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REGIONAL HEGEMONS OR HOUSEHOLD DESPOTS:

DISCURSIVE PATTERNS OF GOVERNANCE IN POST-SOVIET SPACE

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TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER	PAGE
<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>CHAPTER 1: POST-COLONIAL THOUGHT OF THE SUBALTERN EMPIRE</u>	<u>7</u>
INTRODUCTION	7
LITERATURE REVIEW	12
EURO-TRAINED POST-COLONIAL THOUGHT	14
IMPLICIT RACISM IN IR SCHOLARSHIP	15
UNIVERSALISM	18
SPATIO-TEMPORAL HIERARCHY	21
POST-COLONIALIST THOUGHT OF RUSSIAN TOKEN	25
COMPARATIVISTS	29
EURASIANISTS (NEO-FASCISTS)	37
REFLECTIVISTS	43
THE SILENCED SUBALTERN OF THE SUBALTERN EMPIRE	46
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & RESEARCHERS' POSITIONALITY	49
RESEARCH DESIGN	70
CONCLUSION	74
<u>CHAPTER 2: THE BECOMING OF THE RUSSIAN HOUSEHOLD</u>	<u>78</u>
INTRODUCTION	78
SOCIAL CONTRACT OR PRENUPTIAL AGREEMENT? "MARRIAGE" AS A FOUNDATION OF RUSSIAN	81
DOMESTICATION OF SIBERIA	88
THE "VIRGIN" LAND OF INGHERMANLAND	97
MALORUSSIA: THE MOTHER OF RUSSIAN CITIES	103
UNAVAILABLE MISTRESS OF THE CAUCASUS	116
CENTRAL ASIA: THE "NEGLECTED CHILD" OF RUSSIAN HOUSEHOLD	128
CONCLUSION	154
<u>CHAPTER 3. THE BROTHERHOOD OF PEOPLE: PRACTICES OF RUSSIFICATION</u>	
<u>BEHIND THE SOVIET DISCOURSE ON "FRATERNITY"</u>	<u>160</u>
INTRODUCTION	160
POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OF THE BROTHERHOOD	161
FAMILY NARRATIVE IN THE LATE RUSSIAN EMPIRE	164
DISCOURSE ON "BROTHERHOOD" IN THE EARLY SOVIET UNION	170
PRACTICES OF PHYSICAL EXTERMINATION BEHIND THE NARRATIVE ON "BROTHERHOOD"	179
MUTATION OF THE IDEOLOGY OF "BROTHERHOOD" INTO THE IDEOLOGY OF "RUSSIAN ELDER	
BROTHER"	185
THE COMMUNAL HOUSE OF THE LATE SOVIET "PERESTROIKA"	190
CONCLUSION	196

CHAPTER 4: DECONSTRUCTING CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN HOUSEHOLD	198
INTRODUCTION	198
THE TIMEFRAMES AND THE METHOD	202
THE NARRATORS OF POWER DISCOURSE	204
THE OBJECTS OF NARRATIVE: STUDY CASES OF PERIPHERAL COUNTRIES	209
THE SOURCES OF THE NARRATIVE	214
CODING PROCESS: CYCLE I	220
THEMEING PROCESS: CYCLE II	225
THE TONE AND MAGNITUDE OF NARRATORS' SPEECH AND THEIR HOUSEHOLD CONSTRUCTS	225
VLADIMIR PUTIN'S AS A NARRATOR	226
SERGEY SHOIGU AS A NARRATOR	229
VLADIMIR ZHIRINOVSKY AS A NARRATOR	230
PATRIARCH KIRILL AS A NARRATOR	234
COMMON THEMES	239
COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE THEMES	252
BUILDING THE HOUSEHOLD THROUGH LANGUAGE: THE ROLES OF THE DESPOT	263
CONCLUSION	268
CONCLUSION	273
APPENDIX 1: CATEGORIZATION OF THE SOURCES	283
APPENDIX 2: TABLE OF CODES AND THEMES	297
BIBLIOGRAPHY	327
DOCUMENTS:	349
VITA	355

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
Table 1. Narrators' Stances and Contributions to the Discourse.....	209
Table 2. Themes' weight in the discourse.....	253
Table 3. The weight of countries in the discourse.....	255
Table 4. Themes' weight in the discourse on a country.....	256
Table 5. The Discourse on Belorussia.....	258
Table 6. The Discourse on Ukraine	259
Table 7. Discourse on Kazakhstan.....	261
Table 8. Discourse on Georgia.....	262
Table 9. The Self-prescribed Roles of the Despot.....	265
Table 10. Self-Prescribed Roles of the Despot Concerning countries.....	266

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION
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by

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The growing gap between Russian self-perception and the perception of it in neighboring states has become painfully evident since 2008. The current dynamics in the post-Soviet region are, in many ways, a consequence of Russian imperial ambitions that became a source of grievances for the peoples of the regional periphery.

Most scholars focusing on Russia's hegemonic policies in the region draw attention to the late imperial and Soviet eras as a foundation of Russian expansionism. I challenge that approach and state that Russia's foundational view of its place in Eurasia requires the analysis of the language of colonial "regional household" that is traced as far back as the origination of Kievan Rus' and early Russian Imperial era, beginning in the XVI century. Then, the Russian imperial hierarchy was imagined as a regional family where the nations were assigned the identities of "mother," "virgin maid," "mistress," "child," and other household members. Using Patricia Owens' theory of household that frames the genealogy of the social realm, I argue that Russia's self-depiction as the "master" of the regional "household" can provide a much-needed conceptual depth to unveil Russia's continuity in regional policy.

Introduction

The growing gap between Russian self-perception and the perception of it in neighboring states has become painfully evident since 2008. With the war in Georgia in 2008, political unrest in Ukraine in 2014 and then in Belarus and Kazakhstan (2021-2022), and the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Russian ambition to represent a protecting figure and a leader of the region seems unsustainable. These events undermine Russian influence on the political and economic development of the countries that have historically had strong ties with Moscow. The current dynamics in the post-Soviet region are in many ways a consequence of Russian imperial ambitions that became a source of grievances that peoples of the regional periphery inherited from their shared past conflicts that stretch from the imperial era (Caucasian Wars, colonization of Central Asia, conquest of Eastern Europe) to Soviet repressions and forceful Russification. The hatred generated interethnic tension, which then spilled over into ethnic conflicts and civil wars throughout the entire Russian history.

The core concern of this study is: where does the origin of structural oppression in the post-Soviet region rest? Is it human nature, the implication of societal dynamics, state formation, or international hierarchy/anarchy structure? I approach this problem using Patricia Owens' theory of the Household. Owens argues that the ancient Greek household, the *oikos*, was a fundamental building block of the entire systems of *poleis*, or city-states (Owens, 2015). Not only was it a source of reproducing the life of citizens but also the foundation of a value system that normalized oppression and hierarchy" (Owens, 2015; Pomeroy 1994). The nature of relationships within a household was organized around administrating life necessities arranged hierarchically according to the assumed race, class,

gender, age, and other attributes of identity assigned to different members of a household. As Owens claims, the rise and transformation of empires reconstituted – rather than removed – the household rule of feudal and early modern times. Instead of being a complete antipode of household government, the nation-state, and the global system themselves are distinctive forms of household. This form implies governing populations through oppressive social means (Owens, 2015).

While Owens explains the theory of Household rule using the model of nation-states and shows the United States as the head of the global household, I situate the concept in the regional space. My research attempts to explore how hegemons legitimize their actions towards peripheral states in the respective regions as the heads of the regional households. I trace how Russia as a regional leader manipulates the discourse and tactics of household rule to maintain social hierarchy and its own power over the regional “menages.”

The argument of this work stands on the premise that international hierarchy is multi-leveled and filled with complex economically, discursively, and symbolically gendered and racialized dynamics. This work considers a *private household* (not an individual) to be the primary level of analysis to analyze the roots and patterns of social inequality (this is opposed to the non-household structures (polis) that operate based on the rule of law and principles of equal rights to represent their interest). The ideology of a household creates special discourse that resorts to protection, control, and intervention as “necessary” or “natural.” The narrative of protection among states within the region may be unveiled in a variety of options such as kinship, sheltering, shielding, caring, and nurturing or emotional support. At the same time, this discourse normalizes oppression of the near-abroad and aggression against the far-abroad states to sustain the hegemon’s standing in the hierarchy.

According to Owens' theory, a standalone individual cannot discover the nature of oppression without interaction with the most proximate community – a private household. Understanding the essence of hierarchy requires a subject and an object, a “self” and the “other” to display its patterns fully. A private household as a unit introduces the dynamics among individuals in the setting of their personal life and better demonstrates how individuals might legitimize, internalize, and inflict violence and control (Owens 2015). Here is where psychological literature comes into play in explaining post-colonial hierarchies' reproduction. Psychological explanation of patterns of domestic violence and governance is not limited to the domain of private space but can be applied to the public (regional) sphere.

Thus, the research moves from a global household where individual states are the family members, as Owens presents, to the regional level. This is because the regional household members are seen as more geographically bound and culturally kin. The state in its modern form was created through the decisions and treaties of a set of elites rather than historically developed through bottom-up personal, cultural, and political interaction of peoples, which is the development that regions represent. Thus, regions are more sustainable (culturally, historically, and ontologically) and make a better model of household replication.

My personal experience drives my motivation as a researcher to pursue this study as an ethnically Russian but Kazakhstan-born immigrant to Russia. Lifelong observation of the political dialogue between my historical homeland (Russia) and the country of my birth allowed me to discern patterns that I found replicating on the level of dysfunctional family dynamics that I also witnessed and experienced first-hand. This research exercises the desire to shift the conventional view on the correlation between domestic and political governance (which regards the patterns of violence in private and public domains as two separate social

phenomena). The work debates the idea that structural oppression in private spheres of human life is excluded from the public sphere where less hierarchical rules apply. Instead, the ways of domestic (family) governance are strategically important as they tend to reproduce themselves in the political arena.

