Governmentality in North American and Post-Soviet Political Discourses: An Analysis of Presidential Speeches and Their Analogues in the United States, Canada, Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan Delivered From 1993 to 2021

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This article discusses political discourses in five North American and post-Soviet countries through the lens of Michel Foucault's concept of governmentality. Three types of governmentalities (sovereignty, discipline, and security) are differentiated and used in critical discourse analysis. It is shown with the help of quantitative procedures that the governmentality based on security prevailed in Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan at the discursive level until the start of the 2010s. The concept of security does not seem to capture all aspects of the system of governance that existed in North America during the same period. State of the Union speeches and their analogues, Google Books corpus, Web of Science, and eLibrary databases of scholarly publications informed the analysis. In total, 119 speeches were content analyzed using a custom-built dictionary.

Keywords: governmentality, presidential speeches, critical discourse analysis, content analysis

Among the various analytical tools that have been developed to theorize about governance and government, governmentality stands apart. This concept was first coined by Michel Foucault (2007) in his lecture at the Collège de France. Even in French the word *gouvernementalité* was previously unknown. One year later, the February 1978 lecture was published in English as a stand-alone article (Foucault, 1979). Foucault's neologism was translated as "governmentality."

Since then, the concept of governmentality has been translated into many languages. Wikipedia has nine entries devoted to it. The concept has grown in popularity during the past 20 years and is now indexed in Google Books Ngrams (Figure 1; relative frequency is calculated by dividing the number of occurrences of the keyword by the total word count). A closer look at relative frequencies of

gouvernementalité and its translations suggests that its rise in popularity has not been even across languages. It was spreading fast in books published in French until 2005. Since then, the concept has gained relatively greater appeal in the German (*Gouvernementalität*) and English versions.

The case of the Spanish version deserves a separate discussion. Although the term *gubernamentalidad* can rarely be found in books, it appears to be popular in Latin America. Nicaragua, Ecuador, Chile, Colombia, and Peru are among 10 countries whose scientific communities made the biggest contribution to the scholarship on governmentality after controlling for the overall scope of scientific research in those countries as measured by the number of publications indexed in the Web of Science.[2] This pattern suggests that the popularity of the concept of governmentality depends on the political culture and institutions in a particular country. Governmentality may fit some institutional environments better than others.
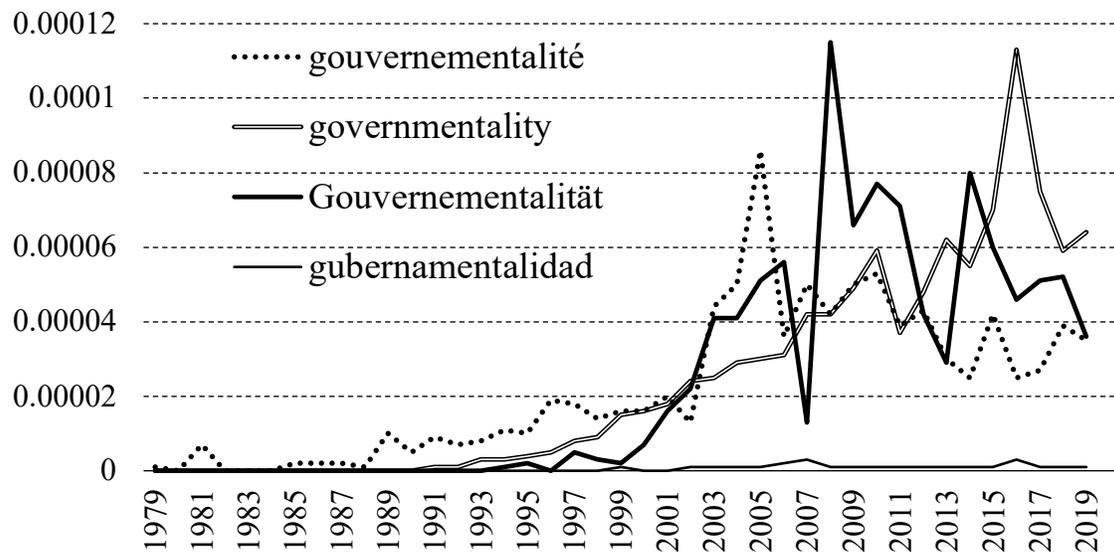

Figure 1. Relative frequencies of the concept of gouverementalité (% of total words) in books published in French, English, German, and Spanish, Google Books, 1979–2019.

The Web of Science and Google Books cover more publications in English than in other languages. Eighty-seven percent of all publications indexed in the Web of Science from 1979 to 2020 are in English,

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[2] The share of publications with governmentality in their metadata (titles, abstracts, keywords) produced by scholars affiliated with institutions in a particular country was divided by the share of all publications indexed from 1979 to 2020 in the Web of Science authored by researchers from the same country. Researchers affiliated with institutions in Chile authored 0.282% of all publications indexed in the Web of Science and 1.179% of all publications with governmentality in their metadata, which gives the ratio of 4.183. For Nicaragua, the ratio is 11.176 (the highest value); the ratios for the other countries are as follows: Ecuador: 5.817, Colombia: 4.025, the United Kingdom: 2.902, Canada: 2.436, Germany: 0.681, Spain: 0.674, the United States: 0.541, France: 0.494, and Japan: 0.049 (the lowest value).

and only 1.5% are in French. Those databases are criticized for such bias (Jeanneney, 2007). However, the coverage of Gallica, an alternative to Google Books developed by the Bibliothèque nationale de France, is limited. Furthermore, the Gallica data are also indicative of a recent decline in the popularity of the concept of *gouvernementalité* in French books (Figure 2; relative frequency is calculated by dividing the number of publications containing the search term by the total number of indexed publications; in the case of Web of Science and eLibrary, by the total number of indexed publications in the social sciences). The French national database of periodical scholarly publications, Persée, shows a different trend, yet the yearly number of indexed sources has been in decline in the past 15 years (from 11,015 in 2005 to 1,301 in 2020).
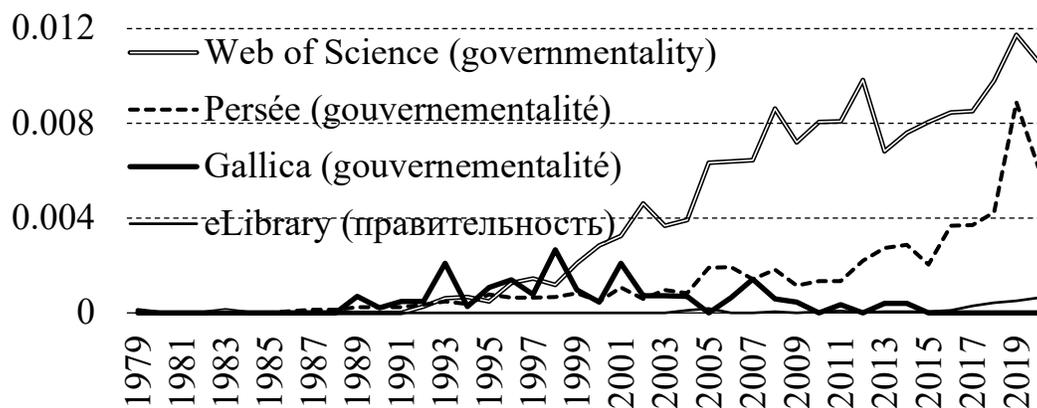

