

Care economy in a war-torn society: the Ukrainian perspective

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ТУРБОТА ЯК РОБОТА

МАТЕРИНСТВО У ФОКУСІ СОЦІОЛОГІЇ



ХТО (ПО)ТУРБУЄТЬСЯ?

ДИТСАДКИ В КОНТЕКСТІ
ГЕНДЕРНОЇ НЕРІВНОСТІ

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"This unique collection brings together scholars and activists who have faced massive changes concerning their own lives and respective professions after the full-scale attack on Ukraine. It is with this in mind that Maryna Shevtsova has collected essays that truly speak to the international feminist (scientific) community, showing what a decolonial feminist approach in international relations, peace, and security studies might look like in the present time. Ranging from analyses of masculinity and femininity in times of war, a critical reading of the feminist foreign policy agenda, a decolonial perspective on peace, to how a non-Western view on the history of the region can describe developments fully, this is a must-read for anyone wanting to understand what lived experiences look like in times of war and what we can all learn from these rich insights."

— **Stefanie Wühl**, University of Applied Sciences BFI Vienna

"This book is indispensable for anyone who seeks to understand Ukraine's steadfast defiance in the face of Russia's war. Shevtsova has brought together an outstanding interdisciplinary group of scholars and practitioners to illuminate and theorize the lived experience of war through a Ukrainian feminist lens that is generous and groundbreaking. The authors narrate and theorize the contributions and resistance practices of women and the LGBTQ community during the war, and the novel ways that gender and sexual identity have interacted with the war effort."

— **Milada Anna Vachudova**, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Feminist Perspective on Russia's War in Ukraine: Hear Our Voices aims to give voices to feminist scholars from Ukraine and the wider Central and Eastern European (CEE) region. This book, recognizing the long-neglected nature of the war that has been evolving since 2014, offers a compilation of essays contributed by scholars spanning diverse disciplines and practitioners alike. Employing a wide array of data sources and methodologies, this book undertakes a broader exploration of how gender norms have been transgressed and cultural expectations of womanhood and manhood have evolved within the context of Ukraine from 2014 to 2023. Representing an early collaborative effort among Ukrainian and CEE feminist scholars, this compilation aims to showcase locally nurtured perspectives on Russia's invasion of Ukraine to a worldwide audience, with the overarching goal of sparking the development of fresh methodologies and approaches that can untangle the complex interconnection between gender and warfare.

Maryna Shevtsova is a senior FWO postdoctoral fellow with KU Leuven, Belgium.

