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<b>JOURNAL</b>	International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science
<b>p-ISSN</b>	2544-9338
<b>e-ISSN</b>	2544-9435
<b>PUBLISHER</b>	RS Global Sp. z O.O., Poland

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<b>ARTICLE TITLE</b>	IDIOMS AND SLOGANS IN POSTER LIKE PROPAGANDA
<b>AUTHOR(S)</b>	Nino Dvalidze
<b>ARTICLE INFO</b>	Nino Dvalidze. (2023) Idioms and Slogans in Poster Like Propaganda. <i>International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science</i> . 4(40). doi: 10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30122023/8066
<b>DOI</b>	<a href="https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30122023/8066">https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30122023/8066</a>
<b>RECEIVED</b>	22 September 2023
<b>ACCEPTED</b>	30 October 2023
<b>PUBLISHED</b>	02 November 2023

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## IDIOMS AND SLOGANS IN POSTER LIKE PROPAGANDA

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**DOI:** [https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal\\_ijitss/30122023/8066](https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30122023/8066)

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### ARTICLE INFO

**Received** 22 September 2023

**Accepted** 30 October 2023

**Published** 02 November 2023

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### KEYWORDS

Idiom, Slogans, Poster,  
Propaganda, Images, Words,  
Influence, Persuade.

### ABSTRACT

21-st century is very busy, contradictive and tensed because of several cores of wars, accordingly abundant information flows out from the internet. Nobody has time to read several pages for a long time. Minimalism in words is appreciated more. As the 12<sup>th</sup> century renaissance period Georgian poet Shota Rustaveli said in the prologue to his famous masterpiece "The Man in the Panther's Skin": "A long word is told shortly" (in few words is uttered a long discourse) as "Minstrelsy is, first of all, a branch of wisdom "...

So, the idioms, slogans, proverbs, parables, some other kinds of phrasal verbs and witty sayings are still the object of scientific studies as far as they have been in use side by side with ballads, poems, songs and preaches since time immemorial up today. You may meet them in modern publicist texts, in posters, in adverts, in web design as well. Therefore, interpreting the idioms adequately isn't so easy. It's well known that idioms are the set of fixed expressions, which is impossible to understand directly and, in most cases, one should consult with the dictionaries of idioms.

Thus, presented article's topicality is conditioned by researching some idioms in posters for filling the information gap and developing intercultural dialogue. The methodology of investigation is qualitative, based on researching different posters, describing and analyzing.

Propaganda is an attempt to influence peoples' opinions or behavior through the use of specific images and words. It usually gives limited information which is heavily biased in its presentation. Propaganda typically achieves its aims by generating an emotional reaction in the viewer. For much of the twentieth century, public posters were a common way for governments to use propaganda to persuade their citizens. They often relied upon simple images in order to manipulate people through fear or guilt. Propaganda uses stereotypes so that audiences can readily identify which people group is the target of the poster.

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### Introduction.

21-st century is very busy, contradictive and tensed by several cores of wars, accordingly abundant information flows out from the internet. Nobody has time to read several pages for a long time. Minimalism in words is appreciated more. As the 12<sup>th</sup> century renaissance period Georgian poet Shota Rustaveli said in the prologue to his famous masterpiece "The Man in the Panther's Skin": "A long word is told shortly" (in few words is uttered a long discourse) as "Minstrelsy is, first of all, a branch of wisdom "...

So, the idioms, slogans, proverbs, parables, some other kinds of phrasal verbs and witty sayings are still the object of scientific studies as far as they have been in use side by side with ballads, poems, songs and preaches since time immemorial up to nowadays. You may meet them in modern publicist texts, in posters, in adverts, in web design as well. Therefore, interpreting the idioms adequately isn't so easy. It's well known that idioms are the set of fixed expressions, which is impossible to understand directly and, in most cases, one should consult with the dictionaries of idioms.

Thus, presented article's topicality is conditioned by researching some idioms in posters for filling the information gap and developing intercultural dialogue. Main outcome of the presented article together with other ones published by me is to make a contribution into that mini-idiom dictionary, which I am going to develop in the nearest future.