Figure 2. Relative frequencies of the concept of gouverementalité in books and scholarly articles indexed in Web of Science, Persée, Gallica, and eLibrary, 1979–2020.

This article explores the idea of institutional and cultural embeddedness of governmentality by comparing two areas characterized by different political institutions, North American (the United States and Canada) and post-Soviet (Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan). The research question is whether the concept of governmentality fits both types of institutional environments, allowing the capture of particularities of governance in North America and post-Soviet countries. Also, can this concept be considered as vernacularized in those countries? Vernacularization refers to the deployment and refiguring of a concept originally developed in one institutional setting in other, different cultures (Merry, 1997; Wilson, 1997).

Post-Soviet scholars have shown relatively little interest in using the concept of governmentality in their research. To begin with, there is no conventional translation of the term into Russian. Several variants can be found: pravitel'nost' (*правительность*), gosudarstvennoe upravlenie (*государственное управление*), and ustroistvo upraleniya (*устройство управления*). The term is not indexed in Google Books in Russian due to its low relative frequency. The Web of Science metrics confirms this lack of interest: 1.326 for Kazakhstan, 0.162 for Russia, and 0.065 for Ukraine. eLibrary, the national database of Russian-language scholarly publications, indexes 25 sources only with pravitel'nost' in their metadata and 160 sources if the search is extended to full texts. Compared with the Web of Science, the relative frequency of governmentality in Russian-language scholarly publications is much lower and did not show a positive dynamic until very recently (Figure 2).

A possible explanation that aligns with the above-formulated research question is that governmentality may not capture well the particularities of political power prevailing in post-Soviet countries. Russia's political system has historically been characterized by its ambiguity: Ideas of national uniqueness have coexisted with periodical attempts at rapprochement with the West (Angermüller, 2012; Malia, 1999). Russia's uniqueness in the political sense led some scholars to theorize about its system of governance in terms of "Russian power," a country-specific model of power relationships (Makarenko, 1998; Pivovarov, 2006). Russian power is an emic category that involves understanding a culture from the inside (Hofstede & Bond, 1984). The war started by Russia against Ukraine in 2014 (the limited-scale aggression transformed into an all-out war in February 2022) caused a revival of interest in what "Russian power" is and how it differs from systems of governance in the other countries, including Ukraine. Violent techniques for imposing will constitute one of the distinctive features of "Russian power."

Emic categories are contrasted with etic categories whose applicability is not constrained by national boundaries. The latter have a universal character. Accordingly, the research question can be reformulated as to whether governmentality is an emic or etic category: Does a concept initially formulated in one political context (French; speaking more broadly, West European) help understand other political cultures, Western (North American) and non-Western (post-Soviet), alike?

This question is answered by analyzing political discourses in five countries. Presidential speeches and their analogues (speeches from the Throne in Canada) delivered from 1993, when the format of the State of the Union (SOTU) addresses was first adopted in Russia, to 2021 inform the analysis. Presidential speeches are further compared with books indexed in the Google Books corpus and scholarly publications indexed in the Web of Science and eLibrary. The books serve as a proxy for political culture, broadly defined, being indicative of its discursive dimension. Scholarly publications are deemed to be a proxy for scientific discourse generated by intellectuals and experts.

Governmentalities and Their Types

Foucault offered a triple definition of governmentality, as a system of governance, as a particular type of government, and as a process that led to its emergence. In the first sense, governmentality refers to

> the ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit very complex, power that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument. (Foucault, 2007, p. 108)

This ensemble has the purpose of "governing the conduct of conduct" (Lassen, 2018, p. 432; Zienkowski, 2019, p. 146).

In the second sense, Foucault calls governmentality "the tendency . . . that . . . has led towards the pre-eminence over all other types of power—sovereignty, discipline, and so on—of the type of power that we call 'government'" (Foucault, 2007, p. 108). Foucault (2007) considers a succession of techniques for governing the conduct of conduct, starting with the technique of operating directly to a government that operates indirectly.

Pastoral power is an example of the former. This type of power involves "the spiritual direction of souls" (Foucault, 2007, p. 123). A ruler who is legitimated by priests (hierocracy) or a high priest who is also the king (theocracy) exercises pastoral power (Weber, 1968). The Islamic Republic of Iran exemplifies pastoral power, which explains the heavy emphasis placed in Islam on the spiritual community as opposed to territorial communities (Badie, 1992).[3] Compared with pastoral power, a government exercises an indirect control of conduct. A priest leads his congregation to salvation whereas a government sets the rules of the game instead of guiding the population toward an objective. The objective is achieved by following the rules of the game: "The captain or pilot of the ship does not govern the sailors; he governs the ship" (Foucault, 2007, p. 120).

In the third sense, governmentality is "the process, or rather, the result, of the process by which the state of justice of the Middle Ages became the administrative state in the 15th and 16th centuries and was gradually 'governmentalized'" (Foucault, 2007, pp. 108–109). The preeminence of government characterizes modernity. It did not exist in premodern societies. Governmentality helps better understand "how power works indirectly in contemporary social worlds, often referred to as neo-liberal democratic societies" (Taylor, 2013, p. 20).

Foucault discusses three types, or dimensions, of governmentalities: Sovereignty, discipline, and security. "Sovereignty is exercised within the borders of a territory, discipline is exercised on the bodies of individuals, and security is exercised over a whole population" (Foucault, 2007, p. 11). The system of government based on security involves the least direct control by restricting choices available to the population whose members make seemingly free choices (Oleinik, 2015a).

According to Foucault (2007), the three types may coexist, complementing each other: "We have a triangle: sovereignty, discipline and governmental management, which has population as its main target and apparatuses of security as its essential mechanism" (p. 108). Despite their interrelatedness, sovereignty, discipline, and security can be separated analytically.

