frames online, and the prevalence of the legitimacy of contributor strategy for countering opponents' frames. The former feature seems contradictory to the popular idea of the increased velocity of digital remembrance (Hoskins 2009: 28); rather, the Babi Yar case demonstrates that digital memories and frames can become static in the absence of a dedicated community of users to keep developing and updating them. The second feature points to the significant role of personal attacks in dealing with various issues online, including traumatic pasts. The prevalence of such personal attacks in the context of online framing can be related to the same factors which influence the growing presence of online bullying – in particular, the simultaneous visibility and anonymity of attacks (Betts 2016), which facilitates the discrediting of opponents as well as of their views.

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