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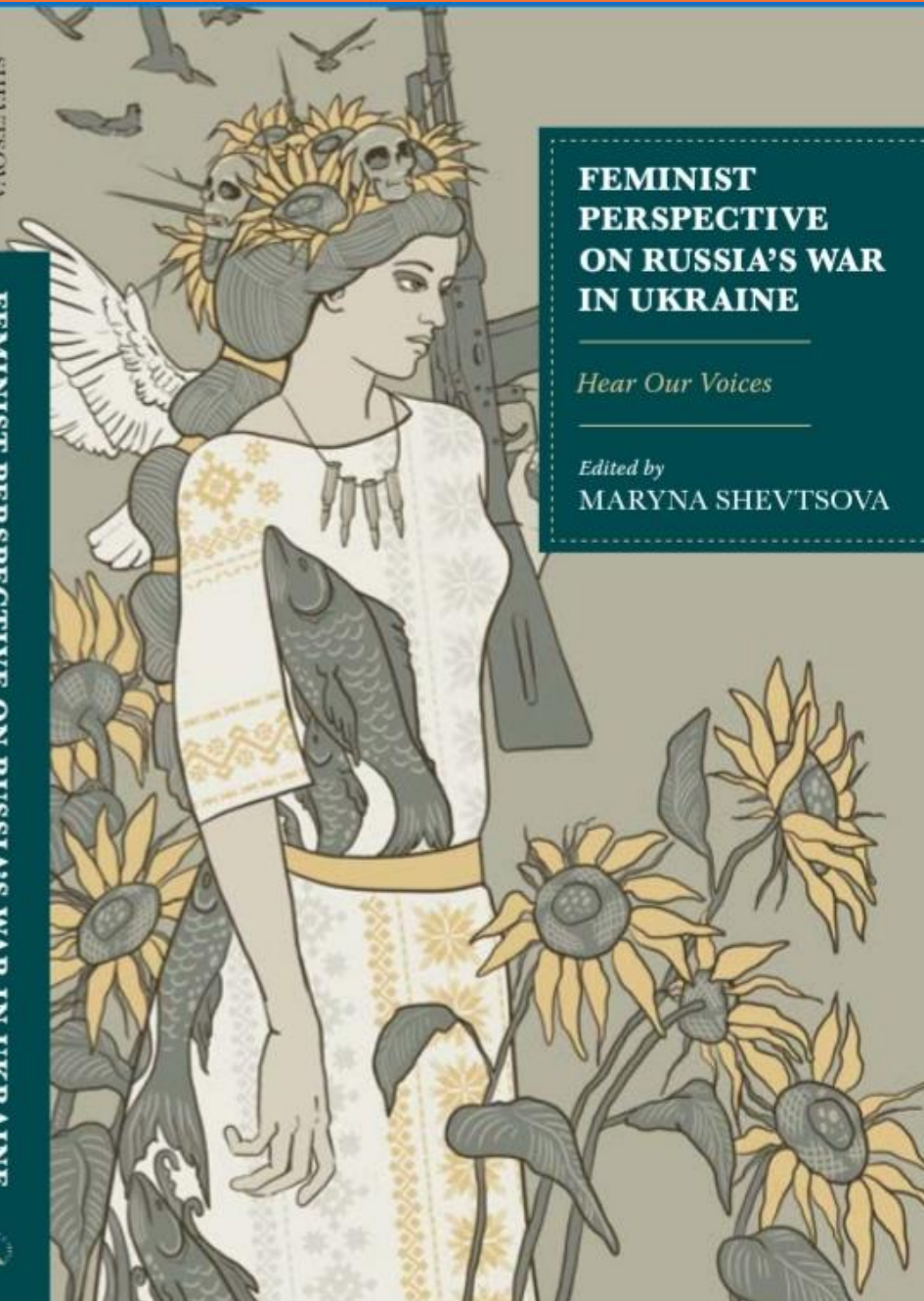
SHEVTSOVA

FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE ON RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE

FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE ON RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE

Hear Our Voices

Edited by
MARYNA SHEVTSOVA





Kharkiv national University, 2022



Kyiv National University, 2022

Feminist March, Poltava, Ukraine, 2020-2021



14:50 4G 78

← У Полтаві на 8 березня пройш...

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На акцію приходять кілька десятків жінок різного віку, дехто із них – із дітьми. Із собою приносять плакати із різними



