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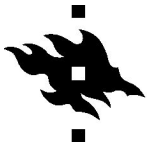
The Language of War:

Framing Enemy Images in Russian Online Media

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Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract

This Master's thesis examines the language manipulations used by Russian online media to create enemy images that are essential for justifying armed aggression. The study explores the issues emerging in the discourse on information warfare and mass-manipulation in the context of the conflict between Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

The purpose of this research is to explore how and why Russian state-funded media used the rhetorics to influence the audience's attitudes towards Ukraine as a state and Ukrainians as a nation, and to evaluate if such manipulation can be recognized as propaganda. This study addresses the gap in current knowledge on a rhetorical angle of enemy creation in Russian online media.

This research is the first to apply the theoretical concepts of enemy images and propaganda devices to the process model of framing research developed by Dietram A. Scheufele. This theoretical approach allowed to address the framing of enemy images by state propaganda.

The empirical data of this research consists of sixteen online publications from two state-funded media organizations in Russia: international network RT and the information agency Rossiya Segodnia, which includes subsidiaries RIA Novosti and Sputnik. Rhetorical frame analysis was applied in this research. The in-depth critical nature allowed to identify the key elements and techniques of enmity framing in the analyzed publications.

The findings of this study confirm the hypothesis that the Russian state-funded online media indeed do work as a body of state propaganda. As earlier research suggests, they did play a crucial role in the info-warfare campaigns preceding and during Russian military operations in Crimea and Donbas by manipulating and distorting information to frame Kremlin's agenda, creating and reinforcing enemy images, spreading disinformation and conspiracy theories that resonated with the state's position.

This research contributes to the pool of investigations that expose a strong Kremlin's commitment to information warfare on many fronts. It confirms that the creation of enemy images is vital for the justification of military aggression. Lastly, it proves that even though modern state propaganda is a highly sophisticated, data-driven powerhouse, on a rhetorical level, it still uses the same techniques as 100 years ago.

Säilytyspaikka – Förvaringställe – Where deposited
Keskustakampuksen kirjasto
Muita tietoja – Övriga uppgifter – Additional information

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1 Introduction

Oxford Dictionaries has declared "post-truth" as the word of the year 2016. It is defined as *"an adjective relating to circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than emotional appeals"* (Oxford Languages 2016). Even though this word became that popular in 2016 because of the Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom and the presidential election in the USA, the concept of post-truth had been relevant long before that.

Modern technologies and the social media revolution have filled reality with the overflow of information. In today's reality, it takes almost too much effort to filter accurate information out of the stream of spam. Ironically, the information (and the truth) has never been so fragile as today, in *the information age.* Not because of Orwell's censorship, but because of Huxley's devaluation of truth[1].

Naturally, with the development of mass information and communication, the methods of mass manipulation and propaganda have also advanced. This study intends to analyze one of the world's oldest and most efficient propaganda machines: the one born in the USSR and matured in Putin's Russia.

My interest in the issue is rooted in my background as a journalist. I used to work at a Ukrainian news TV-channel in 2014 when Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula and later advanced its military presence in the East of Ukraine. After witnessing everyday lies and manipulations by Russian media, I decided to investigate the phenomenal impact of it on people's outlook. Since this is a critical study, my personal perspective will inevitably influence its development. With this in mind, however, I aim to ensure that the findings of this research are as unbiased and accurate as possible.

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[1] Referring to two classic novels: 1984 Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell and Brave New World by Aldous Huxley. Two extreme predictions of the future back from the 20th century.

This study focuses on a rhetorical aspect of propaganda — *the language of war,* which is used by Russian media to create enemy images that are essential for justifying armed aggression. The research touches on relevant issues emerging in the current discourse on informational warfare and mass-manipulation.

This study set out to assess the language manipulation efforts of the Russian state-funded online media towards their audience: how do they use language to frame publications on Ukraine, and how do they portray Ukraine and Ukrainians before and after the conflict has started. The aim is to understand how and why Russian media have influenced the audience's attitudes towards Ukraine as a state and Ukrainians as a nation and to evaluate if such manipulation can be recognized as propaganda.

The modern Russian propaganda and particularly its activity in the Russia-Ukraine conflict have been researched from various angles. All of these studies contribute to an important mission of analyzing and exposing the means of Russian informational warfare and its effect on global power-relations. However, the discourse on this theme undoubtedly lacks a rhetorical angle on enemy creation in Russian online media. This study will address this gap in current knowledge. I will critically analyze sixteen articles from two Russian state-funded media organizations in the process of this research: eight from the 2013 timeframe when pro-Russian president Yanukovych was still in charge, and eight from the 2014 timeframe, after the conflict in Donbas. Rhetorical framing analysis will be conducted to define the dominant frames of each period and the techniques used to set those frames.

This thesis research proceeds in six chapters. The next chapter provides an overview of the Russian neo-authoritarian media system and reviews the geopolitical context of Russia-Ukraine conflict. In the third chapter, the key theoretical elements of this study are discussed, including the framing theory, enemy images, and framing and propaganda devices. Chapter four focuses on the design of this research, elaborating on the rhetorical framing analysis method, listing the research questions, describing the collection of data and the process of analysis. In chapter five, I

provide the results of the rhetorical analysis with an in-depth focus on the dominant frames that have emerged during the analysis. Chapter six is dedicated to a concluding discussion where I present the theoretical contribution of this research, its key findings, limitations and challenges, and give my recommendations for future research.

2 Contexts

This research examines the enemy framing and manipulation in Russian online media towards Ukraine after the annexation of Crimea and the breakout of a de facto armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine. The complexity of the topic requires additional background discussion. This chapter provides a contextual overview of two dimensions: Russian news media as part of a neo-authoritarian media system and geopolitical context of Russia-Ukraine conflict.

2.1 Russian news media: a neo-authoritarian system

International organizations such as Freedom House or Reporters Without Borders have regularly recognized the asphyxiation of the press freedom in Russia since Vladimir Putin took over the country (Figure 1). Based on extensive research[2], these internationally respected organizations rate Russian freedom of press and information as one of the lowest in the world.[3] Such evaluations support the general view on the Russian media ecosystem as an essentially neo-authoritarian polity in which journalists face pressing constraints.
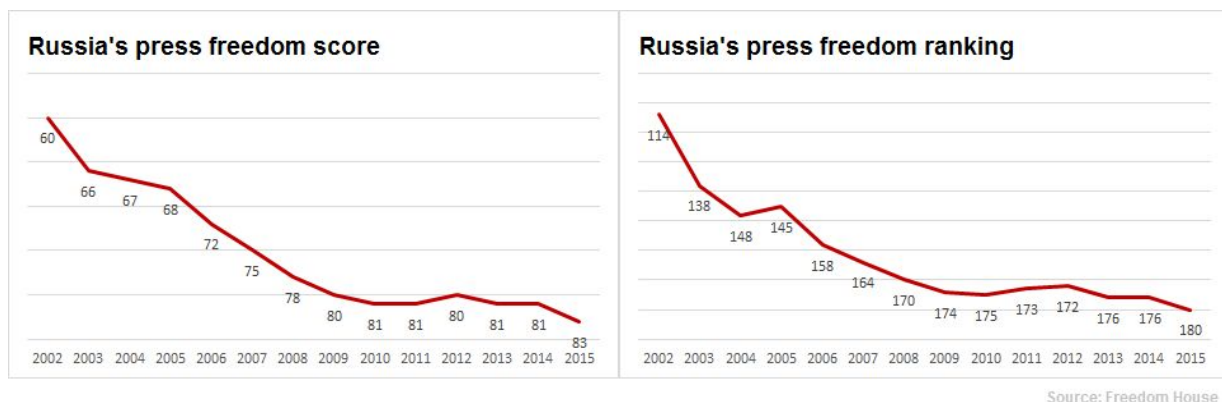
Figure 1. The decline of the Press Freedom in Russia under Vladimir Putin's government captured by Freedom House[4]

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[2] https://freedomhouse.org/report/methodology-freedom-world-2019

[3] https://rsf.org/en/ranking_table Russia's press freedom was ranked 148 out of 180 countries by Reporters without Borders in 2018.

[4] https://freedomhouse.org/report/table-country-scores-fotp-2017 Press Freedom in Russia was ranked 176 out of 201 countries by Freedom House in 2017. Russia's press freedom score is 83 (100 being the worst).

The term *neo-authoritarian media system* was introduced by Jonathan Becker (2004) in the context of Russian media studies[5]. Becker defines the key features that characterise the neo-authoritarian media system:

- State-owned media have limited autonomy and key positions are offered to politically loyal candidates.
- Access to media channels might be open and private ownership is acceptable too, but the content produced is regulated and controlled by other means.
- The state does not practise direct pre-publishing censorship. Instead, critics of the state are silenced by economic pressure and by legal actions against the owners of the media. Journalists also risk getting criminal and civil penalties.
- The state uses resources to control the influential media letting the relatively free small media to create the delusion of the freedom of speech.

For Becker, Russia's neo-authoritarian media system is similar to managed democracy. Russia may have formal democratic institutions, but in fact, these institutions are centrally-controlled and corrupted (Becker 2004: 149–150). In context of this study, it means that even though there are a number of media organizations that may not have direct connection to the state, in one way or another (financially or politically) they are dependent or even controlled by the Kremlin.

Russian journalist, media and political scholar Maria Lipman (2010) points out that the primary goal of newly established president Putin in 2000 was to reclaim the power of the state. This meant, first and foremost, restoring the dominant authority of the nation's leader. Extending state control over mass-media was one of Putin's top priorities. His campaign against privately owned national media groups started within days of his inauguration in May 2000 (Lipman 2010).

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[5] It is important to note that Becker's article was published in 2004 when Putin had been president for one term. Since then, the freedom of press and information have faced even more oppression.

The target of the president was not the journalists but the owners of the media — the businessmen who had built successful media corporations after the collapse of the USSR. Lipman suggests that the campaign was mostly disguised as business litigation against the media tycoons. For example, Vladimir Gusinsky, the owner of Media-Most, once the biggest privately owned media group in Russia, had to flee abroad. His business was taken over by the state-controlled giant Gazprom in the spring of 2001. Eventually, the editorial core of the biggest TV-channel in the group (and one of the top three channels in the whole country) NTV was taken under control and kept firmly in line with the Kremlin's political goals. ORT, the channel controlled by another media magnate Boris Berezovsky, was taken by the state at about the same time as NTV. Berezovsky was forced to ask for political asylum in the UK.

Greg Simons (2010) recalls the speech Putin made in a meeting with journalists in January 2001. The president made it clear that he wanted to see the creation of *"single information space"* taking place in Russia. The intention of this plan was to ensure the security and integrity of Russia. *"Any talk about the unity of the Russian state apparently starts with the formulation of its tasks and goals. A single information space is a priority task. It would be worth noting that the word came first",* said Vladimir Putin to journalists (Simons 2010: 23–24).

In just four years of Putin's presidency, recalls Lipman, the Kremlin had taken full control over all three major federal television channels; Svoboda Slova (Freedom of Speech), the only live political talk show, was closed; several popular hosts were banned from television. Federal channels, whose influence far outweighs all other Russian media, were turned into the Kremlin's political tool (Lipman 2010: 128-131).

Such focused allocation of resources to control only the influential media is typical for a neo-authoritarian media system. Lipman points out that in the Russian reality of non-competitive politics, the Kremlin can afford not to silence every opinion. Moreover, the smaller independent media may even be useful for Putin as they create the delusion of the freedom of speech and

provide a platform for critically minded to let off steam. Maria Lipman elaborates on the aching powerlessness of independent Russian media in her article Constrained or Irrelevant: The Media in Putin's Russia (2005). Once more, this shows that the modern Russian propaganda system is not built around the Soviet-type totalitarian censorship, it rather chooses a lean approach of post-truth. For that reason, the scholarly works like Lipman's are so important — to expose this sophisticated manipulative system.

The next step for Putin, after establishing control over the major federal channels, was to improve Russia's image abroad. In its Foreign Policy concept of 2013, the Russian government declared that it needs to "create instruments for influencing how it is perceived in the world, develop effective means of information influence on public opinion abroad, and counteract information threats to its sovereignty and security" (Russian Foreign Ministry 2013). Ekaterina Skvorovtsova notes that since 2004 the Kremlin has put significant investment into promoting the country's image. Launching the international channel Russia Today in 2005 (rebranded to the more neutral "RT" in 2009) was arguably the largest and most expensive state image projects of all (Skvorovtsova 2016).

There has been controversy about the funding of the channel. Boris Bruk (2013) draws our attention to increasing state funding of RT throughout the years: while the initial amount of funds allocated to RT from the state budget was estimated at $30 million, this number has dramatically increased as the channel expanded. Ten years later, in 2014, RT's budget grew to $360 million (Dorokhina 2014), the channel broadcasts in English, Spanish, and Arabic, and has a global reach of over 630 million people in more than 100 countries. According to the grand plans of RT's founders, the main aim of this media project was to compete with prominent international channels, such as CNN International and BBC World, and provide "alternative perspectives on current affairs" (RT 2019).

Another remarkable project of state media expansion in pursuit of "single informational space" happened in 2013 when Vladimir Putin signed a Presidential Decree "On measures to improve the efficiency of state media" (Kremlin 2013). This decree declared the creation of a new media enterprise called Rossiya Segodnya [Russia Today] funded and operated by the Russian government. According to the executive director Dmitry Kiselyov, the main goal of Rossiya Segondya was "to restore fair treatment of Russia as an important country with good intentions" (Vesti.ru 2013), which strongly resembles the government's foreign policy manifesto.

