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Analogical Advocacy:

Exploring the Rhetorical Use of Historical Analogies in Interstate Talk

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Abstract

How do leaders use historical analogies in interstate talk? Despite significant scholarly progress in understanding the role of analogical reasoning in international politics, this question remains unexplored. Prior research has focused overwhelmingly on how historical analogies serve as cognitive shortcuts in internal decision-making processes. Meanwhile, the few studies that approach analogical reasoning from a rhetorical perspective have demonstrated that historical analogies may be employed for political purposes to mobilize public support, a finding that to date regrettably has been limited to domestic settings. By developing a theory of the rhetorical use of historical analogies in interstate talk, I aim to fill this research gap. I do so by introducing a novel typology of four kinds of "localized" analogies that are commonly invoked in interstate talk. Being rooted in historical events pertinent to the relevant target audience, it is argued that localized analogies are more likely to achieve cultural congruence and persuasion in interstate talk than non-local ones. Through a comparative qualitative content analysis of Ukrainian President Zelenskyy's speeches to foreign legislatures during the first year of the full-scale war in Ukraine, this paper presents theory-consistent empirical evidence of the prevalence of localized analogies in interstate talk and suggests that historical analogies are a powerful rhetorical that may influence international relations in various ways.

Keywords

Historical analogies, localized analogies, rhetoric, Zelenskyy, persuasion.

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Introduction

On February 24, 2022, as massive columns of Russian tanks were rolling through the streets of Ukraine, President Putin addressed the Russian people. Drawing on the Soviet experience from the Second World War (WWII), he framed the ongoing invasion as a defensive war: "The attempt to appease the aggressor ahead of the Great Patriotic War proved to be a mistake which came at a high cost for our people. … We will not make this mistake the second time" (Putin, 2022). Only a day later, Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelenskyy (2022a) similarly referred to WWII, in this case to condemn the Russian invasion, describing the situation as "something Europe has already seen a long time ago, during the Second World War".

Decision-makers frequently invoke historical analogies in this way, and in the past 50 years, international relations (IR) scholars have made great progress in explaining their omnipresence in international politics. The dominant perspective in the field is that historical analogies function as a heuristic device that influences foreign policy by helping decision-makers evaluate and make sense of novel and uncertain foreign policy situations (Khong, 1992). While research in this vein deserves credit for furthering our knowledge about foreign policy decision-making, however, it fails to explain why leaders invoke analogies in public rhetoric as exemplified above.

Seeking to alleviate this gap, a smaller set of scholars have illustrated that historical analogies constitute a powerful rhetorical tool that decision-makers frequently mobilize to shape perceptions and preferences (Paris, 2002; Ångström, 2011; Mosinger et al., 2022). Regrettably, this intriguing finding has so far only been narrowly explored in domestic environments, thus leaving important questions about the rhetorical use of historical analogies in international settings unanswered. How and why do state leaders use historical analogies in interstate talk?

What impact may this usage have on interstate relations? What kinds of analogies do leaders typically invoke in interstate talk?

The purpose of this article is to provide answers to these questions. Doing so, I argue, is essential to understanding how leaders seek to affect change through rhetorical moves in the international arena. Considering the fact that research has demonstrated that rhetorical use of historical analogies can mobilize political support domestically (Mosinger et al., 2022; Paris, 2002), it is puzzling that these questions have remained unexplored internationally. If advocating by analogy is effective in mobilizing support in domestic politics, it may be so in international relations as well.

In this article, I argue that leaders have strong incentives to use historical analogies in interstate talk. As a rhetorical tool, I contend that historical analogies can serve a multitude of political purposes that may help a speaker persuade or rhetorically coerce a target audience. Combining findings in the existing IR literature on historical analogies with that on rhetorical strategies, I develop a novel typology of "localized" historical analogies, which refers to analogies that are tailored to the history and culture of the target audience. By comparing a present situation to a historical event that is uniquely salient to the target audience, localized analogies should be more likely to achieve resonance and congruence than non-local ones.

Drawing on the IR literature on collective memory, trauma, and emotions, I further specify my typology by positing that speakers can localize analogies through references to shared experiences of cooperation, trauma, and emancipation. Alternatively, speakers can refer to a locally salient historical event that induces emotions of guilt and shame in the listeners. Based on this, I derive four types of localized analogies that leaders may use in interstate talk: cooperative, emancipatory, traumatic, and guilt-inducing analogies.

I then proceed to test my theoretical arguments using the case of President Zelenskyy's speeches to foreign legislatures during the first year of the full-scale war in Ukraine. More precisely, I trace patterns in Zelenskyy's use of historical analogies by employing a medium-N, comparative qualitative content analysis. The analysis demonstrates strong theory-consistent evidence of a frequent use of historical analogies, a high degree of localization, and a clear alignment with my typology.

Although the findings in this article are primarily descriptive in nature, it lays out theoretical support from prior research that innovative rhetorical use of historical analogies indeed may have both constitutive and causal effects on interstate relations. It is difficult to counterfactually imagine that public opinion of, and support for, Ukraine would have been the same without President Zelenskyy's "clear and compelling framing of the war" (Bauder & Noveck, 2022), which to a significant degree has been achieved through his widely publicized speeches to foreign legislatures. Thus, this article lays the descriptive and theoretical groundwork for future research to zero in on effects and outcomes of analogical advocacy.

The article proceeds as follows. The first section reviews the existing literature on the use of historical analogies in international politics. Next, I theoretically situate this literature in that of rhetoric, collective memory, trauma, and emotion to develop my novel typology of localized historical analogies. In the third section I outline the research design of the comparative content analysis, after which I turn to presenting the empirics. Finally, the conclusion highlights avenues for future research and discusses the paper's central findings.

Literature Review

This literature review begins with an overview of the findings within the dominant cognitivist approach to analogical reasoning. I argue that understanding this literature is important since many of its findings are transferrable to the rhetorical approach. Next, I cover the key findings

in the rhetorical literature on historical analogies and identify a puzzling absence of research on the rhetorical use of historical analogies in international environments.

The dominant view: Historical analogies as a cognitive shortcut in decision-making processes

In the late 1970s, during the "cognitive revolution" of international relations, the notion that decision-makers draw "lessons" from past events when evaluating foreign policy situations started to gain scholarly traction (Jervis, 1976; Snyder & Diesing, 1977, pp. 313-321; Larson, 1985, pp. 50-57; Neustadt & May, 1986; Vertzberger, 1986; Hybel, 1990). Robert Jervis (1976), for instance, argued that "what one learns from key events in international history is an important factor in determining the images that shape the interpretation on incoming information" (p. 217), suggesting that historical analogies are essential to how decision-makers process and "filter" information.

To date, the most widely cited conceptual work within this subfield is Yuen Foong Khong's (1992) seminal book *Analogies at War*, in which he suggests that analogical reasoning is inextricably linked to the decision-making process. By analyzing internal deliberations as well as public statements by decision-makers during the Vietnam War, Khong (1992) demonstrates that American leadership consistently drew parallels to primarily Korea, Munich, and Dien Bien Phu,[1] convincingly arguing that these analogies had a causal effect on U.S. policy toward Vietnam.

According to Khong (1992), a historical analogy "signifies an inference that if two or more events separated in time agree in one respect, then they may also agree in another" (pp 6–7). Making an analogy thus involves identifying a past event (or analogical base) that shares

[1] The first two analogies refer to the Korean War in 1950-1953 and the appeasement of Hitler at the Munich conference in 1938, respectively. Dien Bien Phu was the site of the Viet Minh's final defeat over the French in the First Indochina War in 1946-1954 (Khong, 1992, pp. 58-68).

structural similarities with the present situation (or analogical target), after which "the base is … 'mapped' onto the target" (Houghton, 1996, p. 524).[2]

In this view, historical analogies are cognitive devices that "affect the way we make sense of a current situation" (Ghilani et al., 2017, p. 282) by performing certain "diagnostic tasks central to political decision-making" (Khong, 1992, p. 10). Six diagnostic functions are outlined in what Khong (1992) calls the AE (analogical explanation) framework:

> Analogies 1) help define the nature of the situation confronting the policymaker, (2) help assess the stakes, and (3) provide prescriptions. They help evaluate alternative options by (4) predicting their chances of success, (5) evaluating their moral rightness, and (6) warning about dangers associated with the options. (p. 10)

By way of example, the lesson of Munich – one of "the most potent" analogies frequently invoked in relation to conflict (Rasmussen, 2003, p. 500) – can be summarized as "aggression unchecked leads to general war later" (Khong, 1992, p. 64). The AE framework clarifies the prescriptions made by this analogy. Khong (1992) argues that President Truman's likening of North Korea's invasion of South Korea to Munich informed that i) the problem at hand was an aggressive dictator, ii) the stakes were very high since appeasement had previously led to war, and thus iii) democracies should not appease North Korea; iv) the chances of success are good as it was believed that Hitler could have been forestalled, v) an intervention is undoubtedly moral and vi) unclear, since intervention was not tried in the 1930s. As demonstrated in this example, historical analogies do not necessarily provide an answer to all questions posed in the AE framework. Nevertheless, their ability to perform multiple diagnostic functions simultaneously make them a useful cognitive shortcut in uncertain situations (Khong, 1992, pp. 22-23). This is an important finding for the purposes in this paper. While cognitivists focus on

[2] For more on the cognitive process of mapping, see Gentner (1983); Gentner et al. (2001); and Flanik (2017).

the many lessons a decision-maker can *learn* from a historical analogy, this indicates that strategic rhetors similarly can use historical analogies in attempts to *teach* lessons about the present to their international counterparts.