The first chapter of this dissertation introduces the literature review and the research design of the work. It interrogates post-colonial paradigms of IR in Western-trained and Russian IR traditions. I explore how different schools describe, criticize, or justify the status quo of existing social hierarchies, and analyze if and how they see various aspects of international/regional hierarchy as a tool to tame or reinforce violence. Finally, I tease out the contributions and limitations of the considered schools, explain the gap in Russian postcolonial studies, and launch a quest for the most explanatory model applied to the post-Soviet regional hierarchy. Here, I also introduce Patricia Owens' household concept as a relevant model to employ and explain it in more detail.

Further, I show how I build my study upon this concept. In addition, I demonstrate how my work fills the gap in the body of existing literature. The chapter explains why the dissertation focuses on the regional but not global or state dynamic and why I employ psychoanalysis as an additional tool to explain regional dynamics in post-Soviet space. There is also research design disclosed in the chapter: I elaborate on the sources, the methods of analysis, and the interpretation of the data. This part of the dissertation also tells how the literature review informs the research design and suggests the theory that is the foundation of the methodology.

Chapter two traces the discourse of the Russian Household's becoming from the state's origination till the eventual formation of the Russian Empire in its final version in the 19th century. It traces the discourse of historiographers and prominent writers who describe

the becoming of the Russian Empire through the household narrative. The encounter of the two founding ancient peoples of Russia – the Varangian and Slavic tribes – is depicted in the historiography as a “Marriage.” Thus, the narrative on the foundation of the Russian state has a family-like character. Further comes the description of the first experience of colonization – Siberia – which is framed as domestication but not a conquest. I demonstrate how the practices of Siberian colonization were portrayed as domestication in the discourse of colonial authors, philosophers, and historiographers.

Further in the chapter, I talk about the annexation of Inghermanland (the Eastern part of Swedish territories) and the establishment of the new capital of the Russian Empire – Saint-Petersburg. I trace how the colonization of these Western territories is framed by the writers, prominent philosophers, and historiographers who shaped the contemporary discourse regarding virginity. The freshly annexed territory was commonly referred to as virgin land. Also, westernized philosophers imagined Russian culture as a virgin and unsophisticated by the time of encountering the enlightened West.

Later in the chapter, I discuss the colonization of Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central Asia. I take the discourse on Eastern European conquests, which are often said to resemble coming back to the elderly mother, who is old-fashioned and largely irrelevant, yet is an inextricable part of the household. Ukraine is primarily referred to as “a mother of Russian cities” yet ridiculed in the literature as being ancient and culturally passé. At the same time, the people of Caucasus, conquered by the mid-19th century, are drawn by the prominent authors as an unavailable passionate lover due to the temper of the Caucasians and their strong resistance to colonization. Finally, Central Asia is portrayed as a “neglected child” that was made from scratch and created as a model of the “parent” metropolis.

The third chapter traces the genealogy of the Soviet discourse on the brotherhood concept central to the socialist state and regional politics. It picks the discourse on massive military recruitment campaigns, army administration, and employment of such newly emerged disciplines as sociology and demographics. The narrative of that historical period frames the regional hierarchy as if it was a patriarchal family and recreates the familial discourse up until the Bolshevik Revolution. Later, I show how upon the formation of the Soviet Union, the spreading propaganda transformed the patriarchal family of the Empire into the universal brotherhood and sisterhood of the Union. In addition, the analysis discloses the practices behind that narrative, showing how the discourse of brotherhood turned into a tool for normalizing the extermination of the inconvenient population.

Further, the chapter traces the discursive development of the family concept after WWII and up until Perestroika. The family narrative converts to the talk about a house that all inhabited together and then collapsed, condemning the neighbors to co-exist as non-relatives but proximate habitats of the region. However, the neighbors remain close under the same roof, which allows for reconciling internal issues and rearranging the connections.

Chapter four offers an analysis of the contemporary political discourse on Russian regional politics. The approach to discourse analysis is different here compared to the historical study of the previous chapters. As the sources of public speech became more extensive and more saturated, other methods were necessary to approach the analysis. I use NVIVO Software to code the discourse produced by several powerful politicians about four countries on the Russian periphery. The countries considered in the chapter are chosen as the most representative cases of the regions touched upon in the previous chapters. The analysis in this chapter sheds light on the discursive constructions currently employed by the

contemporary head of the household to describe itself in its relations to the subordinate countries in the region.

The purpose of chapters 2, 3, and 4 is to present the discursive patterns of household ideology in dominant Russian discourse, both historical and contemporary. The ideational constructions that influential people create as they produce public discourse build things in the real world and form a particular paradigm of the household. This paradigm is designed in a way that veils violence and intervention as natural due to family ties and denies the neighboring countries' sovereignty and political will. Actions such as counterinsurgency, investments, and social and economic re-engineering during colonization are portrayed as gestures of discipline, protection, nurture, and care. While the household ideology does not directly affect the process of colonization, it is capable of framing such a context where oppressive hegemony persists despite the resistance of some members of the post-Soviet community. Finally, in conclusion, I summarize the main ideas reflected in the chapters mentioned above and explain the academic, personal, and social drive and value of the research.

Chapter 1: Post-Colonial Thought of the Subaltern Empire

Introduction

Present Russian aggression against Ukraine can be considered a multifaceted event in the modern-day climate of international relations. The conflict could be considered a result of Russian anxiety about its buffer zones and a quest for security, an awkward attempt to regain economic and political influence in Eastern Europe, the desire to remain the center of regional gravitation or a revanchist move to compensate for defeat during the Cold War. Some authors claim that the fact that contemporary Russian discourse denies Ukrainian

claims to sovereignty (and their right to self-define Ukrainian national interests) speaks volumes about the imperial nature of this conflict (Mälksoo 2022, p.1). The questions of systemic oppression, inequality, and violence in Russia and in general have been consistently examined by mainstream and critical scholarships across social sciences.

International Relations (IR) scholars made efforts to find out what elements of different social orders create conditions that prompt people to violence. Critical paradigms are inclined to argue that hierarchy is the fruitful soil for inequality and violence, where the one on top of the system executes violence out of entitlement and dehumanization of the other and is in a position that allows him or her to abuse power (Tucker, 1972; Wallerstein, 2014; Amin, 2011; Cardoso and Faletto, 1979, Foucault 1975, Rothberg, Sanyal and Sliverman, 2011). Instead, the one at the bottom of the hierarchy becomes violent out of revenge, resentment, and despair to survive. In other words, most critical theory scholars suggest that hierarchy is oppressive by definition.

However, some mainstream schools argue that hierarchy is called for to contain and minimize violence. For example, realists and neorealists suggest that an anarchical international structure holds an intrinsic and unavoidable element of bellicosity as a natural consequence of the continuous quest for power and security. Instead, hierarchy within the states is called to contain violent and greedy human nature and preserve peace within the society (Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1959, Gilpin, 2012). Liberalists state that hegemony can refer to benevolent authority where the hegemon rules over the subordinate states by their choice and based on their support. The hierarchy regulates relationships, allocates resources, and preserves peace and order (Ikenberry, 2012; Nexon and Wright, 2007; Keohane and Nye, 1989). Other authors of such conventional IR paradigms as constructivism attribute hierarchy to a matter of identity and interest. Such ideational constructions as norms,

practices, and rules determine the subordinates and the masters, the wins and the losses from the workings of social hierarchy (Onuf, 2012; Wendt, 1995; Kupchan, 2010; Buzan and Hansen, 2009). The shortcoming of constructivists is that they ignore the power relations that run the creation, enactment, and interpretation of the norms, rules, and practices. As a result, most of the created norms reproduce the existing hierarchy for the benefit of an exclusive social layer of power at the expense of the rest.

Can hierarchy only be a system where injustice and oppression flourish and give way to violence? If so, what elements make it prone to abuse? Can hegemony be self-regulating and reflective, preserving the members of the system from quarrels and joint damage? If so, under what conditions? How is Russian regional hegemony mapped in the landscape of the global hierarchies' network? I consider post-colonial thought to offer the most holistic and nuanced view on social hierarchy, violence, and their connection. The postcolonial paradigm enriches the debates in IR with its attempt to see social hierarchy in its complexity and deconstruct it. Moreover, the post-colonial paradigm allows for the legitimacy of differences. It recognizes the multilayered nature of history, offering a picture of multidimensional truths and realities, as opposed to the realist, neoliberal reality that attempts to convince us that any alternative vision of the social system is unthinkable or narrow. Moreover, post-colonial principles of pluriversalism¹ and intersectionism² also

¹ Pluriversality implies that different ontological angles of perception (verbal, visual, imaginary, emotional, physical, human, non-human, super-human, natural, creative) exist simultaneously and create a holistic complex model of our subjective reality. Each cultural/geographic or other social unit has its own complex world, which consists of the intersection of these perceptions and changes continuously. Different cultural units at the encounter create new worlds of meaning as their subjective realities collide and transform one another (example of mutual change of colonized and the colonizer). Pluriversalists argue that the theories (critical or conventional) that stand on "a hegemony of modernity's one-world ontology" are reductionist and offer a generalized and unrealistic picture of social hierarchy.

² Intersectionality implies that different biological, social, and cultural traits of identity such as gender, race, class, age, sexual orientation, physical (dis)ability, etc. interact with each other and contribute to a certain complex pattern of domination/oppression towards a certain identity. Intersectionalists argue that theories focused on only one particular social category that is a base for discrimination (labeling it as classism, racism, sexism, homophobia, agism or ablism) are reductionist and offer a generalized and unrealistic picture of social hierarchy.

allow for validating an emotional perception of reality and a cognitive one. For example, Arturo Escobar suggests the concept of “sentipensar,” which introduces thinking and feeling as a single way of individual’s perception and creates an epistemology that does not exclude emotions from the spectrum of studies in IR (Escobar, 2020). Furthermore, post-colonial theories acknowledge the multifacetedness of violence that can be expressed through a diversity of intersecting forms such as discourse, symbolic representations, cultural practices, etc. (Sajed 2012). These registers of violence are relatively subtle yet powerful because they can naturalize oppression through images.

