



The Coverage and Reception of
the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict



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When War Lacks Violence:

The ideology of war in the Romanian and English online media concerning the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

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~~The Insulation~~ of War



- Anabelle Lukin (2019) makes a compelling argument that “*war is tightly insulated category*” from that of **violence**:

“One might logically expect it to be associated with war, but given its negative associations, the many positive connotations of war – heroism, courage, sacrifice, struggle, and peace – do not sit well with *violence*.”

- Siniša Malešević (2010) argues that **collective violence** and **war** “were decisive components in the formation of the modern social order”:

“Whether we like it or not, violence is one of the central constituents of human subjectivity, and modern subjectivity in particular, since modernity as we know it would be unthinkable without organised violence.”

Frequencies



TERM	CORECON RO	CoRoLa	CORECON EN	BNC
war	5.725 (4.408,35)	143.363 (188,99)	4.269 (4.090.51)	19.373 (189,36)
violence	118 (90,86)	30.709 (40,48)	129 (123,61)	5.926 (57,92)
war to violence ratio	48 to 1	5 to 1	33 to 1	3 to 1

Some examples (CORECON RO)

Ukraine War-related

“...during the violent attack of Russia against Ukraine...”

“...where violent clashes took place...”

“...the refugees that fled the violence...”

“...simulated referenda that were held under violent military occupations...”

“...the serious trauma caused by this violent conflict...”

“...Russian soldiers use sexual violence to spread terror...”

Ukraine War non-related

“...violence may rise among the European youth...”