Sovereignty

Sovereignty operates by "establishing limits and frontiers, or fixing locations" (Foucault, 2007, p. 23). Sovereign power requires setting clear borders as manifestations of its scope. The sovereign rules within those borders. Her control of the conduct of the subjects abroad tends to be limited.

The law is the other key apparatus (*dispositif*) of sovereign power laying down rules and actions that are permitted or forbidden (Coskuner-Balli, 2020). The law is set and enforced within sovereign borders.

Discipline

Discipline further encloses the space in which power operates (Foucault, 2007). Compared with sovereign power, disciplinary power tends to be more concentrated and focused. Discipline has prison as

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[3] Scholars affiliated with research institutions in Iran have made one of the smallest contributions to the scholarship on governmentality, with the relevant ratio of 0.066.

one of its apparatuses. The development of information technologies allows the achievement of the same effect of the Panopticon—omnipresent control—in the virtual space (Zhukova Klausen, 2016).

Disciplinary action leads to normalization of conduct: "People, movements, and actions [become] conform to [a] model" (Foucault, 2007, p. 57). Various types of regulation, including moralization (Lassen, 2018), also represent apparatuses of discipline. They make conduct uniform and "normal."

Security

Since security operates through free choice, it requires the existence of the market. Parties of market transactions exercise free choices within the limits of what is available on the market. According to Foucault (2007), "freedom is nothing else but the correlative of the deployment of apparatuses of security"(p. 48). By controlling access to the market, however, one restricts the scope of choices available to parties of market transactions, subjecting them to the gatekeeper's power (Oleinik, 2015a). Gatekeeping also exists in other contexts that imply freedom of choice. Conditional welfare is one of them. As a condition of receiving support, one is expected to act in a particular manner, for instance, participating in vocational training programs. The choice remains the would-be recipient's (Dean, 2009).

Police, the other apparatus of security, facilitates reaching the stability and predictability needed for the exercise of free choice. Foucault (2007) equates police with the market: "Police is . . . market based, or to put things more brutally, it is an institution of the market, in the very broad sense" (p. 335). For Europeans, "an *état policé* and an *état civilizé* meant roughly the same thing" (Malia, 1999, p. 28) until the late 18th century.

Analysis of the Discourse on Governmentality

Foucault (1976) studied sexuality by analyzing the discourse on sexuality. His theory of governmentality was developed in a similar manner, by critically analyzing the discourse of governance. Compared with linguistic studies, critical discourse analysis (CDA) has several distinctive features. On the one hand, it calls for taking a critical stance with respect to power relationships under study: "Political discourse analysis is understood as the analysis of political discourse from a critical perspective" (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012, p. 17; see also Meyer, 2001). On the other hand, CDA requires placing the language of power, like any other language, into context. The goal is to deconstruct the whole sociopolitical and historical contexts in which discourses are embedded (Bartlett, 2014; Bartolucci, 2012; Meyer, 2001).

Many studies employ the methodology of CDA. Fairclough (2000) analyzed the language of New Labour in the United Kingdom. Hughes (2019) placed the religious discourse of U.S. presidents at the center of his analysis although not framing it as a study of elements of pastoral power. Bartolucci (2012) produced a study of the discourse on the war on terror. Norris and Billings (2017) offered a critical analysis of the discourse on race in the United States. Their study shows how by placing the analysis of specific terms into context one gains insights into the implicit meanings of words and expressions. For instance, references to housing developments and the streets in cities with large African American populations allow the speaker to appear colorblind while de facto associating crime with representatives of particular races. A more

conventional focus on explicit mentions of race (Coe & Schmidt, 2012) tends to be insufficient to uncover such implied meanings.

At the same time, notions such as pastoral power, bio-power, and governmentality usually fall outside the scope of post-Foucauldian CDA (Zienkowski, 2019). The concept of governmentality has only recently started to attract the attention of critical discourse analysts again. Coskuner-Balli (2020) in her study of the discourse of U.S. presidents deconstructed the political ideology of neoliberalism and the mythology of the American Dream with the help of the concept of governmentality, highlighting their impact on the citizen-consumer subject position.

The present article contributes to the study of governmentality through the lens of CDA. It contains a comparison of political discourses in the United States, Canada, Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. Among them, the political discourse in the United States has been studied the most. In an early study, the existence of long-term cycles in American Republican and Democratic party platforms from 1844 to 1964 was discovered (Namenwirth, 1973). The 1973 article inspired several replication studies, including in the United Kingdom (Weber, 1982). Lakoff (2002) analyzed the role of metaphors in political discourse. He positioned the metaphor of the Strict Father constitutive of contemporary American conservatism in opposition to the metaphor of the Nurturant Parent, which serves as a quintessence of Democrats' values (Lakoff, 2002). Hart (2022; Hart & Lind, 2010) initiated the Campaign Mapping Project in 1995 with the ambition of tracking the evolution of a discursive dimension of presidential campaigns in the United States. A significant number of studies of presidential addresses in the United States aim to answer practical questions such as the assessment of leadership qualities (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008), the identification of geopolitical priorities at different points in time (Flint, Adduci, Chen, & Chi, 2009), or the assessment of the influence of U.S. presidents by measuring the impact of their speeches on the legislative process (Barrett, 2004; Hoffman & Howard, 2012; Lewis, 1997).

CDA assumes that words are indicative of deeds. Words and actions are connected through the concept of strategy. "The development and pursuit of political strategies, with the ultimate goal of transforming the world in particular ways, is an essential feature of political action. . . . Strategies have a partly discursive character: they are developed and formulated in discourse" (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012, pp. 24, 26). It follows that by studying political discourses one gains insights into the particularities of the realm of politics.

Comparative studies remain rare since they require proficiency in several languages and familiarity with different contexts. A study of political discourses in two North American and two post-Soviet countries remains an exception (Oleinik, 2015b). The previous study, however, was not focused on a comparison of governmentalities. The present study helps better understand the realms of politics in the five countries by highlighting particularities of governmentality. Such understanding is particularly needed in the context of Russia's war with Ukraine, which has impacted not only those countries but also the international community.

Methods and Data

CDA is compatible with several methodological approaches (Van Dijk, 2001). Scholars have combined CDA with content analysis in its various forms, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods.