From the post-colonial perspective, rationales behind the war in Ukraine and prior Russian aggression in the region are connected to Russia’s colonial past and the legacy of the Tsarist and Soviet colonial practices that are remnants of the modern-day Russian regional politics. However, post-colonial thought, born in resistance to Western imperial dominance, focuses mainly on the relations of domination and resistance between the Global South and the Global North and remains almost silent about the colonial dynamics in the post-socialist world. Joining Anna Engelhardt and Madina Tlostanova, I claim that the analytical toolkit of post-colonial theory has not yet been applied sufficiently to explain the dynamics of hierarchical relations in the post-Soviet space and does not yet consider the complexities of Russian colonial legacies (Engelhardt 2021, Tlostanova 2011). For that, it is important to develop an approach that would be relevant to study Russian colonial history and modern-day neocolonial regional politics.

In explaining the distinctive model of Russian colonial discourse and practice, I use a model of the household as a cultural connector in my research to establish a dialogue on colonialism between the West and the Post-Soviet space. Patricia Owens first offered the concept of the household in a public space in her *Economy of Force* in 2015. This concept

was initially applied by the author to systematize the knowledge about the US neocolonial practices elsewhere and to regard global hierarchy as a modern type of household populated with menages/subordinate entities. Even though Owens' theory does not originate in post-colonial thought, it still offers some explanatory power in its framework that allows one to systematize various intersections of oppression based on gender, race, sexuality, and class. Also, while Owens does not stress her research on the feminist implications of the study. However, she admits the gendered character is intrinsic to the household construction (Owens 2015, p. 7).

My contribution here is to validate the epistemological differences between the Western and Post-Soviet approaches to colonialism and to reconcile various forms of differences in their colonial discourse and practices. I offer an alternative angle of understanding Russian post-colonial modernity and acknowledgment of its distinctions from that of the West. Another contribution to the body of knowledge is my regional focus and interdisciplinary stance that borrows terminology from psychoanalysis as an additional tool to explain household hierarchy. Further in my research, I employ the theory of the family system coined by Murray Bowen, which describes dysfunctional households' mechanisms and formulates the patterns of their internal dynamics to explain crises and conflicts inside the family unit.

In this chapter, I will interrogate the post-colonial IR schools of the Western-trained and Russian canons and compare their respective epistemological and ontological standings and views on colonial practices and discourses. Further, I elaborate on my positionality as a researcher and the drive behind adopting specific tools attributed to psychoanalysis in studying the colonial household. Later in the chapter, I explain the household concept and why it is relevant mainly for the post-Soviet space. Then, I bring up the methodological

perspective of critical discourse analysis that I employ. Finally, I introduce the research design I use to derive the answer to the research questions and justify the chosen methodology.

Literature Review

Russia holds a significant position as a leader in the post-Soviet world. On the one hand, it continues to be a colonial power, having control over a vast territory, particularly in Siberia, Yakutia, and the Far East. On the other hand, it portrays itself as a victim of cultural colonization by the West. This dual role allows Russia to be seen in Morozov's terms as a "subaltern empire... – a space which is both imperial and postcolonial" (2015, p. 8) and makes it an attractive partner for countries such as Brazil, India, China, and South Africa.

Still, it is interesting how Russia, unlike most Western ex-empires, not only refuses to acknowledge its colonial past but is openly associating itself with the ex-colonies—it has to enter, for example, into such international forums as BRICS. While other BRICS members have a history of decolonization, Russia is a colonial state unwilling to relinquish its ambitions. Why was Russia, arguably the most enduring empire of modernity, able to become a legitimate member of a post-colonial club of the Global South? (Khomyakov 2020, p. 3/227). This question here is not about economic ties or cultural relatedness, not even about the post-communist solidarity and Russian revisionism against the West, but in something rooted deeper. This is a question of hypotheticals – the interpretations of the past, present, and, for that matter, one's identity. It is about the narrative of the past and what one makes of it (Khomyakov 2020, p. 3/227). Why is it that Russian post-colonial thought has not been able to examine and debunk the Russian colonial legacy critically, while Western empires have been able to do so with their own colonial past?

Several measures must be applied to reassess, critically examine, and transform long-standing social hierarchies. Firstly, it is essential to give a voice to the oppressed. In the opinion of the author of the present work, the most effective way to explore and transform social hierarchies is through a bottom-up perspective, as it uncovers the most nuanced and silenced aspects of hierarchical reality. Only by giving voice to the historically defeated parts of the hierarchy can a courageous and refined critique of conventional truths maintained by the hegemon. Therefore, in my analysis of the Western-trained academic canon, I will highlight a variety of authors who, despite being trained in the Western tradition of scholarship, come from ethnically oppressed communities and carry the legacy of colonized people.

Secondly, to achieve a normative stance and be motivated to debunk social hierarchies (that sometimes claim to be for the public good at the expense of individual sacrifices), it is necessary to validate human experience and recognize the importance of human well-being. This means incorporating knowledge on the human psyche and emotional aspects of life experience as an ethical foundation for transcending hierarchical oppression, and micro and macro-aggressions.

Third, one must acknowledge the importance of discourse in creating the foundation for systemic injustices in social practices. For the practices to be implemented, they need to be formalized, negotiated, and normalized. The importance of language and the significant effect of subtle linguistic instruments on the human psyche will be discussed further in the chapter. To transform a hierarchy into a more horizontal benign system, it is essential to address discourse because it reveals the impact it has on individuals and the inhumane practices it legitimizes and the false or questionable beliefs it reinforces as conventional

truths. If these fallacies go unchallenged, they remain the foundational principles for a dysfunctional order and will set a self-destructive course for human evolution.

Fourth, it is necessary to appropriate an intersectional approach and reveal the ignored hierarchies that account for multiple attributes of identity, such as race, gender, age, physical ability, etc. The task of the post-colonial paradigm is to provide insights into studying human experiences of both sexes, multiple genders, ethnicities, and age groups in a multitude of representations in the social hierarchy.

Thus, in the following section, I will present the prominent and less-known scholars whose primary aim aligns with Western-trained post-colonial thought and who incorporate the measures discussed above in their contributions to a different extent. I will also examine the Russian post-colonial vision, analyzing the measures above and comparing the two agendas in terms of their effectiveness in debunking social hierarchy in their narratives.

[Euro-trained Post-Colonial Thought](#)

Post-colonial authors of the Western tradition trace the history of oppression and give voice to those who were silenced because of colonization. They explore the multidimensional patterns of violence and reveal the implicit injustices embedded in institutional structures, daily practices, political discourse, and art. In other words, the post-colonial paradigm in the Western tradition is one of resistance, viewing social hierarchy from a bottom-up perspective. Furthermore, Western-trained post-colonial thought also incorporates a gendered perspective, represented by postcolonial feminists. They offer an even more inclusive vision of hierarchy, rejecting a reductionist model of pure gender or race hierarchy. They endeavor to include gender, race, age, ethnicity, and sexuality in the spectrum of identity attributes that become the foundation of systemic oppression,

discrimination, and marginalization. Both post-colonial and feminist postcolonial thought, published in the Western-trained academic discourse, challenge the Eurocentric way of thinking, largely expressed through three main themes in conventional and critical IR: implicit racism, universalism, and spatio-temporality. These themes are umbrellas for dismantling the intricate mechanisms of oppression that are executed by different means and affect different aspects of human life.

Implicit Racism in IR Scholarship

Franz Fanon, a psychiatrist from Martinique, found the philosophical foundation for revealing the many racist patterns in social structure. He demonstrated how colonialism affected the minds and psyche of both colonizer and colonized through the use of scientific claims, denial of rights, destruction of culture, and language deprivation, leading to a sense of inferiority (Fanon 2008, pp. 4-9). He argued that the perpetuation of colonialism comes from the internalization of inferiority and self-division in the colonized, as seen in his book *Black Skin, White Masks*. Fanon also stated that constant encounters with symbolic, linguistic, and psychological violence is as detrimental as physical violence and that the persistence of white supremacy and its colonial reign happens at the individual level and penetrates every home (Fanon 2008, p. 111).

Fanon's peer and compatriot, Aimé Césaire, a poet and politician from Martinique, also contributed significantly to post-colonialism. Unlike Fanon, who focused on the self-reflecting exploration of the colonial subjects, Césaire, in his *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955), focused on self-acceptance and coined a notion of Negritude which he defined as resistance to assimilation and a reclaiming of pride and respect for African culture (Césaire 1955, pp. 28-30). Césaire critically examined the narrative of colonizers and rejected their moral superiority. He argued that colonization brought no civilization or enlightenment to

the colonizer or colonized. He also exposed the hypocrisy of Western powers' outrage towards the Holocaust, which he believed to be a result of pseudo-humanism, as it only targeted genocide against white people and ignored the same atrocities committed against people of color (Césaire 1955, p. 3). Césaire also argued that this is a consequence of the psychological effects of colonial practices that normalize violence, degrade the colonized, and brutalize the colonizer (Césaire 1955, p. 2).

Homi Bhabha, a renowned post-colonial critic, discusses essential strategies of discrimination in his work, *The Location of Culture* (1994). He addresses the intertwined strategies of stereotyping, subjectification, ambivalence, and the fixity of power discourse. Bhabha draws on Fanon's *Black Skin* to explain how the system of domination remains rigid through the “fixity” in the engineering of otherness. This fixity is maintained through repetitive stereotyping, resistance to change, and denial of the truth (Bhabha 1994, p. 66). Bhabha argues that stereotype is a subtle but powerful tool that reinforces fixity and is a construct imposed by the colonizer on the identity of the colonized. He notes that the colonized subject's stereotype includes characteristics such as untrustworthiness, unpredictability, irrationality, and a half-oppositional, half-acquiescent nature (Bhabha 1994, p. 66). This creates an ambivalent nature of the colonized identity, implying that their cultural belonging is forever deprived of its origin (Bhabha 1994, p. 86).

