

**«HOSTAGES OF RUSSIAN BEAR»
METAPHORICAL REPRESENTATION OF MODERN RUSSIA IN
BRITISH AND AMERICAN MASS-MEDIA**

Abstracts: Metaphors of political interdiscourse conceptualize image of a certain country, political institute or politician. Representation of Russia in foreign mass-media defines the way our country will be interpreted abroad and, consequently, the attitude «from aside» that we are to expect. Herewith, we shouldn't forget that political metaphor is the strongest means of manipulation with consciousness of the society, and the intricacy of it lies in its latent influence, which only an expert is able to feel and resist. This article considers metaphorical image of Russia and its president, created in the political discourse in the USA and Great Britain.

For Russia 2006 was an extremely ambiguous year. The blue sky of well-being under which gross national product was increased, international debts were paid off, state projects, aimed at rising living standards and developing the society, were created, was darkened with a chain of clouds of crimes which burst out with terrible thunder-storms both inside, and outside the country. The stormy inexplicable element has brought new bright conceptual metaphors, reflecting relation of this or that country to the events occurring in V.V. Putin's Russia, onto the sky of political discourse.

This article considers metaphorical representation of Putin's Russia in British and American mass media in the framework of cognitive aspect of political linguistics. Following editions were involved in research: The Economist, The Financial Times, The Guardian, The Times; Business Week, Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, The American Spectator, The International Herald Tribune, The National Interest, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Washington Times.

The majority of American and British mass-media are disturbed by antidemocratic development of Russia and are frightened by growing quantity of not solved political cases. Consequently, most metaphors conceptualizing images of Russia, the Kremlin, the Russian president and society considered in this article, have pejorative meaning and aim at defamation of the country in general. E.g.:

President Bush and Secretary of State Condi Rice have ramped up their criticism of what they see as Mr. Putin's backsliding on democracy. [Borchgrave 2005]

So what Russia has now is an infantile democracy built through Soviet tools, and the freedom to shop ... It takes only a moment for the fragility to show. [Walsh 2006]

Pragmatic sense of the metaphor of Russia *backsliding on democracy*, created by top ranks of the USA and immediately taken up by American mass-media, is as uncertain as "sliding" itself - a diplomatic trick. It would not make an international scandal, but latently set the population of the country advocating democracy and human rights in opposition to Russia and put the two states into lingvocultural dichotomy FRIENDS - FOES. From the same position of the democratically developed countries, Russian democracy is represented as a child, gentle and fragile, and at the same time inexperienced, undeveloped and requiring true education.

The pragmatic potential of the metaphorical model RUSSIAN DEMOCRACY IS A CHILD, created by the British journalists, is aimed at indulgent reaction to it, and simultaneously at raising interest as to how this child will develop. Thus, attention and interest of a reader is focused on observation of Russia and accordingly on its juxtaposition onto himself, that can lead to ideology of constant comparison where Russia will act as an antipode to democratic states. A similar situation developed in the USSR when the political discourse was aimed at opposition of Russia to the West.

In political discourse of the USA and Great Britain there are some journalists supporting Russia, who are not afraid of using direct nominations, asserting, that discredit of Russia in the western press and politics is on a verge of discrimination by nationality. One article published by *The Guardian* on December 4, 2006, is called *In bed with Russophobes*. In spite of the fact that the author of the article nominally is a FRIEND to the British, still he is not a FOE for the Russian. He expresses his relation to Russia by means of inverted commas and dethronement of created negative images. Compare:

... any Russian involvement in the affairs of its neighbours has been spun as an attempt to recreate the "evil empire". [Clark 2006]

Every measure Putin has taken has been portrayed by the Russophobes as the work of a sinister totalitarian. [Clark 2006]

Images created in the political discourse RUSSIA IS AN EVIL EMPIRE and PUTIN IS A DESPOT in this case represent unreasonable, and, hence, groundless metaphorical models. As a result of a change of value of metaphorical models, the direction of their conceptual vector changes to the opposite, which make the recipient doubt the honesty of those who purposefully create false images.