Two key-propagandists were appointed to be in charge of the organization — Dmitry Kiselev as an executive director and Margarita Simonyan was appointed editor-in-chief while still being RT's news channel editor-in-chief concurrently. Multiple journalistic and academic publications (e.g. Dougherty 2014; Jaitner & Mattsson 2015; Hutching and Szostek 2016) have reported on Kiselev's propagandistic activity. Even though my study does not focus on individual journalists, the likes of Kiselev and Simonyan as major players of the state's propaganda are worthy of mention here.

The official statement of the decree suggests that the government's motivation for creating Rossiya Segodnya was purely economical. However, the journalists were alarmed about its political nature and the further tightening of state control in the, already heavily regulated, media sector (Badanin 2013). Overall, more than $1 billion were allocated from the Russian state budget to finance the media in 2014 (Dorokhina 2014). Considering the size and resources of a country like Russia, this number may seem quite acceptable, but the heavy-handed suppression of press freedom, the framing of the news media narratives in-line with the Kremlin's agenda, and complete powerlessness of independent media prove that the Russian government invests not just in the state's soft power, but in information warfare. The strong expression *information warfare*[6] is used here on purpose. In 19 years of Putin's reign, the role of mass (and later also

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[6] Information warfare, defined by Glenn (1989), is a concept involving the battlespace use and management of information and communication technology (ICT) in pursuit of a competitive advantage over an opponent. Information warfare is the manipulation of information trusted by a target without the target's awareness so that the

social) media for the Kremlin has evolved from a tool to secure the next reelection to, as Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu stated, *"yet another type of weapons, yet another component of the armed forces"* (Interfax 2015).

The fact that Russia is actively in the state of global information warfare has become more evident for the wide audience in light of recent investigations regarding Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. elections and the Brexit referendum in the UK. These two major cases showed the massive power of social media as a tool of manipulation and persuasion as well as total negligence of the social media platforms to counter such destructive meddling and incompetence of their users to recognise it.

Facebook confirmed that 3,000 ads linked to 470 accounts or pages were purchased by groups linked to the Russian state during the 2016 U.S. elections (Stamos, 2017). Twitter also identified 50,258 Russian-linked automated accounts that were spreading disinformation and manipulation during the presidential campaign of 2016 in the United States (Twitter Public Policy 2018). Russian information warfare had started way before 2016, but the Brexit and the U.S. election cases revealed the scale of it showing that the billions of US dollars officially allocated on "media support" are just the tip of the propaganda iceberg (e.g., Persily 2018; Narayanan et al. 2017).

While this study does not explicitly focus on social media manipulations, this powerful tool in Russian propaganda arsenal has to be addressed. This topic certainly requires more research. Journalists are naturally at the frontline of the current investigation (e.g. Lipman 2010; Garmazhapova 2013; Aro 2015). This role, however, takes their safety at risk. Finnish journalist Jessikka Aro started to investigate the activity of paid Russian internet trolls on Finnish public debate in 2014 (Aro 2014). Aro identifies "trolls" as *"part of the Kremlin's propaganda system*

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target will make decisions against their interest but in the interest of the one conducting information warfare. As a result, it is not clear when information warfare begins, ends, and how strong or destructive it is.

and technique of information warfare, these recruited commentators distribute the messages of Russia's political leaders online" (Aro 2016: 122). Shortly after Aro opened her investigation, she became the target of disinformation campaigns, online threats and open-source monitoring. "The goal is to discredit me, make my work seem unreliable and ultimately stop me from disclosing facts about social media propagandists," reflects Aro (2016: 122). Similar public discredit and disinformation campaigns are often practiced in Russian information warfare against unfavourable politicians, journalists and others who dare to criticize the Kremlin (Aro 2016).

2.2 The geopolitical context of Russia-Ukraine conflict

Ukraine has always been within Russia's sphere of influence. Diplomat and political scientist Zbigniew Brzeziński said, "it cannot be stressed enough that without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be an empire, but with Ukraine suborned and then subordinated, Russia automatically becomes an empire" (Brzezinski 2013: 95). The format of this research does not allow to fit years of post-imperial tension between the two states. The main focus of this subchapter is the recent period between 2013 and 2014, highlighting the milestones of Russian aggression in Crimea and the Eastern Ukraine, and the events that had led to it.

To be able to present the sequence of the events in a clear and objective way, the information will be delivered in a format of a timeline based on media chronicles from BBC (2014) and Reuters (2014). The Center for Strategic & International Studies (2018) also provides a more thorough interactive record of the crisis in Ukraine covering years 2013 – 2018.

February 2010

A pro-Russian candidate, Viktor Yanukovych, is declared the winner in a presidential election judged free and fair by observers.

November 2013

President Yanukovych's cabinet suspends preparations for the EU Trade Deal, an agreement on closer trade ties with the EU. Instead, seeking closer cooperation with Russia. 100,000 people rally in Kiev against rejecting the EU Deal.

November 30: Riot police tries to break up the Kiev demonstration by force. Protest turns against Yanukovych and his government.

December 2013

Early December: Protesters occupy Kyiv city hall and turn Independence Square into a protest tent city. Rally grows from 350,000 to some 800,000 in Kyiv while Viktor Yanukovych holds previously unannounced talks in Sochi with Vladimir Putin on "strategic partnership".

December 17: Yanukovych and Putin meet for the second time since the crisis began. Putin offers Yanukovych an economic lifeline by agreeing to buy $15 billion of Ukrainian debt and to cut by a third the price of Russian gas supplies to Ukraine.

January 2014

January 16-23: Parliament passes restrictive anti-protest laws. Thousands rally in Kyiv against the protest ban, some clashing with riot police. Three people die during protests and the EU threatens action over poor handling of the crisis. Talks between opposition and Yanukovich fail. Protesters begin storming regional government offices in western Ukraine.

January 28-29: Prime Minister Mykola Azarov resigns. Parliament revokes the anti-protest law and passes the amnesty bill but the opposition rejects conditions.

February 2014

February 14-16: All 234 protesters arrested since December are released. Demonstrators leave Kyiv city hall, occupied since 1 December 2013, along with other public buildings in regions.

February 17: Russia boosts Yanukovych with $2 billion cash injection for Ukraine.

February 18: For an undefined reason, clashes between police and protesters erupt in the worst violence since the start of the Maidan demonstrations. 18 people killed.

February 20: Kyiv witnesses its worst day of violence since the Second World War. At least 88 people are killed in 48 hours. Numerous videos posted online show uniformed snipers firing at protesters holding wooden shields.

February 22: President Yanukovych disappears. Protesters take control of presidential administration buildings. Parliament votes to remove the president from power with elections set for 25 May. Yanukovych appears on TV to denounce the "coup". His arch-rival Yulia Tymoshenko is freed from jail.

February 23-26: Ukraine names ministers for new government. An arrest warrant is issued for Viktor Yanukovych. The Berkut police unit, blamed for deaths of protesters, is disbanded. Russia puts 150,000 troops on high alert. Washington warns Moscow against military intervention.

February 27-28: Armed men seize Crimea parliament, raise Russian flag. Unidentified gunmen in combat uniforms appear outside Crimea's main airports, described by Ukrainian minister as "an invasion by Moscow's forces". Ousted Yanukovych appears in Russia after a week on the run.

March 2014

March 1: Russia's parliament approves President Putin's request to invade Ukraine "to protect Russian interests". Ukraine puts troops on high alert. White House warns Russia of economic and political isolation.

March 6: Pro-Russian government in Crimean parliament votes to join Russia and sets referendum for March 16, escalating the crisis. U.S. President Barack Obama says the referendum would violate international law and orders sanctions on those responsible for Moscow's military intervention in Ukraine.

March 16: Crimea's referendum on joining Russia is backed by 97% of voters, organizers say. Vote condemned by Kyiv and West as a sham.

March 18: Vladimir Putin signs a bill to absorb Crimea into the Russian Federation, which finalised the annexation of Crimean Peninsula.

April 2014

April 7: Pro-Russian protesters occupy government buildings in the east Ukrainian cities of Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv, and call for a referendum following the Crimea scenario. Ukrainian authorities regain control of Kharkiv government buildings the next day.

April 15: Ukraine's acting President, Olexander Turchynov, announces the start of an "anti-terrorist operation" against pro-Russian separatists.

May 2014

May 2: Clashes in the Black Sea city of Odesa leave 42 people dead, most of them pro-Russian activists that got trapped in a burning building.

May 11: Pro-Russian separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk declare independence after unrecognised referendums.

May 25: Ukraine elects Petro Poroshenko as president in an election not held in occupied territories of Eastern Ukraine.

June 2014

June 14: Pro-Russia separatists shoot down a military plane in the east. 49 people dead.

June 25: Russia's parliament cancels the resolution authorising the use of the Russian military in Ukraine.

June 27: The EU signs an association agreement with Ukraine.

July - September 2014

July 17: Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 from Amsterdam is shot down near the village of Grabove in Eastern Ukraine killing all 283 passengers and 15 crewmembers on board. The Dutch Safety Board and the Dutch-led joint investigation team concluded that the plane was downed by a Russian Buk surface-to-air missile launched from pro-Russian separatist-controlled territory.

August 7 – September 2: The Battle of Ilovaisk. After entering the city of Ilovaisk, the Ukrainian Armed Forces got encircled by overwhelming Russian military forces that crossed the border, joining the pro-Russian separatists. After days of keeping the Ukrainian soldiers

besieged, Vladimir Putin promised a humanitarian corridor, which would allow the trapped soldiers to leave Ilovaisk. Russian troops attacked the retrieving column, which led to 366 Ukrainian soldiers killed and 429 wounded.

August 26: Ukraine's security service releases videos of Russian paratroopers captured in eastern Ukraine as an evidence of Russian military presence in the conflict. They are later exchanged for Ukrainian soldiers.

September 5: Ukraine, Russia and pro-Russian separatists sign a ceasefire protocol in Minsk. It failed to stop fighting in Donbas, which led to another summit in Minsk on 11 February 2015. So-called Minsk II addendum was developed and signed by the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, France, and Germany. As reported by Ukrainian news agency UNIAN (2018), not a single provision of the Minsk deal has been 100% implemented.

Figure 2. The Ukraine Crisis Timeline

As of May 2019, the conflict in Eastern Ukraine is still unsettled. According to the UN Monitoring Mission on Human Rights (OHCHR 2019: 6), from 14 April 2014 to 15 February 2019, some 12,800 to 13,000 people were killed in the war in Donbas, of which at least 3,321 were civilians. More than a hundred political prisoners and prisoners of war are illegally detained in Russia (Coynash 2019).

Russian neo-authoritarian media system and its impact on the conflict between Russia and Ukraine have been researched from various angles. For example, Makhortykh and Sydorova (2017) address visual framing in social media during the conflict in Donbas. Hutching and Szostek (2016) provide an overview of Russian media narratives regarding the conflict, and Aro (2014; 2015; 2016) with her series of investigations tackles the problems of disinformation and curated trolling as tools of informational warfare. All of these studies contribute to an important mission of analyzing and exposing the means of Russian propaganda. However, the discourse on this theme is significantly lacking a rhetorical angle on enemy creation in Russian online media. This research was developed to address this gap in the literature.

3 Theoretical Framework

3.1 Framing Theory

To be able to unfold the complexity of language manipulations in mass media, we need to break down the communication chain and take a closer look at its components. In this chapter, the literature on enemy images and language manipulation techniques will be reviewed. In the context of media discourse and agenda setting, framing and propaganda devices will also be examined in more detail.

Having reviewed the previous studies, by the end of this chapter, the reader should have a better understanding of the following topics:

- Deconstruction of the mass media discourse process.
- The process model of framing: how does framing work in news media?
- Framing and propaganda devices and their impact on masses.
- What can be defined as an enemy image and how can it be framed into mass media discourse?

Marais and Linström (2012) hold the view that the agenda-setting theory and the framing theory are the two main theories of media effects. McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (1997) propose the term second-level agenda-setting implying that framing is, in fact, an extension of agenda-setting. Jasperson et al. (1998: 206) elaborate, clarifying that the traditional agenda-setting does not explicitly focus on the implications of coverage within an issue while the framing *"provides a means of describing the power of communication to direct individual cognitions towards a prescribed interpretation of a situation or object"* (Jasperson et al. 1998: 206).

In this research, the framing theory will be used as a foundation for media analysis. This will enable a thorough examination of the media discourse with a focus on the process of framing manipulative messages, language used for that and possible effects on the audience.

Framing theory is deeply rooted in Erving Goffman's (1974) work Frame Analysis: An essay on the organization of experience. Goffman used the idea of frames to label "schemata of interpretation" that allow people "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" occurrences or events (Goffman 1974: 21). Today, as a number of studies apply this approach (e.g., Entman, 1993; Scheufele, 1999; D'Angelo 2002; Kuypers 2010; Marais and Linström, 2012), framing has evolved into a popular theory in media analysis. According to Entman (1993), frame analysis serves four main purposes within the context of media research: to define problems, to diagnose a course, to make value judgments, and to suggest remedies (Entman 1993: 52).

There is no generally accepted definition of framing but the existing ones are quite similar. Gaye Tuchman, in her book Making news: A study in the construction of reality (1978: 1) uses the metaphor of a window to explain frames in news media:

"News is a window on the world, and through its frame, Americans learn of themselves and others, of their institutions, leaders, and lifestyles, and those of other nations and other peoples. The news aims to tell us what we want to know, need to know, and should know. But, like any frame that delineates a world, a news frame may be problematic. The view through a window depends upon whether the window is large or small, has many panes or few, whether the glass is opaque or clear, whether the window faces a street or a backyard."