#### 1. Picture messages embedded in posters and expressed by idioms and slogans.

It should be noted that in many cases, verbal advertising can be so flexible, concise and effective that one or another idiomatic phrase can establish itself as a slogan. According to the English language dictionary, *an idiom* is a term whose meaning cannot be determined from the literal meanings of the words it is made of. Many idioms are figurative—they're intended to create an image, association, or other effect in the mind of the listener or reader that goes beyond the literal meaning or expected use of the words involved. *A slogan* is a short easily remembered phrase, especially one used to advertise an idea or a product. *A catch phrase* is a word or phrase that is often repeated by, or becomes connected with, a particular organization, especially a political group. Catch phrases are words that are in current use. They derive their associative meanings from the cultural and social environment in which they are produced. These associative meanings are specific to their culture and do not invoke the same images in non-native speakers of English who are not familiar with such catch phrases. catch phrases fail to translate into other languages so that they maintained the same form and sounding.

As Claire Stokoe says in her article: "51 Powerful Propaganda Posters and The People Behind"-

Propaganda is most well known in the form of war posters. But at its core, it is a mode of communication aimed at influencing the attitude of a community toward some cause or position, and that doesn't have to be a bad thing. Although propaganda is often used to manipulate human emotions by displaying facts selectively, it can also be very effective at conveying messages and hence can be used in web design, too.

Adam Taylor's article "19 incredible British propaganda posters of the World War second" is also shared in this article as well as Rachel Conley's propaganda posters, and some idioms from Linda and Roger Flavel's Dictionary of Idioms.

So, why did we choose idioms in the context of visual posters?! The answer is unambiguous, to make easy to understand the ambiguity of the idioms. And what kind of context is more suitable and helpful in this case? To my mind it's a poster with visual images, pictures and different signs. As political media expert Doris Graber notes: "Purely verbal analyses not only miss the information contained in the pictures and nonverbal sounds, they even fail to interpret the verbal content appropriately because that content is modified by its combination with picture messages. In short, understanding of visual imagery helps to avoid drawing incomplete or misleading conclusions about the messages "...in our case, the question deals with the messages which are embedded in idioms in posters. Humans process images more quickly than text, making images more emotionally visceral and responses to images frequently more immediate and powerful than responses to text.

So the people first perceive the images on the posters, and afterwards they try to interpret the meaning of the idioms. Visual prompts help a great deal, but in some cases, it's impossible to know all the idioms and witty phrases which are used in such a rich language with polysemy as the English Language is. Bi-lingual dictionaries of idioms are the best outcome to consult with in such cases. That is main reason why I began to investigate the idioms in different context.

#### 1.1. A brief history of war propaganda posters.

In 'a brief history of the graphic design' by Guitin novins we read: Propaganda is defined as; the systematic propagation of official government policies through manipulative communications to the public. The propaganda may provide true or false information, but the information is selectively presented in a provoking style to have its maximum emotional effect. The term "propaganda" apparently first came into

common use in Europe as a result of the missionary activities of the Catholic church. In 1622 Pope Gregory XV created in Rome the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. This was a commission of cardinals charged with spreading the faith and regulating church affairs in heathen lands.



In modern times it is argued that propaganda and public diplomacy are interrelated, with the former having a negative connotation. According to Joseph Nye Jr.'s definition Public Diplomacy is “building relationships with civil-society actors in other countries and about facilitating networks between nongovernmental parties at home and abroad”. On the other hand, Leonard Doob defines propaganda as the “control of individuals through the use of suggestion...regardless of whether or not the propaganda intends to exercise the control”, which suggests an element of mind engineering that is absent in public diplomacy.

It is well known fact that posters are used broadly in different field of discourse, but most popular are the War Propaganda Posters. Claire Stokoe describes a history of developing the war propaganda posters in her article: “51 Powerful Propaganda Posters and The People Behind”- where she mentions several authors who created the most memorable posters; namely: **William Orpen** from England (1917); **Dimitri Moor** (or Dmitry Stakhievich Orlov) changed the face of graphic design in Soviet Russia back in 1918. His work dominated both the Bolshevik Era (1917–1921) and the New Economic Policy (1921–1927). The main theme of Moor’s work is the stark contrast between the oppressive evil and the heroic allies. A lot of pressure was put on Russian workers to rise up against imperialism. Then comes **El Lissitzky**, who spent his whole career absorbed by the belief that the artist could be an agent for change and good, and his work in a lot of respects shows this. He himself was a huge agent of change in the artistic movements of the time. He was one of the fathers of suprematism, along with Kazimir Malevich; and along with many of his peers, he changed the look of typography, exhibition design, photo montage and book cover design. Most of the modern techniques we see today and that appear in film and modern Kinetic typography are the product of Lissitzky’s work. One of his most famous pieces, shown below, really embodies Lissitzky’s work. It is so avant garde that even a lay person could recognize the style. The abstract geometric shapes and clear color pallet scream of modernist art, and yet the poster has a real message. It describes the Russian revolution that took place in 1917. The white circle represents the royalists from the old regime, and the red triangle represents the communists moving in and changing opinion. It has been describe.ed as a stylized battle plan for communist victory. It is called: *Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge, 1920*.