In recent decades, a flurry of case studies utilizing this cognitive perspective in the analysis of foreign policy decision-making have been published (Houghton, 1996; Brunk, 2008; Cox, 2011; Kamali & Sheikhzadeh Jooshani, 2019; Macdonald, 2002; Saltzman, 2016; Siniver & Collins, 2015). Strong examples include the influence of WWII analogies on the United States' (U.S.) policy toward Kosovo (Hehir, 2006), the role of the Pearl Harbor analogy in the Cuban Missile Crisis (Tierney, 2007), and the influence of analogical reasoning on the development of outer space law during the Cold War (Peterson, 1997). Finally, yet another group has explored the "accuracy" or general (mis)use of certain common analogies, such as the Holocaust analogy (Desch, 2006), the parallels between contemporary U.S.-China relations and the Cold War (Khong, 2019; Harris & Marinova, 2022), and even the war in Ukraine as an analogical base for decisions regarding Taiwan (Chan, 2022).

Drivers of analogical retrieval

There is broad consensus among scholars of historical analogies that "policy-makers ordinarily use history badly" (May, 1973, p. xi). Jervis (1976) argues that leaders typically evoke superficial and overgeneralized analogies, and that the lessons learned therefore "will be applied to a wide variety of situations without careful effort to determine whether the cases are similar on crucial dimensions" (p. 228). Regarding the Vietnam War, Khong (1992) similarly

concedes that "better analogical reasoning at the time would have led to better decisions and happier outcomes" (p. 255).[3]

The notion that leaders use history inadequately has prompted cognitive scholars to explore the drivers of analogical retrieval, that is, "the calling up of potentially useful analogies from memory" (Peterson, 1997, p. 248). As has already been established, the retrieval of analogies typically occurs in novel situations, whereas issues perceived as cyclical or reoccurring instead are "associated with the formation of rule-based problem schemas" (Houghton, 1998, p. 172).

On the complex question of what causes an individual or a group to retrieve a particular possible analogy over others in a novel situation, valuable insight has been drawn from psychological research on judgment heuristics. One important factor is how readily "available", or salient, a specific historical event is in one's "repertoire of historical memories" (Khong, 1992, p. 35). This is what cognitive psychologists Tversky and Kahneman (1973; 1974) refer to as the "availability heuristic". For instance, retrieving a historical event based on its recency and one's personal memory is consistent with the availability heuristic. Jervis (1976) argues that the most recent war will be the most frequently evoked in analogies, since "major wars rarely come more than once a generation and most people will have firsthand memories of only the most recent one" (p. 269). Schuman and Rieger (1992) correspondingly find strong generational effects when measuring public analogical retrieval during the Persian Gulf War.

Further, analogy retrieval also hinges upon the perceived similarity between two events. Cognitive psychologists refer to this as the "representativeness heuristic", which is "employed when people are asked to judge the probability that an object or event A belongs to class or

[3] As a remedy to decision-makers' tendency to evoke inaccurate analogies, a set of scholars have proposed various "techniques" to improve analogical reasoning, such as the making of lists and tables to evaluate the quality of available analogies and consulting historians more frequently (Neustadt & May, 1986; Mumford, 2016; Ferguson, 2022). Noting that most of these techniques in fact were utilized to no avail by the American presidential administrations involved in the Vietnam War, Khong (1992) doubts the feasibility of this suggestion.

process B" (Tversky and Kahneman, 1974, p. 186). Tversky (1977) proposes that the perceived similarity between two objects is decided by the proportion of shared features. In foreign policy situations, Khong (1992) suggests that resemblance, or "surface commonalities", is essential in the process through which a decision-maker retrieve an analogy (p. 36).

Unsurprisingly, the degree to which these factors matter in the retrieval process will vary between individuals. As stated by Axelrod and Forster (2017), "what counts as 'similar' may depend on one's personal and cultural preferences in determining point of view … and this strongly influences what counts as a reasonable analogy or exemplar" (p. 10). The "level of reasoning skill" (Peterson, 1997, p. 250) may also play a role; one study has shown that so-called "low-complexity" individuals are more likely to draw analogies from their own generational and cultural context, whereas individuals of "high-complexity" often do so from a broader historical repertoire (Dyson & Preston, 2006).

For my purposes, this research importantly indicates that speakers will seek to refer to historical events that are available and salient to the relevant target audience. Notable, however, is that this cognitivist approach concentrates on how analogies are used to understand war and crisis. In interstate talk, actors may seek different outcomes than understanding, such as building constructive relations and encouraging collective actions. In these cases, there are likely better ways to formulate analogies that are salient to the target audience than referring to the most recent war that one's own country experienced.

The alternative view: Historical analogies as a rhetorical tool

Importantly, Khong (1992) notes that there is a body of scholars – which he labels "skeptics" of the cognitive perspective – who primarily view historical analogies as a rhetorical tool used by leaders for *post-hoc* justification and advocacy.[4] Fairbank (1966), for example, argues that

[4] For more "skeptical" positions, see Butterfield (1951, pp. 176-177); Schlesinger (1974, p. 444); and Taylor & Rourke (1995).

"'history' is used as a grab-bag from which each advocate pulls out a 'lesson' to 'prove' his point." While Khong (1992) cautiously concedes that decision-makers occasionally use historical analogies to justify decisions, he argues that they do so by using the same analogy used *a priori* to make said decisions. Therefore, he claims, there should be minimal variance in the analogies used in private deliberations and those used in public (pp. 15-17). The more recent publications exploring the rhetorical use of analogies, particularly since the publication of *Analogies at War*, typically acknowledge the dual use of analogical reasoning.[5] The view is often that "it is not an either-or question: cognitive and political functions of historical analogies may go hand in hand" (Brändström et al. 2004, p. 206).

Although relatively few in number, scholars of the rhetorical perspective have displayed a wide array of incentives for leaders to add historical analogies to their rhetorical arsenal. Ångström (2011) argues that historical analogies are "powerful tools" that can "provide meaning to actions" and help decision-makers construct "a favourable narrative of the policy that is undertaken" (p. 225). They also tend to "create connotations and invoke public sentiments that can be difficult to ignore" (p. 226). For instance, historical analogies can provide "comfort" to the public by implying that the situation is not unprecedented and unmanageable (MacMillan, 2009, pp. 16-17; Ångström, 2011, p. 225).

Case studies have demonstrated that leaders often use historical analogies as "tools of political persuasion … to legitimize certain policy options and to delegitimize others" (Paris, 2002, p. 429). Studying the use of historical analogies and metaphors in the American debate on how to deal with Kosovo in 1999, Paris (2002) insightfully illustrates that American officials disagreed not only on which historical event was most apt to describe the situation in Kosovo, but also on

[5] For an exception, see Taylor & Rourke (1995).

how to interpret those historical events. “The Kosovo debate”, he states, “was simultaneously a battle to define or fix the meaning of both the present and the past” (p. 426).

Similarly, Mosinger et al. (2022) interestingly hold that the Nicaraguan protests in 2018 gained broad support and turned into a popular uprising in part because social activists framed the Ortega administration as analogous to former President Somoza’s repressive regime. The article asserts that activists framed the protest “around widely-shared conceptions of history to transform others’ understandings and preferences and spur collective action” (p. 255). Brändström et al. (2004), while primarily focused on cognitive processes, suggest that the political framing of Austrian far-right politician Jörg Haider as a present-day Hitler helped build political support within the EU for a sanctions regime against Austria at the turn of the millennium (pp. 196-200).

It is clear, then, that historical analogies play an essential role in how leaders represent a current situation, and that this subsequently may impact how others interpret the present. This is consistent with Peterson’s (1997) assertion that “different representations can lead to the retrieval of very different analogies and thus very different conclusions about the target domain” (p. 209). The idea that representations matter is also well-established in the political psychology literature, where it has been found that the way in which people interpret information in part is contingent upon how that information is framed (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

For the abovementioned reasons, Paris (2002) astutely argues that “the study of historical metaphors and analogies … is not merely an examination of language but rather an investigation into the conduct of politics through language” (p. 425). This is also the vantage point of this paper. As is evident in this literature review, historical analogies do much more than provide cognitive schemas for decision-makers; through their reproduction and potential contestation

in public spheres, they also possess the ability to shape how other actors perceive of the current reality.

Despite important progress in understanding the importance of rhetorical use of historical analogies in the political process, no studies have, to the best of my knowledge, systematically explored how historical analogies are used in interstate public talk. Most of the existing literature within the rhetorical perspective focus on the use of analogies in domestic rather than international settings (Mosinger et al., 2022; Paris, 2002; Ångström, 2001; Noon, 2004). While Brändström et al. (2004) mention that analogical reasoning may enable joint interstate action, they emphasize the cognitive perspective and only mention rhetorical use in passing.