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Women's March in Ukraine

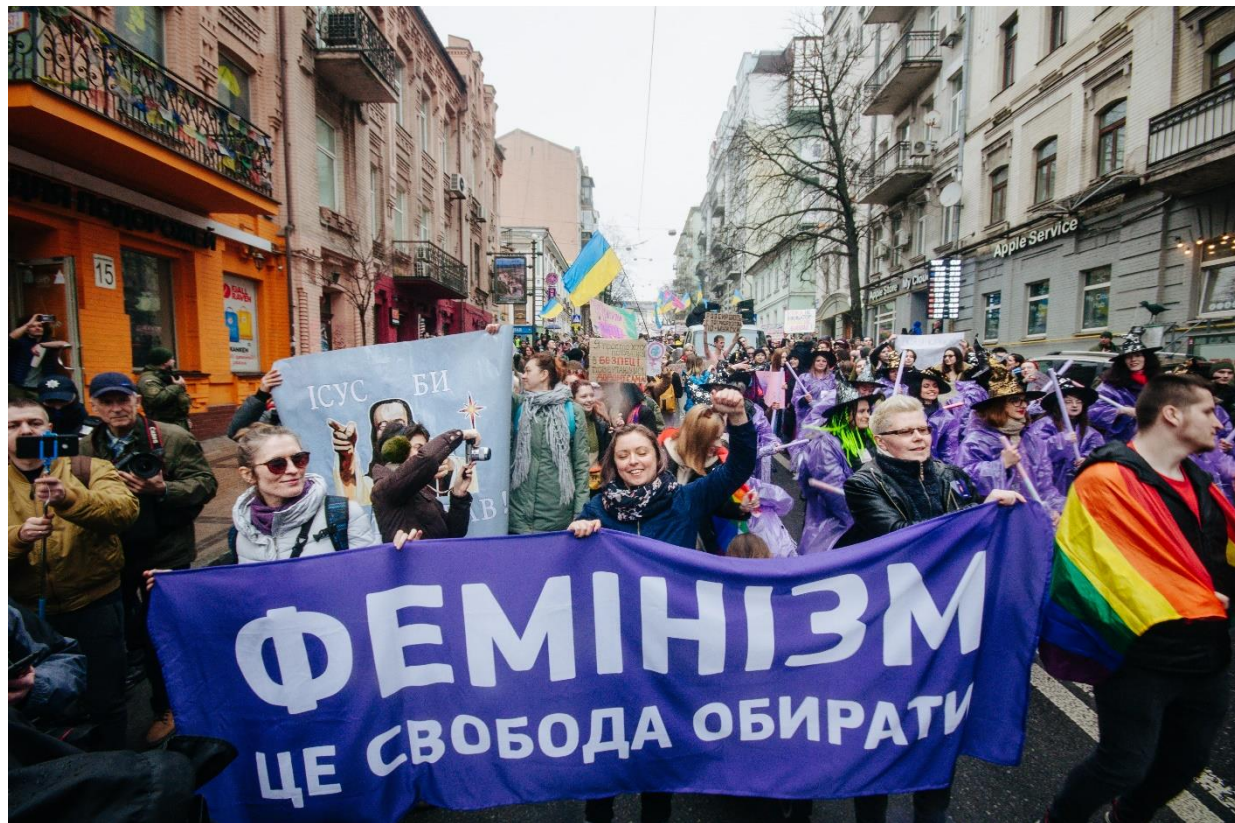


Фото: Facebook/marshzhinok

**Ukraine has made
a great progress
on human rights
and gender
equality
perspective
(especially since
2014)**

- The Law on equal rights and opportunities for women and men (2005)
- Domestic violence is criminalized (since 2018) and the Istanbul Convention is ratified (2022)
- A law on gender quota in political parties lists (30% in 2015, 40% since 2020) and increasing share of women in politics
- Strong feminist and women's NGO activity
- A steady decline in the proportion of the population that supports gender stereotypes and patriarchal gender roles