Content analysis is defined as a systematic, replicable technique for reducing qualitative data (texts, images) into content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Bernard, 2013). Coding can be done either manually, based on coders' subjective assessments, as in qualitative content analysis (Norris & Billings, 2017; Van Noije & Hijmans, 2005), or automatically, in the function of word co-occurrences, as in quantitative content analysis, or by mixing the two approaches with the help of custom-built dictionaries (Coskuner-Balli, 2020; Fairclough, 2000; Hart, 2022; Hart & Lind, 2010; Hughes, 2019; Karpowitz, 2014; Namenwirth, 1973; Oleinik, 2015b; Seyranian & Bligh, 2008; Weber 1982). In the latter case, the presence of indicator words serves as a proxy for the presence of a topic in the discourse (Hughes, 2019).

Custom Dictionary

In the present study, mixed-methods content analysis was used. A custom dictionary of governmentality was developed. It contains 30 words and bigrams in English, Russian, and Ukrainian.[4] Bigrams were included when they best describe the relevant concept, as in the case of "nation-state" (in Russian and Ukrainian, it is a bigram: *natsional'noe gosudarstvo*, *natsional'na derzhava*).

The dictionary derives from a close reading of Foucault's 1977–1978 lectures on governmentality. Terms used by Foucault constitute its foundation. This approach to building a dictionary also explains its compactness. There is a precise and comprehensive definition of governmentality, in contrast to "essentially contested" concepts, such as power or human dignity (Rodriguez, 2015). Since the underlying concept is not essentially contested, the task of drawing a longer list of indicator words was not prioritized.

The dictionary covers the concept of pastoral power as a type of government that historically preceded governmentality. Hughes' (2019) study suggests that elements of pastoral power may well be present in contemporary political discourse in North America. The list of indicator words that serve as a proxy for the presence or absence of this topic in a political discourse includes "church," "religion," "God," and their equivalents in Russian and Ukrainian languages. "Pastoral power [is] bound up with the organization of a *religion* as a *Church*, with the Christian *religion* as the Christian *Church*" (Foucault, 2007, p. 148; emphasis added). U.S. president Bush (2003) notes,

> Our Nation is blessed with recovery programs that do amazing work. One of them is found at the Healing Place *Church* in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. A man in the program said, "*God* does miracles in people's lives, and you never think it could be you." Tonight let us bring to all Americans who struggle with drug addiction this message of hope: The miracle of recovery is possible, and it could be you (para. 31; emphasis added).

Words that are deemed to be indicative of the presence or absence of sovereignty in a political discourse are "territory," "law" (Coskuner-Balli, 2020, p. 330), "empire," "nation-state," "sovereignty," and their equivalents. The discussion of empire and nation-state as alternative foundations of a state is ongoing

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[4] Speeches from the Throne in Canada are delivered in English and French, the French version being identical to the English version; presidential addresses in Kazakhstan are delivered in Russian.

in post-Soviet countries (Oleinik, 2018a). Putin (2012), Russia's president, confirms it: "How to interpret Russia's *sovereignty* in the 21st century? We discuss this issue often and at length" (para. 16).

The concept of discipline is operationalized with the help of such indicator words as "discipline," "prison," "punishment," "regulation," "moral" (Coskuner-Balli, 2020, p. 329), "obedience," and their equivalents. "Obedience" is included in this list since discipline implies the unconditional following of norms, even when prescribed conduct appears as unreasonable: "The perfection of obedience consists in obeying an order, not because it is reasonable or because it entrusts you with an important task, but rather because it is absurd" (Foucault, 2007, p. 176). The Speech from the Throne (2002) reads:

> The knowledge economy requires new approaches to how we *regulate*. We need *regulation* to achieve the public good, and we need to *regulate* in a way that enhances the climate for investment and trust in the markets. The government will move forward with a smart *regulation* strategy to accelerate reforms in key areas to promote health and sustainability, to contribute to innovation and economic growth, and to reduce the administrative burden on business (para. 53).

"Security," "freedom," "market," "police," and their equivalents were selected as indicator words for the concept of security. The idea of free markets represents its quintessence. Kazakhstan president Nazarbayev (1997) provides an illustration: "If a *free market* is *free* indeed, it will lead to creation of new production facilities in the country" (para. 251).

Since Foucault adopted a critical approach to studying governance, he devotes significant attention to the concept of resistance. Resistance places limits on power. Relevant indicator words are "resistance," "opposition," "protest," "dissent," "minority," "truth," and their equivalents. The inclusion of the word "truth" has the following rationale: By daring to speak the truth, one affirms her autonomy, ability, and willingness to protect it. "The obligation and possibility of telling the truth in procedures of government can show how the individual is constituted as subject in the relationship to self and the relationship to others" (Foucault, 2011, p. 42). According to Foucault, all systems of governance, including democracy, make truth telling, *Parrēhsia*, problematic. Ukrainian president Poroshenko (2014) says,

> Our terminal value is the unity of the country. Accordingly, to take into account the existence of an ideological *minority* in our society is even more important than to hear the voice of the *opposition* in the Rada [Ukraine's parliament] (para. 65).

Words included in the custom dictionary are thus grouped into five categories: pastoral power, sovereignty, discipline, security, and resistance. Since some words can be included in more than one category, the analysis was run for categories as well as for indicator words taken separately, both at the aggregate and the disaggregate level. For instance, "law" and "regulation" may refer to the system of governance by the "visible hand" that characterizes both sovereignty and discipline. The "visible hand" of sovereign and disciplinary powers is opposed to the "invisible hand" of security (Oleinik, 2015a), as in Nazarbayev's (2009) address:

I am persuaded that this global crisis will cause the global financial system and perhaps even the system of political governance to change. Many start to believe that "hands-on" management of the economy is now needed, and *regulation* becomes a key condition for exiting from the crisis (para. 41).

Mixed-Methods Content Analysis

One hundred and nineteen speeches retrieved from official presidential or parliamentary websites were content analyzed (about 750,000 words in total). The dictionary was pretested with the help of the Key-Word-In-Context operation, which allowed accounting for variation in usage by formulating more restrictive rules.[5] Frequencies of indicator words (in the disaggregate level analysis) and categories (in the aggregate level analysis) were calculated for each country included in the sample taken separately and for the whole sample using QDA Miner and WordStat, computer programs for content analysis. The latter figure divided by the total word count was considered as the expected frequency, F_e. Frequencies of indicator words and categories in all presidential speeches delivered in a particular country were considered as observed frequencies, F_o. The difference ($F_o - F_e$) divided by the standard deviation was used as a criterion for assessing the relative prevalence of indicator words and categories in the political discourse of a particular country (Shalak, 2004), which produced an equivalent of Cohen's d, an effect-size index (Warner, 2013).