Fifteen years before that, Cohen (1963: 13) published a dictum in which he states that press *"may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling readers what to think about."* This point of view perfectly describes framing

as a persuasive tool used in public communication to make striking points that would direct the audience to a desired frame of mind.

In his definition of framing, Qing (2000: 666) brings up the role of the journalist's language in building frames:

"News is a representation of the world mediated via the journalist. Like every discourse, it constructively patterns that of which it speaks. Differences in expression carry ideological distinctions and thus differences in representation. The content of news stories, therefore, represents ideas, beliefs, values, theories, and ideology. The major role of news language as discourse is to supply the categories imposed by the journalist on the event itself."

The term frame building, used above, is borrowed from Cobb and Elder's (1972) agenda-setting study. Similar to their model of agenda building, the key question here is what kinds of organizational or structural factors of the media system, is there any pressure from the owners or a state, or which individual features of journalists can impact the framing of news discourse (Figure 3).

In his work Framing as a Theory of Media Effects, Dietram A. Scheufele (1999) points out the lack of a commonly shared theoretical model underlying framing research and systematizes the fragmented approaches into a process model of framing research (Figure 3). It allows researchers to characterize framing as a continuous process where outcomes of specific processes serve as inputs for subsequent processes.
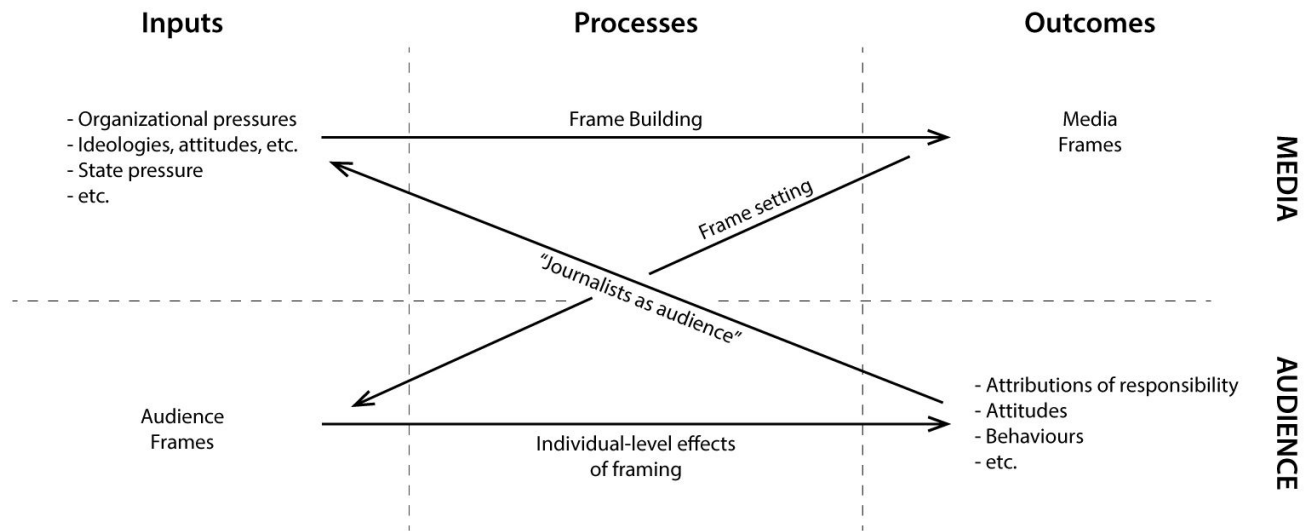
Figure 3. A process model of framing research (Scheufele, 1999: 115)

Scheufele's model of framing breaks down the framing process into two levels: *media frames* and *individual or audience frames* that are shaping and influencing each other. According to Gamson and Modigliani (1987), media frames are *"a central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events… The frame suggests what the controversy is about, the essence of the issue"* (p. 143). Entman (1993) provides a more thorough definition of media frames emphasising *selection* and *salience* which makes it possible to differentiate framing as a media effect from approaches like *agenda setting* or *gatekeeping*. *"To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation"* (Entman 1993: 52). An example of a media frame could be an article or a report that promotes a certain agenda, or it could be a quote cited out of context to show the author in a bad light, etc. Through media frames, journalists can manipulate the audience's perception of the events and people featured in the news.

Previous studies have indicated at least five factors that may affect how journalists frame a certain topic: social norms and values, ideological or political orientations of journalists, organizational pressures and constraints, pressures of interest groups and journalistic routines (e.g., Tuchman, 1978; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). In his model of framing (Figure 3), Scheufele places these factors into the *Inputs* of media frames.

Audience frames (Figure 3). For Entman (1993), individual frames represent *"mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals' processing of information"* (p. 53). Scheufele (1999) points out that often researchers (e.g. Iyengar 1991) that examine the individual-level outcomes of framing assume a direct link between media frames and individual-level outcomes, skipping the effect of audience frames. This means that media frames do not create attitudes and behaviors by default — first, they translate into audience frames that are different for each individual. The audience frame is layered on top of existing beliefs, thus adding more color to the individual palette of attitudes.

On media-level of framing, this research examines the language of media frames and linking the manipulations to propaganda inputs; on the individual-level of framing, it explores enemy images as audience frames and frame setting as a process of enmity creation.

3.2 Framing and Propaganda Devices

When it comes to identifying frames in a media narrative, there is no unified set of framing devices. Scholars that study framing devices generally operate within a common range of meanings while applying different approaches. For instance, Marias and Linström (2012) identify two groups of framing devices based on their application: *rhetorical devices* and

technical devices. Alternatively, Pan and Kosicki (1993: 59-61) distinguish framing devices based on four *structural dimensions*:

- *Syntactic structures* refer to the patterns in the arrangement of words or phrases. Such patterns can claim empirical validity by quoting experts, link certain points of view to authority as well as marginalize certain points of view linking it to a social deviant;
- *Script structures* refer to the fact that the news narrative is based on storytelling. Pan and Kosicki compare a reporter writing a news story to a storyteller or a novelist writing a fictional story. As a result, news reports often appear to be excessively fragmented, personalized and dramatized;
- *Thematic structures* can be often identified in so-called issue stories and usually contain certain hypothesis-testing features, e.g. events are cited, sources are quoted, and propositions are pronounced; all function as logical support for the hypothesis which journalist is trying to prove and thus impose a certain opinion on the audience;
- *Rhetorical structures* describe the stylistic choices made by journalists in relation to their intended effects. All the rhetorical framing devices mentioned above — metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions — belong to this category.

Regardless of taxonomy, all the devices mentioned above essentially involve selection and salience. Entman (1993: 52) emphasizes that frames can be manifested by both the *presence* or *absence* of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments.

Building frames does not necessarily create manipulation. As Scheufele (1999: 115) points out, journalists actively use frame building simply to structure and simplify large amounts of information. Framing devices are a toolset in the journalist's arsenal and it is up to him or her how these tools will be used. Therefore, in the context of this study, it is important to get acquainted not only with the framing devices but also with the propaganda devices in media discourse.

Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell (2018:151) point out that after World War II, researchers tended to avoid using the term "propaganda" when referring to their subject of study and replaced it with various constructs of "persuasion". Since this study examines the media manipulations in the context of an armed conflict, the term "propaganda" and the "propaganda devices" as a phenomena are relevant and appropriate for this research. In this study I define propaganda devices as the rhetorical tools of propaganda. When identified in the media text, these devices may indicate that the given material is a product of propaganda.

The construct of the seven propaganda devices, introduced by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA) in 1937, has been claimed to be "the most ubiquitous and long-lasting among the many frameworks for propaganda criticism" (Sproule 2001: 135). When detected in a media text, the propaganda devices can indicate that the input of a certain media frame is state propaganda. The Seven propaganda devices identified by IPA (Miller 1937) are the following:

- *Name calling* is a labelling technique. It attaches a bad label to certain ideas, individuals or groups with the purpose of making the audience reject or condemn them without examining the evidence. Examples of such stigmatizing names are "fascist," "radical," or "terrorist".
- *Glittering generalities* is the opposite of name calling. This device associates ideas or people with virtue words such as "truth, freedom, patriot, progress, etc." As with name calling, the effect on the audience is that people form a thoughtless judgment under the influence of an emotional impression.
- The *Transfer* device may carry both positive and negative connotations. It involves associating an event, idea or person with something or someone respected and admired (Mother Teresa, Gandhi, etc.) or someone perceived as evil (Nazis, Kim Jong-un, etc.). Using the audience's reverence for national or religious symbolism is typical for this form of manipulation.
- The *Testimonial* device uses someone with social value (respectable or hated) to endorse an idea or person thus linking them and creating a certain trust or association.

- With the *Plain folks*' technique, the persuaders represent themselves as "just plain folks", representatives of the people (versus the elite or versus the enemy), and hence building trust to the persuaders' ideas.
- *Card stacking* is the device of selective omission. Similarly to Entman's (1993) definition of framing that is driven by selection and salience, the card stacking device uses overemphasis and underemphasis to put a calculated spin on certain ideas or events. Persuader's narrative and structural distortions throw up a smokescreen which makes the audience forget disturbing information and embrace half-truths.
- The *Bandwagon* technique is based on the power of numbers. Here, propagandists use the peer-pressure to impose a certain opinion and frame it as truth or a fact. Focus often is on appealing to ties of nation, religion, race, region, sex, class or other groups.

Even though the bulletin with seven propaganda devices was published in the late 1930s, these techniques are still applicable, widely used in media and studied by modern scholars (e.g. Conway et al. 2007; Hobbs and Mcgee 2008; Cozma 2015). While constantly evolving technology is transforming the channels and speed of communication, the core tools of persuasion, identified by the IPA, remain relevant.

3.3 Enemy Images in Mass Media

Both the framing and propaganda devices can serve various purposes of persuasion and influence, but this study will focus on one goal of propaganda which is the creation of *enemy images* to justify potential military aggression.

Several scholars (e.g., Steuter & Wills 2009; Vuorinen 2012) hold the view that the creation of an enemy, or *the Other,* requires *the Self* to be in place. This means that the inclusion of some

into a certain group or community (e.g. religious, national or political groups), necessarily leads to the exclusion of others.

The idea of otherness is based on Freudian *projection*, the social-psychological concept coined by Sigmund Freud. Projection filters what is considered evil, weak or otherwise faulty from the Self by attaching these features to another person or group in order to mentally protect the Self. Edward Said (1978) extrapolates this phenomenon to a global scale in his remarkable work *Orientalism*. For Said, the Western colonial and imperial projects would not be possible without the projection of otherness onto the East as a counter-image of the West.

In her work on war propaganda, Marja Vuorinen (2012) highlights the distinction between otherness and enmity, two identity-reversing concepts of exclusion. She points out that every enemy is the Other but not all others may necessarily be enemies. The creation of an enemy always starts with the creation of the Other. A similar connection can be seen between enemy images and stereotypes. For Vuorinen, enemy images are stereotypes in the most negative sense of the word but not all stereotypes may necessarily be labelled as enemy images.

Vuorinen (2012) claims that the enemy image is basically an embodiment of threat: "It represents imminence of unwanted acts towards the Self and motivates a need to remain vigilant, to plan defence or even to actively engage in a pre-emptive first attack" (Vuorinen 2012: 3). Debra Merskin argues that the construction of enemy images is vital for justifying an unjust war and is necessary if "power elites want to move military and diplomatic policies forward without full disclosure but with maximum public support" (Merskin 2005, 121).

Louis Oppenheimer (2006) points out that societies with limited access to free information and open political discussions tend to have "strong hostile and antagonistic attitudes toward others"

(p. 275). He argues that stereotypes and enemy images can be perceived as personal beliefs as well as tools influenced by certain groups to achieve particular objectives. This point of view assumes that enemy images are the individual-level outcomes of framing (Figure 3). Scheufele (1999) warns that such omission of the audience frames, when examining the texts, is quite common in communication studies and may distort the results.

When applied to Scheufele's model of framing (Figure 3), in the context of news media discourse, the concept of enemy images falls into the category of Audience Frames. Influenced by the state, the owners or journalist's political views, and so on (Media Level Input), a certain message gets built and framed into the news material (Frame Building), thus creating Media Frames (Media Outcome). If a frame can be identified as the Propaganda Device, it most certainly indicates that the material is serving particular interests (state's or owners') by influencing the audience. Such influence creates or adjusts already existing (Frame Setting) Audience Frame (Audience Input) or in context of this study also — an enemy image. If the Frame Setting relies heavily on triggering stereotypes, mocking, or excluding particular groups or individuals, creating a hostile perception of a particular group or individual, it may create or reinforce an Enemy Image. This study aims to identify the dominant media frames in the analyzed articles, to examine what devices are used to build those frames, and what messages are they setting in order to create enemy images as audience inputs.

4 Research Design

4.1 Rhetorical framing analysis

In the last 25 years, framing analysis has evolved from a fractured paradigm (Entman 1993) to a more robust yet flexible framework (D'Angelo & Kuypers 2010), which leans towards the quantitative orientation (Kuypers 2010: 286). Framing research is predominantly derived from a social scientific orientation. Grounded in quantitative assumptions, framing analysis, traditionally, has been conducted by coding and measuring predefined frames. In this thesis, I am turning to a less commonly used qualitative approach by investigating the framing of enemy images in Russian online media from a rhetorical angle.