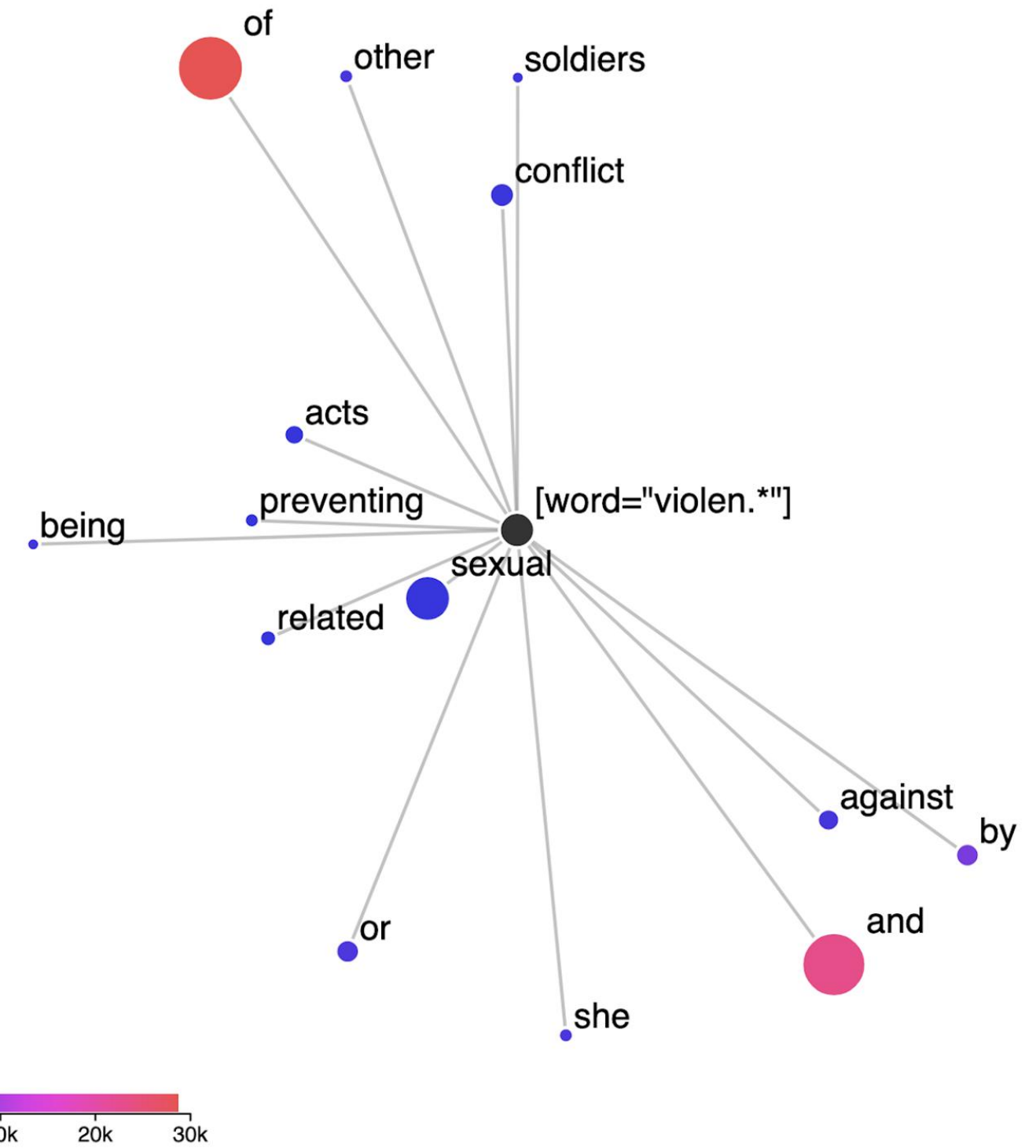
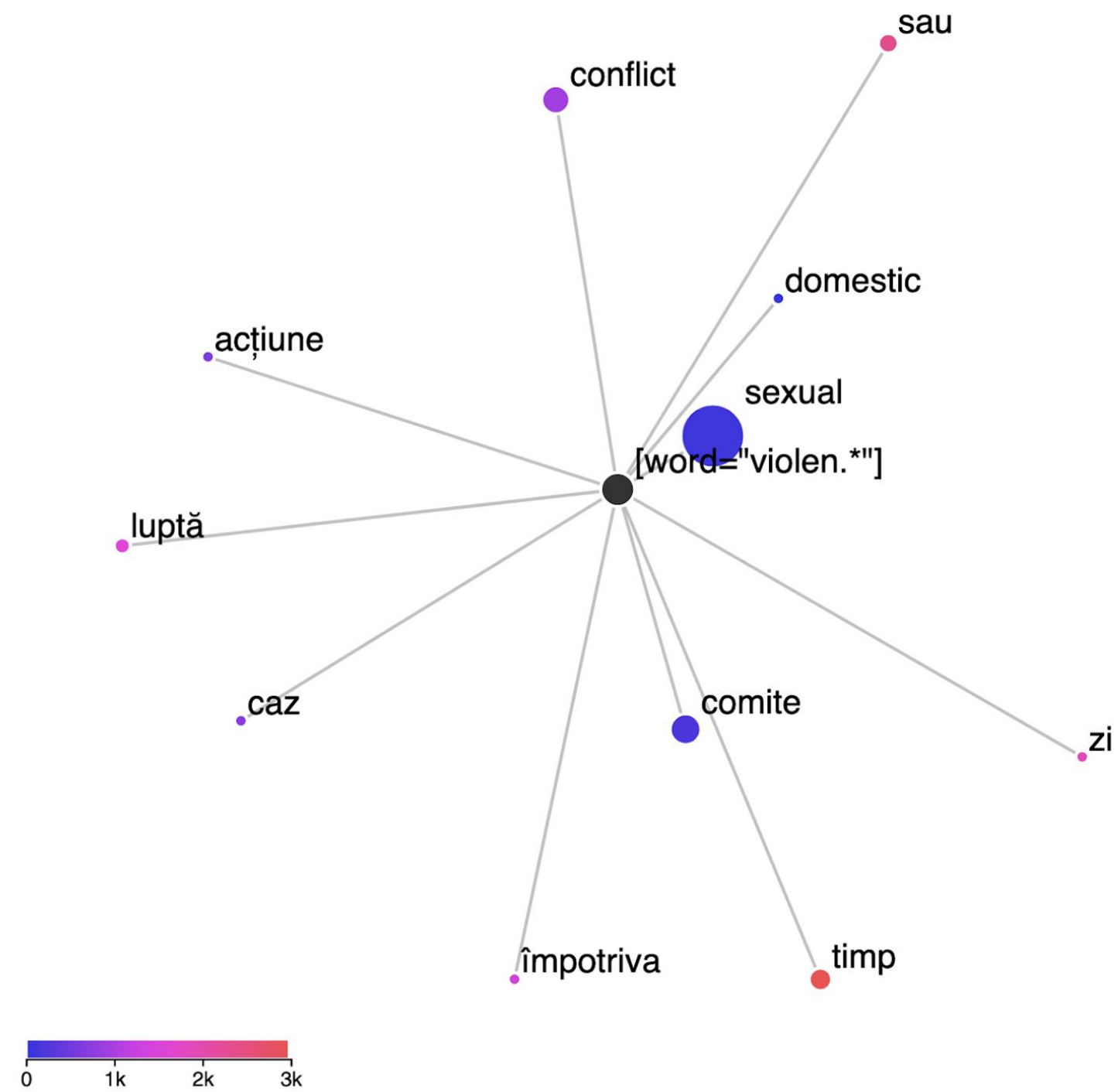
“...the monasteries in the area have been targeted by violent inspections carried out by the Ukrainian security services...”

“...it is one of the clear examples of the violent infighting that have affected Putin’s army...”