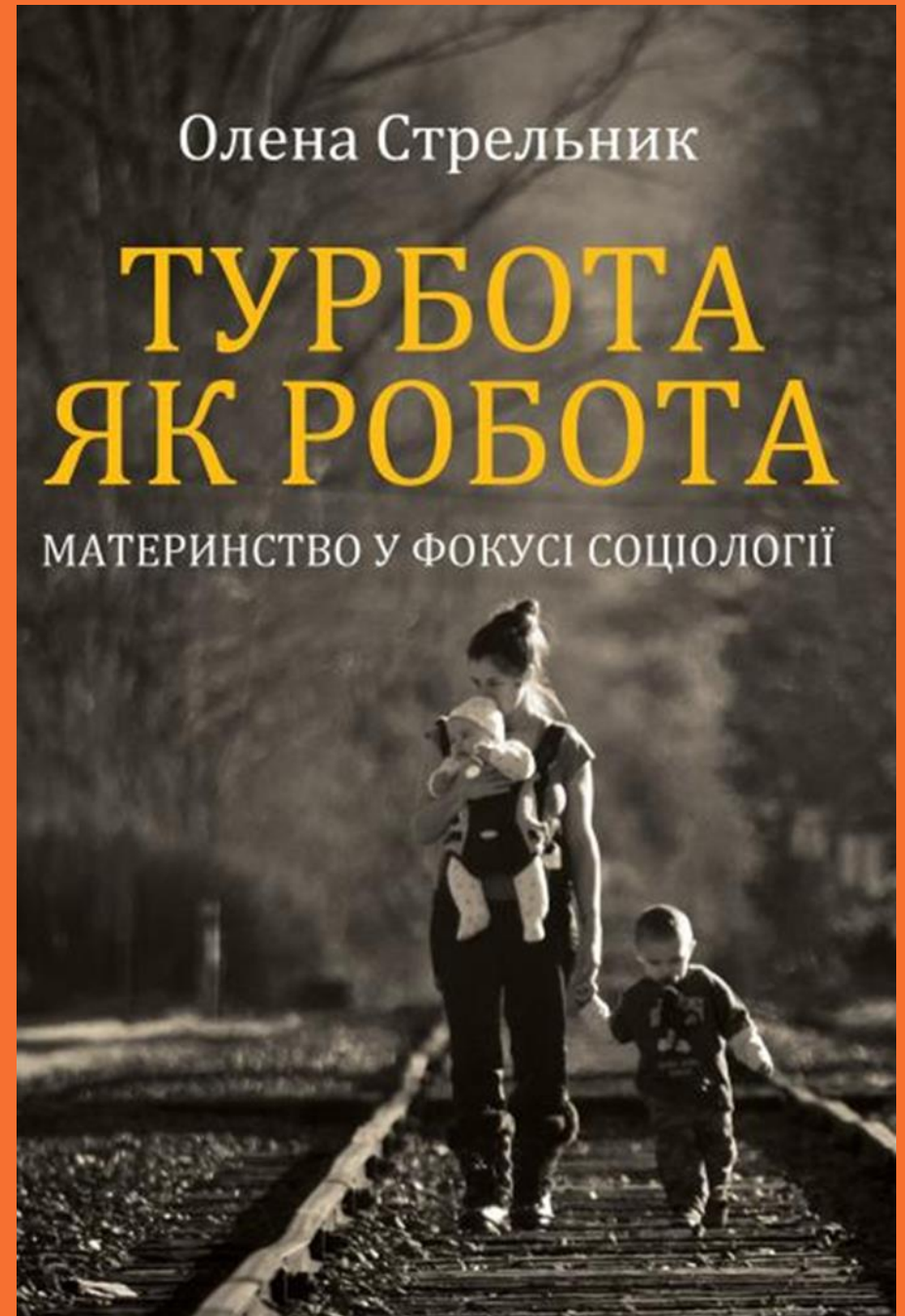


The care economy includes paid and unpaid work through which care is provided for others.



I will focus my presentation mainly on the issues of childcare.

Structural conditions, namely:
public policy, a labor market, a family
and cultural expectations
create a gender order (system) within
which women are assigned
responsibility for the private sphere
and care work as both unpaid and paid
activity



Balancing the responsibility for care (reality)



State



Market



WOMEN



**Non-profit
sector**

Brief overview of care economy in pre-war period: care infrastructure

- Kindergartens are mostly public / state-owned, parents partly pay for meals + informal payments
- Working hours of kindergartens: 10.5 or 12 hours
- Lower level of coverage of children in kindergartens in rural areas: in 2019, 68% in cities and 40% in rural areas visited kindergartens
- Kindergarten is considered to be an important agent of socialization
- Children mainly start attending kindergarten at the age of 3 (the end of parental leave).



Photo: <https://volycya-gromada.gov.ua/news/1643726367/>



Brief overview of care economy in pre-war period: **care jobs**

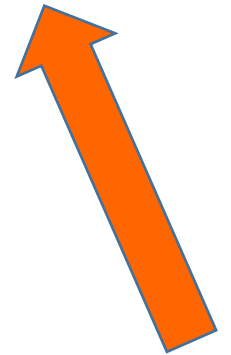
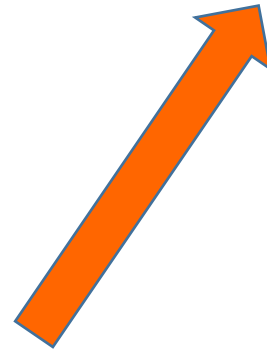
- Highly feminized care jobs: The vast majority of both the pedagogical (99%) and technical (82%) staff of kindergartens are women (*Across OECD countries 96% of pre-primary education teachers are women, 2023*)
- Care work is extremely poorly paid (55% of the national average salary; in the OECD – 80%),
- Kindergartens are fully financed by local budgets
- Kindergarten workers are overloaded (paperwork, strict regulations, overcrowded groups, high level of stress)



Brief overview of care economy in pre-war period: **unpaid care work (1)**

- Legally equal rights of women and men to take care of children (for example, parental leave to take care of a child up to 3 years old, in some cases up to 6 y.o.)

- 2-3% of fathers took parental leave



parental leave
is not paid

the gender pay
gap in 2021
was 19%

sociocultural
norms

Brief overview of care economy in pre-war period: **unpaid care work (2)**

- 83% of men and 84% of women believe that the main task of a woman is to take care of the home and family
- 74% of men and 76% of women believe that the main task of a man is to earn money
- 52% surveyed said that a woman is mainly involved in care for children in their family (59% in 2015);
- 64% said that in their family it is mostly a woman who cooks food (in 2015 – 79%)

2015, 2020,

representative survey

The war affects the relations between the state and individuals in a distinctly gendered way

only men are entrusted with the duty to protect the state and that mostly men provide the state defense

only civilian men can be mobilized/drafted, while for civilian women it is not an obligation, but a right



the new configuration of gender order also affects women.