Thus, essential questions remain unanswered. Do state leaders use historical analogies in interstate talk? If so, why? That is, what do leaders' use of historical analogies "do" in international relations? What kinds of historical analogies do leaders typically use in interstate talk? By theorizing the use of historical analogies in interstate talk, as well as empirically tracing said usage in a highly relevant case, this paper purports to address this significant gap.

A purposive theory of analogical advocacy

This section outlines theoretical responses to the questions posed above. The main argument presented is that historical analogies is a powerful rhetorical tool that can shape interstate relations in a variety of ways, which explains why leaders frequently invoke them in international environments. I start the theoretical development of this argument by outlining two broad discursive dimensions through which historical analogies may be mobilized rhetorically, as well as what effects they may have. I then proceed to introduce what I label "localized" analogies, before proposing a new typology of analogies often invoked in public interstate communication: *cooperative, traumatic, emancipatory*, and *guilt-inducing* analogies.

Finally, I discuss the theoretical limits to the use of localized analogies, presenting situations in which they may not be available for rhetorical utilization.

Why do state leaders use historical analogies in interstate talk?

Within the rationalist literature, in particular since Fearon's (1995) conceptualization of the bargaining model of war, the study of interstate communication in international relations has been limited to theories of informational signaling, and under what circumstances such signals are "costly" (and credible) or "costless" (and "cheap").[6] While this literature has made important scholarly contributions, this paper assumes that states talk to each other because they believe that it is useful and can shape outcomes. As put by Jennifer Mitzen (2005), "if talk in IR is always cheap, then it is not clear why states would bother to talk at all" (p. 402).

As illustrated in the literature review, scholars have already demonstrated that historical analogies can shape domestic politics by framing the present in particular ways, which may subsequently transform public opinion through persuasion or other forms of cognitive congruence. In addition to influencing the relations within a society, however, I posit that historical analogies in similar ways can affect relations between states. If true, leaders have strong incentives to use historical analogies for political purposes in interstate talk. I argue that historical analogies may affect interstate relations across two, not necessarily mutually exclusive, discursive dimensions, that taken together explain why leaders would want to engage in analogical advocacy in interstate talk.

The first dimension regards the constitutive effects that historical analogies may have on social interstate relations. The core of this argument is that historical analogies hold a non-negligible degree of discursive power which states can mobilize to construct meaning, not only about a current event, but also about identities and social relations. In other words, historical analogies

[6] For a discussion, see Trager (2016).

are a constitutive part of the discursive processes through which states produce the "historically contingent and changing understandings, meanings, norms, customs, and social identities that make possible, limit, and are drawn on for action" (Barnett & Duvall, 2005, p. 56).

If widely shared between states, such understandings can constitute a collective identity, or a "common lifeworld", in which states can pursue Habermasian "communicative action" and subsequently achieve consensus through argumentative persuasion (Risse, 2000, p. 19; Müller, 2001). In other words, a common lifeworld enables a constructive, truth-seeking interstate debate through which actors can be convinced to change their interests, identities, and beliefs (Risse, 2000, pp. 22-23). In the absence of a collective identity, states "can construct the common lifeworld through narratives *by referring to shared experiences, common historical memories, and the like* [emphasis added]" (Risse, 2000, p. 16). Thus, Historical analogies are not only useful as persuasive tools within a common lifeworld but can be equally helpful in constructing shared identities and self-understandings. By constructing collective understandings of the Self, they correspondingly also help define what constitutes the Other (Neumann, 1996).

While analogies in the first discursive dimension may persuade, or create conditions more amenable to persuasion, the second dimension regards the more coercive functions of historical analogies. My argument in this case is that historical analogies may also be conducive to non-persuasive change-making, through mechanisms such as rhetorical entrapment and shaming (Schimmelfennig, 2001; Krebs & Jackson, 2007; Goddard, 2009; 2015; Foley, 2021; Tingley & Tomz, 2022). Rhetorical entrapment refers to rhetorical moves that expose inconsistencies and contradictions in the normative foundation upon which the target state legitimates itself (Krebs & Jackson, 2007, p. 45; Schimmelfennig, 2001). Translated into a historical analogy, this could entail pointing out inconsistencies between a target state's historical commitments and its present actions. If the rhetorical move resonates with the target state's domestic

audience, the target state's government will risk losing legitimacy if it does not comply with the rhetorical move. Hence, the target government may be forced to adopt a position even though persuasion has not occurred (Krebs & Jackson, 2007, pp. 44-45).

How do state leaders use historical analogies in interstate talk? Introducing the "localized" analogy.

In light of the discussion above, any successful rhetorical use of a historical analogy seemingly depends on how well the analogy resonates with the listeners. Theorizing how leaders use historical analogies in interstate talk thus requires considering how resonance and coercion is achieved in analogical advocacy. Paris (2002) asserts that

> listeners are more likely to embrace comparisons that offer a credible description of events, refer to past experiences that the listeners themselves recollect, and evoke … justifications that members of the society are generally willing to accept for governmental policy or action. (p. 429)

This view is consistent with the aforementioned heuristics of representativeness and availability, and furthermore finds support in the literature on rhetoric and discourse. Krebs and Jackson (2007) note that speakers seeking to rhetorically entrap a target audience must adhere to "a number of *topoi,* or rhetorical commonplaces"[7] (p. 45), that "represent the boundaries of legitimate framing" (p. 48). Correspondingly, other scholars have found that speakers must select representations out of a "repertoire that is widely shared by the audience" in order to achieve so-called "cultural congruence" (Kornprobst, 2019, p. 62; Entman, 2004, pp. 14-15).

While I am chiefly in agreement with Paris (2002), it is important to note that achieving resonance across borders is significantly more difficult than in domestic environments. An

[7] Commonplaces is the translation of Aristoteles' *topoi*, which Kornprobst (2019) describes as "well-known ideas" (p. 66).

analogy that resonates in one country need not, given cultural and historical variation, resonate in another. The increased number of actors involved in interstate talk further complicates things; in interstate talk, a speaker must remain resonant with the domestic audience at home as well as the government and foreign public of the target state (Putnam, 1988).

I can identify only two solutions to this issue. The first is for the speaker invokes analogies that are relatively uncontested and "settled". The Munich analogy is one such example; most people will interpret it in a similar manner and understand that it serves to discourage appeasement (Paris, 2002). The Holocaust is another example (Desch, 2006). Nevertheless, even relatively settled analogies may invoke disparate reactions depending on the historical and cultural context of the target state. In addition, the fact that settled analogies are so widely understood in similar ways limits the range of possible actions they can prescribe.

In many situations a better option may therefore be to invoke a localized analogy, that is, an analogy tailored to the national identity and historical experiences of the target state. Being rooted in an event that the target audience has experienced, or in a value it holds, localized analogies should be readily available in the minds of the target audience. Using such analogies might make it less challenging for a speaker to achieve cultural congruence in interstate talk.

I define a localized analogy as one in which a current situation is compared to a historical event experienced by either the target audience or both the speaker and the audience. In the same way, a localized analogy could compare a current leader or influential person to a historical person uniquely tied to the target audience. Broadly speaking, it is a historical analogy that is locally anchored in the culture and national identity of the target state.

There are a variety of ways in which leaders can use localized analogies to justify their behavior and advocate for preferred policies in interstate talk. Just like in Khong's (1992) AE framework,

historical analogies used rhetorically can perform a number of "tasks" simultaneously. They can highlight opportunities or negative consequences, include or exclude, persuade or coerce.

A particularly important aspect is that of emotions and collective memory, sometimes also referred to as social memory. The latter term helpfully connotates a distinction between the socially constructed recollections and interpretations of history within a society from history as it really occurred (Noon, 2004, p. 341; Verovšek, 2016, pp. 531-533.). Collective memory is important to the rhetorical use of historical analogies because it is closely related to national identity (Becker, 2016) and, in extension, to ontological security (Innes & Steele, 2016; Bachleitner, 2021).[8] Scholars have suggested that collective memory of traumatic historical events is constitutive of national identity, often making states feel ontologically insecure and subsequently affecting their foreign policymaking (Becker, 2016; Innes & Steele, 2016; Bachleitner, 2021). Such dynamics, I argue, could be utilized rhetorically in situations when a speaker seeks to activate emotional responses. In other words, by using localized analogies that invoke traumatic memories of the past, the speaker may be able to make the audience feel a certain way. Desch (2006) argues that "historical analogies often evoke powerful emotions like fear or guilt" (p. 111) which, along with anxiety and shame, are emotions closely connected to ontological insecurity (Steele, 2005).