“...the same is the case with domestic violence in Russia...”

“Acts of violence committed by radical Israeli colonists...”

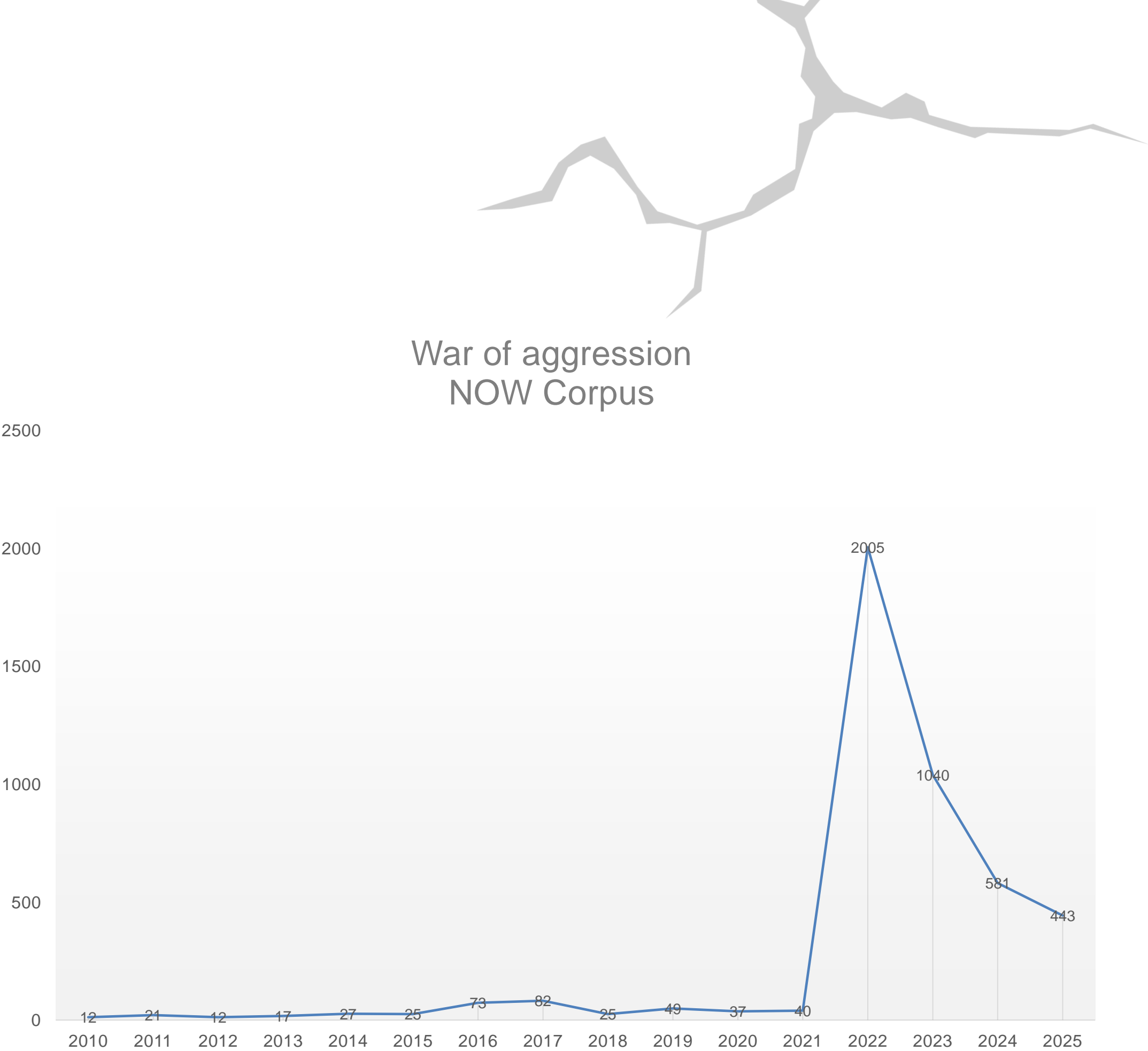
Collocations



War of aggression

CORECON RO	CoRoLa	CORECON EN	BNC
45 (34,65)	145 (0,99)	20 (19.16)	8 (0.08)