Mariupol maternity hospital, March 2022



📷 Mariana Vishegirskaia stands outside a maternity hospital that was hit in Mariupol. Photograph: Mstyslav Chernov/AP





[Kharkiv Railway station, 06 March, 2022](#)
[Photo from Sergey Naumovich's facebook page](#)



Kremenchuk railway station, March 04, 2022

To be mother on the war



«Ukrainian Madonna”

Olia, Kyiv

Photo:

UNICEF/Facebook





Photo <https://life.pravda.com.ua/society/2022/04/12/248217/>
<https://www.rbc.ua/rus/stylar/marsh-materey-stranah-evropy-ameriki-fotoreportazh-1649777865.html>

Reproductive work VS reducing care resources and infrastructure



Photo: Wolfgang Schwan, Erin Trieb, Alex Lourie, Juan Carlos, Aris Messinis, Petr Josek, Chris McGrath, Salwan Georges, Juan Carlos.



- 261 schools and 127 kindergartens in Ukraine were completely destroyed
- 1,441 schools and 942 kindergartens were damaged

(as of June, 2023)



The destroyed kindergarten in Druzhkivka, Donetsk region, Pavlo Kyrylenko\Telegram

42% of children study in schools/kindergartens online,
29% - in a mixed form (both online and in the premises),
only 26% - constantly attend schools and kindergartens



survey conducted by the Sociological Group "Rating" among mothers of Ukrainian children aged 3 to 17, commissioned by the "Ukraine Children's Action Project", January-February 2023

the first "underground school", the city of Kharkiv

- as of July 29, 2023, only 55% of kindergartens had bomb shelters (data by the Ministry of Education)

- *"For more than a year, the women of Kremenchug have been demanding that at least some regular groups of kindergartens in the city with a population of over 200,000 residents be opened, so that school attendance resumes"*

- *Лариса Гориславець. Як у Кременчуці (не)вирішують проблему зачинених дитсадків та шкіл, Жінки це 50% успіху країни, 01.09.2023 року*



“A good dad is not a wallet”



- a representative survey of 2023 found that, compared to 2020, the participation of fathers in caring for a children has increased
- the share of men who would like to take part of parental leave has increased (from 20% to 50%)

Data by Info Sapiens, 2023





The war significantly increased the burden on “female jobs”: kindergarten teachers, teachers, nurses, social workers, workers of the local community (against the background of increased workload and reductions in funding and salaries)

“female jobs” are key in overcoming the humanitarian challenges of war

The weakness of state policies in the field of education, health care, and social protection is primarily compensated by women



Kyiv, December 2022. The teacher conducts a lesson on the street during a blackout (shot from an amateur video)

Women compensate for the deficiency of the public system of treatment and rehabilitation of military



<https://suspilne.media/amp/ivano-frankivsk/548489-razom-roblat-persi-kroki-v-ivano-frankivsku-druzina-poranenogo-vijskovogo-dopomagae-jomu-prohoditi-reabilitaciju/>



<https://suspilne.media/rivne/675730-perse-vesilla-u-gospitali-na-rivnensini-poranenij-vijskovij-odruzivsa-z-kohanou/>

The war and upcoming «care deficit»

Increasing care needs:

for elderly people (including due to the rapid aging of the population as a result of mass migrations abroad and declining birth rate); for wounded soldiers and veterans, peoples with disability

Reduction of capacity of both of the state and families in providing care:

- Forcibly separated families
- Growth in the share of families headed by one parent (mostly single mothers)
- Lack of available public resources to care for children, the elderly, and people with disabilities

Care economy in post war recovery plans

- some relevant but generic demands are included in "Ukraine Facility Plan" (chapter "Human Capital")
- the rhetoric of "investment" and "efficiency" as fundamental to post-war development; building the economy based on the principles of deregulation and liberalization, reducing the role of the state
- the state budget deficit will primarily affect social sectors with a high proportion of women and the care economy sectors vs growing care needs





THANK YOU!

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<https://www.facebook.com/olena.strelnyk>