A set of intricate maneuvers of racism was also addressed by one of the iconic authors of post-colonial thought, Gayatri Spivak. She termed complicated tactics of silencing and homogenizing the colonized subjects as “othering.” She argues that this creates a class of silent groups who are greatly affected by the system of international relations but have little say in it (Spivak 1988, p. 75). She terms this group the “Subaltern” and questions if they can truly speak on behalf of their own identity (Spivak 1988, p. 78). Spivak states that to give

voice to the subaltern, the entire system that oppresses them needs to be transformed because the subalterns cannot be isolated from the environment that defeated them to the level of the underdog (Spivak 1988, p. 80). Similarly, Chandra Teplade-Mohanty, a feminist post-colonial author, has criticized the discursive images of “Third World Women” as a reductionism that homogenizes marginalized women incapable of speaking on their own behalf, reproducing their dehumanization and victimization (Mohanty 1984, p. 4).

Some of the authors tackle specifically the academic domain as an area where racism takes the same intricate and subtle forms. Neufeld and Vitalis, for example, are focused on the matter of implicit racism of Western-centered IR. They point out that non-Anglo-American authors in IR are often marginalized and excluded from required syllabi. Vitalis argues that white American scholars in anthropology and IR created disciplinary doctrines based on racist attitudes that reinforced and legitimized implicit racism in academia (Vitalis 2015). Neufeld criticizes the Eurocentric conventional IR for not respecting the diversity of post-colonial scholarship and ignorance of it (Neufeld 2009, p. 2).

Thus, this reflection on implicit racism in Western-educated post-colonial thought demonstrates how authors participate in the narrative by representing colonized social groups and detailing the experiences of the oppressed, such as being silenced, reduced to stereotypes, and scientifically dehumanized. They also provide a comprehensive examination of the intricacies of racism and the implicit nature of its perpetuation. The authors reveal how oppression can be legitimized and normalized through subtle means, such as discourse or lack thereof. Many authors also validate the human experience, highlighting how distortions and inconsistencies in Eurocentric logic profoundly impact human life and psyche.

Universalism

Universalism is the second issue I see as one of the primary themes of post-colonial thought. Taking power over the discourse makes such fundamental notions as “state,” “sovereignty,” “peace,” “anarchy,” and “state of nature” mainly unquestioned, which is detrimental to the evolution of the discipline. The question of hierarchical world order remains largely unproblematized because it is uncomfortable for the status quo and would question the legitimacy of the Western power over the East and the latter’s prescribed status of inferiority (Said 1978, p. 3 in Fitzgerald 2019, p. 2). Once the question of hierarchy is raised, other conventional concepts such as progress, wealth, property, and development would also become subject to re-negotiation, which would challenge the stability of the hierarchy.

The notion of international anarchy, which holds that states are deprived of ultimate authority in international relations but have the right to use legitimate force in domestic affairs, is a universalist concept in Realist IR discourse (Walker 1993, p. 93 in Fitzgerald 2019, p. 2). However, as Neuman argues, this concept only applies to great powers who can compete and resist each other. Third World countries, on the other hand, have been weakened by colonization and cannot be considered equally competitive rivals capable of forming anarchy. Neuman suggests that if the international system is less anarchical or not anarchical for most states, it raises the question of whether there is only one global system. (Neuman 1998, p. 3-4).

Also, the notion of legal sovereignty³ that is intrinsic to the unit of international anarchy (a state) was questioned by postcolonial thinkers as they reveal the bias of

³ State sovereignty can be defined by a spectrum of varying sometimes conflicting components, but usually it is understood as an inherent legal characteristic of an independent state, representing its political and legal independence, ultimate

international legal norms that define sovereignty because these norms are a product of a hierarchical system of power relations that have been formed as a result of colonization. The Western notion of sovereignty was designed by the Westphalian peace creators and was forcefully assigned to the colonized areas with little to no respect for their original structure and historical background (Grovoqui 2013, pp. 256-7 in Fitzgerald 2019, p. 2).

Feminist authors like Naffine, Charlesworth and Chinkin view Eurocentric notion of sovereignty from a gender perspective. They show how the imaginary concept of a state possesses the traits of a masculine body as a sample of a solid and perceivably impenetrable unit of the international system. The constructs of strict borders, homogenous population, legitimate government, formal recognition of sovereignty, and informal recognition of “buffer zones” are seen by the authors as a “male body.” This unit mimics the ideational masculine body, as associated with resilience, strength, and mysterious nature. States that are “conquered” are seen as “penetrated,” feminized, or “humiliated” homosexual bodies (Naffine, 1997, p. 79-93). Some authors point out how colonial historiography speaks of the periphery as if it was a “virgin” land. The colonized people treated the land as an inclusive rather than exclusive possession. They did not think of protecting their territory and fighting those who attempt to occupy it, because they were unfamiliar with the sense of land appropriation (Charlesworth & Chinkin, 2000, pp. 16, 126).

Furthermore, post-colonial authors also challenge liberal IR theory that proposes the concept of a benevolent constitutional hierarchy.⁴ They show how this notion is problematic

authority, and primary subject of international law. It ensures the exclusive exercise of state power and implies independence from the power of another state (Krasner 2001).

⁴ Nexon and Wright suggest that "constitutional order" is the ideal type of liberal hegemony, where representatives are subject to the same rules and institutions are established to ensure the exercise of rights and limitations on power. They argue that American imperial control dates back to the Spanish-American War, but the current system was established

as it is based on biased norms and evaluated according to Eurocentric standards. Concepts such as modernization, for example, is defined by the European terms of democracy that originates in the Kantian theory of “perpetual peace” that only legalizes the Western understanding of peace while putting a blind eye to the embedded injustices and racism that silences alternative versions of thereof (Grovoqui 2013, p. 251 in Fitzgerald 2019, p. 2). Jahn and Tickner also dismantle the liberal hypocrisy and the imperialism of free trade showing how the economy of liberal ideology guarantees the right to integrity only to the states that comply with the Eurocentric criteria of democracy and condemns the ex-colonies as “failed” states as they “failed” to adapt to the Western norms that were forcefully prescribed to them (Jahn 2005, p. 198; Tickner 2003, pp. 315- 6 in Fitzgerald 2019, p. 2).

Thus, this section on universalism demonstrated how postcolonial scholars of the Western canon consistently challenge the dominant beliefs presented by conventional International Relations theories. Some scholars also contribute to the discourse by offering an intersectional perspective, illustrating how conventional theories often reflect a heteronormative value system in their definitions of state and interstate relations. Overall, the authors mentioned in this section reveal how universalism is a self-perpetuating perspective that persists not because of a solid logical foundation, but because of the prevalence and longevity of its advocates in the dominant discourse. The prevalence of conventional truths discussed here can be attributed to the fact that conventional scholars have proximity to power and share a common Eurocentric foundation, which in a rigid power hierarchy makes it challenging or impossible to question these beliefs.

during the Cold War. However, recent changes in international relations have led to less imperial behavior by the US, and a greater emphasis on a "constitutional order" based on liberal principles (Nexon & Wright 2007).

Spatio-Temporal Hierarchy

The consequence of the racism and universalism of Anglo-American IR, according to the Western-trained post-colonial paradigm, creates a fundamental distortion of reality that draws the world with a “spatio-temporal” skew (Seth 2013, p.151). Spatio-temporal hierarchy, in other words, is an ideational division between the Occident and Orient in space and time and deprives the Oriental narrative of legitimacy of knowledge.

Here, the “temporal” part means that “Eurocentric” mindset creates an artificial distance in timeline of development between the West and the East. The latter is expected to overcome this distance to catch up on progress (Chakrabarty 2000, p. 8). The “*temporal* hierarchy” denies the reality that the underdevelopment of Third World countries is a result of actions taken by Western metropolitan powers that have harmed and depleted the economies of colonized spaces and have the power to determine the definition of “development” (Grovoqui 2013, p. 251). Secondly, the temporal hierarchy posits that the origins of the Orient began at the point when it was “discovered” by the Occident, as if it did not exist before. This obscures the original civilizations, education, cultures, and evolution of the Orient. This perspective creates the illusion that the birth of the Orient occurred during the age of European exploration, when it was allegedly “enlightened” and “civilized” by white colonizers. This approach is referred to by Krishna as “willful amnesia” (Krishna 2001, p. 5/401). This hierarchy disregards the process of reciprocal influence and the fact that upon encounter both ideational poles were cocreating each other during mutual exploration and the process of domination/resistance (Escobar 2007, p. 185).

Chakrabarty, a recognized figure in post-colonial thought, explained this division by developing Foucauldian idea on relationship between power and knowledge: he claims that the dominating party gets to write its own history and erase the history of the dominated.

The created asymmetry in knowledge and agenda of the history compels non-Western authors to refer to Western history while producing their own narrative to draw parallels or rely on the referent points in the European historical timeline, while Western scholars do not have that necessity (Chakrabarty 2000, pp. 1-2).

The second aspect of the spatio-temporal hierarchy is the concept of *spatiality*, which involves positioning the “Orient” as a separate and distant space in relation to the “Occident” in terms of texture of cognition. Occident presents itself as rational, scientific, and masculine, while the Orient is portrayed as emotional, spiritual, and natural, existing outside the realm of legitimacy. Postcolonial and feminist postcolonial authors often focus on not only the practices of colonialism but also the psychological, discursive, and symbolic aspects of it in order to uncover the subtle ways in which violence is perpetuated. However, these perspectives are often dismissed by conventional International Relations theories as unscientific or illegitimate (Nair 2017, p. 4).

Edward Said, one of the key figures in postcolonialism, argues that the normalization of social oppression through discourse is a major contributor to its persistence. In his seminal work *Orientalism*, Said asserts that the power discourse, imagery, and symbolism used to create a fictional and distant space of the Orient, and portray it as a wild and inferior “other,” serves as a means for the Eurocentric “self” to define itself. Said states that “without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage [the Orient] [...]” (Said 1978, p. 12). Thus, post-colonialists notice that the public discussion on global poverty is usually followed by the images of simple-minded, overly emotional, feminine, or on the contrary, brutal and hypermasculine subjects (Said 1978, p. 138).