As Reese (2007: 10) explains the value of the qualitative approach to framing analysis, it "helps resist the reductionistic urge to sort media texts and discourse into containers and count their size or frequency." Wood (2004: 69) argues that "not all communication can be measured quantitatively, and quantitative data cannot provide substantial insight into the texture and meaning of experiences." Wood (ibid.) elaborates that "qualitative methods are valuable when we wish not to count or measure phenomena but to understand the character of experience, particularly how people perceive and make sense of their communication experience. This involves interpreting meanings and other unobservable dimensions of communication".

I have used Jim Kuypers' study Framing Analysis from a Rhetorical Perspective (2010) as a guideline for building the methodology for this study. In his research, Kuypers provides an overview of how to approach framing analysis from a qualitative (i.e. a rhetorical) angle. The rhetorical analysis was aligned with this particular study in terms of the purpose of research, the project design and the type of knowledge to be generated, therefore I chose to embrace this orientation.

The rhetorical approach of framing analysis falls within the critical paradigm described by D'Angelo (2002) in his exploration of news framing metatheory. According to Denton and Kuypers (2008), when critical scholars analyze and interpret utterances, they go beyond quantitative assumptions and can allow themselves to take a subjective, in-depth look at framing devices. A scholar operating from within the critical paradigm examines how news frames affect the political consciousness of audiences. This is the aim of this study as well.

Jim Kuypers points out that since a rhetorical act is a multidimensional, complex, and nuanced event, it requires critical scholars to be able to use different perspectives. This allows a researcher to see different aspects of the rhetorical act. *"For instance, a perspective grounded in the theory of narrative will orient the critic to narrative elements; a perspective grounded in the theory of framing will orient the critic to framing elements"* (Kuypers 2009: 297).

Kuypers (ibid: 297) reminds scholars to be cautious when applying perspectives to their analysis regardless of which one they choose. Perspectives are to help a researcher, not to direct the criticism. A critic operating from a rhetorical perspective would be asking: How do language choices invite the audience to understand and interpret a particular issue or event? Adding a layer of context to this question allows me to formulate the first **research question** of this study:

RQ 1: How do language choices in analyzed Russian media invite the audience to perceive Ukraine and Ukrainians?

To answer this question, I have analyzed media frames which Scheufele in his model of framing (Figure 3) identify as the outcome of *frame building* and the foundation of *frame setting*. There is a direct link of *frame setting* between media frames and audience perception and I address this link with my first research question.
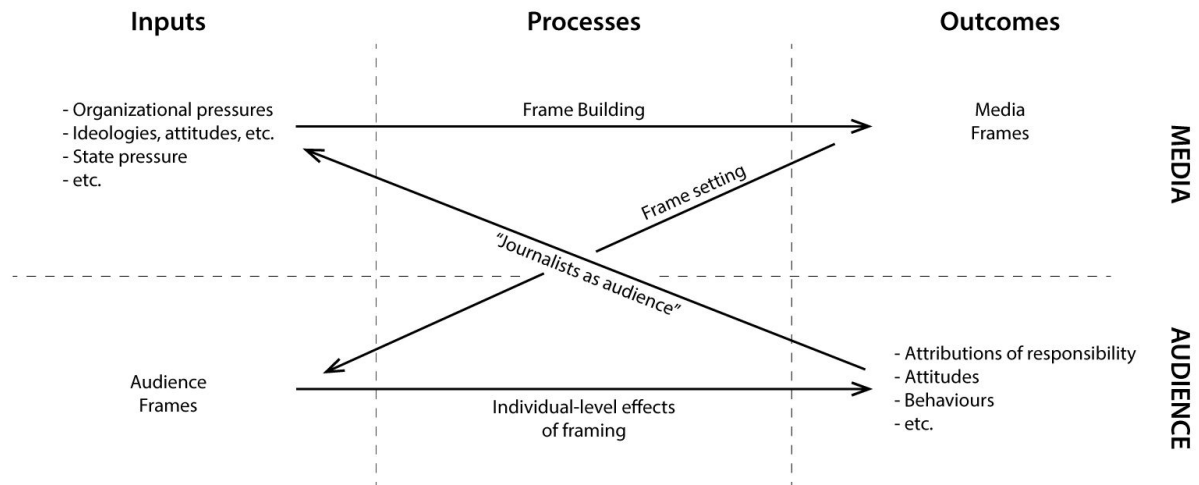
Figure 3. A process model of framing research (Scheufele, 1999: 115)

The second key-link of the framing process in focus of this research is *frame building*. It leads us from media frames to their inputs: ideologies, organizational or state pressures that influence journalists. When analyzing the language choices in Russian media, not only do I aim to understand how these choices influence the audience, I also want to understand what made the journalists make those particular choices. I want to detect political and ideological influences in media activity, and, in order to do that, I have analyzed the articles published before the Euromaidan revolution, when the pro-Russian president Yanukovych was in charge, and after the annexation of Crimea and the conflict's breakout in Donbas. Furthermore, if the analyzed frames have been identified as the *Propaganda Devices* it indicates that the material is serving certain interests (state's or owners') and is a product of propaganda.

RQ 2: How does the framing of stories about Ukraine in the analyzed Russian media change after the Euromaidan revolution?

RQ 3: Can the analyzed articles be recognized as a product of propaganda?

4.2 Data collection

In the material selection process, I was following the guidelines of Marais and Linström (2012), Patton (2002), and Kuypers (2010). The focus medium of the study is online media. Media selection was based on three main conditions: content availability, state influence, and size. The first condition was a technical one implying that selected media should have an archive of materials in place covering the period of 2013-2014. The size and state influence conditions were necessary to qualify the analyzed publications as a product of propaganda. It means that the media organization should have national or transnational coverage and has to be funded by the Russian government.

Taking these conditions into account, two media organizations were selected: international network RT and the information agency Rossiya Segodnia which includes subsidiaries RIA Novosti and Sputnik. Even though RT and Rossiya Segodnia proclaim that they are in no-way related organizations, not only do they share one name but also the same editor-in-chief — Margarita Simonyan. This is another example of the Kremlin's "single information space" program: the same funding source, same management, same mission, but different target audience.

To be able to address the RQ 2 and to compare how the framing changes with time, two timeframes were selected: from May to August of 2013, when the pro-Russian president Yanukovych was governing in Ukraine; and from May to August of 2014, after the Russian annexation of Crimea and the breakout of the armed conflict in Donbas region.

The timeframes allowed me to narrow down the initial data pool and break it down into two groups. After that, purposeful intensity sampling was applied to each group to identify the

"information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon intensely, but not extremely" (Patton 2002: 243).

The preliminary query to retrieve the articles was conducted under the search terms of "Украина" (Ukraine, in Russian); "Украина армия" (Ukraine army); "Украина войска" (Ukraine military); "Украина президент" (Ukraine president). The contrast in the number of articles published during the selected timeframes was quite extraordinary (Table 1). For example, during the whole analyzed period of *three months* in 2013, RT has published 67 articles with the keyword "Ukraine" in them. In 2014, in just *three days,* RT has produced 259 articles with the same keyword. Overall, in the analyzed period of 2014, Rossiya Segodnya has produced nearly 10 times more articles and RT about x100 more articles with the keyword "Ukraine" compared to the same period in 2013 (Table 1).

Table 1. Preliminary collection of the materials

Media Channel	Timeframe	Number of results for search term "Ukraine"	Number of results for search term "Ukraine army"	Number of results for search term "Ukraine military"	Number of results for search term "Ukraine president"
Rossiya Segodnya (RIA & Sputnik)	01.05 - 31.07.2013	1,483	93	67	411
RT	01.05 - 31.07.2013	67	4	3	13
Rossiya Segodnya (RIA & Sputnik)	01.05 - 31.07.2014	14,795	2,339	1,066	5,958
RT	01.05 - 31.07.2014	6,264	915	431	1,677

From the preliminary data pool, I scanned 200 publications to be able to get the needed material for further analysis. 30 information-rich materials based on the topic, size and information delivery were then selected for inductive frame search within the dominant themes in news narratives. As a result, 16 publications (8 per timeframe) were identified for in-depth rhetorical frame analysis. In this process, I was following Alozie's (2005: 66) approach to identify news frames:

- Step1: General multiple reading of the articles while taking descriptive notes about the content;
- Step 2: A second reading to identify certain recurring themes, frames, values and topic categories;
- Step 3: In-depth interpretation of the articles.

In the next chapter, I present the key findings of the in-depth analysis and systematize the results providing examples from the articles. Since the articles are originally in Russian, I also provide my own translation into English proofread by a native speaker.

Table 2. Analyzed materials — Final data pool

Article Reference Number and Media Channel	Date	Title (original)	Title (English translation)	Source
RT 13-1	22.06.2013	В ночь на 22 июня в странах бывшего СССР зажгли «свечи памяти»	On the night of June 22, "candles of memory" were lit in the countries of the former USSR	https://russian.rt.com/article/11124
RT 13-2	27.07.2013	Владимир Путин: Украинская экономика, объединившись с российской, получит большие конкурентные преимущества	Vladimir Putin: The Ukrainian economy, combined with the Russian, will receive great competitive advantages	https://russian.rt.com/article/13103

RT 13-3	28.07.2013	Владимир Путин поздравил российских и украинских моряков	Vladimir Putin congratulated Russian and Ukrainian sailors	https://russian.rt.com/article/13132
Rossiya Segodnia 13-4	08.05.2013	Генеральная репетиция парада войск Украины и РФ прошла в Севастополе	The dress rehearsal of the military parade of Ukraine and the Russian Federation took place in Sevastopol	https://ria.ru/20130508/936423346.html
Rossiya Segodnia 13-5	29.05.2013	Меморандум об участии Украины в ТС подпишут в Минске 31 мая	Memorandum on Ukraine's participation in the Customs Union will be signed in Minsk on May 31	https://ria.ru/20130529/940172922.html
Rossiya Segodnia 13-6	09.05.2013	День Победы на Украине: праздник со слезами на глазах	Victory Day in Ukraine: a holiday with tears in the eyes	https://ria.ru/20130509/936567575.html
Rossiya Segodnia 13-7	27.07.2013	БТР утонул во время репетиции ко Дню флота Украины в Севастополе	BTR drowned during a rehearsal for the Day of the Fleet of Ukraine in Sevastopol	https://ria.ru/20130727/952443800.html
Rossiya Segodnia 13-8	27.07.2013	Путин поблагодарил Януковича за встречу на торжествах в Киеве	Putin thanked Yanukovych for meeting at the celebrations in Kyiv	https://ria.ru/20130727/952470376.html
RT 14-1	15.05.2014	Народный губернатор ДНР Губарев предъявил новый ультиматум киевским властям	People's Governor of the DPR Gubarev presented a new ultimatum to the Kyiv authorities	https://russian.rt.com/article/32106
RT 14-2	01.07.2014	Украинские силовики возобновили активную фазу карательной операции на востоке страны	Ukrainian forces resumed the active phase of the punitive operation in the east of the country	https://russian.rt.com/article/38880
RT 14-3	13.07.2014	Штурм украинскими силовиками Мариуполя — первые фото и видео с места событий	The assault of Mariupol by the Ukrainian force officers - the first photos and videos from the scene	https://russian.rt.com/article/36280
Rossiya Segodnia 14-4	19.06.2014	Карательное миротворчество. Президент Украины объявил войну	Punitive peacekeeping. President of Ukraine declared war	https://radiosputnik.ria.ru/20140619/1012675160.html

Rossiya Segodnia 14-5	14.07.2014	"Внутренняя война" на Украине - Петр Порошенко как украинский Пиночет	"Internal War" on [in] Ukraine - Petro Poroshenko as Ukrainian Pinochet	https://ria.ru/20140714/1015823162.html
Rossiya Segodnia 14-6	17.07.2014	Обама Бен Ладен. США ударили Россию в самый "сектор"	Obama Bin Laden. The USA hit Russia right in the "sector"	https://radiosputnik.ria.ru/20140717/1016398563.html
Rossiya Segodnia 14-7	18.07.2014	Бесполезная зона. Украина официально стала "черной дырой"	Useless zone. Ukraine has officially become a "black hole"	https://radiosputnik.ria.ru/20140718/1016595884.html
Rossiya Segodnia 14-8	31.07.2014	Жители Марьинки: силовики использовали снаряды, похожие на фосфорные	Residents of Maryinka: force officers used phosphorus-like shells	https://ria.ru/20140731/1018365593.html

5 Results: Dominant Frames and Propaganda Devices

To be able to address the research questions fully and thoroughly, this chapter is broken down into five subchapters each focusing on one or more dominant frames that were inductively identified within this research. Dominant and secondary frames unfold a strategic level of framing and enmity setting — *what ideas are framed in the analyzed articles and why*, and how it changes over time. Within each subchapter, I also provide examples of framing and propaganda devices that are forming a particular frame. The devices illustrate the tactical level of framing meaning *what messages transmit the ideas and how.* As was expected, most frames, framing and propaganda devices were identified in the second timeframe of the study — in 2014, after the annexation of Crimea and the breakout of armed conflict in Donbas. The publications from 2013 were much more neutral compared to the samples from 2014. I expand more on the comparison of the two timeframes in the Discussion.

5.1 Unity of the two nations

The "Unity of the two nations" (Russia and Ukraine) frame is present in most of the analyzed articles of the 2013 period (6 out of 8 articles) as a dominant or a secondary frame. By contrast, in the materials from 2014, this frame was not present at all.