Paris (2002) similarly argues that historical analogies are effective in provoking emotions. Likening a foreign leader with Hitler, he argues, "is apt to produce a more emotional response among listeners than the suggestion that the foreign leader is behaving 'like the head of an oppressive, authoritarian regime,' because strong emotions are associated with the evocation of Hitler's name" (p. 428). What my conceptualization of localized analogies adds is the notion that likening a current *German* leader to Hitler before a *German* audience likely will produce

[8] For more on ontological (in)security in international relations, see Steele (2005) and Mitzen (2006).

stronger emotions than doing so elsewhere, because the historical guilt deriving from Hitler's legacy should arguably be strongest in Germany. Research has shown that such emotional, or "hot", frames can induce an affective cognitive state of mind (Damasio, 2005) which in turn can influence risk propensity and decision-making (Druckman & McDermott, 2008; Houghton, 2011, pp. 163-165). Mercer (2010) notes that emotion can be used as a persuasive tool since "it is fundamental to how people think and what they believe" (p.19).

Conversely, however, localized analogies can also create shared understanding by validating trauma. For instance, a speaker may draw parallels between a natural disaster currently experienced by the target state to one which the speaker's home country has experienced in the past, thus creating a bond over shared experiences of trauma. In this hypothetical situation, evocations of trauma fit better with Lerner's (2022) description of "*collective* trauma … as a potent social and political force that can mobilize groups and motivate action" (p. 27). Hutchison (2016) similarly contends that "traumatic events are experienced in inherently social ways, which can shape shared meanings and common bonds" (p. 35). Collectivizing traumatic emotion may thus be a way to construct a common lifeworld.

Clearly, national self-understandings are often built on positive social memories as well. The United Kingdom has partly built its national identity on triumphant histories of empire, whereas the Soviet Union (and later Russia) constructed national identity based on the victory in the "Great Patriotic War" (WWII) (Langenbacher, 2010, p. 18; Wertsch, 2021, pp. 135-140). Similarly, the notion of American exceptionalism derives in no small part from social memories and interpretations of the American state formation, which may explain why American politics is fraught with invocations of the Revolutionary War, the Declaration of Independence, and the Founding Fathers (Langenbacher, 2010, p. 18; McDonnell et al., 2014; Jarausch, 2021). Localized analogies can thus invoke amicable emotions and promote collective identity by tying a current situation to a historical event that is positively remembered by the listeners.

Comparably, localized analogies can invoke shared memories of cooperation to encourage continued cooperation in the present.

The abovementioned examples importantly demonstrate that collective memory does not necessarily refer to personally experienced events, but rather to the collective social interpretation of the past, which can turn historical events into commonly understood national "myths" (Langenbacher, 2010, pp. 27-29). This, I argue, loosens the need for speakers to refer to a recently experienced event. Certain events are evidently salient and available in memory and mind despite having occurred centuries ago.

Moreover, the examples illustrate that collective memory and historical narratives can always be rhetorically contested (Krebs & Jackson, 2007). For instance, positively framed narratives about freedom and democracy in the American independence movement can be counter-framed by pointing out slavery, and memories of British imperial greatness can be contested by highlighting the injustices of British colonialism. Localized historical analogies are apt for such rhetorical contestation, which by inducing feelings of shame and guilt or by otherwise delegitimizing the identity or behavior of the target state potentially could coerce it into a particular action.

Indeed, the strategy of shaming is often described as a type of rhetorical coercion (Foley, 2021, p. 103). According to Tingey and Tomz (2022), the scholarship on shaming is fragmented with respect to the effects of foreign shaming on domestic audiences. Whereas some scholars argue that foreign shaming could both inform and persuade domestic audiences, "other scholars argue that foreign shaming can backfire, provoking defiance instead of compliance" (Tingley & Tomz, 2022, p. 449). In testing such effects experimentally on public attitudes toward the Paris Agreement, however, they find that shaming indeed shifted public opinion toward compliance. Interestingly, the effect was larger against partial compliers than against targets that were in full compliance or took no action whatsoever (Tingley & Tomz, 2022, p. 462).

Notwithstanding potential causal effects, shaming is a commonly used rhetorical tool that I contend can be effectively communicated through localized analogies. Speakers should be more likely to do so against a state perceived as incompliant with certain commitments or otherwise engaged in an activity perceived as immoral.

Four types of localized analogies

From the discussion above, I derive four types of localized analogies available to leaders: *cooperative*, *emancipatory*, *traumatic*, and *guilt-inducing* analogies. Below, I outline what these types may look like by drawing on historical examples.

President Nixon's visit to Moscow in 1972 provides an apt example of a *cooperative* analogy, which is an analogy that draws on a shared history of cooperation to describe or prescribe cooperation in a current situation. In a televised speech addressed to the Soviet people, Nixon (1972) stated:

> Our two countries have a lot in common. Most important of all, we have never fought one another in a war. On the contrary, the memory of your soldiers and ours embracing at the Elbe as allies in 1945 remains strong in millions of hearts in both of our countries. It is my hope that memory can serve as an inspiration for the renewal of Soviet-American cooperation in the 1970's.[9]

This analogy is considered localized and cooperative because it refers to a past event of cooperation that is particularly salient to the Soviet Union. Winning and ending "the Great Patriotic War" was a source of national pride in the Soviet Union and continues to be so in Russia, not least demonstrated by their annual Victory Day celebration commemorating the Red Army's final defeat of the Nazis in Berlin (Wertsch, 2021, pp. 135-140). Thus, Nixon drew

[9]In April 1945, U.S. and Soviet troops met on the Elbe River near the town of Torgau, signifying the impending defeat of the Nazis, who at this point were cut off from both West and East (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 2020).

on the shared experience of cooperation in WWII to argue for continued détente in current Soviet-American relations. The principal analogical inference is that if cooperation in the past event was successful and morally correct, the same can be said for cooperation in the present.

In 1998, President Clinton also made a localized cooperative analogy during a joint press conference with Russian President Yeltsin in Moscow by invoking past cooperation in Bosnia to advocate for cooperation regarding Kosovo:

> we would not have solved the Bosnian war or ended it, had it not been for the leadership of Russia and the partnership between NATO and Russia. … Similarly, we have got to work together in Kosovo to prevent another Bosnia from occurring. (The White House, 1998).

As evident from these examples, cooperative historical analogies draw on history to persuade the listeners of the right course of action in the present. In doing so, they can construct a collective identity in cases where the common lifeworld is thin. That said, cooperative analogies can also serve to reinforce existing bonds between friends. This was the case when President Obama (2011) spoke in the British Parliament about the historical Anglo-American friendship, "forged … in the fire of war", to argue for continued American and British leadership in world affairs.

Furthermore, localized analogies can be *emancipatory,* which is a comparison between a target audience's past emancipatory struggle with one's own emancipatory ambitions. For example, when speaking to a joint session of the U.S. Congress in 1990, not long after negotiations to end apartheid in South Africa had begun, Nelson Mandela (1990) drew a parallel between the ANC's struggle for freedom and that of Americans during the Revolutionary War. In a speech to Congress four years later, Mandela (1994) succinctly recalled this analogy. "When last we were here", he recalled,

> we came … to share with you our dreams of genuine independence, democracy and the emancipation of all our people, you whose forebears had, at earlier times, dreamt of independence, of democracy and of the emancipation of all the people of these United States.

Lech Wałęsa, Poland's first democratically elected leader following the Polish withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, made a similar claim in a speech to the U.S. Congress in 1989, comparing the ambitions of his Solidarity movement to those of the U.S. Founding Fathers. This emancipatory analogy served as a moral justification for Wałęsa's appeal for a new Marshall Plan to Eastern Europe, a suggestion which itself is a localized analogy (C-SPAN, 1989; New York Times, 1989, p. 22).

Evidently, emancipatory analogies can be used to provide the moral groundwork for making an appeal for aid. As previously discussed, independence movements and emancipatory events are typically salient in collective memory and constitutive of national identity. Emotional appeals based on such historical events should thus be readily available in the minds of the target audience which increases the possibility for persuasive resonance. Apart from their persuasive capacity, emancipatory analogies can also be used more coercively. Implicit in Wałęsa's and Mandela's emancipatory analogies is the notion that not supporting their emancipation movements would be morally wrong and inconsistent with the values that the U.S. claims to live by. Depending on the context and goals of the speaker then, emancipatory analogies could fit in to both persuasive and more coercive rhetorical strategies.

A third option is to use a localized *traumatic* analogy by invoking the collective memory of a shared trauma, or by comparing one's own current situation to a trauma experienced by the target state. Traumatic analogies are typically highly emotion-laden and primarily serve either to construct a common lifeworld or to install emotions of ontological insecurity in the target audience. Examining a speech made by French President Chirac to the Algerian Parliament in 2003, when Franco-Algerian relations were tense, Rosoux (2019) notes that Chirac talked at

length about how Algerian and French soldiers fought and died together in Verdun during the First World War (WWI). Around 26,000 Algerians fought with the French in Verdun, the longest battle in WWI, in which the French side suffered up to 500,000 casualties (Axelrod, 2016, pp. 1-2; Rosoux, 2019, p. 514). Through Chirac's historical framing of "shared martyrdom" in Verdun, Rosoux (2019) argues, "the French did not appear as former colonial rulers, but as brothers in arms" (pp. 514-515).