As an alternative to dismissing the discursive and emotional aspects of human perception, postcolonial (and postcolonial feminist) authors propose validating emotions and the discourse that evokes them as an inherent part of every society; they argue that acknowledging emotional imaginaries, which can reinforce systemic oppression, is crucial in understanding the ways in which power operates. For example, in *Revisiting Gendered States*, Swati Parashar examines the role of emotions in shaping perceptions of statehood and citizenship. She offers to consider sexist and racist imaginaries in the relations among states in their interpretations in the context of global hierarchy (Parashar 2018, p. 13). Parashar argues that emotions are often manipulated for political purposes, creating a sense of “affective citizenship” that reinforces hierarchical power structures (Parashar 2018, p. 158). Accounting for emotions, post-colonial approaches, thus, draw tight connections between political narratives and social psychological aspects of hierarchy.

Concluding this section, it illustrates how post-colonial scholars within the Western tradition validate the patterns of violence inherent in discourse and recognize their significance. They also acknowledge the emotional aspect of human cognition as an important dimension of political life and deconstruct the ways in which discourse manipulates people by evoking emotional and imaginary associations. They argue that the emotional and discursive aspects of social life have been devalued by conventional theories, and that this has enabled the creation of a spatio-temporal hierarchy in which one part of the world asserts dominance over the other, positioning itself as more rational, mature, and civilized.

Thus, post-colonial discourse around Western European colonial legacy discovers racism as a multidimensional system of oppression intrinsic in psychological patterns of human psyche, social interactions, academic and mental practices. What is characteristic for

the post-colonial thought criticizing (neo)colonialism of the Western token is taking steps towards overcoming the claimed flaws of the scholarship and acknowledging the normative stance as a legitimate view on reality. It is true that Anglo-American academic community is criticized for neglect of the post-colonial perspectives and insufficient self-reflection that is expressed through remaining implicit racism, universalism, and spatio-temporal hierarchy in IR. However, the fact that I am introducing this study in a US academic institution speaks of the opportunity to employ post-colonial lenses in the research. This means that the system of the Anglo-American IR academia allows the room for post-colonial voices to challenge traditional Western IR perspectives, as these voices are still present within the IR disciplines of the West.

As was demonstrated above, Western-trained post-colonial authors openly reveal different tools of indoctrination, alienation, silencing, reductionism, and stereotyping and deliver it to the community of the Western academic canon yet being published and included in the educational programs even if it is at the discretion of the professor. Accepting the flaws of the Western academia, the question of inclusion of post-colonial perspectives in the core debates of IR is yet in place and multiple times recognized as an important step towards progress in education, dismantling the hidden injustices and transforming social hierarchy. Indeed, the institutions and individuals who implicitly deny the post-colonial thought the access to re-negotiation of IR are still dominant, yet they are already a subject to public critique and can well be called out for protracting the development of the International Relations as a discipline and ignoring global perspectives. Pointing out these existing opportunities is not an intent to celebrate or compliment the Anglo-American tradition of IR discipline, but to draw a baseline for comparison with that of Russia, which is the main subject of this review.

Post-Colonialist Thought of Russian Token

Russian imperial ambitions in the region are strongly supported by the academic community, there is little to no critical relationship here. This tradition traces back to the Russian Empire and sustains itself to the days of modernity. For example, orientalist researcher, member of the expert council of the State Duma Committee on CIS Affairs, Eurasian Integration and Relations with Compatriots, Alexander Savelyev, writes in *Regnum* magazine that Russia always consistently opposed colonial oppression and helped national liberation movements around the world. Savelyev attributes the collapse of the colonial system to the merit of the Soviet Union. At the same time, he claims that Russia, as the main successor of the USSR, pursues the principles of internationalism and is the guarantor of interethnic harmony (Savelyev 2022, p. 1). Furthermore, the Scientific Council of the Security Council (SC) has denounced postcolonial studies by Western academics interpreting Russia's imperial experience as colonial as efforts to distort and falsify Russian history. Any critical examination of Russia's past by foreign researchers has been viewed as “deliberate, destructive actions” by foreign governments and international organizations that are aligned with an anti-Russian agenda (Nagornykh 2016, p.1).

Vladizlav Inozemtsev, Russian academician, a director of the Moscow-based Centre for Research on Post-Industrial Societies, acknowledges that “Russian intellectuals are reluctant to admit that Russia’s history was indeed one of colonization” (Inozemtsev 2017, p.1). Another academic, a specialist in Russian history, Alexander Morrison, also rightfully notices that “only in the Russian academic circles do you encounter an allergic reaction to the very word ‘colonial’ (Kolonial’nyi), something increasingly enforced by the state [...] With rare exceptions, you will be met with a baffled, if not offended, response: ‘Colonialism? What Colonialism? Russia has never had colonies’” (Morrison 2017, p. 1).

He further cites a respected scholar, a specialist on Buddhist representation in Russia, Ivan Minaev, who referred to the western colonial experience claiming that “There’s no comparison – India was a colony of Britain, Indians were considered racially inferior. Russians never treated Central Asians in the same way” (Morrison 2017, p. 1). This statement appallingly contradicts widely accepted disrespectful references in the Russian day-to-day language to migrants from the Caucasus and Central Asia, who are often called “hatch” [equivalent to N-word] or “chernozhopyi” [“black ass”]. While recognizing the degrading attitude of the European metropolis of ex-empires of the West to their colonial subjects, many Russian academics tend to turn a blind eye to the same attitude of the Russian ethnic core population towards the racial diversity coming from the peripheral countries around Russia or from the Eastern regions.

The Russian government's failure to critically examine its colonial past is perpetuated by a denial of the brutal methods used in conquest and a strict power structure that controls all aspects of society, including education, which silences dissenting voices. This allows the Russian majority to remain unaware of discrimination based on race, gender, and other intersections within the country. The leaders of modern Russia show little self-awareness about the country's colonial and imperial legacy. There is a strong resistance to acknowledging the violent nature of past conquests, which are instead presented to the public as voluntary annexations and acts of goodwill. This narrative is reinforced by comparisons of Russian and Soviet imperial practices to those of Western colonial powers, which are portrayed as worse (Morrison 2017, Inozemtsev 2017).

For example, appealing to the leaders of Egypt, Congo, Uganda, and Ethiopia on the eve of his visit, Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov said: “Our country, which has not stained itself with the bloody crimes of colonialism, has always sincerely supported the

Africans in their struggle for liberation from colonial oppression.” (Atanesyan 2022, p. 1) He also argued that the West was conquering colonies, while the Russian Empire “did not subject other peoples to its aesthetic, moral requirements when it spread its influence” (Atanesyan 2022, p. 1). In this, Lavrov describes the numerous conquests of Russia as an indicator that “the Russian Empire, by all measures - size, territorial control, and longevity - was the greatest empire in history. As Nikolai Berdyaev argues, the idea that Russia's history is destined for a great mission of linking East and West” (Lavrov 2016, p. 1).

Interestingly, colonial past has not always been such a vulnerable spot in Russian discourse. Instead, in the 19th century, Russia was incredibly proud of its colonial endeavors and openly named them as such. The narrative proudly demonstrated Russian territorial acquisition and power over the newly annexed peoples. Russia was a part of the International Colonial Institute headquartered in Brussels and actively participated in the negotiations on the technologies of control and exercising power over the subordinate regions of the empires. Moreover, Russia was a member of the popular “colonial movement” and employed many of the practices adopted from European powers in the newly colonized lands of Central Asia. These practices were diligently observed by the journal “The Questions of the Colonization” [Voprosy Kolonizatsii], edited by such reviewers as Shkapsky, Chirkin, Uspensky, and Gavrilov, who reviewed the practices carried out in Turkestan (Morrison 2017, p.1).

However, a specific approach to assessing Russian history that only focuses on celebrating imperial victories, while ignoring the oppression and discrimination of borderland peoples and internal minorities, has been present for a long time. This approach justifies Russian colonialism by comparing it favorably to Western powers, silencing atrocities, and constructing a separate language that frames Russian colonialism as “not that

colonial.” This is a continuation of the old tradition of Russian historiographers to sugarcoat and reframe Russian imperialism, making it appear as a benevolent and unique endeavor.

This tradition comes from the 19th century historiography, more specifically an imperial historian Sergei Solovyov who claimed in 1840 that “the history of Russia is the history of a country that colonizes itself” (Solovyov 1988 in Etkind 2015, p. 161) This phrase gained extreme popularity in 1911 when appropriated by another prominent Russian historian, Vasili Kliuchevskiy, in his *Course of Russian History* and became a pillar of the narrative that justifies Russian colonialism up until modern-day Russian regional studies (Klyuchevskiy 1911 in translation of Inozemtsev 2017 p. 1). The discourse on colonial practices in the Russian historiography has been framed in a special language that emphasized the superiority of Russian colonialism in terms of its humanity or kinship in relation to the indigenous people. For example, Russian historian, philosopher, literary critic, religious thinker, and a publicist of 19th century, Georgy Fedotov, writes “Unlike all the Western powers, [Russia] was built not through violence, but through peaceful expansion; not by conquest, but by colonization” (Fedotov 1911 in translation of Inozemtsev, 2017).

The historical discourse has also left echoes in the current debates of historians, political scientists, and specialists in international relations who discuss the nature of Russian and Soviet imperialism. At the moment, at least three general approaches can be distinguished in the literature devoted to this subject: comparativists, Eurasianists and reflectivists. The first category of authors largely revises the imperial experience of Russia and yet again assesses it in comparison to Western colonialism. These thinkers tend to argue that Russia is after all a colonial empire and, as evidence, use a set of practices and discourses produced by Tsarist Russian and Soviet elites that correspond to the theoretical notions of Western-style colonialism.

The second, Eurasianist, current of thought also resorts to comparison, but unlike the previous dimension, here, the authors draw the nature of Russian regional leadership as organic. Eurasianist even argue that Russian supremacy is legitimate and necessary; they defend Russian messianism. Many works of authors from the Eurasianist bloc (and perhaps most of them) idealize Russian imperialism, promote openly neo-fascist discourse, and discard normative principles of post-colonialism, including assumptions about shared humanity and recognition of intersectional forms of discrimination.