The list of famous poster makers is long. It includes such famous artists as **Picasso, Phillip Zec, and Norman Rockwell, who** was probably one of the best known of the propaganda movement. He admitted that he was just a propaganda stooge for the Saturday Evening Post. The newspaper paid many artists and illustrators to whitewash American news with patriotism and propaganda for around 50 years. We can't leave without mentioning Jim Fitzpatrick, who was a well-known Irish Celtic artist of his time, but he is probably best known for his Che Guevara poster in 1968.

The most interesting poster maker in above mentioned article for me appeared Brain Moore from the US (2009) as a modern propaganda artist who exhibits his work on his Blog. He lives in Brooklyn and is probably best known for his promotion of net neutrality and his work during the 2009 Iranian election protests. The posters are based on old WWII propaganda posters but updated in their message to match today's technology and Web culture.

This poster was a comment on the 2009 Iran election protests. He borrowed the old "loose lips" refrain and replaced it with tweets.

**"Loose Lips Sink Ships"** As opposed to keeping your mouth shut. Talks freely about **confidential** matters. In **WWI**, any casual talk about shipping schedules was supposed to give German spies information for U-boats to sink critical cargoes.



And the last poster maker, who attracts my attention is Nick Griffin, from the UK, who is not an artist, he is the chairman of the British National Party (BNP). Just as most other national parties across the globe, BNP is a good example of propaganda techniques being used to produce an emotional rather than rational response to the information presented. BNP has used them to build their hate-filled ranks for years. BNP is extremely good at speaking to people in plain, emotional language and affecting those who experience personal problems and want to find someone who can be blamed for these problems.

Just like many other national parties, BNP is blaming foreigners for these problems and uses strong religious metaphors to deliver the message. Very powerful, yet extremely unethical. This is an example of propaganda being used to manipulate people in a very deceptive, unfair manner.



According to this poster, we can come to the conclusion, why the UK prefers to keep itself away from EU and why Brexit has won.

Such is the brief history of poster propaganda makers, but now we should come to the main point and discuss some interesting cases of using idioms in posters and as well as discussing some main

propaganda techniques according to the posters below, where we can find the answers to the questions why and how is propaganda carried.

### 1.2. Some main war propaganda posters' techniques.

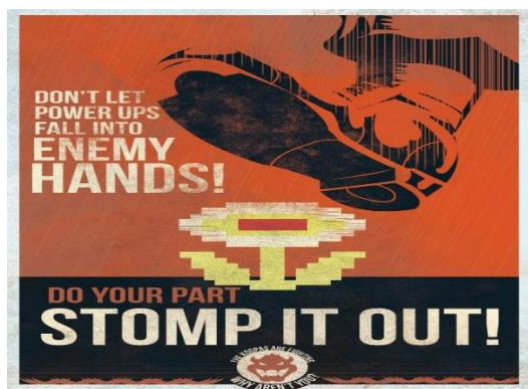


## Propaganda Techniques

- **Name Calling:**
- **Name calling** occurs often in politics and wartime scenarios, but very seldom in advertising. It is another of the seven main techniques designated by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis. It is the use of derogatory language or words that carry a negative connotation when describing an enemy.