The "unity of the two nations" is the only positive frame found in this analysis. Even though this frame has a positive connotation, it revolves around the idea of self and otherness. This frame portrays Ukraine and Russia as allies with a common heritage while putting them against the "other" on many levels: On a historical level, Ukraine and Russia are framed as the heirs of the Soviet Union (self) that heroically defeated Nazi Germany (other) in World War II, or as they call it in Russia, The Great Patriotic War. On an economic level, the polarization lies between Russian-influenced Eurasian Customs Union (self) and the European Union (other). In 2013, the

Ukrainian government was faced with a choice of which trade agreement to sign: with the Eurasian Customs Union or the EU. Ultimately, this choice (or rather an unexpected change of it) was the reason for the Euromaidan protests that grew into a revolution in 2013-2014. On a cultural and religious level, the emphasis is put on the Russian orthodox church as a unifying factor with its traditionalist conservative views as opposed to the Western liberal views. On a geopolitical level, the "other" is NATO, and the uniting "self" is close military and naval partnerships that Russia and Ukraine had in 2013.

Thus the "unity of the two nations" frame is reinforcing passive enemy images of the liberals, the West, the EU, the USA and the Third Reich that were activated in 2014 and applied to Ukraine in various contexts to accelerate alienation and hostility of what recently used to be a "brother nation". According to Vuorinen (2012: 4), *"when a passive enemy-image is activated and made into a motive for action, the situation is apt to escalate into conflict. Most elaborate enemy imagery is related to wars between nations when propaganda is broadcasted by both mass media and official state organs."* I found this process of enmity-transfer particularly important and thought-provoking. In the following subchapters, I elaborate on how enmity-transfer is evident in different frames.

In the analyzed materials, the most typical device used for this frame was a testimonial device as journalists quoted the Russian and Ukrainian presidents speaking about shared interests, traditions, and ancestors of the two nations. While the pro-Russian President Yanukovych was still in power, his rhetorics were naturally in-sync with Putin's, transmitting messages of "common roots" and "unity of the two nations".

Extract 1

Президент России Владимир Путин поблагодарил своего украинского коллегу Виктора Януковича за возможность встречи на этом праздновании 1025-летия Крещения Руси в Киеве.	*Russian President Vladimir Putin thanked his Ukrainian counterpart, Viktor Yanukovych, for the opportunity to meet at the celebration of the 1025th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus' in Kyiv.* ***"This joint celebration reminds us of the***

"Это общий праздник напоминает нам о духе единства, общих корнях, о том, что много сделано в предыдущем столетии. Мы полны решимости, опираясь на то, что сделали наши предки, продвигаться дальше," — *обратился он к президенту Украины.* *[...]* *Янукович со своей стороны напомнил о значимости торжеств.* ***"Этот праздник свидетельствует о единении наших народов.*** *Значимость этого праздника огромная, и мы приложим все усилия хорошо его отметить,"* — *обратился он к Путину в начале их беседы.* *[...]* *Он предложил коротко обсудить текущую повестку дня переговоров. "У нас много взаимных интересов, много вопросов, которые бы способствовали развитию взаимного сотрудничества двух стран в целом ряде отраслей,"* — *добавил Янукович.*	*spirit of unity, common roots, of how much has been done in the previous century. We are determined, based on what our ancestors have done, to move forward,"* *he addressed the President of Ukraine.* *[...]* *Yanukovych for his part reminded about the significance of the festivities.* *"**This holiday testifies to the unity of our peoples.** The significance of this holiday is tremendous, and we will make every effort to celebrate it well,"* *he addressed Putin at the beginning of their conversation.* *[...]* *He suggested a brief discussion regarding today's agenda. "We have many mutual interests, many questions that would contribute to the development of mutual cooperation between the two countries in a number of industries,"* *Yanukovych added.*

(Putin thanked Yanukovych for meeting at the celebrations in Kyiv; 13-8)

Extract 2

Выступая на торжественном мероприятии по случаю совместного празднования Дня флота Военно-морского флота России и Дня флота Украины, Путин отметил: ***"Сегодня в военном параде все вы проходите в общем строю, знаменуя крепость и преданность устоям наших предков, которые веками жили вместе, трудились и защищали общее Отечество, сделали его могучим, великим и непобедимым. У нас общие корни, культура и религия. Такая общность особенно ощущается в эти дни, когда наши страны отмечают праздник — 1025-летие Крещения***	*Speaking at a ceremony marking the joint celebration of the Day of the Fleet of the Russian Navy and the Day of the Fleet of Ukraine, Putin noted:* ***"Today, in a military parade, you all go in a common formation, showing the strength and devotion to the foundations of our ancestors who lived together for centuries, worked and defended the common Fatherland, made it powerful, great and invincible. We have common roots, culture and religion. Such unity is especially felt these days when our countries celebrate a holiday - the 1025th anniversary of the Baptism of Holy Rus'. Our blood and spiritual bonds are inextricable.”***

| *Святой Руси. Наши кровные и духовные узы неразрывны.”* | |

(Vladimir Putin congratulated Russian and Ukrainian sailors; 13-3)

The examples above provide a clear idea about the "unity of the two nations" frame: "the great and invincible common fatherland built by heroic ancestors who shared the same culture and religion". However, one detail in those extracts stood out for me. In both Putin's quotes when he speaks about Kievan Rus as a common fatherland, he made the "Rus" salient while always omitting the fact it was founded in Kyiv. The idea of unity for the Kremlin is more about influence rather than brotherhood. Nevertheless, this is still a positive frame, the only positive frame found in this research.

5.2 The division frame

"The division frame" is the only frame identified in the materials from both timeframes, 2013 and 2014. The main message embedded in this frame portrays Ukrainian society being split between different ideologies and influenced by various internal and external powers. It is an old frame used by the Russian (and some Ukrainian too) public figures and media for whom Ukraine has always been divided into "pro-Russian" East and "pro-European" or "nationalist" West. However, as the agenda and relationships between the two countries are changing with time, this frame has also been evolving. This evolution expands far beyond the period of this research but is still clearly visible in the analyzed articles.

This frame may be considered as, what I call, a foundation frame which had set a mental framework for new, more radical frames (e.g. "Donbas is independent" and "Legitimizing terrorism" frames in this study). This frame does not merely imply that Ukrainians have different views, it polarizes the nation into a pro-Russian group ("the Self") and an opposing group ("the Other") which can change depending on the context (e.g. "nationalists" or "pro-western liberals"). Thus this frame is crucial for enemy creation: journalists offer the reader two rival

groups — one to be associated with and the other, consequently, to denounce. Such practice has been widely used in the long history of nationalist ideologies. Zygmund Bauman characterizes this phenomenon as 'Gardening state' — an attempt to dictate which groups or ideologies are allowed to grow within a particular state or community, and which must be eradicated (Griffin 2008).

The division frame follows the age-old rule of 'divide et impera', divide and rule, which aims to weaken an opponent by breaking up its powers into pieces. The annexation of Crimea and the separatist scenarios in Donbas show that this strategy is fully functional nowadays. It is important to note that in 2014, according to Medaisapiens (2016), about 21% of Ukrainians were still actively consuming Russian online media. Therefore, the hostility and enemy-creation broadcasted by Russian propaganda inevitably had a substantial impact on the views of many Ukrainians as well. The division frame, in particular, played a significant role in informational campaigns preceding the Russian military operations in Crimea and Donbas by giving the people living there a mental framework of belonging and, what is most important — opposition to certain real or intentionally fabricated groups within a nation thus splitting and radicalizing the society.

Two articles, from 2013 and 2014, had the division frame as dominant: "Victory Day in Ukraine: a holiday with tears in the eyes" (13-6) and "Internal War" on [in] Ukraine — Petro Poroshenko as Ukrainian Pinochet" (14-5). Through the analysis of the division frame, I have looked into the topics, depictions of the opposing group, and the main idea(s) set in the articles.

"Victory Day in Ukraine: a holiday with tears in the eyes" (13-6)
In the article 13-6, the division is based around the celebration of the Victory Day. The author compares how the holiday is celebrated in different regions of Ukraine: the West, the East, and Crimea. The main idea framed in this article is relatively simple: the inherited Soviet traditions of celebrating Victory Day are jeopardized by the increasing activity of nationalists.

Extract 3

*Празднования Дня Победы состоятся в большинстве городов Украины, но не везде. Депутаты двух западных регионов объявили 8 и 9 мая "днями скорби". Традиционные празднования Дня Победы состоятся в большинстве городов Украины, но не везде. **Страна по-прежнему расколота надвое, и накануне 9 мая это становится особенно заметно**: в прошлые годы праздник омрачали различные инциденты, связанные с попытками националистов на западе страны помешать торжествам. Недобрая традиция.*

[…]

Потасовки, словесные оскорбления и драки в День Победы — для Украины не новость. В 2011 году, во время масштабных беспорядков во Львове, слышалась даже стрельба из травматического оружия — и не в качестве праздничного салюта. Тогда десятки радикальных националистов из движения "Свобода" не пускали ветеранов и жителей города к военному кладбищу на Холме Славы. […]

*Между тем, на востоке Украины, власти Харькова обратились в конце апреля к правоохранителям с просьбой защитить от надругательств памятники войны на территории города. **Городской совет утверждает, что "радикально настроенные шовинисты, исповедующие фашистские ценности", собираются начертить свастику на памятниках участникам Великой Отечественной войны, якобы с целью отомстить за снос памятного камня, заложенного в честь "Украинской повстанческой армии", которая воевала против Красной Армии.** […]*

Совместный парад российских и

*Victory Day celebrations will take place in most cities of Ukraine, but not everywhere. Deputies of the two western regions declared May 8 and 9 "the days of sorrow." Traditional Victory Day celebrations will take place in most cities of Ukraine, but not everywhere. **The country is still split in two, and on the eve of May 9, this becomes especially noticeable:** in past years, the holiday was overshadowed by various incidents related to attempts of nationalists in the west of the country to interfere with the celebrations. Bad tradition.*

[…]

*Brawls, verbal abuse, and fights on Victory Day are typical news for Ukraine. **In 2011, during large-scale riots in Lviv, even shots from traumatic weapons were heard — and not as a festive salute.** Then, dozens of radical nationalists from the movement "Svoboda" did not let veterans and citizens enter the military cemetery on the Hill of Glory.*

[…]

*Meanwhile, in eastern Ukraine, the Kharkiv authorities requested law enforcement to protect war monuments in the city from abuse in late April. **The city council claims that "radical chauvinists professing fascist values" are going to draw a swastika on the monuments to participants of the Great Patriotic War, supposedly to avenge the demolition of the memorial stone laid in honor of the "Ukrainian Insurgent Army" which fought against the Red Army.***

[…]

The joint parade of Russian and Ukrainian sailors in Sevastopol, where the main forces of the Russian Black Sea Fleet are based, for several years in a row has become the biggest celebration event on Victory Day in Ukraine.

украинских моряков в Севастополе, где базируются основные силы Черноморского флота России, уже несколько лет подряд становится самым массовым на Украине праздничным мероприятием в День Победы. За прохождением колонн, в которых военнослужащие российского и украинского флотов идут плечом к плечу, наблюдают от 30 до 50 тысяч человек.	*From 30 to 50 thousand people observe the passage of convoys in which service members of the Russian and Ukrainian fleets go shoulder to shoulder.*

(Victory Day in Ukraine: a holiday with tears in the eyes; 13-6)

The author uses card-stacking and name-calling techniques to highlight the growing tension in society. The East of Ukraine and Crimea (the pro-Russian group in this article) are resisting "*the prohibitions of Soviet symbols and the aggressive rhetorics of nationalists*" while the West of the country (the opposing group in this article) is troubled with fights and riots. The author brings up some conflict stories from the past (2011 and 2012), as well as some vague claims of a city council preparing to possible acts of vandalism by "*radical chauvinists professing fascist values,*" to magnify the hostility and attach negative labels to the westerners and Ukrainian nationalists. Meanwhile, thousands of people in Crimea are appreciating the Russian and Ukrainian fleets "*going shoulder to shoulder*" — the unity of the two nations frame is used here as a secondary frame to solidify the affiliation of this group with "the Russian Self."

"Internal War" on [in] Ukraine — Petro Poroshenko as Ukrainian Pinochet" (14-5)
The article 14-5 has a much more complex structure than the previous example from 2013. This article is built around the division frame. It provides not one but many angles on the confrontation rifts and opposing groups in the country showing that the newly-elected President Poroshenko is not in control, he navigates the chaos with force "*relying on the punitive battalions and the block of Nazis and fascists.*"

Extract 4

Несмотря на провозглашение Порошенко президентом, на Украине до сих пор нет	*Despite the proclamation of Poroshenko as president, Ukraine still does not have a single*

единого центра управления, ее «элиту» раздирают внутренние противоречия. Политические разломы, на краю которых балансирует Порошенко, как потенциальный правитель пиночетовского типа, углубляются как в самом Киеве, так и между столицей и регионами. Политические разломы проходят: *Между сторонниками «февральской революции» и **людьми, не приемлющими «нового украинского порядка». То есть ополченцами Донбасса, отстаивающими свои права с оружием в руках, гражданским населением и политиками, включая депутатов Верховной рады, придерживающимися антифашистских взглядов.***	*control center; its "elite" is torn by internal contradictions. Political rifts, on the edge of which Poroshenko balances, as a potential ruler of the Pinochet type, are deepening both in Kyiv itself and between the capital and the regions. Political rifts pass between: Between supporters of the "February revolution" and **people who do not accept the "new Ukrainian order." That is the rebels of Donbas defending their rights with guns in their hands; civilians and politicians, including members of Parliament, who hold anti-fascist views.***

(Internal War" on [in] Ukraine - Petro Poroshenko as Ukrainian Pinochet; 14-5)

The extract above shows how polarizing the article is. It also lists some of the confronting groups framed with a variety of propaganda devices. Overall, a number of confrontation rifts are highlighted in this publication. They are dividing the country into the following groups: the supporters and opponents of the Euromaidan revolution; civilians and politicians "holding anti-fascist views"; different regions and consequently the oligarchs representing those regions. It is worth taking a closer look at the first four of the listed opposing groups, how they are framed to create enemy images, and what devices are used for that.