The third dimension of thought is aimed at a self-reflexive study dedicated to the distinction between the concepts of internal and external colonization of Russia and its existential features. The latter, unlike the two previous dimensions, accepts the colonial nature of the Russian Empire in its uniqueness. The analysis of the Russian past by the authors of the self-reflexive approach is more devoted to introspection than comparison, revealing the nature and consequences of the historical and geographical circumstances of the Russian state, which largely determined the image of the social hierarchy within the country and in the region of the post-Soviet space.

Comparativists

Authors in the comparativist tradition apply Western canons of colonialism to Russian experience and resort to comparative research of the two colonial cultures in a variety of their dimensions. One of the most prominent authors in this category is Michael Khodarkovskiy. He states that the colonial practices of the Russian Empire differed little from those of the West. There was both cultural and socio-economic alienation of the conquered territories, resettlement and the subordinate status of the conquered regions, special laws that apply only to peripheral territories. However, the most legitimate argument behind the denial of the colonial Russian past, and which Khodarkovsky dismantles, is that,

unlike the Western empires, tsarist government immediately granted Russian citizenship to the local population of the colonies and included the regional administration in the hierarchical structure of the state administrative apparatus. Instead, Western colonial practices were different by design: they were executed through private joint-stock companies such as the Dutch United East India Company (*Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*), the French Ost-Indian trade (*Compagnie française pour le commerce des Indes orientales*), British East India (in the East Indies) or The Hudson Bay Co. (in North America) (Khodarkovskiy 2012, p. 5/109).

However, the Russian rulers refused to resort to private companies and put government officials in control of the peripheral territories forming imperial administrations. This procedure was cumbersome and impractical, as it complicated the work of colonial administrators, who were forced to coordinate any political decision and action at hand with the center. Khodarkovskiy writes that, during the 19th century, representatives of the imperial elites repeatedly proposed the concept of a Western-like colony as a way to organize colonial management. They demanded more autonomy for the local administration as it would facilitate infiltration into the area and faster distribution of resources for the needs of the colonialists. As an example, Khodarkovskiy cites the request of the Minister of Finance Yegor Kankrin in 1827 to declare Georgia a colony and govern it as such. He also introduces a petition of the Governor-General Konstantin von Kaufman in 1873 that offered a set of “Regulations on the Administration of the Turkestan Territory.” These regulations included a manual that used British techniques of colonization of India to employ in Central Asia; Kaufman offered to rule Turkestan as Western-style colony. All such requests received a harsh refusal from the central government, which wanted to centralize control over the territories under its subordination. Instead of colonial headquarters, the peripheral territories

were administered by departments within the Ministry of War, which were not much different from the British Colonial Office, the French Arab Bureau, or the German Kolonialamt (Khodarkovskiy 2012, p. 5/109).

Dmitry Vasiliev, professor at the Moscow City Pedagogical University, develops a discourse on legal practices in the colonized territories on the example of the Central Asian region, in which the Russian Empire included the Kazakh, Turkestan and Transcaspian lands and considered it as a single administrative unit. According to the author, before Russians formulated a clear political agenda in the region, they only used the territory for economic purposes. At those times, the region was governed almost like a Western-type colony. However, after the change of political landmarks in the 19th century and the advance towards the Afghan border, Central Asia began to be regarded as an internal colony, which provoked the introduction of a new administrative management strategy and the inclusion of the local administrative apparatus in the state structure of the empire. However, an “anti-colonial” view of the national outskirts of the empire and the desire to spread the administrative-political and socio-economic norms of state policy in this territory rose in St. Petersburg (Vasiliev 2022, p. 3).

Schorkowitz tracks the change in the discourse of the Russian metropolis in relation to peripheral regions. The author observes the presence of initially undisguised imperial pride in the speeches of the capital's elite. It was reflected, for example, in the Memorandum of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexander Gorchakov in 1864, deciding the promotion of General Mikhail Chernyaev to Chimkent and Tashkent, which states “comparing the behavior of Russia in Central Asia with the behavior of” all other civilized states “that happened to be in contact with wild nomadic peoples” (Geyer 1987, p. 89 in Schorkowitz 2021, p. 11/96). This Ministerial Dispatch also proudly declared that Russia was now like

“the United States in America, France in Africa, Holland in her colonies, and England in the East Indies” (Geyer 1987, p. 89 in Schorkowitz 2021, p. 11/96). Like Western powers, for example, Russian officials often resorted to images of Siberia as “our Peru,” “our Mexico,” “Russian Brazil,” or even “our little India” (Bassin 2006 p. 48 in Schorkowitz 2021, p. 11/96).

However, the official recognition and administrative registration of the adjacent territories as colonies was too risky for the Russian emperor, who witnessed the turbulence Western empires experienced in their colonies. He understood that Russia needed a different imperial discourse to maintain control over the borderlands that would promote compliance and conformity. Citing Masoero, Schorkowitz writes that “the heterogeneous complexity of imperial society was accompanied by an almost obsessive concern for territorial integrity and centralization of power” (Masoero 2013: 68 in Schorkowitz 2021, p. 13/98). According to Schorkowitz, the characterization of Russia as a colonial empire was unthinkable dangerous, as it exposed the supranational construction of a “one and indivisible Russia” (Frank 2003, pp.1659-1660 in Schorkowitz 2021, p. 13/98). Thus, the need to legitimize imperialism along with an attempt to compete with and survive Western-style imperialism, turned colonial Russian discourse into a distinguishable way of orientalism (Bassin, 2006, p. 49; Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, 2010, pp. 4–11 in Schorkowitz 2021, p. 11/96).

Khomyakov is also trying to bring Russian practices of colonialism to a common denominator with Western ones. In his opinion, the colonial nature of the empire according to European canons is determined by three elements: trans-plantation of the settlers, external nature of the territory and formal dependency from the core metropolis, which are all characteristic to the Russian empire (Khomyakov 2020, p. 5/229). Khomyakov cites Hobbson’s ideas as a ground to imply that Russian Empire was arguably even “more

colonial” in comparison to the Western empires. According to Hobbson, in Khomyakov’s interpretation “imperialism is when colonies are not considered an extension of the metropolis nationality but are imperialistically exploited” (Khomyakov 2020, p. 8/232). For that, he claimed that French and German colonies in Africa and Asia are hardly colonies, because they “were in no real sense plantations of French and German national life; nowhere, not even in Algeria, did they represent true European civilization; their political and economic structure of society is wholly alien from that of the mother country” (Hobbson 1902, p. 7 in Khomyakov 2020, p. 3/222). Drawing a conclusion from Hobbsonian understanding of pure colonialism and considering Russian practices of periphery administration, Khomyakov claims that Russia is nothing but indeed a purely colonial power.

Studying the period after the collapse of Russian monarchy, the comparativists studying the colonial past of the USSR divide the Soviets’ regional experience into several periods: from 1917 to 1930 (the time of Vladimir Lenin's leadership) and from 1930 to 1965 (the regime of the Stalinist model) and from 1965 to 1991 (the time of stagnation and thaw, as well as the pre-perestroika). In different periods, the political influences, discourse, and practices of the Russian Center differed from each other and to varying degrees could correspond to the classical European colonial canons.

As Shorkowitz writes, the October Revolution opened the door to an open discourse about colonialism, actively used by Marxists to criticize the previous regime (Weinerman, 1993: 430-431 in Schorkowitz 2020, p. 13/98). The cruelty and exploitative nature of tsarist colonialism were recognized with particular emphasis placed on the economic exploitation (Drabkina, [1930] 2014: 5 in Schorkowitz 2020, p. 13/98). For example, in his critical assessment of the imperial regime, local activist Grigory Minkin, in an attempt to protect the

interests of the small peoples of Russia, spoke in the journal *Historian-Marxist*: “Kalmykia is on the eve of the imperialist war [World War I. – D.Sh.] was one of those Russian colonies where Russian military-feudal imperialism reigned supreme” (Minkin, [1933] 1968: 30, 35 in Schorkowitz 2020, p. 14/99).

However, such a frank criticism was admissible only before Joseph Stalin came to power. He immediately returned the discourse to the focus on the personality cult of the “great leader”, and legitimized conformism and Russian supranationalism disguised by the dogma of friendship between peoples (Schorkowitz 2020, p. 14/99). “Because ... the struggle for national survival against Germany fanned Russian nationalism, many Russian historians found it simply unacceptable to condemn Russian colonialism” (Weinerman, 1993: 435 in Schorkowitz 2020, p. 14/99). Only after the 20th Congress of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Khrushchev’s debunking of Stalin’s personality cult did the original Marxist motifs reappear in Soviet political discourse (see Gerasimova 1957; Burchinova 1968; Kamalov 1971; Schorkowitz 2020, p. 14/99).

A historian, Dominik Lieven, also divides the Soviet regional reign into the periods before and after the Stalinist regime. Prior to the Stalinist regime, according to Lieven, the Soviet authorities showed relative awareness of their responsibility for the oppressed borderland population. The Leninists launched a policy of indigenization', which meant that Russian settlers were supposed to familiarize and adopt the local customs in the periphery instead of changing them (Lieven 2005, p. 445).

Similarly, Adeeb Khalid writes that Leninist and Stalinist regimes were fundamentally different in their level of self-reflection and awareness about their colonial past. The Provisional Government recognized the right to equality and freedom for all

regardless of their gender, race, creed, religion, and ethnicity. Yes, it is undebatable that Marxism as a concept was multiple times criticized for being universalistic and pursuing Eurocentric evolutionary ideas which is conforming and at times color-blind, yet early Bolsheviks were aware of the burden of their imperial past and openly recognized it (Khalid 2007, p. 127).