Cohen's d was used as a term specificity measure: It helps distinguish among texts in the function of the specificity attached to a concept (Savoy, 2016). Values of Cohen's d in the range from 0.2 to 0.79 are indicative of a medium effect size and 0.8 and higher, a large effect size (Warner, 2013). The manipulations with relative frequencies were performed in Excel.

In addition to calculating F_e from the texts of presidential addresses, F_e was also calculated from three other data sets, Google Books, the Web of Science, and eLibrary. The Google Books corpus contains digital and indexed versions of more than 5% of all books ever published (Michel et al., 2011). This corpus was used as a proxy for cultural norms in North America (English-language books) and post-Soviet countries (Russian-language books) in the same manner as cultural norms had been gauged from Whissell's large corpus of common English-language textual materials (Sigelman, 2002). The two corpora of scholarly publications informed the analysis of scientific discourse in North America (the Web of Science, using "USA" or "Canada" in the author's affiliation as a filter) and in post-Soviet countries (eLibrary). By comparing scientific discourse with political discourse, one can assess the role of intellectuals and experts in the political process.

Context

The period covered by this study, from 1993 to 2021, allows focusing on the impacts of neoliberal policies and the war between Russia and Ukraine on political discourse. The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991

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[5] For instance, occurrences of the term "territory" near "province" or "Northwest" were not counted since in this context "territory" means an administrative unit in Canada.

was followed by reforms with neoliberal content. A neoliberal turn started in the United States in the 1980s with Reagan's presidency (Coskuner-Balli, 2020). It led to the reassessment of the government's role in the market, downsizing the scope of processes regulated by the "visible hand." The neoliberal turn prioritizes security as a type of governmentality.

The first wave of neoliberal reforms in post-Soviet countries was carried out in the early and mid-1990s. Those reforms derived from the so-called "Washington consensus" placing emphasis on economic liberalization, macro-economic stabilization, and mass privatization of state property (Andreff, 2003, pp. 15–21). By the end of the 1990s, neoliberal principles started to fall out of fashion in the West in general and in North America in particular. Google Books Ngram Viewer shows that the relative frequency of the word "market" was rising in English-language books until 1996 and started to fall thereafter. Thus, a comparison of North American political discourse with post-Soviet political discourse allows distinguishing the governmentality based on security at different stages of its evolution.

The Russo-Ukrainian war that started in 2014 is the other key element of the context in which the analyzed political discourse is embedded. On the one hand, the war became a contributing factor to nation-state building in Ukraine (Oleinik, 2018b), which may have affected the governmentality based on sovereignty. On the other hand, it is instructive to assess the impact of the war on resistance.

Results

The summary statistics (Table 1) reveal several noteworthy patterns. The custom dictionary better captures the particularities of the post-Soviet political discourse than the North American, judging by the total ratio of classified words (it varies from 0.98% in the Ukrainian case to 0.64% in the Canadian). "Freedom" appears to be the most frequent indicator word in Russian and Ukrainian political discourses and the second most frequent entry in all other cases. The word "market" prevails in Russian, Ukrainian (second most frequent entry), and Kazakhstani (first most frequent) discourses. The word "security" is the most frequent in the United States and Canada. References to the market, freedom, and security are indicative of a neoliberal character of those political discourses. At the same time, references to security, freedom, and the market are relatively less common in books published during the same period. The same goes for the scientific discourse except for "market" (the most frequent indicator word both in the Web of Science and eLibrary samples).

Table 1. Relative Frequencies of Categories and Indicator Words in the United States, Canada, Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan, 1993–2021.

Categories	Indicator Words	Presidential Addresses					Books	Scholarly Publications		
		United States	Canada	Russia	Ukrainian	Kazakhstani	Russian	English	Post-Soviet	North America
Pastoral	church, religion, God	0.066	0.007	0.016	0.041	0.052	0.01	0.015	0.009	0.005
Sovereignty	sovereignty	0.004	0.033	0.024	0.022	0.016	0.000	0.001	0.001	0.001
	nation-state	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.006	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.003	0.000
	empire	0.004	0.001	0.003	0.01	0.008	0.001	0.003	0.004	0.001
	law	0.131	0.049	0.093	0.083	0.108	0.008	0.034	0.009	0.011
	territory	0.007	0.012	0.097	0.076	0.052	0.001	0.003	0.013	0.001
Discipline	discipline	0.008	0.009	0.011	0.002	0.01	0.001	0.003	0.012	0.004
	prison	0.014	0.003	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.003	0.001	0.001
	obedience	0.001	0.000	0.009	0.001	0.012	0.001	0.002	0.000	0.000
	punishment	0.012	0.003	0.017	0.006	0.019	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.001
	regulation	0.019	0.061	0.058	0.031	0.057	0.001	0.005	0.014	0.006
	moral	0.008	0.001	0.015	0.017	0.006	0.002	0.008	0.002	0.012
Security	security	0.203	0.187	0.097	0.183	0.168	0.002	0.011	0.017	0.004
	freedom	0.196	0.125	0.202	0.202	0.176	0.004	0.009	0.007	0.005
	market	0.055	0.096	0.156	0.189	0.197	0.004	0.019	0.017	0.02
	police	0.035	0.015	0.006	0.008	0.015	0.001	0.008	0.001	0.002
Resistance	resistance, opposition, truth, minority, protest, dissent	0.041	0.034	0.049	0.101	0.034	0.015	0.022	0.008	0.014
	Total	0.805	0.638	0.85	0.976	0.929	0.052	0.146	0.119	0.088

Source: Official presidential websites, Google Books Ngram Viewer, Web of Science, and eLibrary. The author's calculations.