The Euromaidan revolution, which led to an escape of the pro-Russian President Yanukovych, was a pivotal point in Russo-Ukrainian relationships. The Kremlin perceived the Ukrainian revolution not only as a diplomatic defeat and loss of influence in the region but also as a bad example for Russian citizens and a threat to Putin's reign. Therefore, the Euromaidan has been heavily targeted by Russian propaganda with disinformation, hate speech, and enemy framing.

In the article 14-5, the split around the Euromaidan presents the following opposing groups. The Pro-revolution group (anti-Russian), which includes the President Poroshenko and the new government, Ukrainian citizens, the USA and the UK as agents of influence that are "curating" the new Ukrainian leaders. The anti-revolution group (pro-Russian), which includes armed separatists in Donbas and members of Parliament, "*who hold anti-fascist views*".

In his expressions, the author dramatically deviates from objective reality to appeal to his audience emotionally. He uses the glittering generalities device for framing the anti-revolution group. In his words, Russia-backed armed forces in Ukraine become "*people who do not accept the "new Ukrainian order". That is the rebels of Donbas defending their rights with guns in their hands*." Then he calls the pro-Russian MPs "*anti-fascists*" to attach a repeatedly used archetype of "*fascists*" to the rest of the post-revolutionary parliament. When it comes to framing the pro-revolution group, there are more devices involved and it is worth highlighting them with some examples from the text.

The Transfer device. The whole article 14-5 is built around the analogy comparing President Poroshenko to Augusto Pinochet. The analogy suggests particular meanings: to show Poroshenko as a cruel dictator and to suggest that the Euromaidan was nothing but a coup planned and curated by the USA.

Extract 5

Благодаря этим людям Порошенко действует в логике Пиночета, сумевшего сходным образом со временем сосредоточить в своих руках всю полноту власти, устранив конкурентов. [...] **Наиболее действенный инструментарий «украинского Пиночета»: «эскадроны смерти»**, *то есть парамилитаристские формирования так называемой «национальной гвардии», батальоны олигархата – «Днепр», «Донбасс», силовики спецслужб типа «Альфы» СБУ и*	*Thanks to these people, Poroshenko acts in the logic of Pinochet, who similarly managed to concentrate in his hands the fullness of power, eliminating competitors. [...]* **The most effective tool of the "Ukrainian Pinochet": "death squads"**, *i.e., paramilitary units of the so-called "national guard", oligarchy battalions - "Dnipro", "Donbas", security forces of the "Alpha" security services of the SSU and special forces of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, mercenaries of foreign private military companies. [...]*

спецподразделений МВД, наемники иностранных частных военных компаний. [...] *Управлять голодным и мерзнущим населением можно* **только с помощью террора, проводимого карательным механизмом, превращающим всю силовую группировку в стальной кулак полицейского режима пиночетовского типа.** *[...]* *Порошенко, в отличие от Коломойского и Тимошенко, собственных вооруженных формирований пока не имеет.* **Он опирается на армию и блок нацистов и фашистов, взращенный спецслужбами** *через Наливайченко-Смешко-Скипальского-Гриценко-Яроша.* **Их основная задача – превращение Украины в плацдарм войны против России. Разведслужбы играют при Порошенко, как и при Пиночете, значительную роль уже с первых месяцев репрессий и уничтожения инакомыслящих.**	*Managing a hungry and freezing population is possible only* **with the help of terror, carried out by a punitive mechanism that turns the entire force group into a steel fist of the Pinochet-type police regime.** *[...]* *Poroshenko, unlike Kolomoisky and Tymoshenko, does not yet have its own armed forces.* **He relies on the army and the block of Nazis and fascists, nurtured by the secret services** *through Nalivaichenko-Smeshko-Skipalsky-Gritsenko-Yarosh.* **Their main task is to turn Ukraine into a bridgehead of the war against Russia. Intelligence services play under Poroshenko, as well as under Pinochet, a significant role already from the first months of repression and the destruction of dissidents.**

(Internal War" on [in] Ukraine - Petro Poroshenko as Ukrainian Pinochet; 14-5)

Name-calling device. It is evident from the extract above that the author is not shy to use quite extreme expressions for characterizing the Ukrainian military in particular: "battalions of punishers; block of Nazis and fascists; death squads". As mentioned before, the archetype of Nazis and fascists has a strong emotional weight for the Russian audience and is repeatedly used in this article as well as in propagandist publications in general. These two terms are used interchangeably without any logical attachments — only the emotional ones.

The card-stacking device is embodied in every paragraph of the article as it has several dominant frames and a highly manipulative narrative. In addition to the division frame, there are also "Independence of Donbas" and "The USA as a chaos curator" dominant frames present in this article. The following extract provides quite a remarkable example of card-stacking. In this

passage, all the dominant frames are emerging into one main idea — the audience frame (Figure 3) that the author has planted in this article. Firstly, this idea implies that the armed conflict in Donbas is beneficial to the Ukrainian leaders as it allows them to *"redirect the energy of discontent"* that is growing in the country to an external enemy. Secondly, it implies that the Kremlin is being "provoked" to be involved in this conflict by the USA because if it were not, not only Ukraine would get Donbas and Crimea back but would go further and invade a number of regions in Russia.

Extract 6

*Причины, вынуждающие действовать именно так, обусловлены экономическими и внешнеполитическими факторами. В первом случае **внутриукраинские противоречия между олигархами и населением не устранимы в принципе, поэтому энергию недовольства удобнее перенаправить на внешнего врага.** Во втором – **втягивание России в конфликт необходимо американским кураторам «Наливайченко и Ко».** Этапы, они же предлоги для провоцирования Кремля: «освобождение» Донбасса, затем Крыма, к границе которого Киев с 10 июля стягивает тяжелую боевую технику, и, наконец, Курской, Липецкой, Воронежской и других, по мнению Яроша-Тягнибока, «исконно украинских земель».*	*The reasons for acting in this way are due to economic and foreign policy factors. In the first case, **the internal Ukrainian disputes between the oligarchs and the population cannot be eliminated at all; therefore, it is more convenient to redirect the energy of discontent to an external enemy.** In the second, **the involvement of Russia in the conflict is necessary for the American curators of "Nalyvaichenko and Co."** The stages, i.e., the pretexts for provoking the Kremlin: the "liberation" of the Donbas, then the Crimea, to the border of which Kyiv has been pulling together heavy military equipment since July 10, and, finally, according to Yarosh-Tyagnibok, Kursk, Lipetsk, Voronezh, and others, "primordially Ukrainian lands".*

(Internal War" on [in] Ukraine - Petro Poroshenko as Ukrainian Pinochet; 14-5)

5.3 Donbas is independent — legitimizing terrorism

"Independence of Donbas" and "Legitimizing terrorism" are two closely related frames that are often used together. They are the most common frames of this study, identified in various combinations in 7 out of 8 articles of the 2014 period. This subchapter provides a closer look at

those combinations, as well as the main ideas that authors try to transmit using these frames, and the devices they use to do it.

The common purpose of these two frames is to undermine the authority and legitimacy of the Ukrainian post-Euromaidan government and the president. "The independence of Donbas" frame does it by recognizing the self-proclaimed separatist republics of "DPR" and "LPR" (also called jointly as "Novorossiya") as independent states and making it look natural as if these formations have always been there. "The legitimizing terrorism" frame does it by providing a media platform for the leaders of the self-proclaimed republics, using their information as a single source of truth, making their perspective salient while criticizing or omitting the perspective of Ukrainian authorities.

When it comes to reporting news about the conflict in Donbas, the analyzed media use these two frames by default simply because they reflect the Kremlin's position on this topic. The article 14-1 is one of many (e.g., 14-2; 14-3; 14-4; 14-5; 14-7;14-8) online publications that amplify the separatists' agenda of enmity and hostility towards Ukraine.

Extract 7

Народный губернатор ДНР Губарев предъявил новый ультиматум киевским властям.	*People's Governor of the DPR Gubarev presented a new ultimatum to the Kyiv authorities.*
*Лидер Донецкой народной республики Павел Губарев предъявил новый ультиматум киевским властям. Он заявил, что **если в течение ближайшего часа войска и военная техника не будут выведены с территории ДНР, они будут уничтожены силами ополченцев.***	*The leader of the Donetsk People's Republic, Pavel Gubarev, presented a new ultimatum to the Kyiv authorities. He stated that **if troops and military equipment were not withdrawn from the territory of the DPR within the next hour, they would be destroyed by the rebel forces.***
«Остаётся 1 час до истечения ультиматума украинским оккупантам, чтобы они сняли незаконные блокпосты и увели войска и технику от городов	***"One hour remains before the ultimatum expires for the Ukrainian invaders to remove illegal checkpoints and withdraw troops and equipment from the cities of Donbas.***

Донбасса. В противном случае – тотальное уничтожение всех: и техники, и живой силы фашистов!» - написал он в Facebook.	*Otherwise, the total destruction of all: both equipment and manpower of the fascists!" he wrote on Facebook.*

(People's Governor of the DPR Gubarev presented a new ultimatum to the Kyiv authorities; 14-1)

In the extract above, the media provide a platform for hate speech, broadcasting enemy images of "fascists" and "invaders" (name-calling and transfer devices), and attaching them to Ukrainians. At the same time, the author portrays Gubarev as a hero, "People's Governor" (glittering generalities technique). The self-proclaimed separatist formation "DPR" is framed as a legitimate, recognized country with its pompous titles like "People's Governor". The reader gets the idea that this "country" has existed in Donbas for ages until its existence got threatened by the "invasion" of Ukrainian "fascists".

The above-mentioned propaganda devices are the ones typically used to facilitate the "Independence of Donbas" and "Legitimizing terrorism" frames. The name-calling device is applied to Ukraine to call it a "killer-country" or a "junta" (14-5; 14-7); Ukrainian soldiers are described as "punishers", "invaders", "forcers" and "fascists" (examples are present in all articles of 2014). By contrast, the glittering generalities device is applied to the pro-Russian separatists. They are typically called "people's rebellion" or simply "rebels" (ibid.) implying that the Russian Federation has no involvement in establishing, supporting and effectively controlling the "DPR" and "LPR" which has been proved wrong numerous times by various respected international institutions (e.g., PACE 2016; International Court of Justice 2019). This implication is another central idea promoted by the Independence of Donbas frame — in addition to undermining Ukrainian authorities, it also denies Russia's involvement in this conflict.

One particular device is distinctive for the Independence of Donbas frame. This technique is not identified in previous research (e.g., Pan & Kosicki 1993 or Miller 1937). Instead, the device was inductively found in the data, and I have named it "Grammatical separatism". It works by manipulating with prepositions. In the Russian language, the preposition "на" [in English, "on"]

is used for territories and regions (e.g., на территории, на Закарпатье) while the preposition "в" [in English, "in"] is used with countries or cities (e.g. в Германии, в Москве). In some of the analyzed articles, the authors use the preposition "на" [on] with Ukraine (e.g., 13-2; 13-6; 14-4; 14-5) subtly undermining its independence and addressing it as one of the regions of the fallen USSR. In article 14-4, the author also uses the preposition "в" [in] with Donbas, which normally, as a region, would be addressed with the "на" preposition. Thus, the author authorizes the idea of the independence of Donbas by distorting grammar.

5.4 The USA as the ultimate enemy

The Cold War has turned the USA and Russia into arch-enemies. The Kremlin has been nurturing the enemy images of the USA and everything American for decades. Anti-western narratives have been a prominent feature of Russian political and media discourses years before the conflict in Ukraine (e.g., Hutching and Szostek 2016; Smyth and Soboleva 2014: 257-275; Yablokov 2014: 622-636). However, I was not expecting to find this frame within this study simply because the research is focused on relationships between Russia and Ukraine, not Russia and the USA. However, the frame of the USA as the ultimate enemy is vividly present in the materials of 2014.

Three articles (14-4;14-5;14-6) frame the United States and President Obama personally as terrorists and the organizers of the war in Ukraine (to harm Russia). In article 14-4, the author compares President Poroshenko to President Obama as the agents of evil, but on a different scale: *"Like Obama in regards to the entire planet, Poroshenko also got disrespect, only adjusted to his own geographical and political insignificance." Then he uses the "plain folks technique" by replying to the president's statement with provocative fictional responses from "the people"* (Extract 8). The following extract is an example of a bland propagandist manipulation by appealing to the reader's emotions, using syntactic, rhetoric, and thematic structures.