While this example also highlights historical cooperation, the central framing revolves around a shared traumatic experience. The example astutely illustrates how trauma can be used to construct a collective identity and highlight commonalities between actors. However, like all historical analogies, traumatic analogies have versatile rhetorical functions. As previously discussed, traumatic memories can evoke ontological insecurity as well, depending on context and framing. Collective memories of terror attacks, for instance, have been a source of ontological insecurity in many Western states in recent decades, which may explain why leaders around the world have employed securitizing narratives citing terrorism concerns to justify stricter migration policies (Leduc, 2021; Bourbeau, 2011). Speakers in interstate talk may thus use traumatic analogies in the hope of achieving resonance by installing emotions of fear in the target audience.

Guilt-inducing analogies are the type of localized analogies most consistent with theories of rhetorical coercion and entrapment. Broadly defined, the term refers to analogies that draw on history to shame or delegitimize a current policy position or person closely related to the target audience. In doing so, they can induce feelings of guilt and shame in the minds of the target audience by highlighting contradictions between the target state's current behavior and what it historically has committed itself to. Furthermore, guilt-inducing analogies can contest romanticized identity narratives of the target state by pointing out historic wrongdoings and

shameful behavior which, similar to traumatic analogies, can create negative emotional responses.

Although Pope Francis is not a state leader, his speech to the U.S. Congress in 2015 effectively illustrates what a localized, guilt-inducing analogy may look like. Speaking about the need for and moral righteousness of open immigration policies, the Pope noted that both he and many of the listeners were descendants of immigrants, before invoking the United States' history of repression toward indigenous peoples: "Tragically, the rights of those who were here long before us were not always respected. For those peoples and their nations, from the heart of American democracy, I wish to reaffirm my highest esteem and appreciation." This shameful historical period was then "mapped" onto the present with a clear prescription: "when the stranger in our midst appeals to us, we must not repeat the sins and the errors of the past" (Francis, 2015).

Having outlined this novel typology of four variations of localized analogies, it is worth clarifying what a non-local analogy is. In short, it is an analogy that is not uniquely related to the culture or national identity of the target audience. Consider, for instance, if Pope Francis would have argued against anti-immigration sentiments to the U.S. Congress by invoking Europe's history of oppressing indigenous peoples, or if Lech Wałęsa would have compared the Solidarity movement's emancipatory ambitions to the French Revolution instead of the American. My main assertion, as outlined in this section, is that those analogies would have made for less resonant and congruent messages since the historical events are less culturally salient to the target state in question. In short, they would not be a "good match" (Entman, 2004, p. 15).

Under what circumstances are localized analogies likely to be used?

Despite the apparent benefits of using localized analogies, there are cases where leaders may not be able to direct their remarks to a local context. The most obvious example is in non-

regional multilateral fora such as the United Nations (UN), where the target audience consists of representatives from multiple states with disparate histories and cultures. In such contexts, it is virtually impossible to invoke analogies that are culturally congruent for the entire audience since any analogy will resonate differently depending on the diverse cultural backgrounds of the listeners. Localized analogies should thus be more common in bilateral and regional interstate talk.

Moreover, making a congruent, localized analogy requires a certain degree of understanding of the culture, history, and national identity of the target audience. Thus, certain leaders who lack the required cultural literacy, or "reasoning skill" (Peterson, 1997, p. 250), may not be able to invoke localized analogies. Also, certain types of localized analogies require the existence of a repertoire of shared history, the extent of which will vary depending on the target audience. This requirement is most noticeable for cooperative analogies, which are contingent upon a shared history of cooperation to function. Cooperative analogies might thus not be very common in interstate talk between countries that for reasons such as geography or ideology lack a history of interaction and cooperation.

Research design

Case and data

Following the Russian invasion, the Ukrainian government launched a comprehensive public diplomacy campaign to garner international support for its defense and promote its strategic narrative abroad. This campaign has received praise for its apparent effectiveness in the battle for the "hearts and minds" of the international community (Butler, 2022), which analysts have ascribed to its savvy use of social media (Budnitsky, 2022; Adams, 2022), its mobilization of national symbols (Fomenko, 2022), and not least President Zelenskyy's many emotional speeches foreign legislatures (Breuer, 2022). These public speeches provide a suitable case to

test the validity of my theoretical argument. Given the existential stakes at play for Ukraine, combined with the fact that its success on the battlefield to an extent is dependent on external aid (Cancian, 2023), Zelenskyy has obvious incentives to be strategic in his appeals for continued and increased support. Importantly, the case features significant variety in target audiences during a short time span while keeping the speaker constant, thus providing fertile ground for comparative analysis of the rhetorical use of historical analogies.

Therefore, I identified a universe of 39 speeches given by Zelenskyy to foreign legislatures during the first year of the war, that is, between February 24th, 2022, and February 24th, 2023. This corpus of speech transcripts, collected from the official website of the President of Ukraine[10], constitutes my main data set. The 39 speeches were given to 33 different state legislatures as well as the European Parliament, which despite not being a state entity is included in the data set because it is a foreign legislature. Ukraine's selection of target audiences seemingly reflects its expressed goals of becoming members of both the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); 23 of the target states are members of the EU and 24 are NATO members.[11] Only five target states are part of neither the EU nor NATO: New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and Israel. Worth noting is that with few exceptions, the countries that Zelenskyy has addressed have been staunch supporters of Ukraine, providing the majority of the €12.96 billion euro that have been committed to Ukraine in the form of military, humanitarian, and financial aid (Trebesch et al., 2023).

The selection of target states has important implications for the possibility for persuasion. Scholars have argued that the EU and the transatlantic community constitute the best examples

[10] One speech to the European Parliament was not available on the website and was instead drawn from Carrick (2022).
[11] With Finland's recent accession to NATO, this number would be 25 instead of 24. Finland was, however, not yet a NATO member when President Zelenskyy addressed the Finnish parliament. The members of the EU and/or NATO that Zelenskyy did not address are Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Malta, Austria, Turkey, North Macedonia, and Montenegro.

of dense common lifeworlds, which as mentioned is a prerequisite for persuasion to occur (Risse, 2000, p. 15; Krebs & Jackson, 2007, p. 56). Since Ukraine is not a member of neither the EU nor NATO, it is difficult to measure the extent to which a common lifeworld exists between Ukraine and the target states. Nevertheless, Ukraine has clearly maintained close relations with the EU, particularly following the 2014 Euromaidan and the signing of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement (Wolczuk, 2019). Public Western support for Ukraine as well as Ukrainian support for moving closer to the West has been high since the start of the war, not least demonstrated by Ukraine gaining EU candidate status in June 2022 (Garton Ash et al., 2023; Matthijs, 2022; Hrushetskyi, 2022). Similarly, Ukraine has enjoyed a close relationship with NATO through a variety of Euro-Atlantic integration programs, such as the Partnership for Peace Program and the bilateral NATO-Ukraine Commission (NATO, 2023). It could therefore reasonably be assumed that Ukraine to a certain extent is part of both the transatlantic and the European lifeworld, and that persuasion certainly is possible. At the same time, Ukraine has incentives to use historical analogies to construct and strengthen said lifeworld to maximize its chances of formalizing its place within it through membership.

Most speeches were given in the beginning of the war, with the frequency gradually decreasing. More precisely, 16 speeches were given in March 2022, ten in April, seven from May to July, none from August to November, and six from December 2022 to February 2023. The density of speeches in the initial stage of the war is unsurprising; research has shown that belligerent states are quick to establish their war narratives in the early phases of the conflict (Fox & Welch, 2012, p. 1), when uncertainty and information problems are most pronounced (Powell, 2006, p. 173). The absence of speeches from August to November is more difficult to explain, but it could be the case that Zelenskyy at this point had already addressed most legislatures of interest.

With the exception of New Zeeland, the speeches given November 2022 – February 2023 were directed to legislatures that Zelenskyy had previously addressed.[12]

Qualitative content analysis and coding

Having collected the data, I proceeded to conduct a comparative qualitative content analysis, tracing themes in President Zelenskyy's rhetorical use of historical analogies. Qualitative content analysis was deemed an appropriate method for this article's research purpose since it allows for transparent analysis of "patterns and regularities" in textual data, making it an "ideal approach to descriptive qualitative research" (Drisko & Maschi, 2016, pp. 86-87). As is typical when using qualitative content analysis (Drisko & Maschi, 2016, pp 102-103), I employed manual qualitative coding in multiple cycles. Initially, all historical analogies were descriptively labeled according to the analogical base (i.e WWII and Pearl Harbor), after which they were categorized as localized or non-local. Worth repeating is that whether the analogy is localized or not depends on the target state it is directed towards, meaning that the same analogy could be coded as localized in certain contexts and non-local in others. To ensure reliability in this process, I consulted a wide range of secondary historical sources.