In this poster, a superman says: “you can slap a jap, with war bonds and stamps”. There are several war propagandas that can be found during WWII, but it is interesting when war propaganda enters the world of super hero comics. The idea of how war propaganda enters the world of super hero comics creates an interesting aspect due in part that Superman is usually read by children. The idea that wartime propaganda entered the realm of children's comics illustrates the idea of how war time propaganda tries to encourage the people in the home front to support the war. Through these Superman comics, it is evident that it is trying to motivate people to buy wartime bonds due to the text stating "War savings bonds and stamps do the job on the Japanizes" and "Superman says: you can slap a Jap with war bonds and stamps". In a way, Superman is an efficient way of propaganda because Superman has become an American super hero icon. Due to Superman being an icon, it becomes an effective use of propaganda for the support of the war. Furthermore, Superman, and also Captain America, becomes a representation of The United States. It is also important to state how the Japanese is represented on the second comic cover. Most of the Japanese are represented with the stereotypical buck teeth. Overall, the use of comic books superheroes are similar to political cartoons in the sense that the heroes can represent a nation while the villains are the opposing team against the nation. This is depicted through these comic book covers. Comic books encouraged readers to "...buy war bonds, engage in scrap drives, and participate in other war-related events". War bonds and stamps were used "...to foster the sense that "we're all in this together". " Paper drives, money for war bonds and scrap metal drives were all supposed to help children feel like they we're doing their part for the war effort.

Therefore, one of the main phrases, which were used in posters, was “to do our part”.



PROPAGANDA TECHNIQUES

### GLITTERING GENERALITIES

- Words that have different positive meaning for individual viewers – linked to highly valued concepts
- Words meant to demand approval without thinking
- Accept words because of high value of concept
- Examples: “equality now,” “for your country” “freedom”
- Often occurs in political propaganda
- Identified as a technique of propaganda in 1938

Here the one of the warrier, Joe Louis claims that they are going **“to do their part”** ...and they will win because they are on God’s side....as an idiom it means **“To contribute work to that of others in a group”** or **“to do what one is responsible for doing or is able to do”** So, the main Idiomatic phrases in the posters were connected either to struggle against the enemy by standing firmly, or to work hard and support warriors, suchlike idioms were: **“our boys need sox, knit your bit”**; **“Land a hand on ....”**; **“we need kitchen waste”** ....” **Dig a victory**...and many more:



As the poster says above, using jargon, idiom, or common humor creates the sincere and spontaneous ways of effective propaganda. I can’t leave without mentioning the words: “glittering generalities”, and “plain folk”, which can easily be connected to General sinus –Stalin (Josef Dughashvili, Georgian by origin) who factually played the main role in winning the WWII. That’s why he is called “Stalin- Public Happiness” in this poster and while attacking the fascists, warries used to cry: “, for Stalin, for the home-land” ...

### 1.3 The idiomatic phrases become slogans of poster like propaganda.

In this respect, I will bring some more examples from the WWII poster propaganda, where the idiomatic phrases become slogans of poster like propaganda:



During WWII, while the Americans ran with the campaign slogan that **warned loose lips sank ships**, people in the UK had their own slogan from 1940: **Keep it under your hat**. The campaign

addressed every class — from working class to upper class — and drove home the point that anything a person knew, whether they thought it was important or not, was a danger to the men on the front lines if it what they knew was talked about.

Slogans appealing to keep silence, not to speak much in order not to reveal the secrecy, was rather actual during the war, and this was transferred by a lot of phrases, like: “Zip you lips” or “Button your lips” or “mister Hitler wants to know”.



The main strongest allies - England and the Soviet Union, by the leadership of Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill carried rather witty negotiations and could defeat the Hitlerism. A very interesting book: “Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam” is dedicated to the dialogues which were carried by above mentioned leaders. These dialogues remind me the following idiom: “Let ‘s Talk Turkey” which is defined as the carrying the negotiations by the dictionary of idioms by Linda and Rojer Flavells and it usually refers to speaking frankly, discussing **hard facts**, or **getting down to serious business**. (On-line urban dictionary).



*Posted by Ken Booth on March 16, 2022*

## 2. The Ukraine- Russia war in the posters.

Propaganda posters have always been associated with conflict, and the war in Ukraine with Russia is no different. Several artists have taken to social media to share works that in various ways push back against the invasion of Ukraine. The art expresses a range of emotions, from defiance to a hope for peace. Propaganda posters are a useful tool to generate and reinforce support for a cause. And



they can often motivate fence-sitters to rally around a worthy cause. They offer a sense of being part of a joint action, a feeling of solidarity, and allow those looking in from afar to share emotionally in the struggle. They can also effectively move people to action. Be it directly, by motivating people to take up arms for self-defense, or indirectly, by getting foreign citizens to call on their government to offer financial or material support. Because many of these images from Ukraine come from a place of desperation or hope, it may seem harsh to call them *propaganda*. The term has a negative connotation, but wrongly so. Propaganda posters have always been used to pull at the heart strings and reinforce emotions. There is nothing wrong with that, and they're a useful tool for creating a feeling of hope and inspiring those actively engaged in a struggle.