In the mid-1930s, Stalin has changed the trajectory of regional policies and launched a strategy of supranational state building. Khalid states that Stalin emphasized the division between the backward “East” and the developed “West” were now accepted as objective categories. This distinction was bureaucratically formalized when the Soviet Commissariat for Education proclaimed some of the Central Asian, Siberian peoples “culturally backward” nationalities (Khalid 2007, p. 137). By the end of Stalin’s rule, the asymmetry in ethnic representation reaches the point that the power over the entire country was centralized in Moscow and ruled by predominantly Russian elite group called “nomenklatura” that managed to establish such an economic system that supplied the center at the expense of the borderland economies (Khalid 2007, p. 138-139).

Khomyakov develops the ambiguity of the relations between the USSR and the Russian Empire and their legacy. On one hand, ‘before 1917, the Bolsheviks [. . .] had condemned all forms of colonization as exploitative. After attaining power, however, they began to express concern that it would not be possible for Soviet Russia to survive without the cotton of Turkestan and the oil of the Caucasus. [. . .]’ (Hirsch, 2005: 5 in Khomyakov 2020, p. 21/245). In a way, Khomyakov argues, the Bolsheviks did not cancel the Russian imperialism but modernized it; he claims that decolonial character of Bolsheviks ideology was more used as a rhetoric than a sustainable policy and was designed to hide the exploitative nature of the Soviet Empire.

Just like Lieven, Khalid and Schorkowitz, Khomyakov admits early Bolsheviks recognized Russian imperial ‘chauvinism’ and tried to make up for the wrong doings of the old Empire. ‘A distinction must necessarily be made,’ Lenin claimed in 1922, ‘between the nationalism of the oppressor and nationalism of the oppressed, the nationalism of a large nation and the nationalism of a small nation. [. . .] Thus, internationalism on the part of oppressor or so-called ‘great’ nation [. . .] must consist not only in the observance of the formal equality of nations, but even yielding to the smaller nation, to make up for the inequality which exists in actual practice’ (Lenin 1970, pp. 358–359 in Khomyakov 2020, p. 22/246). This concept implied the commitment to self-regulation in favor of the freedom and respect for the culture and economy of the smaller peripheral nations. However, Khomyakov states, as soon as the Bolsheviks were supplied with enough populace support, the system immediately was retracted back to Russian imperial interests and even to the greater extent of oppression considering its conformity and totalitarian control (Khomyakov 2020, p. 23/247).

The characteristic feature of the early Bolshevik period is the pronounced position of the communist feminism that focused on liberation of women and creating an infrastructure that would ease their burden of motherhood. However, there is a lack in representation of comparative approach when it comes to intersectional analysis of colonization: they fail to address the women’s question in colonial practices as it was or in comparison to that of the Western experience or apply it to the Western canon.

To summarize, the abovementioned set of authors find common ground on several elements of their studies. They, firstly, rely on Western constructs of colonialism as a theoretical framework to define Russia as a colonial empire. They are also focused on comparison of the colonial experiences between Russia and the Western Empires. Third,

they all conclude that Russia is one of the European types of colonial empires that has minor deviations from the classic understanding of colonialism.

Eurasianists (Neo-Fascists)

Another array of authors who tend to see themselves through the lenses of comparison and contradiction are labeled in the Russian literature on colonialism as the Eurasianists. These thinkers are the core sponsors of the official Russian strategy of foreign policy, and unlike the previous community of scholars, they completely deny the colonial nature of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union but refer it only in the context of the Western experience. Instead, they are ideologically driven and celebrate Russian regional leadership as the only possible scenario that benefits the entire international community because it stands for multipolar world against the US-led global imperial ambitions.

Eurasianism has its roots in the circles of Russian emigrants who fled the Bolshevik repressions in the early 1914-1920s. This framework of thought was a reaction to the decolonial discourse of the early Bolsheviks. Von Hagen highlights several aspects of early Eurasianism in the early 20th century (Von Hagen 2006, p. 4/71). First, it is a radical critique of the Eurocentric point of view and a gravitation towards the idea of a beneficial “Asian” influence for the history of Russia. Secondly, it is a justification of the imperial experience of Russia and a view of it as an educational and unifying project for the benefit of the multinational neighboring community of the borderland peoples. In an attempt to free themselves from European influence, the Eurasians asserted self-sufficiency of the Russian Empire and its “special path” in the development of the region (Von Hagen 2006, p. 4/71). The early Eurasianists based their beliefs on the concept of “place-development”, in which they invested “a set of domains of a wide order, built based on genetic age-old connections between human plant, animal and mineral kingdoms” (Savitsky 1925 in Shcherbakov 2021,

p. 2/19). The defense of place-development meant following the super-idea of serving God and the good of “one’s own local good” (which is understood as the regional values system) suppressing any ethnic, nationalist, class, and gender goals and, accordingly, the implementation of “cathedral thinking” (Trubetskoy 1935 in Shcherbakov 2021, p. 3/20).

Eurasianism returned to Russia after the collapse of the USSR and was reconsidered primarily by three main thinkers: Alexander Dugin (Russian political scientist and public figure, PhD candidate of philosophical sciences, Doctor of Political Sciences, Doctor of sociological sciences), Alexander Panarin (Russian philosopher, political scientist, and publicist), and Vadim Tsymbursky (Russian philosopher, researcher of geopolitics, philologist). These authors adapted the postulates of classical Eurasianism to the new context of post-Soviet Russia and were included in numerous provisions of the basic foreign policy documents of the Russian Federation (Shcherbakov 2021, p. 1/8).

They offered different intersecting and conflicting lenses to apply and regard Eurasianism. Panarin's position lies in “a new synthesis of formational and civilizational paradigms, a breakthrough into the future not on the basis of cultural disarmament and depersonalization, but with the preservation of the cultural and civilizational diversity of humanity” (Panarin 1994, p. 204 in Shcherbakov 2021, p. 4/21). Secondly, “different from the West and having a conscious of a unique nature, Russian civilization nevertheless never showed any inclination to shift the burden of responsibility for the fate of the world” (Panarin 1994, p. 56 in Shcherbakov 2021, p. 5/22). Thirdly, Panarin proposed “to assess the civilizational potential of Russia, rooted, in particular, in its Orthodox archetype” (Panarin 1994, p. 205 in Shcherbakov 2021, p. 5/22). The philosopher defends the “messianic” status of Russia and proposes to resist the challenges posed by the international community through dialogue and mutual enlightenment between Eurasia and the collective West. At the same

time, Panarin states that the separation of the interests of small peoples and various ethnic groups from Russian supranational group is alienating and fetishizing. Distinguishing the needs and interests of the internal groups is dangerous because it is weakening the attention to really pressing problems of the state, such as spirituality and economic development.

Unlike Panarin, who proclaimed Russian messianism as a “burden of responsibility,” Tsymbursky advised to debunk and renounce it. The latter author advocated for a fundamentally new, isolationist definition of the Russian identity pattern. He described Russian civilization through the category of an “island” surrounded by a belt of culturally alien states: “Russia’s rollback from its para-European and para-Asian borders, ‘withdrawal to the island,’ should contribute to regionalization and highlight the problems of internal geopolitics, especially those related to the difficult spaces of the New Russia beyond the Urals,” wrote the philosopher (Tsymbursky 1993, p. 30 in Shcherbakov 2021, p. 6/23).

Both authors can be rightfully accused of promoting ultra-nationalist and right-wing narratives. However, the most radical, influential, and popular representative of Eurasianism is Alexander Dugin, who goes even further. His ideas are recognized by a wide range of international academics as openly neo-fascist and extremely detrimental to the survival of human species if applied in practice (Shekhovtsov 2009; Ingram 2001). However, much of his “Memorandum on Eurasianism” is included in the 2021 strategic doctrine of Russian foreign policy (Shekhovtsov 2021). Dugin proposes to consider several central principles of Eurasianism. Firstly, the principle of a certain “blooming complexity.” According to Dugin, although the Russian ethnic group is the leader, it does not have a monopoly on power in the country. Instead, the extremist philosopher proposes to consider the Eurasian system as a monolith of many peoples. Secondly, Dugin considers the supremacy of patriarchal monotheistic religions like Christianity and Islam to be an inalienable postulate of

Eurasianism. Thirdly, the author insists on the intransigence of the goals of the North Atlantic bloc and those of Eurasian Russia: “Russia has its own path. And this path does not coincide with the mainstream of Western civilization. Russia and the West are implementing different civilizational models, they have different value systems [...] between the Eurasian metacivilization, the core of which is Russia, and the Western Atlantic community, there is initially an irreducible contradiction. Here we have a clear opposition: it’s either us or them” (Dugin 2002, p. 9/17).

Dugin’s version of Eurasianist thought has been multiple times recognized as being inherently neo-fascist and critiqued by both, Russian and Western authors like Anton Shekhovtsov in his “The Palingenic Thrust of Russian Neo-Eurasianism: Ideas of Rebirth in Aleksandr Dugin's Worldview,” Andreas Umland in “Dugin kein Faschist? Eine Erwiderung an Professor A. James Gregor,” Roger Griffin, Werner Loh and Andreas Umland in their “Secondary Debate on Aleksandr Dugin,” Stephen Shenfield in his *Russian Fascism: Traditions, Tendencies, Movements*, Markus Mathyl in “The National-Bolshevik Party and Arctogaia: Two Neo-Fascist Groupuscules in the Post-Soviet Political Space,” and Alan Ingram in “Alexander Dugin: Geopolitics and Neo-Fascism in Post-Soviet Russia,” and many others (Shekhovtsov 2009, p 4/10).

For example, Shekhovtsov states that even though Dugin addresses cultural preservation more than racial or ethnic one, the latter author still attributes cultural traits to “manifestations of an ethnic community, an *ethnie*” because Dugin’s vision of Neo-Eurasianism is originated in the ideas of Soviet anthropologist Lev Gumilev and his theory of *ethnogenesis* (Shekhovtsov 2009, p 4/10). In 1970s, Gumilev’s pseudoscientific study defined ethnogenesis as a biologically organic community with certain deterministic traits and predispositions to development in a certain trajectory which are prone to go through

different stages like evolution, climax, and decline. Gumilev legitimized racist discourse in Soviet social sciences and prescribed certain characteristics of mindset and character to different ethnic groups within the Soviet diverse society. Dugin accepts this concept as legitimate to this day and argues that his ethnogenesis of origin, Russian, is now in the stage of decline as it was alienated from its mystical supreme nature (Dugin 2000, pp. 259, 255 in Shekhovtsov 2009, p. 4). According to Dugin, the shift of the trajectory in Russian “condition in the ethnic, biological and spiritual sense” is only possible if engaged with Russian nationalism in cultural ethnic terms and its mission to lead the surrounding Eurasian nations (Dugin 2000, pp. 259, 255 in Shekhovtsov 2009, p. 4).