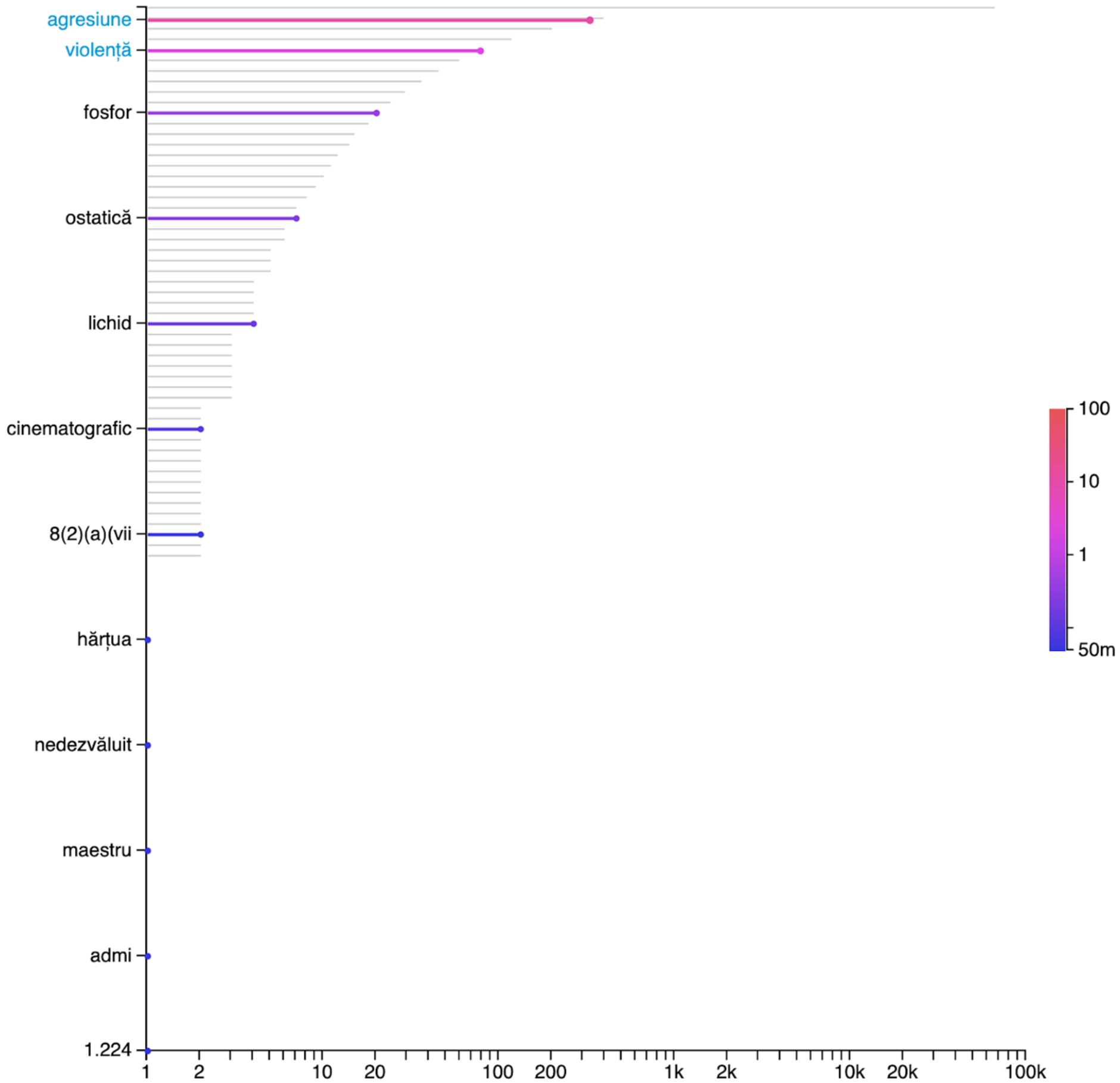
Bachman, Jeffrey S., and Esther Brito Ruiz. 2025. "The Politics of War and Aggression: Scholarly Biases in Public Discourse on the Invasions of Iraq and Ukraine." *Critical Studies on Security*, May, 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21624887.2025.2503574>.



Aggression vs. violence

	CORECON RO	CoRoLa
violență	118 (90,86)	30.709 (40,48)
agresiune	327 (251,8)	6498 (8,57)

	CORECON EN	BNC
violence	129 (123,61)	5.926 (57,92)
aggression	187 (179,18)	836 (8,17)



Why is “violence” quasi-absent?



- You can put a face on aggression, but it is more difficult to put a face on violence.
 - aggression → aggressor
 - violence → ?
- Aggression is ‘strategically’ more effective in discourse, as it is regulated by International Law (UN Charter, Chap. 7).
- In war, both the aggressor and the victim employs violence:
 - to **invade** the victim
 - to **defend** from the invader
- Associating *violence* with *war* might undermine the idea of **just war** (*bellum iustum*), or war in general as one of the central constituents of our modern world (Malešević, 2010).
 - The ideology of war, which **insulates** it from violence, has a great gravitational pull, even when such insulation is not necessary or demanded.



Thank you!

Selected References

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