However, it is necessary to notice, that metaphorical models RUSSIA IS AN OMINOUS PLACE, PUTIN IS A DESPOT are rather popular in the British political discourse. Compare:

However, Mr Putin has reasserted the Kremlin's authority by riding roughshod over the rights of others, including businessmen, journalists and regional governors. [The Kremlin is killing Russia's rule of law 2006]

But, whoever is behind the recent spate of killings, Vladimir Putin's Russia looks like an increasingly sinister place. [Rachman 2006]

Undoubtedly, conceptual vector of such bright and frankly negative metaphors is aimed at enforcement of fear and horror in relation to Russia and its leader in subconsciousness of the addressee. Certain aggression of the image supported by journalists, and, therefore, target-spheres of metaphorical expansion cause sharp rejection on the part of the reader.

It is curious that the American mass-media do not hurry into giving labels to Russia and its president, they confine to comparing it with other countries who choose undemocratic way of development. E.g.:

So Russia in some ways appears a little like China, where the economy flourishes with new freedom but politics remain tightly controlled. Or in other ways, it seems like Hugo Chavez's Venezuela. Or Augusto Pinochet's Chile. Or all of the above. There was a reason the old monarch was called the Czar of All Russias. [Baker 2006]

It should be noted that the source - sphere *monarchy* is often involved by both American, and British mass-media for metaphorical expansion of an image of Russia and its governor. Compare:

Could the poisoner be from Prince Putin's court [Skidelsky 2006]

Russia does not have a government; it has a prince, and a court riven by factions trying to win access to the resources they crave. [Skidelsky 2006]

For all the "power" he has engrossed, Putin cannot impose coherence on his squabbling entourage, which is why Russia remains badly governed. [Skidelsky 2006]

Vladimir Ryzhkov, an independent member of parliament, says that Mr Putin may see himself as an emperor, but not as a Führer. [Playing a dangerous game 2006]

Again, Russia is waiting for Godunov Medish 2006]

Monarchic metaphorical models RUSSIA IS A MONARCHY, PUTIN IS A TSAR testify that Russia is still judged according to its historical past. Regal governors of Russia have always been inaccessible and godlike to the Russians, they were worshipped, they were silently obeyed. In political discourse of the USA and Great Britain imperial Russia and Russia

of V.V.Putin are often compared. The western press is surprised with the fact, that, despite deprivation of democratic freedom and total control from above, Putin's ratings in Russia is extraordinary high, hence, these people choose for themselves such a governor. Nothing changes in national consciousness - the Russians prefer order and strong power.

Though it is necessary to notice, that it's not only the Russians who are "charmed" by charismatic sovereign of Russia, but leaders of other states as well. Compare:

Mr Putin has exercised a strange fascination over his western colleagues. George W. Bush famously suggested that he had glanced into his Russian counterpart's soul and liked what he had seen. [Rachman 2006]

Others to fall for the charming Russian president have been Messrs Chirac, Schröder and Silvio Berlusconi of Italy. [Rachman 2006]

There are no longer any excuses for infatuation with Mr Putin. But it is usually unwise to swing straight from adoration to loathing. Mr Putin may not be a soulmate. But he is not an enemy of the west either. [Rachman 2006]

Metaphorical models PUTIN IS CHARMING, PUTIN IS NOT AN ENEMY reflect positive perception of the president of Russia as «*the hero of the hour not wearing a tie*». The pragmatic sense of the given metaphorical models adjoins the psychology of interpersonal relations of the enamoured or of loving spouses. Conceptual vector of the given metaphors is aimed at the creation of feeling confident in the person, admiration to the person and happiness because, he or she is always nearby.