Also worth noting is that even though most target states were involved in, or somehow affected by, WWII, such analogies were coded as non-local unless they referred to a particular WWII event uniquely experienced by the target state. The purpose of this exclusion is to make the case a more difficult test of my theoretical argument (Rapport, 2015). As previously mentioned, WWII analogies like Munich in 1938 are generally understood similarly across contexts, and analysts and politicians alike started drawing comparisons to WWII early in the war (Snyder, 2022; Morawiecki, 2022). Coding general WWII analogies as non-local thus ensures a higher degree of validity of the results by ensuring that I truly measure localization rather than

[12] In the researched timeframe, President Zelenskyy spoke twice to the legislatures of the U.S., the U.K., Lithuania, Norway, and the E.U.

generalization. For similar reasons I made sure during the entirety of the coding process to only code historical analogies, that is, comparisons between historical and current phenomena. That meant setting a high bar for explicit comparison and excluding metaphors, historical allusions, and non-historical analogies from the coding process. Doing so clarified both the scope of the study and the unit of analysis and strengthened the reliability of the results by requiring less interpretation.

In the final coding cycle, I coded the localized analogies according to the four types outlined in the theory section. This stage required a certain degree of interpretation, as the boundaries between the four types are not always distinct. For instance, an emancipatory struggle for freedom is often preceded by a period of oppression and trauma, and a historical analogy can compare the present to both themes. The coding in such cases was determined based on a close contextual reading of which theme was most emphasized by Zelenskyy. While critics could consider this a reliability issue, it in fact lends credibility to my argument that localized analogies due to their rhetorical versatility can perform multiple tasks simultaneously.

Cognitive or rhetorical use of historical analogies? A methodological comment

As previously implied, I do not consider cognitive analogical reasoning for decision-making purposes and rhetorical use of analogies for persuasive purposes mutually exclusive. Given the rhetorical perspective's ostensibly lower status in the field, however, a methodological comment on this debate is warranted. Khong (1992) argues that decision-makers will use the same analogies for public advocacy and justification as they do in private decision-making environments (pp. 15-17), and that decision-makers typically stick to one, or a few, "favorite" analogies (p. 256). Based on the cognitivist view, then, one would not expect Zelenskyy to use more than a few analogies. Conversely, an observation of Zelenskyy using a large variety of analogies would support my argument that leaders often use historical analogies for rhetorical

purposes, regardless of whether those analogies have been used in the decision-making process or not.

Control group: Speeches in multilateral fora

As a final evaluation of my contention that localized analogies will be less common in multilateral settings, I control for speeches made to non-regional multilateral fora. More precisely, I collect a universe of 11 speeches given by Zelenskyy to the Group of Seven (G7), the Group of 20 (G20), the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) and the U.N. General Assembly (UNGA) during the first year of the war. Framed as a natural experiment, this data set represents my control group whereas the treatment group consists of the speeches given in bilateral settings. I expect Zelenskyy to use fewer analogies in the multilateral context and that any analogies invoked will be of a non-local and settled nature.

Empirical analysis

This section outlines the results of the analysis. It starts with a descriptive summary before proceeding to narrate Zelenskyy's use of each type of historical analogy. In the interest of transparency and being "loyal to the data" (Skjott Linneberg, Korsgaard, 2019, p. 259), I provide tables describing all analogies invoked as well as quotes and examples. The section ends with an overview of the coding of the speeches to multilateral organizations.

Introductory summary

The results lend support to my theoretical argument. Of the 39 speeches given, 32 (~82%) included at least one historical analogy. Further, out of the 32 speeches that included a historical analogy, 24 (75%) included at least one localized historical analogy. Even if counted against all the speeches, a proportion of ~62% included at least one localized historical analogy. Strikingly, Zelenskyy used 31 different localized historical analogies in the speeches, lending support to the theory that Zelenskyy use of historical analogies is strategic and not a function

of cognitive analogical retrieval alone. Table 1 outlines the number of speeches in which the different types of localized analogies were present, as well as the total number of invocations of each type, showing that traumatic and emancipatory analogies were most common.

Table 1

Prevalence of each type of analogy.

Type of localized analogy	Speeches	References
Traumatic	12	13
Emancipatory	11	13
Cooperative	5	6
Guilt-inducing	2	4

Traumatic analogies

As summarized in Table 2, Zelenskyy frequently invoked traumatic and tragic events experienced by the target state to draw attention to the hardship currently experienced by Ukraine. By way of example, in a speech to the U.S. Congress, Zelenskyy (2022e) likened the American trauma of both Pearl Harbor and September 11 to Ukraine's current hardship:

> In your great history you have pages that will allow you to understand Ukrainians. Understand us now. When it is needed most. *Remember Pearl Harbor*. Terrible morning of December 7, 1941. When your sky was black from the planes attacking you. Just remember that. *Remember September 11th*. A terrible day in 2001, when evil tried to turn your cities into a battlefield. When innocent people were attacked. Attacked from the air. In a way no one expected. …*Our state experiences this every day! Every night!* [emphasis added].

September 11 had a profound emotional impact on American citizens and U.S. politics (Small et al. 2006; Bleiker & Hutchison, 2008), and by invoking these undoubtedly highly salient national traumas, Zelenskyy likely sought to invoke a similarly emotive response to the war in Ukraine.

Table 2

Summary of traumatic analogies invoked by Zelenskyy.

Speeches	Traumatic analogy code	Reference description
United States	Pearl Harbor	Russian attacks are like Pearl Harbor.
	9/11	Russian attacks are like 9/11.
Israel	Holocaust	Russian genocide in Ukraine is like the Holocaust.
France	Battle of Verdun	Ukrainian cities look like post-battle Verdun.
Australia	MH17	Both Ukrainians and Australians deserve justice for losses and pain from Russian aggression.
Belgium	Battles of Ypres	Battles in Ukraine are as horrible as those in Ypres.
The Netherlands	MH17	Dutch people have also suffered losses and pain from Russian aggression.
Spain	Guernica	Ukrainian cities are as destroyed as Guernica in 1937.
Finland	Winter War 1939-1940	Russian invasion is like Stalin's invasion of Finland in 1939.
Estonia	Soviet oppression	Current Russian deportations are like Stalin's deportations of Estonians and Ukrainians.
Slovakia	Soviet invasion 1968	Russian invasion is as tyrannical as Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.
Latvia	Soviet oppression	Russia's current actions in Ukraine are like Ukraine and Latvia's shared historical experience of occupation and deportations.
Czech Republic	The fateful "eights"	The Czechoslovakian experiences of 1938, 1948, and 1968 demonstrate why Russia should not be appeased today.
Total		
12	11	13

Note. Derived from Zelenskyy (2022e; 2022g; 2022j; 2022o; 2022p; 2022q; 2022s; 2022w; 2022z; 2022af; 2022ag; 2022ai)

To Spain, Zelenskyy (2022s) similarly invoked one of Spain's most commemorated national traumas, asking the Spanish parliamentarians to

> imagine that people now - in Europe - live for weeks in basements to save lives. From shelling, from air bombs. Daily! *2022, April - and the reality in Ukraine is as if it's April*

> *1937. When the whole world learned the name of one of your cities – Guernica* [emphasis added].

To France, Zelenskyy (2022j) said that Ukrainian cities now "resemble the ruins of Verdun" and to Belgium he stated that the battles in Ukraine "are no less appalling than [those] you had near Ypres"[13] (Zelenskyy, 2022p). Again, these are very salient, destructive events experienced by the target states. To Australia and the Netherlands, Zelenskyy (2022o; 2022q) invoked the shooting down of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 in 2014 to highlight shared tragedy caused by Russia. More than two thirds of the deceased passengers were Dutch citizens, and 27 were Australian (Malaysia Airlines, 2014), making this a localized analogy.

These examples elucidate how Zelenskyy, sometimes very creatively, used analogies rooted in trauma and tragedy experienced by the target state to create an understanding of the gravity and horrendousness of the Ukrainian situation and subsequently provide a prescription not to stand idly by. This prescription was often made explicit, as in Zelenskyy's speech to the Czech Republic, in which he posited that "the fateful Czech 'eights' - 1938, 1948, 1968 - are comprehensive answers to all those who still want to 'pacify' the aggressor by betraying European values and weakening Europe" (Zelenskyy, 2022ai). Here, Zelenskyy used the Czech trauma of Nazi Germany's occupation of Sudetenland in 1938 (Goddard, 2015), the 1948 Soviet-backed communist coup d'état (Lukes, 2011), and the Warsaw Pact invasion of 1968 (Tait, 2018) to convey that appeasement is as wrong and immoral today as it was then.

As expected, this type of analogy was also used to refer to shared experiences of trauma. In the Estonian Parliament, for instance, Zelenskyy (2022z) compared Russia's present-day deportations of Ukrainian citizens to the shared historical experience of Soviet deportations:

[13] Belgium suffered heavy losses in multiple battles fought in or close to Ypres in the First World War (Jones, 2015).

> The black pages of history should not be repeated, when deported Ukrainians and Estonians remained for many years in Siberia or the Russian Far East. There are already more than enough Ukrainian and Estonian graves - graves of those who died from communist deportations.

A similar claim was made in a speech to Latvia as well (Zelenskyy, 2022ag), indicating support for the notion that leaders often use shared historical trauma to construct a collective identity.