Most of these images are not posters in the literal sense. But surely works of art posted to social media serve the same purpose today as a silk-screened poster did during WWII.

Maksym Palenko is a well-known Ukrainian book illustrator. But now he produces war posters which are very popular on social media.

This poster is called "Sepukkin".



*Putin's ritual suicide with 'Z' symbol*  
Maksym Palenko



*Putin pastiche of Battleship Potemkin*  
Maksym Palenko

Here Vladimir Putin commits seppuku (ritual suicide) by cutting the Z letter into his belly. Russian propaganda actively uses Z as a symbol of their "special operation" (which is how some Russians have phrased this war). Another piece from Palenko is a homage to the iconic scene from Sergei Eisenstein's film "Battleship Potemkin" (1925), a classic of the Soviet propaganda surrounding the Revolution of 1905. The famous film scene takes place on the Potemkin Stairs in Odesa where Eisenstein stages people being shot. During this massacre, a recently-orphaned baby in a pram falls down the stairs, a real symbol of helplessness. In Palenko's poster, the helpless baby in a pram takes the guise of Putin, surrounded by his own dead soldiers.

Another prolific artist in this area is Andriy Yermolenko. On one of his posters, you can see a reconceptualization of the Kyiv Founders Monument.



*Kyiv Founders Monument reworking*  
Andriy Yermolenko



*Sorrow for Mariupol*  
Andriy Yermolenko

According to the legend, the city was founded by three brothers: Kyi, Shchek, Khoryv and their sister Lybid. They arrived on the boat. The monument commemorating this event is iconic, it is located on the bank of Dnipro River. In Yermolenko's version, you can see these four legendary figures

recapitulated as well-equipped modern soldiers asking everybody to join in the protection of the capital. This next Yarmolenko work is dedicated to the tragic fate of Mariupol's Theatre. The theatre was built during the Cold War era, so there was already a large bomb shelter. Besieged Mariupol used it to hide children. On the pavement in front and behind the building people wrote "Children" in Russian to attempt to warn Russian military pilots. The tactic didn't work and 300 were reported dead, Mariupol city council said in a statement. The next poster by Yermolenko is dedicated to Chornobayivka. It is a small village near Kherson known for its military airport. Russians try to use it as a hub of their military logistics, but Ukrainian forces destroyed their equipment there 11 times, according to Oleksiy Arestovych, an advisor to Zelenskyy. In his poster, Yermolenko creates a skull using folkloric patterns from traditional Ukrainian embroidery and pottery.



*Marking the reported victories in Chornobayivka and Montage of Yermolenko's international protest.*

The topic of cancelling Russia and its culture is now more and more popular in Ukraine. On the following poster by Oleksiy Say you can see the reconceptualized coat of arms of Russia - the two-headed eagle: one head is Leo Tolstoy, the other Fyodor Dostoevsky.



*Russian coat of arms transformed Oleksiy Say*



*Calendar of 24 Feb continuous Oleksandr Grekhov*

This eagle has the legs of a ballerina, and in the background, you can see the results of the creature's activity.

It is a symbolic calendar that the majority of Ukrainians now live by. Starting from 24 February, every next day is still 24 February. This poster was created on the 24th of March, but nothing has changed, even today Ukrainians feel they live the same day.

### 3. **Palestina - Israel war propaganda posters.**

To experience the role of posters in the birth, growing pains, and ultimate conflict, this is perhaps the best online resource. Here's what Walsh collects: 1) international artists and agencies; 2) Zionist and Israeli artists and agencies; 3) Palestinian nationalist artists and agencies; 4) Arab and Muslim artists and agencies.

JERUSALEM (AP) — In the three and a half decades since it began as an underground militant group, Hamas has pursued a consistently violent strategy aimed at rolling back Israeli rule — and it has made steady progress despite bringing enormous suffering to both sides of the conflict. But its stunning incursion into Israel over the weekend marks its deadliest gambit yet, and the already unprecedented

response from Israel threatens to bring an end to its 16-year rule over the Gaza Strip. Israel's retaliation for the Hamas assault, in which over 1,200 people were killed in Israel and dozens dragged into Gaza as hostages, will likely bring a far greater magnitude of death and destruction to Gaza, where 2.3 million Palestinians have nowhere to flee and where 1,100 have already been killed.