In creation of the metaphorical models reflecting relations between people liking each other, Russia and other countries wishing to gain its favor or friendship are often personified. E.g.:

Engaging Russia, as Mr. Bush says he wishes to do, means dropping gratuitous insults about its lack of democratic virtues. Such advice is best rendered in private. Russia is at a crossroads. [Borchgrave 2005]

The west has no choice save to continue the weary struggle to engage with Moscow. [Hastings 2006]

However, it's well known, that from love to hatred there is only one step, and it was made on pages of *The Guardian* November 27, 2007. In the article "Corruption, violence and vice have triumphed in Putin's Russia" it was concluded that Great Britain which always loved and

supported Russia, was personally insulted. Hence, the country should revenge for the treachery. Compare:

It is precisely because we feel goodwill towards them that there is something of the bitterness of rejected courtship in our response to their recent behaviour, of which the apparent murder of Alexander Litvinenko is a bleak manifestation. [Hastings 2006]

Instead we must confront a defiant new Russia, fortified by possession of a substantial part of the world's oil and gas reserves in an era when energy competition will be critical. [Hastings 2006]

The analogy of relations between countries with unrequited love between people is close and clear to everybody, which strengthens the pragmatic effect of metaphorical model RUSSIA IS AN IMPUDENT BELOVED. The conceptual vector of the given model is aimed at revival in one's memory of the most painful moments of interpersonal relations and at corresponding reaction: either a desire to revenge or to forget and never recollect.

It is interesting to notice that when other countries are mentioned in the context of events in Russia, the American mass-media, as a rule, compare political development of Russia with its own or refer to Europe. In both cases the American political discourse is tuned precautionary. Compare:

The 15-year path from the demise of Gorbachev to the rise of Putin is instructive at a time when Washington is talking about planting democracy in hard soil around the world. [Baker 2006]

Little wonder, then, that Russian officials bristle when lectured by the West about democracy. [Baker 2006]

Unfortunately for the Europeans, a number of their governments are cementing a relationship with Vladimir Putin's Russia which, in effect, will make them hostages of the Russian bear. Russia already accounts for 26 percent of Europe's gas imports. [Rahn 2006]

While actions of Washington associate with agriculture, planting of a new life into infertile soil of the world around the USA, the Kremlin and Russia are represented by means of the conceptual metaphors using as source-sphere *fauna*. OFFICIALS of Russia are likened to A RACK of DOGS, and RUSSIA under the guidance of Putin IS A BEAR, powerful, strong, wild, frightening, capable of keeping others in a captivity. Such aggressive metaphors are pragmatically programmed for intimidation of a reader. The conceptual vector of these

metaphorical models is aimed at creation of an image of Russia as growling and menacing animal in the mind of a reader.

Speaking about other countries in a context of Russia, the British mass-media turn their critical sight towards the USA. Compare:

... we should be wary about jumping on a bandwagon orchestrated by the people who bought death and destruction to the streets of Baghdad, and whose aim is to neuter any counterweight to the most powerful empire ever seen. [Clark 2006]

As part of their strategy, Washington's hawks have been busy promoting Chechen separatism in furtherance of their anti-Putin campaign, as well as championing some of Russia's most notorious oligarchs. [Clark 2006]

Though George Bush's follies have debased the coinage of freedom and democracy, these remain noble objectives, never likely to be shared by Moscow. This is a city where taxi drivers see no embarrassment in carrying miniature portraits of Stalin on their dashboards ... [Hastings 2006]

The USA, to be exact the US president, in the British political discourse is associated with RECKLESSNESS, aspiration to destruction of any competitor. The metaphor of *fauna* as a boomerang comes back to the creator. The pragmatic sense of metaphorical model WASHINGTON POLITICIANS ARE HAWKS causes fear to an aggressive bird of prey with long sharp claws, capable of tearing its victim to pieces.

In this connection, the use of *a theatrical* metaphor is noteworthy. AMERICA is represented as an ORCHESTRA under guidance of the ruling elite, who by a light gesture of a CONDUCTOR lead the orchestra to demolition and destruction of the strength of its opponents. The conceptual vector of this extended metaphor is aimed at zombiing and depersonalization of Americans in the eyes of the British as the former blindly follow the instructions of their leader which results in deadly consequences.