Emancipatory analogies

The emancipatory analogies, summarized in Table 3, were clearly employed to achieve a congruent understanding of the war as a legitimate defense against an oppressive Other, thus deserving of support. Zelenskyy's second speech to the Lithuanian Parliament is a case in point. In this speech, he stated that:

> Lithuania is … one of the most sincere defenders of freedom. And *this is the best way to honor the memory and feat of the heroes who defeated the empire on those winter days 32 years ago*. Your people did not just defend the buildings of the TV center, parliament and others. *You defended your historical choice. Now we are also heading to victory. To the final victory over that empire* [emphasis added]. (Zelenskyy, 2023a)

The ambition to emphasize shared democratic values and emancipatory experiences was equally evident when Zelenskyy (2022ab) addressed the Portuguese Parliament, stating that "your people who will soon celebrate the anniversary of the Carnation Revolution, which freed you from the dictatorship, clearly understand our feelings. Exactly understands the feelings of all other nations of our region who seek freedom." This emphasis on understanding Ukraine's feelings was a common feature in many analogies, indicating a theory-consistent ambition to induce emotive responses and create emotional congruence.

Table 3

Summary of emancipatory analogies invoked by Zelenskyy.

Speeches	Emancipatory analogy code	Reference description
United Kingdom	Battle of Britain	Ukraine defends its freedom like the Brits against the Nazis in WWII.
United States	MLK	Like Dr. Martin Luther King, Ukraine dreams of freedom.
The Netherlands	Capture of Brielle in 1572	Ukrainians are revolting against an oppressor to gain their freedom, just like the Dutch did against Spain in the 80 Years' War.
Romania	Romanian Revolution	Putin is an oppressor like Ceaușescu, but just like Romania, Ukraine will gain its freedom.
South Korea	Korean War	Ukraine will successfully defend its freedom, just like South Korea did in the Korean War.
Lithuania	Lithuanian independence	Lithuania supports Ukraine because it knows the value of gaining independence from Moscow.
Portugal	Carnation Revolution	Given the experience from the Carnation Revolution, Portugal understands why Ukraine wants freedom.
Czech Republic	Soviet invasion 1968	Ukraine's fight for freedom is like the Czechoslovakian resistance following the Soviet invasion in 1968.
USA (2nd time)	Battle of the Bulge	Ukraine defends its freedom like Americans did in the Battle of the Bulge (WWII).
	Battle of Saratoga	Ukraine's freedom fight is like the American Revolution.
	FDR's quest for freedom	President Roosevelt led the U.S. into WWII to defend freedom. Ukraine is fighting now for the same purpose.
Lithuania (2nd time)	Lithuanian independence	Lithuania freed itself from empire, and so will Ukraine.
U.K. (2nd time)	Battle of Britain	Zelenskyy now understands how Churchill felt when defending the U.K. in WWII.
Total		
11	11	13

Note. Derived from Zelenskyy (2022b; 2022e; 2022q; 2022r; 2022x; 2022y; 2022ab; 2022ai; 2022au; 2023a; 2023b)

Not all analogies coded as emancipatory referred to independence movements or revolutions. In many cases, Zelenskyy referred to events in which a state was defending its freedom from an external Other that threatened its way of life. In the U.K., for example, Zelenskyy (2022b) likened the Ukrainian battle for freedom with that of the British war against the Nazis in WWII, saying:

> we do not want to lose what we have, what is ours - Ukraine. Just as you did not want to lose your island when the Nazis were preparing to start the battle for your great power, the battle for Britain.

After comparing Putin's regime to the Nazis, Zelenskyy reused Shakespeare's famous question "to be or not to be?", concluding that Ukraine chooses to be free. He then finished the address by paraphrasing the famous "We shall fight on the beaches" speech, given by Winston Churchill in 1940 (Churchill 1940; Zelenskyy 2022b). In addition to being highly localized, this analogy was coded as emancipatory because it compares the British process of breaking free from and defeating the Nazi threat to Ukraine's pursuit of freedom from the Russian threat.

To summarize, the emancipatory analogies were typically emotional-laden and framed Ukraine as sharing values pertinent to the target audiences, particularly freedom and democracy. Emancipatory analogies thus seem especially apt for constructing a common lifeworld. They also provide a moral justification for supporting Ukraine by communicating that Ukraine's emancipatory ambitions are just as legitimate as the target states' historical emancipatory processes were. In this sense, there is an implicit, more coercive message in emancipatory analogies that it would be hypocritical not to support Ukraine. This is particularly true for cases where the target state received outside help to achieve its freedom. Zelenskyy's (2022x) emancipatory analogy in the South Korean parliament is a good example of how this inference is made explicit. First, he used the Korean war as the analogical base: "You know what it's like to defend your land. You remember when in the 1950s you were attacked by those who wanted

to destroy your freedom." Next, he formulated an explanation of South Korea's successful emancipation: "But you withstood, *the world helped you* [emphasis added]". Finally, the analogy ends with a prescription for the current situation in Ukraine: "Now we want the same" (Zelenskyy, 2022x). The principal analogical inference is that Ukraine's emancipation from Russia, just like South Korea's pursuit of freedom in the 1950's, will be successful if like-minded countries provide aid. Implicit, however, is also the notion that it would be dishonest of South Korea not to support Ukraine since they owe their own freedom to outside help. While emancipation was deemed the most emphasized theme in this analogy, the example also illustrates the many simultaneous tasks an analogy can perform. In one single analogy, Zelenskyy i) invoked both the trauma of being invaded and the emancipation from the invader and ii) prescribed the "correct" way forward while iii) implicitly shaming any alternative course.

Cooperative analogies

Pleas for support and promotion of increased cooperation were a leitmotif in all of Zelenskyy's speeches. On five occasions, such messages were expressed through localized cooperative analogies. These are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4

Summary of cooperative analogies invoked by Zelenskyy.

Speeches	Cooperative analogy code	Reference description
Poland	Shared threat perception	Current Polish-Ukrainian cooperation is derived from a shared historical understanding of the threat from Russia.
France	Normandy format	Cooperation under the Normandy format did not work; therefore, Ukraine and France must now cooperate on the battlefield.
Norway	Common Kyivan Rus history	Current cooperation is like how Norwegian Vikings helped form Kyivan Rus.
	Liberation of Kirkenes	Ukrainians helped liberate Kirkenes in WWII, now Norwegians are similarly helping Ukraine.
Greece	Ancient Greece	The identities of Greece and Ukraine are linked by a long common and amicable history; therefore, they must cooperate now.
Albania	Mother Teresa	Albanian humanism and support for Ukraine is like how Mother Teresa helped others in need.
Total		
5	6	6

Note. Derived from Zelenskyy (2022c; 2022j; 2022n; 2022u; 2022ac).

In one of the more elaborate cooperative analogies, Zelenskyy (2022n) returned to medieval times to emphasize how closely related Ukrainians and Norwegians are, stating the following:

> Looking at our common path, *we always meet in history in difficult yet defining moments for Europe*. Like a thousand years ago, when the Norwegian Vikings were frequent visitors in Kyiv and participated in the formation of the first Kyiv state. Or - Garðaríki. This is what the lands of Rus'-Ukraine were called in Scandinavian sagas. … Both our and your ancestors lived in them more than a thousand years ago.
>
> Today, Russian bombs are flying at our land and our people. At the land where the Ukrainian Princess Elisiv of Kyiv was born and grew up. Wife of King Harald III of Norway, mother of King Olaf the Peaceful, grandmother of Magnus III, great-grandmother of Eystein I and Sigurd the Crusader. *These are the pages of our common history!* History of Kyivan Rus'.

> *And this history was created on this land and by our people. And we are defending it together again* [emphasis added].

Zelenskyy (2022n) then continued to describe the two countries shared history by telling the story of a Ukrainian military unit that helped liberate the Norwegian city of Kirkenes from the Nazis in 1944. While analogies that go centuries back in time may at first glance seem far-fetched, it is a creative way of emphasizing a shared identity, and indeed Norwegian museums still commemorate the Norse Vikings' political alliances in Kyivan Rus (Historical Museum in Oslo, n.d.).

Zelenskyy clearly considers this an appropriate rhetorical strategy, as he went even further back in time in a speech to the Greek Parliament, stating that "the ties between Ukraine and Greece are so old that it is now impossible to find their origin." He noted that "for centuries, our people have lived side by side", citing that the Greeks brought Orthodox Christianity to Ukraine and built city states on the Black Sea Coast. My assertion that the purpose of cooperative analogies is to construct collective identities was quite clearly confirmed by Zelenskyy's statement that "your national self-perception are [sic] tied with the Ukrainian land. 'Freedom or death!' - these words now reflect not only our struggle against Russia's attempt to conquer Ukraine. This is a part of your identity…" (Zelenskyy, 2022u).

To clearly provide a prescription of continued cooperation, Zelenskyy then drew on the ancient battle of Thermopylae, stating that "we will not be comforted saying about Mariupol in the future: 'These are new Thermopylae'. When the heroes died, stopping a large enemy army. Now we can save our heroes" (Zelenskyy, 2022u). Although this battle occurred in 480 BC, it remains a mythological cultural story, famously retold not least in the Hollywood film *300* (Snyder, 2006). This empirical finding clearly contradicts assertions in the literature that the availability and saliency of historical analogies is determined by its recency (Jervis, 1976; Khong, 1992; Paris, 2002).