Extract 8

Как и у Обамы по отношению ко всей планете, у Порошенко тоже пренебрежение, только с поправкой на собственную географическую и политическую незначительность. *Том о военном вмешательстве в дела других стран – этот о войне с другим Донбассом. Том об альтернативных инструментах воздействия – этот о неких мирных инициативах. Том о мировом лидерстве США – этот о всепобеждающем украинском национализме.*	*Like Obama in regards to the entire planet, Poroshenko also got disrespect, only adjusted to his own geographical and political insignificance*. *The one is about military intervention in the affairs of other countries - the other is about the war with another Donbas. The one is about alternative tools of influence - the other is about some peace initiatives. The one is about US world leadership - the other is about all-conquering Ukrainian nationalism.*
У Порошенко это было торжество недосказанности. В его специально для цитирования рубленых фраз отрубили и выбросили главное. “Наши условия – отсутствие потерь среди мирного населения”, – говорит он. “Не выполнены”, – уточняют уничтоженные и безлюдные города юго-востока. “Наша победа неотвратима, поскольку это наша армия на нашей территории”, – грезит он. “Убивает наших людей”, – дополняют мирные граждане Донбасса. “Мы способны принести мир на украинскую землю”, – медитирует он. “Предварительно опустошив ее”, – добавляют те, кого уже вынудили эту землю покинуть.	*Poroshenko had that triumph of an understatement. In his, specially-made for quoting, chopped phrases, the main thing was chopped off and thrown away. "Our conditions are the absence of casualties among the civilian population," he says. "Not fulfilled," the destroyed and deserted cities of the southeast specify. "Our victory is inevitable because it is our army on our territory," he dreams. "Kills our people," - civilians of Donbas add. "We are able to bring peace to Ukrainian soil," he meditates. "By preliminarily emptying it," add those who have already been forced to leave this land.*

(Punitive peacekeeping. President of Ukraine declared war; 14-4)

In the above cited article, as well as in article 14-5 about the "Ukrainian Pinochet" (examined in subchapter 5.2), the authors transfer and reinforce the well-rooted enemy images of the USA onto Ukraine. By doing so, propagandists help the reader find some rationale in this sudden change of attitude: what was a partner and a "brother nation" a year ago, now is a "Ukrainian junta" — why? Americans must be the reason behind it.

Another idea supported by this frame is that the USA has planned the revolution in Kyiv and the war in Donbas to provoke Russia, force it to get involved in the conflict so the US could find the reasons to impose sanctions against Russia and weaken its economy (e.g., extracts 6 and 9). In the article 14-6 (Extract 9), the author uses the transfer device by attaching the terrorist stigmas to the USA and President Obama to create a "geopolitical monster Al-USA" led by "Obama Bin Laden". The author uses a mix of rhetorical and thematic structures to create an emotional image of the United States using Ukraine as a tool in order to impose sanctions on Russia and "*clear the space for American companies*": *"Let's say Bush needed a bottle of flour to destroy Iraq. Obama already needed Ukraine to try to do the same with Russia" (Extract 9).*

An interesting point in the extract below addresses the idea of being proud to get sanctions imposed against you: *"Sanctions mean that we are truly worth something."* This sentiment reflects the campaign span by Russian propaganda in response to the sanctions imposed by the US and the EU. "Topol [missile system] is not afraid of sanctions" and "Sanctions? Don't make my Iskander [missile system] laugh" were one of the statements used in this campaign. In Extract 9, the author reinforces the message that Russia's involvement in the war in Ukraine is completely justified even though it may undermine the economy due to sanctions.

Extract 9

Спасибо Майдану. Открыл истинное лицо президента США. ***Знакомьтесь, Обама Бен Ладен. Кажется, что он способен появиться везде. Может уничтожить покой в любой точке мира. И ему для этого совсем не нужны бомбы или начиненные смертниками самолеты. Санкции — это его оружие массового поражения.*** *Это не отдельный теракт. Это — повсеместный террор. Или, по крайней мере, заявка на него. Он не взрывает небоскребы, станции метро, поезда или вокзалы. Он метит в основу, бьет по устоям, разрушает порядки, делает больно всем.*	*Thanks Maidan. Revealed the true face of the US President.* ***Meet, Obama Bin Laden. He seems capable of appearing everywhere. He can destroy peace anywhere in the world. And he doesn't need bombs or suicide bombers to do that. Sanctions are his weapons of mass destruction.*** *This is not a separate terrorist attack. This is widespread terror. Or at least an attempt on it. He does not explode skyscrapers, subway stations, trains or train stations. He targets the core, hits the foundation, destroys orders, makes everyone hurt.* *If it does not help - then the good-old methods of converting the disobedient into their faith.*

*Если не помогает — тогда старые добрые методы обращения непокорных в свою веру. **В Сирии уже не разберешь, где Аль-Каида, где США. Там окончательно сформировался новый геополитический монстр под названием Аль-США. Он угрожает своим "джихадом" всем, кто даже не мешает, а просто живет своей жизнью. В мире скоро не останется стран, которые в той или иной степени не подверглись бы атаке американских принципов.**

*Это, конечно, придумал не Обама. Но при нем это приобрело неприличные формы. **Скажем, Бушу для уничтожения Ирака понадобился флакончик с мукой. Обаме, чтобы попробовать сделать то же самое с Россией, уже понадобилась Украина.***

[...]

Санкции — это значит, что мы, правда, чего-то стоим. Обама, по сути, "санкционирует" признание.** Хотя вряд ли, конечно, мы нуждались именно в такой его форме. Но терроризм лишен логики, правил, морали. У него есть только мотивация. Запугать, подчинить, уничтожить. **В США надеются таким примитивным способом еще и расчистить пространство для своих компаний. Рынок вооружений, например, без "Калашникова" заметно оскудеет. Но в Соединенных Штатах, наверняка, уже знают, как его разнообразить. Это называется недобросовестной конкуренцией.

__In Syria, one could no longer tell where Al Qaeda ends and where the United States starts. A new geopolitical monster called Al-USA was formed there decisively.__ It threatens its "jihad" to anyone who does not even interfere but simply lives his life. There will soon be no countries in the world that are, to one degree or another, not attacked by American principles.

*This, of course, was not invented by Obama. But with him, it took obscene forms. **Let's say Bush needed a bottle of flour to destroy Iraq. Obama already needed Ukraine to try to do the same with Russia.***

[...]

Sanctions mean that we are truly worth something. Obama, in fact, "sanctions" the recognition.** Although hardly, of course, we needed it in this form. But terrorism is devoid of logic, rules, morals. It has only one motivation. To intimidate, subjugate, destroy. **In the US, they also hope to clear the space for their companies in such a primitive way. The arms market, for example, without Kalashnikov, will noticeably scarce. But in the United States, they probably already know how to diversify it. This is called unfair competition.

(Obama Bin Laden. The USA hit Russia right in the "sector"; 14-6)

5.5 Framing the post-truth reality

In addition to the highlighted frames, the example above (Extract 9) evidently illustrates how online media create and spread misinformation and conspiracy theories to create a bubble of alternative reality for their audience. The idea of the USA curating the revolution in Kyiv, highlighted in extract 9, was at the core of a popular conspiracy theory spun by Russian media. The threat of such activity is more significant than it may seem. Even though other media and NGOs are actively exposing disinformation and manipulation broadcasted through the propagandist networks, those efforts rarely lead to bursting the bubble of alternative reality simply because the audience is comfortable being inside of that bubble. As Lewandowsky and Cook (2017:11) put it: *"The post-truth problem is not a blemish on the mirror [that can be cleared up with a suitable corrective disinfectant]. The problem is that the mirror is a window into an alternative reality."* This subchapter presents some of the examples of frames that notably exploit misinformation and conspiracy theories to fuel the post-truth machine.

Extract 10 provides an example of the "Ukrainian misery" frame evident in five articles (14-2; 14-4; 14-5; 14-7; 14-8), mostly as a secondary frame supporting the main messages with the background picture of suffering Ukrainians emerged in the chaos and "managed by terror". Important to point out that this distorted sad picture of the "hungry and freezing population" is applied not to the warzone regions but the whole nation. As extract 10 shows, this frame is lacking any logic or evidence and appeals purely to emotions or the reader reinforcing the enemy image towards the "punitive regime" in Ukraine.

Extract 10

Главный враг режима — не «сепаратисты» Донбасса, а собственное многомиллионное население, которое нужно кормить. Делать это все сложнее – с учетом углубляющегося экономического кризиса и деиндустриализации. В этих условиях	*The main enemy of the regime is not the "separatists" of Donbas, but their own [Ukrainian] multimillion population, which needs to be fed. It is becoming increasingly difficult to do this, given the deepening economic crisis and decentralization. Under these conditions, the army also turns into an*

армия также превращается в инструмент внутренней, а не внешней политики. Управлять голодным и мерзнущим населением можно только с помощью террора, проводимого карательным механизмом, превращающим всю силовую группировку в стальной кулак полицейского режима пиночетовского типа.	*instrument of domestic rather than foreign policy. Managing a hungry and freezing population is possible only with the help of terror, carried out by a punitive mechanism that turns the entire force group into a steel fist of the Pinochet-type police regime.*

(Internal War" on [in] Ukraine - Petro Poroshenko as Ukrainian Pinochet; 14-5)

After the MH17 catastrophe over the sky of Donbas, the propagandist media started spreading conspiracy theories about who downed the plane. Extract 11 is an example of framing Kyiv being responsible for downing the Boeing. The author uses card stacking, rhetorical and thematic manipulations, citing some "American expert" to build a believable theory blaming Ukraine for downing the plane with the Buk missile system. The official investigation (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2018) has debunked this theory since the Buk system that shot the plane actually belongs to the Russian army and was used by the separatists. However, the way the author of the article 14-7 operates various details from different (not necessarily reliable) sources make this theory seem pretty solid.

Extract 11

*Возвращение Путина из сверхудачного латиноамериканского турне. Новые санкции США, с треском проваленные Евросоюзом. Военные успехи ополченцев. Все так некстати складывалось не в пользу хунты и ее покровителей. Из этого еще ничего не следует. **Но тот, между прочим, американский, эксперт который первым сказал, что именно Киев мог быть заинтересован в этой катастрофе, наверное, взвесил все "за" и "против". Есть факты. С одной***	*Putin's return from a highly successful Latin American tour. New US sanctions failed miserably by the European Union. Military successes of the rebels. Everything was going so much not in favor of the junta and its patrons. Nothing yet follows from this. **But one, by the way, American expert who was the first to say that it was Kyiv that could be interested in this disaster, probably weighed all the pros and cons. There are facts. On the one hand, Ukraine just the day before [the downing of MH17] relocated the Buk missile***

стороны, Украина как раз накануне передислоцировала ракетные "Буки", способные бить по таким верхам из-под Харькова в Донецк. По данным министерства обороны России, Боинг сбили именно в зоне поражения их комплексов.	*launchers, capable of hitting such heights, from near Kharkiv to Donetsk. According to the Russian Ministry of Defense, the Boeing was shot down precisely in the strike zone of their systems.*

(Useless zone. Ukraine has officially become a "black hole"; 14-7)

Another frame from article 14-7 reflects the essence of the post-truth world by framing the idea that one's opinion prevails over facts: "no matter what experts and politicians, upright or not, would assume now, until finding out the true reasons, everyone will still draw conclusions by virtue of their sympathies and interests. And after, apparently, too." Here propagandist uses the bandwagon technique by applying the peer-pressure to impose this idea on the reader. Later in the same paragraph, the journalist uses the MH17 crash as a leverage to create an enemy image of "Ukrainian punishers exterminating people purposefully, including women and children."

Extract 12

Впрочем, что бы сейчас ни предполагали эксперты и политики, добросовестные или нет, до выяснения истинных причин каждый все равно будет делать выводы в силу своих симпатий и заинтересованности. И после, видимо, тоже. Одно бесспорно. Массовое убийство — это всегда страшно. Но на Донбассе люди гибли и до Боинга и, что самое ужасное, будут гибнуть и после него. **И, если в самолет хотя бы теоретически могли попасть случайно, то на этой земле, в том числе, женщин и детей украинские каратели истребляют целенаправленно.**	**However, no matter what experts and politicians, upright or not, would assume now, until finding out the true reasons, everyone will still draw conclusions by virtue of their sympathies and interests. And after, apparently, too.** One thing is certain. Mass kill is always scary. But in the Donbas, people died before the Boeing [MH17] and, worst of all, they will die after it. **And while the plane, at least theoretically, could have been hit by accident, on this land, Ukrainian punishers exterminate people purposefully, including women and children.**

(Useless zone. Ukraine has officially become a "black hole"; 14-7)

6 Discussion

This study aimed to assess the language manipulation efforts of the Russian state-funded online media in their news and analytical publications on Ukraine. It was designed to answer three research questions: RQ1. How do language choices in analyzed Russian media invite the audience to perceive Ukraine and Ukrainians? RQ2. How does the framing of stories about Ukraine in the analyzed Russian media change after the Euromaidan revolution? RQ3. Can the analyzed articles be recognized as a product of propaganda?

In the previous chapter, the strategic and tactical levels of enemy-image framing were analyzed. The discussion section combines the two levels above into a coherent outline, addresses the research questions, provides an overview of the theoretical contribution of this study, as well as its critical evaluation, challenges, and future research recommendations.

6.1 Key Findings and Theoretical Contribution

By thoroughly addressing the research questions, this study has found that the analyzed Russian media have considerably changed the narratives of their news and analytical publications on Ukraine after the Euromaidan revolution. In contrast to generally neutral articles from 2013, the publications from 2014 were portraying Ukraine as a threat to Russia, the new Ukrainian Government as a cruel dictatorship controlled by the US, dehumanizing and undermining Ukrainian authorities while romanticizing and legitimizing the armed separatists in the warzone of Donbas. One thing that stayed consistent before and after the government change in Ukraine is the alignment of the analyzed media narratives with the Kremlin's political agenda. This alignment, combined with omnipresent misinformation, reinforcement of conspiracy theories, aggressive enmity framing using propaganda techniques, suggests that the analyzed media organizations de-facto function as extensions of a centralized body of state propaganda.