Hamas officials say they are prepared for any scenario, including a drawn-out war, and that allies like Iran and Lebanon's Hezbollah will join the battle if Israel goes too far.

"I don't think anyone really knows what the endgame is at the moment," said Tahani Mustafa, a Palestinian analyst at the Crisis Group, an international think tank. But given the amount of planning involved in the assault, "it's difficult to imagine they haven't tried to strategize every possible scenario."

Shaul Shay, an Israeli researcher and retired colonel who served in military intelligence, said Hamas "miscalculated" Israel's response and now faces a far worse conflict than it had anticipated. "I hope and I believe that Israel will not stop until Hamas has been defeated in the Gaza Strip, and I don't think that this was their expectation before the operation," Shay said of Hamas.



*An Israeli flag is burned at a 1994 rally in Gaza City. (AP Photo/Nabil Judah, File).*

Dan Walsh's incredibly rich Palestine Poster Project Archives includes much in the way of protest, but it also contains a trove of rare Zionist/Israeli posters from the 1920s through the '50s, largely before partition. The ones excerpted here are from the Mahmoud Darwish Memorial Gallery, which includes a collection of Zionist Worker agency posters calling for increased development of Palestine. Over the next 16 years, through four wars and countless smaller battles with Israel that rained devastation upon Gaza, Hamas only grew more powerful. Each time it had more rockets that traveled farther. Each time its top leaders survived, securing a cease-fire and the gradual easing of a blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt. In the meantime, it built a government — including a police force, ministries and border terminals with metal detectors and passport control. It is obvious that some other imperialist countries support hostile Terrorists as well as Israel.

#### **4. About some verbal and non-verbal peaceful posters.**

Propaganda is an attempt to influence peoples' opinions or behaviour through the use of specific images and words. It usually gives limited information which is heavily biased in its presentation. Propaganda typically achieves its aims by generating an emotional reaction in the viewer. For much of the twentieth century, public posters were a common way for governments to use propaganda to

persuade their citizens. They often relied upon simple images in order to manipulate people through fear or guilt. Propaganda uses stereotypes so that audiences can readily identify which people group is the target of the poster. Getting to know common stereotypes can be quite confronting for us, since they can be very racist in nature. However, once you become familiar with common forms of stereotyping, you can identify the appropriate people group being targeted in a particular poster. Understanding what a historical propaganda poster means can be difficult for us because we did not live through the events that inspired them. However, many propaganda posters rely upon a limited number of elements to persuade their audience. Once we learn those elements, we can begin to understand the specific message of a particular poster.



***"The world cannot be saved by force; it can only be achieved by understanding." Albert Einstein...***

There is no alternative better way rather than to carry out a diplomatic dialogue and maintain the peace all over the world! Terrorists should also think about what day they do with their future, children, innocent population...Natural cataclysms are enough trouble in the conditions of global warming and people's blood should not be spilled as well as conflicts should not be solved by means of cruel wars. Our earth will accommodate everyone only by a good will... To make the world into the hell on the earth must be stopped... life is too short... if we follow the logic of Palestine, the colonists from the USA should also return to their home-lands and leave the local Indians there only... there are many other examples in the world including the occupied territories of Georgia republic, by different occupants.

Nobody will become a winner factually after the cruel wars and it is high time to make propaganda by peaceful posters for making the universe more human...



### **Conclusions.**

- Multimodal ways of expressing poster like propaganda allow us to talk about mono- and multimodal character of its expressions. Accordingly cognitive-linguistic and semiotic approaches to

advertising discourse by the posters is defined by the abundant use of cognitive metaphorical idioms and slogans, as can be seen from the examples described above.

- Poster like war propaganda can be separated from the genres of advertisement, fictional texts, art and cinematography, even as a separate sub-genre, and we can talk not only about metaphorical paradigms in it, but about the synthesis of advertising as a verbal-non-verbal, written or oral discourse, as a multimodal and pictorial conceptual, as well as a cognitive metaphor.

- So, if "Life is semiosis" as Marcel Danesi says, everything in it is a metaphorical comparison and imaginative reference, which is created for influencing people of the world and carry the "cold war" for making believe others in their justice struggle.

- Word is sometimes a stronger warrior than armed soldiers in the war.

Non-verbal graphic design expresses even more impressive emotions sometimes.

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