Finally, another interesting cooperative analogy was the comparison between Albania's current support of Ukraine and the humanism of St Mother Teresa, "an Albanian woman" who "taught people that good daily efforts can defeat evil and bring them closer to the holiness". Further, Zelenskyy used this analogy to prescribe continued collective action against Russia: "I believe that by working together with all Europeans in this way … we will be able … to stop this war waged by Russia" (Zelenskyy, 2022ac).

Guilt-inducing analogies

Like the theme of cooperation, guilt and shame were present in many speeches though not always expressed through analogy. Interestingly, the guilt-inducing analogies were directed to the two countries in the data that Ukraine arguably has been most critical of; Ukraine's relations with Germany have been tense for years (Kusa, 2023), and Kiev has also criticized Israel for being neutral (Abrams & Weiss, 2022). The five guilt-inducing analogies invoked by Zelenskyy are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5

Summary of guilt-inducing analogies used by Zelenskyy.

Speeches	Guilt-inducing analogy code	Reference description
Germany	Berlin Wall	All German decisions that do not fully support Ukraine is like bricks for a new wall. Zelenskyy wants Scholtz to "tear down this wall".
	Never again	Germany and Europe said "never again" to Nazism and genocide. But now that Russia tries to make Ukraine its "living space", Germany does not show leadership.
	Berlin Airlift	The world helped Germany in the 1948-1949 Berlin Airlift, yet Germany does not support a no-fly zone in Ukraine now.
Israel	Ukrainians rescued Jews WWII	Ukrainians rescued Jews during the Holocaust, yet Israel does not fully support Ukraine now.
Total		
2	4	4

Note. Derived from Zelenskyy (2022f; 2022g).

In the speeches, Zelenskyy made this displeasure clear using historical analogies. In the case of Israel, Zelenskyy (2022g) claimed that Ukrainians rescued Jews during the Holocaust, and shamed Israel for not doing more now that Ukraine is experiencing a genocide reminiscent of the Holocaust. To Germany, he spoke at length about how Germany's inaction is like building blocks for a new wall that blocks Germany from seeing reality:

> You are like behind the wall again. Not the Berlin Wall. But in the middle of Europe. Between freedom and slavery. And this wall grows stronger with each bomb that falls on our land, on Ukraine. With every decision that is not made for the sake of peace. Not approved by you, although it may help. (Zelenskyy, 2022f).

This analogy anchored the entire speech, with the word "wall" appearing 16 times in the address. Incorporated in this macro-analogy were two other guilt-inducing analogies. First, Zelenskyy (2022f) pointed out the hypocrisy of Germany's opposition to establish a no-fly zone over Ukrainian territory when West Germany received airborne help during the Berlin Blockade in 1948-1949. Then he reminded the listeners of the collective promise of "never again" following WWII, and asked why Germany is not showing leadership now that Russia is trying to establish a "living space" in Ukraine (Zelenskyy, 2022f). Living space, or *lebensraum*, is an expression closely associated with Nazi Germany (Noakes, 2011) and was probably not invoked in this context by chance. By evoking shameful social memories of Nazi Germany, this expression likely induced more guilt in the audience than the "near abroad" would have, which the sphere of influence that Russia seeks to establish is more commonly referred to (Kivelson & Suny, 2017, pp. 385-388).

Returning to the wall analogy, Zelenskyy (2022f) finished by recycling a historic and highly localized quote: "Ronald Reagan once said in Berlin: Tear down this wall! And I want to tell you now. Chancellor Scholz! Tear down this wall."

Non-local analogies and absence of analogies

The non-local analogies consisted primarily of settled analogies, such as general references to WWII and descriptions of Russia as analogous to Nazi Germany (Zelenskyy, 2022m; 2022h; 2023c). To demonstrate, Zelenskyy (2022ah) stated to Luxembourg that

> *no one will be able to … avoid being affected* when a catastrophe of such enormity occurs in the world because of the Russian state. *It is reminiscent of World War II, when Nazi aggression threatened the lives of entire nations*. Therefore, we must significantly increase the pressure on Russia… [emphasis added].

To Sweden and Japan, Zelenskyy (2022l; 2022i) compared Russia's actions in Ukraine to those in Syria. To Slovenia, he compared Ukraine's future need for post-war reconstruction to the Marshall Plan (Zelenskyy, 2022ak), which was coded as non-local since Slovenia was not a beneficiary of the Marshall Plan (Carrasco-Gallego, 2012, p. 95).

However, this does not mean that the speeches were not locally targeted, but rather that localization in certain cases was pursued through different means. To Sweden, Zelenskyy (2022l) drew on symbolism, speaking of the shared values represented by the two countries national flags, which share the same colors. In Japan, he spoke at length about the risk for nuclear disaster – a theme that was not present in any other speeches – and called the war a "*tsunami* of brutal invasion [emphasis added]" (Zelenskyy, 2022i). Likely, the nuclear theme and the tsunami metaphor alluded to the memory of Nagasaki and Hiroshima in 1945, and Fukushima in 2011 (Schell, 2011). Further, the only time Zelenskyy (2022t) invoked the theme of famine and called the Russian's "colonizers" was in a speech to the Irish Parliament, possibly to evoke memories of the Irish famine and British colonization (Rahman et al., 2017). Similarly, the assertion that Russia is trying to "divide Ukraine into parts" may have resonated particularly well in Cyprus, which is politically divided by the so-called Green Line (Zelenskyy, 2022v; Volkan & Hadjimarkou, 2022). In many cases, Zelenskyy invoked hypothetical, non-historical

analogies describing what a Russian invasion of the target state could look like and asking the listeners how that would feel (Zelenskyy, 2022d; 2022h; 2022z; 2022ab).

Nevertheless, the fact that Zelenskyy used such a vast number of localized analogies despite possibilities to localize rhetoric through other means indicates that Zelenskyy considers historical analogies an effective way to tap into the collective memory and national identity of the target audience.

Control group: Speeches in multilateral fora

Of the 11 speeches analyzed, four (~36%) included a historical analogy. Admittedly, the sample size is very small, but this observation provides an indication that historical analogies are less frequently used in multilateral settings than in bilateral relations. WWII events was referred to in two speeches, one to G7 and another to G20 (Zelenskyy, 2022ae; 2022ap). In a speech to the UNSC, Zelenskyy (2022al) implied that another Chornobyl may happen if Russia is not stopped. Contrary to my expectations, however, one speech did include an analogy that according to my definition could be considered localized. In this speech Zelenskyy (2022aj) criticized the UNSC for not establishing an international tribunal investigating Russia's genocide, pointing out that they did so "in the case of the genocide in Rwanda". Given that this analogy compared a historical decision made by the UN to advocate for a similar decision in the present, it could be considered a localized guilt-inducing analogy.

Conclusion

This paper set out to explore the rhetorical use of historical analogies in interstate talk, thereby departing from the field's conventional focus on the cognitive aspects of analogical reasoning and decision-making. It has argued that historical analogies are a powerful rhetorical tool with the capacity to perform multiple simultaneous tasks, which explains why leaders frequently use them to affect change in international relations. Drawing on key findings in the literature on

rhetoric in IR, I developed a novel typology of *localized* analogies which, by referring to historical events that are uniquely salient to the target audience, may increase rhetorical resonance, cultural congruence, and persuasiveness. Further, the typology theoretically outlined four central themes commonly invoked through localized analogies: cooperation, trauma, emancipation, and guilt.

By analyzing President Zelenskyy's speeches to foreign legislatures during the first year of the full-scale war in Ukraine, this paper presented theory-consistent empirical evidence of the prevalence of localized analogies in interstate talk. The analysis displayed a clear alignment with my four-part typology and strongly indicated that Zelenskyy used historical analogies as a purposive rhetorical strategy of persuasion and advocacy rather than as a cognitive shortcut. These are significant and novel findings that have implications for future research on historical analogies. Foundationally, they highlight the need for continued research on the rhetorical use of historical analogies in international environments. Prior research has already demonstrated that analogical advocacy can have mobilizing effects in domestic settings, and this paper has provided prefatory evidence indicating that leaders seek similar effects in interstate talk. Crucially, this suggest that the rhetorical employment of historical analogies is central to how states mobilize international support and construct shared meanings of reality.

Since the findings in this paper are primarily descriptive, however, future research should focus its efforts on empirically testing the effects of invocations of historical analogies on message resonance and congruence. Experimental survey designs would allow for testing of the framing effects of various types of historical analogies. Such designs could furthermore compare historical analogies to other rhetorical tools used by Zelenskyy, such as historical metaphors, allusions, and hypothetical analogies. To strengthen external validity, the theoretical framework outlined in this paper could helpfully be applied to and tested on more cases of international public talk. While generalizability is always an issue in single case studies, I expect my

typology of localized analogies to be present in a variety of contexts, particularly in bilateral public talk and when a speaker is incentivized by situational factors to appeal for external aid or collective action.

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