Taken separately, observed frequencies are not as informative as when compared with expected frequencies. If expected frequencies are calculated from all presidential speeches combined, at the aggregate level, Russian political discourse shows greater emphasis on discipline and sovereignty (Figure 3; source of Figures 3–6: Official presidential websites; the author's calculations). One needs to bear in mind a relative character of this moderate emphasis: It is relative to the other four cases.
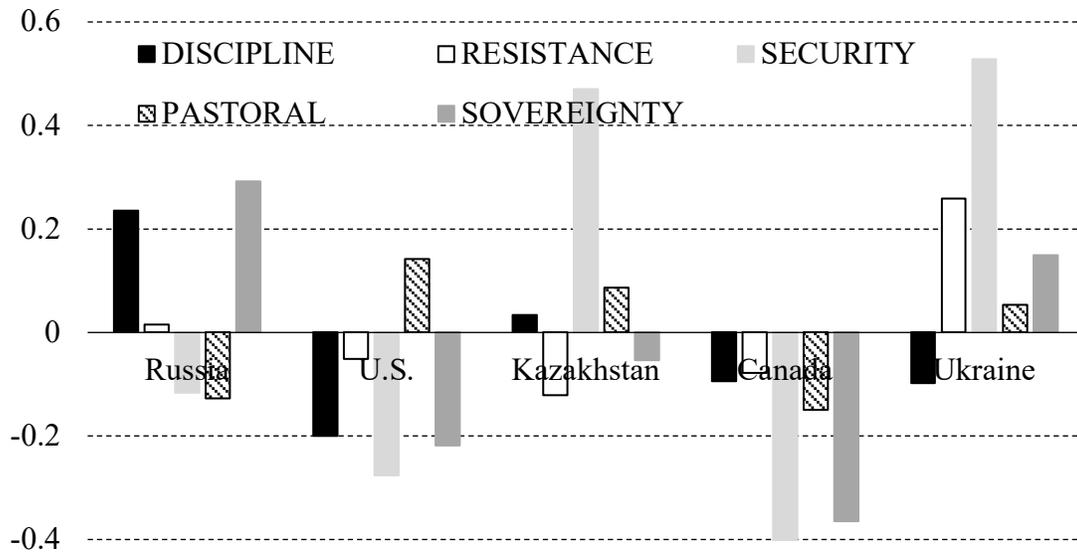
Figure 3. Relative prevalence of mentions of various types of governmentalities in political discourses in the United States, Canada, Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan at the aggregate level, 1993–2021; values of Cohen's d.

Political discourses in Kazakhstan and Ukraine are distinguishable from those of the other three cases by significant attention devoted to security. Ukrainian political discourse also places high value on resistance, which may shed light on this country's exceptional resistance to Russia's aggression. The political discourse in the United States has one distinguishing feature: Frequent mentions of religious and God terms, which is consistent with previous reports (Hughes, 2019). All SOTU speeches end with a prayer for god's blessing: "God bless America." Canadian political discourse does not seem to be fitting the analytical framework chosen here.

The analysis at the disaggregate level (Figure 4) highlights ambiguities in the operationalization of the governmentality based on security. The market and freedom appear to be prioritized in the political discourses of all three post-Soviet countries compared with political discourses in the United States and Canada. Security, the other key indicator word, manifests a different pattern. Mentions of security are relatively rare in Kazakhstani political discourse and especially Russian political discourse. They tend to be relatively abundant in American, Canadian, and, more surprisingly, Ukrainian political discourses. A closer look at the context in which the word "security" is used by North American and post-Soviet leaders offers an explanation. The latter mention security almost exclusively when discussing foreign affairs and challenges in international politics. The former, while referring to security in the same context, also use this term speaking of domestic matters ("social security," "secure retirement," "security of our neighborhoods," etc.). Accordingly, the word "security" is more indicative of security as a type of governmentality in North America than in post-Soviet countries.
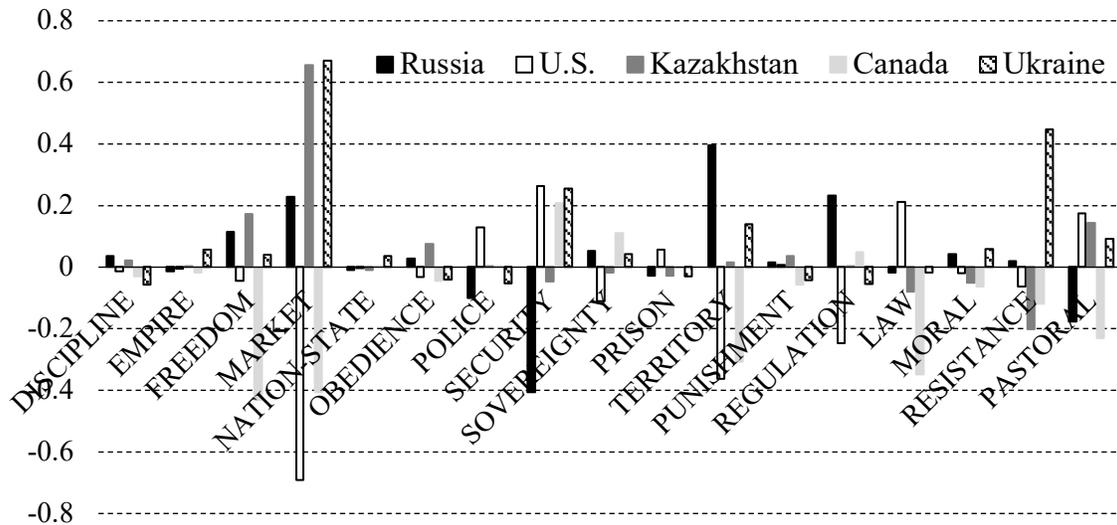
Figure 4. Relative prevalence of mentions of various types of governmentalities in political discourses in the United States, Canada, Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan at the disaggregate level, 1993–2021; values of Cohen's d.

A comparison of the pre-2014 situation with the situation after the start of the Russo-Ukrainian war highlights continuity and changes in post-Soviet political discourse (Table 2). Post-Soviet political leaders place discursive emphasis on law in both periods although it has weakened since 2014 in the Russian case. In all three cases, relative frequencies of "market" and "freedom" have significantly decreased, yet the disillusionment with neoliberal policies may have started before the war rather than being an outcome of the 2008 global financial crisis (Oleinik, 2015b). The war and especially the annexation of Crimea by Russia seem to have increased the awareness of the importance of territory in Kazakhstan: From a negative marker, this indicator word has transformed into a positive one. In the Ukrainian case, the war led to further strengthening of the emphasis on resistance and the transformation of pastoral power from a negative into a positive marker likely because of the intensification of nation-building and the establishment of the national church in 2018.

Table 2. The Impact of the Russo-Ukrainian War on Political Discourses in Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan; Values of Cohen's d.