The overwhelming majority of comments characterizing modern Russia, are devoted to Alexander Litvinenko's poisoning which happened on the territory of Great Britain. The western journalists found the roots of mysterious death of this former Russian spy at pages of Russian history, and named poisoning - old Russian tradition of getting rid of people, unwanted by authorities. Many people notice what happened with Litvinenko is closer to some fiction of a detective-story writer, but not to the reality.

The grisly death of Alexander Litvinenko by radioactivity in London has created one of the supermysteries of our time. The victim's bizarre metamorphosis from Soviet spook to Muslim

human - rights champion-in-exile goes far beyond anything Le Carré would have dared, and the rest of the plot is hopelessly impenetrable. [Schmemmann 2006]

The unsolved poisoning is an old Russian tradition. Historians are still arguing about the role of poison in the death of Ivan the Terrible in 1584 - as well as in those of Rasputin in 1916 and Maxim Gorky in 1936. [Rachman 2006]

Exaltation of poisoning to the level of an OLD RUSSIAN TRADITION is performed with an obvious purpose of manipulation with reader's mind as it is aimed at generating mistrust to the country and people living in it, and desire to stay away from the country with such terrible traditions.

In British mass-media it is often written that Russia is captured by serious mental disease. Representation of RUSSIA as INSANE ORGANISM testifies the relation to Russia as to intellectually defective organism subjected to steady delirium. Serious affairs and relations with such country are out of question, as it is sick, it requires isolation from the society and treatment.

Western revulsion from Russian behaviour, including the murder of Litvinenko, merely feeds Russian paranoia. [Hastings 2006]

Putin can never know how popular he truly is, so instead paranoia sets in, the Kremlin stifling anything that could upset his dominance of the political scene. [Walsh 2006]

Another widespread image maintained for exposure and disparagement of Russia in political discourse of the USA and Great Britain, is a metaphorical model RUSSIA IS A BRIGANDISH STATE, a dangerous place where corruption and vice rule. Compare:

Corruption, violence and vice have triumphed in Putin's Russia. [Hastings 2006]

Instead, to our bewilderment, Russia is institutionalising a state gangster culture which promises repression and ultimate economic failure for itself, fear and alienation from the rest of the world. [Hastings 2006]

Who are all these Russian "businessmen," a term that seems to cover anything from a government minister to some of the richest thieves on earth? [Schmemmann 2006]

Stable usage of the metaphorical model RUSSIA IS A BRIGANDISH STATE confirms in consciousness of the addressee permanent desire to keep clear of this country. The brightest metaphors are used to mention the Kremlin and its main persons acting not less aggressively, than gangsters. Compare:

Oh yes, there are politics in the Kremlin, vicious politics. It's just that they've reverted to the form famously described by Winston Churchill as a bulldog fight under a rug: "An outsider only hears the growling, and when he sees the bones fly out from beneath it is obvious who won." [Schmemmann 2006]

So long as Putin remains strong, the men around him will appear totally loyal. Under the rug, however, the knives are already out. [Schmemmann 2006]

For now it is in Putin's interest to stay out of the fray. Once he proposes an heir, after all, he's a dead duck - sorry, lame duck. [Schmemmann 2006]

It should be noted that in many cases source-sphere of metaphorical expansion *animals* is used for the image of participants of Russian political life. The RUSSIAN POLITICIANS ARE STRONG AND AGGRESSIVE ANIMALS ready to attack and kill each other in any minute. Quite justified in this case is the use of *military* and *mortal/morbial* metaphors, as fight of animals is a severe battle which can lead to death of participants. However, beyond the number of metaphorical images hide neither criminals nor prisoners, but leading politicians of Russia, and such metaphorical expansion obviously discredits Russian ruling elite and asserts the reader in thought, that political relations with Russia are extremely dangerous.