Even though in the majority, this study has generated anticipated findings, some surprises and challenges also appeared in the process of the research, which, however, only added depth to its outcomes. The working hypothesis that the discourse on Ukraine has changed dramatically in the analyzed media after the Euromaidan revolution in Kyiv was confirmed. The materials from the 2013 period were more neutral in their judgment and language; the framing of the stories was mostly positive, displaying the affinity and shared history of the neighboring states. However, even those seemingly positive publications about the unity of the two nations were transmitting the Kremlin's post-imperialist agenda. The central element of this agenda is the Freudian "Self" that positions Russia as a victorious heir of the Soviet Empire that defeated Nazism.

As discussed in chapter 3 by scholars like Steuter and Wills (2009), and Vuorinen (2012), the nurturing of the Self is essential for enemy creation because, in order to oppose a group, one has to belong to another group in the first place. This opposition becomes evident through the "division frame" already in the materials from 2013 and grows into a full-scale enmity in 2014. The division frame was vital for Russia's hybrid war scenario because it is not an old-fashioned invasion to fight enemies — it is an "invasion to protect friends." The propaganda had been nurturing the idea of the pro-Russian "Self" in the South-East of Ukraine long before the conflict. So after the Euromaidan, all it took to justify Russian military intrusion in Crimea and later in Donbas was creating an image of that "Self" being in danger. As Katchanovski (2016: 85) puts it:

"Russian leaders and the media often characterized the overthrow of Yanukovych as a fascist coup, and they justified support of separatism and annexation of Crimea by the protection of ethnic Russians from the Ukrainian 'fascists'."

One of the long-standing dilemmas that have pushed me to conduct this investigation was understanding how Russian propaganda was able to switch its narratives about Ukraine so rapidly. In a matter of months, even weeks, what had been before a brother-nation with *"common roots, culture, and religion"*, suddenly has become a *"junta"* ruled by *"the block of Nazis and fascists."* How is it possible to shift the course of public opinion so dramatically and get

much-needed people's support for the military interventions in a neighboring country? The answer I found through this research was, what I call, *"an enmity transfer"*. This concept is based on a transfer propaganda device (Miller 1937) defined by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA) back in 1937. It works by associating a targeted group or a person (the Other) with existing enemy images. This manipulation expands the negativity from existing enemy images and attaches it to the targeted group or a person. It is usually conducted by combining different syntactic, rhetoric, and thematic framing techniques. As a result, yesterday's friend starts to resemble today's enemy and deserves to be fought against tomorrow.

In the context of this study, Russian propaganda transferred primarily two existing enemy images to create a new one around Ukraine: the Nazis (or fascists) from World War II, and the USA (or the West in general) from the Cold War. As was mentioned before, anti-American narratives have always been a part of the Russian political and media agenda (e.g., Hutching & Szostek 2016). However, such a strong presence of this theme within this investigation was not anticipated. Nonetheless, this surprise turned out to be one of the key insights of this research and provides a possibility to examine the enemy creation process as a larger entity. Figure 4 is an attempt to illustrate the enmity transfer phenomenon by putting some of the key subjects of the analyzed articles on the *"Spectrum of enmity"*. This figure shows the transfer of the audience's perception: from enemies like the Third Reich or the USA to Ukrainians. On the opposite side of the spectrum, we can also see how the fake separatist republics get the recognition and positive attribution. This figure also demonstrates the polarisation of Ukraine through the division frame. The block arrows indicate some of the devices used to achieve the enmity frame, while arrows names "saving" and "curating" describe the meta-meaning attached to it.

Figure 4. The Enmity spectrum. Transfer of enemy and ally attributions by Russian propaganda in the analyzed materials of 2013-2014

Overall, through this investigation, I was able to address the research questions thoroughly and validate the hypothesis that the Russian state-funded online media indeed do work as a body of state propaganda. They did play a crucial role in the info-warfare campaigns preceding and during Russian military operations in Crimea and Donbas by manipulating and distorting information to frame Kremlin's agenda, creating and reinforcing enemy images, spreading disinformation and conspiracy theories that resonated with the state's position.

This research presents a significant social value for a number of reasons. Firstly, it contributes to the pool of investigations that expose a strong Kremlin's commitment to informational warfare on many fronts. Secondly, it confirms that the creation of enemy images is vital for the justification of military aggression. Lastly, it proves that even though modern state propaganda is a highly sophisticated, data-driven engine, on a rhetorical level, it still uses the same techniques as 100 years ago.

In the research process, I have applied and combined several communication theories, which helped me to address the research questions. Even though framing theory is relatively new and has been previously criticized as a fractured paradigm (Entman 1993), this study has proven the validity of D'Angelo's (2002) multiparadigmatic approach to framing theory. Having chosen the critical paradigm for this framing research (Kuypers 2009), I was able to apply concepts of enemy images and propaganda devices to the process model of framing (Figure 3), thus adjusting it to be more informational-warfare oriented. To my knowledge, this is the first research that has combined these three principles to address the framing of enemy images by state propaganda. This approach can be used in future research that aims to tackle enmity framing in various contexts.

My study has helped to solidify the concept of enemy images by recognizing them as an active component of the framing process, equivalent to audience frames (Figure 3). It also demonstrated that propaganda devices introduced by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis in 1937 (Miller 1937), are still relevant today. Moreover, they function as framing devices in the frame building process.

The process model of framing research (Figure 3), developed by Dietram A. Scheufele (1999), was used as a theoretical cornerstone of this study. All the applications mentioned above have proven it to be a lean and reliable framework.

6.2 Critical Evaluation of The Research

I used Tracy's (2010) guidelines for qualitative research assessment in order to critically evaluate this study. With the conflict between Russia and Ukraine staying unresolved and the increasing spread of media manipulations worldwide, the topic of this research is proving to be timely and relevant. As a Ukrainian citizen and a former journalist, I am morally and emotionally invested in this study. As a communications scholar, I am most interested in the credibility of this research and the accuracy of its findings. Therefore, I tried to eliminate any biases while being guided by my moral, critical, and professional compasses.

Following the guidelines of Kuypers (2009), I was able to apply the rhetorical perspective to my framing analysis which has proven to be a reliable method for this in-depth investigation. However, every method has its limitations. With the sample covering two timeframes of three months each, it is expected that the thematic range of the sample is somewhat limited to the events relevant to those timeframes. The rhetorical nature of the analysis inevitably excludes visual elements of framing and enmity setting which certainly play a big part in the propaganda process. These two elements can be potentially combined in a bigger scale research project. Lastly, due to its time and resource limitations, this investigation focuses only on online news and analytical publication, thus excluding other mediums, channels, and formats that are used in propaganda.

During the analysis, following the instructions of Marais and Linström (2012: 30), I was able to identify a dominant and secondary frame in most of the articles. According to Marais and Linström (ibid.), "the dominant frame is the main theme of the news article, while the secondary frame is a supplementary idea that supports the main theme." However, I have faced two challenges applying this approach to some publications, especially long ones. Firstly, in these articles (e.g. 14-4;14-7;14-8), it was difficult to identify only one dominant frame as there were several themes framed with relatively equal value in those cases. Secondly and subsequently, those frames were relatively independent, which made it hard to categorize them in a

power-relation of dominant and secondary. I found those challenges quite useful and particularly fascinating as they show that framing is a complicated and fluid process. It also reassured me that the in-depth qualitative analysis was the right method to choose for this research as it was unlikely I would be able to spot those dynamics with a quantitative approach.

To address those challenges, I used the metaphor of atoms and molecules and applied it to media frames. It helped me make sense of the power dynamics between different frames I had identified in my analysis, and I hope it will help the reader as well. In my illustration, I compare a media publication to a molecule that consists of frames or atoms. It can be a single frame that sets a specific agenda. It can be two or more frames of the same "element" (dominant and secondary frames relations). Or it can be two or more independent frames that come together in one molecule/article and create a more complex message. What I specifically like about this analogy is that it illustrates how fluid informational space is and how, similarly to atoms and molecules, frames and media publications do not just exist by themselves — they react, collide and combine into more complex systems of meanings. The process model of framing by Dietram Scheufele (Figure 3) and my enmity spectrum illustration (Figure 4) illustrate the high level of this media "ecosystem" dynamics quite well. This approach has helped me identify eight dominant and secondary frames (Table 3) through the process of conducting this research project.

This study provides significant social and theoretical contributions in respective fields. Its methodological approach, theoretical and practical findings are welcome to be tested in different contexts and languages in future research.

6.3 Future Research Recommendations

In the results section, it has been voiced that Russia conveys a sophisticated propaganda strategy that creates distorted realities. It is challenging to fight propaganda and disinformation and break the bubbles of the post-truth. Therefore, counter-propaganda is often forced to use the same

techniques, which only intensifies informational warfare. With that in mind, a natural progression of this research would be conducting a similar analysis of Ukrainian state-funded media within the same time frame and comparing it with this study. I am curious to see if/how some of the concepts explored within this investigation (e.g., enmity transfer, enmity spectrum) will translate into Ukrainian context, what are the dominant frames in Ukrainian media and what is the frame dynamics between Russian and Ukrainian publications. Such development can provide a better understanding of the Ukraine-Russia conflict, the modern propaganda and counter-propaganda theory, as well as the use of language in enemy creation.

The methodological approach, theoretical and practical findings of this study are welcome to be examined in different contexts, conflict levels, mediums, and languages. Particularly the concepts of "enmity transfer" and "enmity spectrum" deserve further examination in various settings. One of the possible applications could be a rhetorical framing analysis of a non-armed conflict that may provoke the creation of enemy images. It could be a political campaign preceding elections or other significant decisions. The rhetorical analysis of the enmity framing in different mediums like press, TV, radio, various social media platforms, is also likely to enrich existing knowledge in the field.

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Appendix

Table 3. Dominant Frames and Propaganda Devices

Media Channel, Article Reference Number, and Date	Title (English translation)	Dominant Frames	Secondary Frames	Propaganda Devices
RT 13-1 (22.06.2013)	On the night of June 22, "candles of memory" were lit in the countries of the former USSR	Unity of the two nations	-	Glittering generalities
RT 13-2 (27.07.2013)	Vladimir Putin: The Ukrainian economy, combined with the Russian, will receive great competitive advantages	Unity of the two nations	-	The Testimonial device
RT 13-3 (28.07.2013)	Vladimir Putin congratulated Russian and Ukrainian sailors	Unity of the two nations	-	The Testimonial device
Rossiya Segodnia 13-4 (08.05.2013)	The dress rehearsal of the military parade of Ukraine and the Russian Federation took place in Sevastopol	Unity of the two nations	-	-
Rossiya Segodnia 13-5 (29.05.2013)	Memorandum on Ukraine's participation in the Customs Union will be signed in Minsk on May 31	-	-	-
Rossiya Segodnia 13-6 (09.05.2013)	Victory Day in Ukraine: a holiday with tears in the eyes	The division frame	Unity of the two nations	
Rossiya Segodnia 13-7 (27.07.2013)	BTR drowned during a rehearsal for the Day of the Fleet of Ukraine in Sevastopol	-	-	
Rossiya Segodnia 13-8 (27.07.2013)	Putin thanked Yanukovych for meeting at the celebrations in Kyiv	Unity of the two nations	-	The Testimonial device

RT 14-1 (15.05.2014)	People's Governor of the DPR Gubarev presented a new ultimatum to the Kyiv authorities	Legitimizing terrorism; Independence of Donbas		Name-calling; Glittering generalities; The Transfer device; Card stacking
RT 14-2 (01.07.2014)	Ukrainian forces resumed the active phase of the punitive operation in the east of the country	Legitimizing terrorism	Ukrainians are suffering	Name-calling; Glittering generalities; Card stacking
RT 14-3 (13.07.2014)	The assault of Mariupol by the Ukrainian force officers - the first photos and videos from the scene	Legitimizing terrorism		Name-calling; Glittering generalities; Card stacking
Rossiya Segodnia 14-4 (19.06.2014)	Punitive peacekeeping. President of Ukraine declared war	The USA as a chaos curator; Legitimizing terrorism	Ukraine is divided; Ukrainians are suffering; Grammatical separatism	Name-calling; Glittering generalities; The Transfer device; Plain folks technique; Card stacking
Rossiya Segodnia 14-5 (14.07.2014)	"Internal War" on [in] Ukraine - Petro Poroshenko as Ukrainian Pinochet	The division frame; Independence of Donbas; The USA as a chaos curator	Legitimizing terrorism; Ukrainians are suffering	Name-calling; Glittering generalities; The Transfer device; The Testimonial device; Card stacking
Rossiya Segodnia 14-6 (17.07.2014)	Obama Bin Laden. The USA hit Russia right in the "sector"	The USA as a chaos curator	The USA started the conflict in Ukraine to destabilize Russia	Name-calling; Glittering generalities; The Transfer device; Plain folks technique; Card stacking
Rossiya Segodnia 14-7 (18.07.2014)	Useless zone. Ukraine has officially become a "black hole"	Ukraine downed the MH17 plane; Ukrainians are suffering; Independence of Donbas	Facts don't matter, everyone will be judging based on their opinion	
Rossiya Segodnia 14-8 (31.07.2014)	Residents of Maryinka: force officers used phosphorus-like shells	Independence of Donbas; Legitimizing terrorism;	Ukrainians are suffering	