Categories	Indicator Words	Russia		Ukraine		Kazakhstan	
		1994–2013	2014–2021	2000–2013	2014–2021	1997–2013	2014–2021
Pastoral	church, religion, God	−0.10321	−0.144	0.23527	−0.14209	−0.16226	0.40312
Sovereignty	sovereignty	0.01465	0.02299	−0.02351	−0.05662	−0.0209	0.0484
	nation-state	−0.00799	−0.00663	−0.00687	−0.00647	0.05228	−0.00559
	empire	−0.01445	−0.01924	0.01009	−0.02849	0.01924	0.0611
	law	0.9513	0.21455	0.66129	0.52531	0.47637	0.69658
	territory	0.19598	−0.02852	−0.38352	0.29734	0.12844	−0.27394
Discipline	discipline	0.0522	−0.05705	0.01437	−0.01789	−0.03763	−0.06486
	prison	−0.00225	0.00463	0.00122	0.00912	−0.00502	−0.00447
	obedience	0.00007	0.01118	0.02017	0.04314	−0.0552	−0.03492
	punishment	0.02765	−0.04381	0.01422	0.01854	−0.05562	−0.01332
	regulation	0.28756	−0.34489	−0.17104	0.11482	−0.05015	−0.18645
	moral	0.04581	−0.05242	−0.03818	−0.06598	0.02761	0.03065
Security	security	−0.14381	−0.32162	0.27338	−0.28001	0.52328	0.01923
	freedom	0.24635	−0.57709	0.2305	−0.41751	0.15234	−0.27901
	market	0.06598	−0.68641	0.25647	−0.27043	0.81734	−0.51254
	police	−0.02128	−0.05239	−0.05117	0.25379	−0.04726	0.06171
Resistance	resistance, opposition, truth, minority, protest, dissent	−0.01588	−0.05874	−0.16143	−0.1624	0.16607	0.44195

Source: Official presidential websites; the author's calculations.

A comparison of political discourses with cultural norms suggests that in the former elements of the governmentality based on security, "freedom," "market," and "security" are much more pronounced than in the latter in all countries included in the sample with no exception (Figure 5). Neoliberal discourse does not seem to be enrooted in cultural norms even in North America. It appears to be introduced from above, as Polanyi (1944/2001) argued. The places of "discipline," "empire," "nation-state," "prison," "obedience," and "moral" in political discourses and cultural norms tend to be comparable.
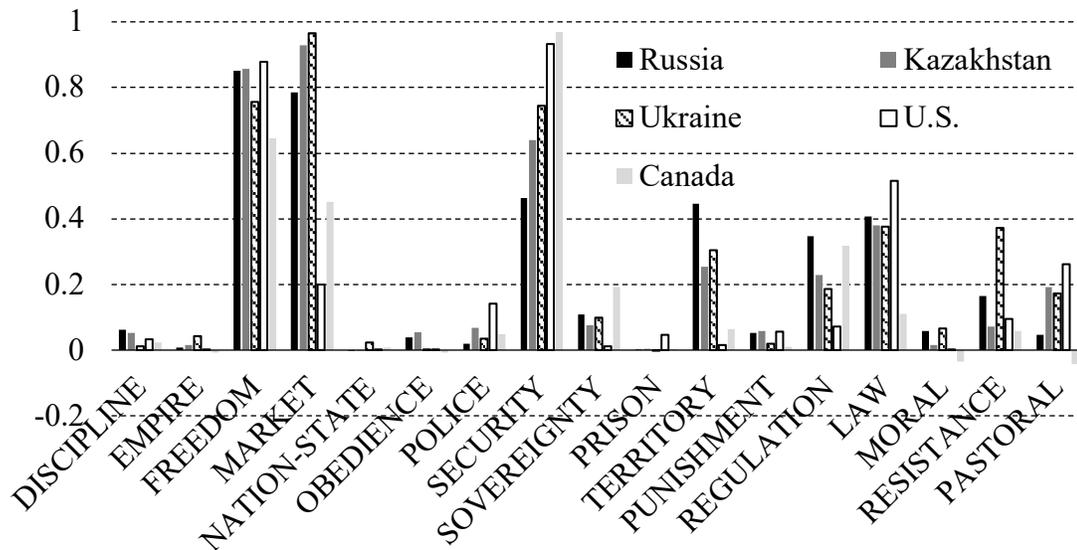
Figure 5. Relative prevalence of mentions of various types of governmentalities in political discourses in the United States, Canada, Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan by using Google Books to calculate expected frequencies, 1993–2021; values of Cohen's d.

The calculation of F_e from the Web of Science and eLibrary allows for determining if intellectuals and experts had a role in the promotion of neoliberal discourse. In the three post-Soviet countries, references to freedom, the market, and security are more pronounced in political discourse than in scientific discourse, which suggests that political leaders had the lead (Figure 6; relative frequencies are multiplied by 10 because the search was carried out in metadata only as opposed to full texts; the author's calculations). The discrepancy in the "security" dimension is minimal in the Russian case, however. In the United States and Canada, the "market" occupies a comparable place in political and scientific discourses whereas references to "freedom" and "security" are substantially more common in political discourse. In other words, intellectuals and experts may have contributed to strengthening some aspects of the governmentality based on security at least in Russia and North America ("may" since a more fine-grained analysis is needed to confirm the direction of causality). The other notable findings are a highly legalistic, compared with scientific discourse, character of political discourse in the United States and relatively little attention paid to the idea of resistance by scholars in Ukraine.
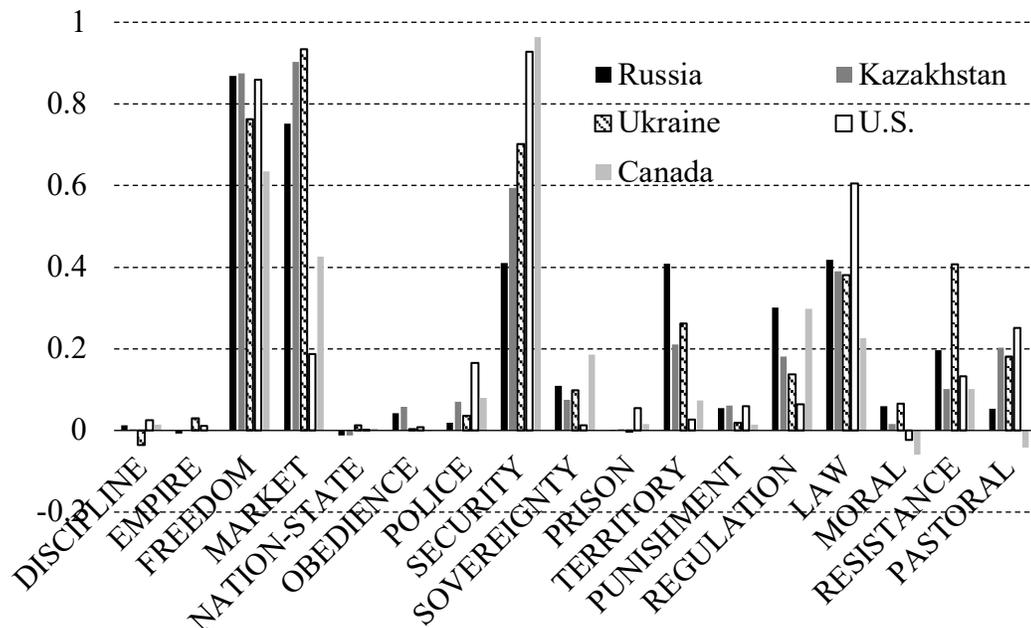
Figure 6. Relative prevalence of mentions of various types of governmentalities in political discourses in the United States, Canada, Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan by using the Web of Science and eLibrary to calculate expected frequencies, 1993–2020; values of Cohen's d.