It's noteworthy, that extreme ways of behavior are attributed in American and British political discourses not only to the top stratum of the Russian society, but also to the most of Russian people, which brings to memory ancient Russian proverb: "When in Rome do as the Romans do". Compare:

Russian responses to western failures of deference have often been indistinguishable from those of the yob on a suburban train who assaults an innocent commuter because he dislikes the way the man looks at him. [Hastings 2006]

Why, having tasted freedom and democracy, should they wish to return to the murderous practices of Stalinism? [Hastings 2006]

It's easy to pick on the Russians. They miss being a world power. They seem to be up to their eyes (as always) in intrigues. [Madigan 2006]

In the examples the RUSSIANS are represented as AGGRESSIVE HOOLIGANS capable of inexplicable severe acts. The conceptual vector of the given image is aimed at prevention of vigilant and accurate Americans and Britons of extremeness and inadequacy of Russian behavior. The given metaphor eloquently convinces a reader, that the Russians - are

FOES/STRANGERS and will never become FRIENDS. Knowing the taste of freedom they prefer not to trouble themselves with thinking as to what to do or how to do something, but do the way they are ordered. Their history is not only a history of the state poisonings, but also a history of numerous intrigues which do not allow the society to relax. In the British political discourse the Russians have acquired a peculiar collective image of EXTREME PEOPLE, not refusing the control from above and enamored as it is strange, with money. Compare:

And so it follows, on the pendulum of extremes that is society here, that while the country's direction can be intensely sad and worrying, it should, just moments later, be intensely hopeful. [Walsh 2006]

Russians have fallen irreversibly in love with denghi - their ugly word for money - and the mobility and riches of the globalised world. [Walsh 2006]

How can they acquiesce in Putin's restoration of tyranny? Here is a nation suddenly granted wealth which might enable its people to become prosperous social democrats like us. [Hastings 2006]

The metaphor of WEALTH that has accidentally FALLEN down onto the Russians bearing such an unknown earlier quality of the Russian national character as AVIDITY to money is original and fresh in the political discourse. Undoubtedly, such image of modern Russian is created with the purpose of humiliation. Though the specified characteristics are not typical for any nation, but universal human vices, for people it is unusual to project shortcoming on themselves. Thus, Russians again appear as FOES/STRANGERS in linguistic dichotomy FRIENDS - FOES.

At the best, in analyzed articles Russia of our time is estimated under a general slogan «NEITHER FRIEND, NOR FOE». Certain journalists, who have frequently worked in Russia for a long period of time, try to write about our incomprehensible country positively, diluting a stream of pejorative publications. In their articles the accent is put on the increased well-being of the population of the country and on changes in opinion of the Russians about what may be called a civilized society. Compare:

Russia is swimming in money; its economy has grown fivefold under Putin, from \$200 billion to \$920 billion, and the once-destitute government has paid off its international debt in full and early. ([Baker 2006]

My 4 years here have seen an ugly surge of authoritarianism in Russia but also vast economic freedoms; the broad repression of dissent, but also a hardened popular understanding of how a proper, civilised society should be... [Walsh 2006]

Ostensibly these reforms are aimed at strengthening Russia's hand in fighting terrorism ... [Sevunts 2004]

In quoted statements latent psychological influence on the reader implied by means of metaphorical models RUSSIA IS A RICH COUNTRY, RUSSIA –IS A STRONG COUNTRY. If to consider, that as both in American and British national consciousness riche peoples are seen as a result of enormous work, conceptual vectors of metaphors «*bathing in money*» and «*force strengthening*» are aimed at attention to the country that is in the process of changing, is becoming younger and gathering strength. It forms respect for long-awaited evolution in the Russian society deprived of the possibility to advance in the last century.

Thus, in bright light of the metaphors representing Mr Putin's Russia in political discourse of the USA and the Great Britain «*hostages of the Russian bear*» are not only the foreign states depending on fuel resources of Russia, but also Russia itself which's got into traps, placed by the history of the state with the strongest power concentrated in hands of the ultimate sovereign, and democracy in a bud. As advised by the western mass-media, the country is in a captivity of its traditions, which are, unfortunately, far from being optimistic.

In other words, the research of metaphorical representation of modern Russia has shown, that in the foreign political discourse there is a depressing and fear-inspiring image of Russia. As for this phenomenon, either it is black PR or a real state of affairs in the country, the majority of foreigners receiving such data on Russia from the considered mass-media, do not reflect.

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