Discussion

Reported outcomes are relevant both to CDA and area studies. The concept of governance appears to better capture particularities of government in post-Soviet countries than in North America. Canada is a case in point. In addition to the fact that the custom dictionary allowed to classify the lowest ratio of all words, 0.64% (Table 1), no single positive marker appears to characterize Canadian political discourse (Figure 3). A more detailed content analysis at the disaggregate level (Figure 4) shows three weakly positive markers distinguishing political discourse in this country: "security," "sovereignty," and "regulation."

Without frequent references to the other rather unexpected—in the context of modern governance—concept, pastoral power, political discourse in the United States would have had few positive markers as well. The governance based on security may not be the latest form of governmentality. The concept of governmentality introduced by Foucault (2007) more than 40 years ago needs updating and incorporating the most recent developments, including the growing importance of the concept of post-truth (Harsin, 2018).

Specialists in area studies will find a confirmation that neoliberal reforms and policies were introduced in the post-Soviet countries from above and at a point in time when the governmentality based on security started to fall out of fashion in North America. The version of liberalism promoted in the 1990s by President Clinton, for instance, diverged from the neoliberal canon because of its emphasis on community orientation and equal market opportunities (Coskuner-Balli, 2020), which was absent in the post-Soviet

version of neoliberalism. Post-Soviet political leaders initially attempted to appear more Catholic than the pope: More neoliberal than the neoliberals in North America. The concept of security as a specific type of governmentality helps better understand that ample references to the market and freedom do not equate to the emergence of competitive markets. The market may transform into a weapon for those vested in power (Oleinik, 2011). "Russian power" turns to be compatible with *gouvernementalité* in this sense, which is indicative of a possibility for vernacularization of this etic concept.

The case of Ukraine is extreme: Political discourse in this country was initially more pro-market than was political discourse in Russia (Figure 4).[6] The Russo-Ukrainian war created a demand for a fresh start in nation-state building (Oleinik, 2018b). Real changes in Ukrainian political discourse during 2014–2021 turned out to be not radical, however (Table 2). A relative decrease in frequencies of references to "freedom," "market," and "security" has not been matched by a stronger emphasis on alternative types of governance, with the previously mentioned exception of pastoral power. References to sovereignty remain rare whereas mentions of territory have even decreased, unlike in Kazakhstan. Effects of the transformation of the military conflict into the full-scale war in 2022 are to be analyzed at a later point.

On the one hand, Ukraine appears to be the closest match to the concept of governmentality in the sample. On the other hand, Ukrainian scholars made almost no contribution to the scholarship on governmentality. The current state of the social sciences in post-Soviet Ukraine helps to explain this apparent paradox. Contributions of social scientists affiliated with institutions in Ukraine are significantly visible neither in the Web of Science nor in eLibrary (Oleinik, 2018b).

Conclusion

Returning to the research question as to whether the concept of governmentality fits the institutional environments both in North America and post-Soviet countries, one can conclude that the governmentalities based on sovereignty and discipline have been recently more widespread in post-Soviet countries. The fact that those countries are still at the relatively early stages of nation-building explains the emphasis on sovereignty in their political discourses particularly visible in Russia and Ukraine. The governmentality based on security seems to be in decline in both areas although its decline in post-Soviet countries has started more recently, following a sharp rise in the 1990s and the early 2000s.

This study has broader methodological and practical implications. It highlights the potential of comparative content analysis for understanding the evolution of concepts and their applicability in various contexts. The increased availability of big data makes international comparisons using custom-built dictionaries particularly insightful. In practical terms, the study of governmentality helps better make sense of the context of Russia's war against Ukraine. Although neoliberalism played an important role in both countries, resistance as an element of political discourse distinguishes the Ukrainian case from the Russian case. The study also calls for inquiring about the nature of governance and governments in North America

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[6] With the caveat that Ukrainian presidents adopted the SOTU format of addresses significantly later than their Russian counterparts, in 2000.

and the post-Soviet countries after the end of the war. The concept of governmentality will unlikely cover all their aspects.

This study has several limitations. First, although the sample includes five countries, its scope does not suffice for generalizing the claim that the concept of governmentality does not capture all aspects of today's governments. The inclusion of the European case in the scope of the analysis may help alleviate this limitation. Leaders of the European Union started to deliver addresses in the SOTU format in 2010, which enables meaningful comparisons.

Second, all reported findings are sample-specific. Both positive and negative markers of political discourse in a country do not have an absolute character. They are relative to the other countries included in the sample. Were other than post-Soviet countries included in the scope of the analysis, its outcomes would have been different. The same goes for the period covered by the study. Were the timeframe different, so would be the findings. The timeframe could be extended in the North American case relatively easily (the first SOTU in the United States was delivered in 1790, the first Speech from the Throne in 1867), less so in the post-Soviet case—reports of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) at 27 CPSU Congresses were presented less frequently and had a different format.

Third, political leaders may avoid the language of security while being involved in the reproduction of this type of governmentality in the same manner as they have learned how to refer to race while remaining "colorblind" (Norris & Billings, 2017). If this is the case, studies based on the analysis of frequencies of words need to be complemented by qualitative content analysis and hermeneutic approaches.

Fourth, by expanding the custom dictionary, one increases the level of precision in the analysis. For instance, the custom dictionary of religious and God terms built by Hughes (2019) contains hundreds of terms. Dictionaries and lexicons used in computational linguistic analysis include hundreds to thousands of entries (Ravi & Ravi, 2015). DICTION, a computerized language analysis program, contains 10,000 search words (Hart, 2022; Hart & Lind, 2010).

Last, but not least, conducted tests and produced estimators have roots in frequentist (classical) statistics. It would be instructive to compare frequentist measures with Bayesian ones, especially considering the popularity of Bayesian statistics in linguistics. Such restrictions as limited sample size or the need to achieve normality of data lose their importance when working with Bayesian estimators.

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