Dugin’s Eurasianism is an attempt to clash with modernity and resist present-day globalization led by Western (first, Anglo-Saxon, American) cultural norms. His discontent is directed at the universality of the Western approaches “decomposition of ethnic communities into autonomous individuals” that is a result of mixing races and cultural traits and creation of a new cosmopolitan human (Shekhovtsov 2009, pp. 4-5). Even though Dugin claims that at times mixed ethnicities are an inevitable product of multinational society that can be regarded as a positive phenomenon (at times), he still emphasizes that the Russian nation is in danger of losing its ethnic identity and calls for creation of legal regulations that could sustain the “norms of ethno-cultural hygiene” (Dugin 2000, p. 251 in in Shekhovtsov 2009, p. 4). The supremacy and purity of Russian identity in Dugin’s ideas can well be summarized in his own words cited by Sherbakov: “The will of any people is sacred. The will of Russian people is sacred a hundredfold” (Dugin 1994 in Shekhovtsov 2009, p. 4).

Ingram notices that, given Russian historic memory of the Great Patriotic War with Nazi Germany, it is unthinkable for the Russian academic community to use the word “fascist” referring to a legitimate paradigm included in an educational program of social

sciences like Russian Eurasianist thought. However, Dugin, one of the main proponents of Eurasianism, relies on thinkers who are known to be associated with fascist and neo-fascist paradigms, such as Spengler, Evola, Schmitt, Steukers, de Benoist, Niekisch, Parvelescu and Thiriart, as well as more ambivalent figures such as Jung and Heidegger (Ingram 2001, p. 18/ 1046). From the philosophical foundations established by the mentioned thinkers, Dugin draws the conclusion that Russia owns a specific organic natural unity that stems from its core ethnic and geographical supremacy which gives Russians a “universal significance and empire-building mission” (Ingram 2001, p. 18/ 1046). Ingram also concludes from Dugin’s works that authoritarianism and totalitarianism are suggested as the most suitable form of government in Eurasia including the respective gender relations: men are expected to be heroes and warriors “positively aligned with conflict, violence, war, and imperialism. Women appear only in discussion of a pro-family policy, with contraception and abortion to be banned” (Ingram 2001, p. 19/ 1047).

Thus, Eurasianism by its nature is an antagonistic paradigm since it exists only in comparison with and in opposition to the “Western” system of values. Eurasians categorically oppose any colonial discourse relating to Russian history and consider the Russian people an object of Western culture colonization and the latter’s violent influence. Devotees of Eurasianism also argue that Russia's imperial experience is an organic process of attraction for neighboring states, and Russia's exercise of its responsibility to protect neighboring small nations. This school of thought also elevates the role of religious values and structures to a new status, since it is one of the foundations of Russia's messianic authority in the region.

Reflectivists

The third trend of Russian post-colonial thought is devoted to self-reflection of Russia's colonial experience. Here, the authors are more turned inward and to a lesser extent try to measure Russian colonial experience with Western scale. One of the founders of this trend is Alexander Etkind. This school by default recognizes that Russian imperial past was a story of colonialism, however, is focused on the uniqueness of this experience and makes a unique case of Russian style colonialism. The authors of this block take Solovyov and Klyuchevsky's view on self-colonization and build their arguments on top of the fundamental assumption that "Russia is a country that colonizes itself." This set of historians and political scientists agree that the terrestrial nature of Russia's colonies make it more difficult to distinguish the boundaries between the metropolis and the colonies. Moreover, Russian unique experience is that the Empire orientalized, exploited, and alienated its own center to the same extent as it did the borderland colonies. For that, the boundaries between the center and the periphery become blurred.

The authors of this school (e.g., Fournier) distinguish three main characteristics of the Russian style of colonization. First, they point out that tsarist Russian historiography cultivates the illusion of consensual nature of the Empire as if the colonies voluntarily submitted to the center. They dismantle this idea, revealing the history of continuous resistance of the peasantry and peripheral colonial subjects against the core elites. The second idea that the reflectivists mention is the concept of self-orientalization: this means that Russian elites culturally distanced themselves from the aboriginal population of Siberia or Central Asia to the same extent as they did from their own peasantry. The higher society of Russians referred themselves to a different civilization; the only thing that united the classes of social hierarchy was, in fact, religion. The last dimension of the reflectivist thought

touches upon a somewhat psychoanalytic notion of “splitting oneself” that organically stems from the previous two ideas. This concept refers to the Russian colonizing elites who found themselves aliens in the country they completely orientalized and distanced themselves from (Fournier 2012, p. 2/20).

The followers of the reflectivists’ school of thought expand the concept of colonization and find its salience in Foucauldian concept of panopticon⁵. Etkind regards colonization in Foucault’s philosophical terms as a set of tactics and strategies to create and change cultural distance between the colonizer and the colonized. He argues that the Russian colonial empire and the police state emerging from its depths maximized the social distance between the center of their power and its subjects but minimized the cultural distance between them to maintain the loyalty of subordinates and connection with the periphery. The tsar and the serf belong to the same culture, language, and faith, only this can be a foundation of their unity, because the tsar does not want to share everything else. Thus, it is precisely the work with the cultural distance between the center of power and its subjects – its study, exaggeration, demonstration, minimization, denial – that is the key element of any colonial policy (Etkind 2001, p. 17/70). This definition is especially useful in the case of Russia due to the blurred nature of its borders and the ambiguous distance between the mother country and its colonies (Etkind, Uffelmann, Kukulin 2012, p. 10).

The authors write that in classical Western colonialism, cultural differences between the mother country and the colony were based on distinct, in the opinion of the colonialists,

⁵ The concept of the Panopticon, as formulated by Michel Foucault in his seminal work "Discipline and Punish" (1975), refers to society's self-regulation of its mental state. The idea was borrowed from Jeremy Bentham, who, in the late 18th century, proposed the architectural design of a prison, the Panopticon, in which chambers are arranged in a circular formation around a central tower. This tower allows for constant surveillance of the prisoners, creating an environment in which none of the prisoners can be sure they are not being watched. As a result, the prisoners begin to self-regulate their behavior.

racial, ethnic, and linguistic features. By colonizing India or Congo, the British or Belgians endowed these attributes of identity some political significance and thus distanced themselves from those enslaved and exploited. Etkind writes that “the constructed differences between the subjects and objects of colonization ensured that even that racial distinction would not lead to undesirable confusion. But in Russia, the social distance between the metropolis and the colony did not coincide with the ethnic distance between them” (Etkind, Uffelmann, Kukulin 2012 pp. 11-13).

However, the history of the internal colonization of Russia does not imply a distraction from the oppression of the surrounding territories. The authors of this type do not dispute the fact of the simultaneity and coordination of the processes of external and internal colonization, but, on the contrary, highlight the correlation of internal and external colonization and the mutual transitions of these two practices in the history of the Russian Empire and neighboring countries (Etkind, Uffelmann, Kukulin 2012 p. 12). Self-reflection in the discourse on Russian colonial policy became popular in the early 2000s, and many authors can be included here: Alexander Etkind, Dirk Uffelmann, Ilya Kukulin, Tatyana Artemyeva, Valeria Sobol, Heinrich Kirshbaum, Kyohei Norimatsu, Marina Mogilner, Irina Shevelenko, Mykola Ryabchuk, Tatyana Vasilyeva, Stefan Rodewald, Mirja Lekke, Yulia Gradskova. The list of authors also indicates a greater degree of inclusiveness of these perspectives in terms of the diversity of gender and ethnicity of the authors of this thought themselves, even though the predominant part of the scholarship included in the educational programs is occupied by ethnically Russian white male authors.

Analyzing the Western and Russian post-colonial thought might lead to an impression that the Russian and Western academic communities have long been developing in isolation as if they existed in two parallel universes (Engelhardt 2021, p. 1). Unlike in the

Western post-colonial canon, Russian post-colonial studies almost completely silence the Subaltern. This deprives the field of enough critical perspective and creates a gap in the extent of appropriating the normative stance. Unlike the Western-trained canon of post-colonial theory, Russian post-colonial scholarship is not explicitly normative. It displays a significant lack (or wholesale absence) of an intersectional approach to studying the Russian colonial experience. The field of Russian post-colonial studies is still in its early stages of development and has evolved within a specific historical context with limited critical voices. At the same time, Western-trained post-colonial studies primarily focus on the relationship between the Global South and Global North and do not address Russia's imperial experience. As a result, the field of Russian post-colonial studies tends to under-examine Russia's colonial past critically, and those who do engage in this critical stance do not receive enough attention to widely acknowledge Russia as a colonial empire and present its aggression as a legacy of that history.

The Silenced Subaltern of the Subaltern Empire

It is essential to acknowledge the great number and diversity of authors in the post-Soviet space who raised the question of Russian colonialism and offered a critical perspective to modern-day imperialism. Belarussian, Ukrainian, Kazakh, and Caucasian authors like Madina Tlostanova, Anna Ohanyan, Marco Pavlyshin, Lyudmila Kozhari, Yadvica Stanishkis, and many others offered their research to deconstruct the Russian colonial legacy in their own political and cultural domains. However, the Russian academic world successfully banned the opportunity to question the status quo and critically assess Russian regional hegemony. The attempts of post-colonial authors from the periphery to provincialize Russia, according to Chernetsky, were either “ignored or ridiculed by the overwhelming majority of Russian intellectuals” (Chernetsky 2000, p. 2/834). However,

while ignoring the borderland authors was a relatively simple endeavor, the Western post-colonial narrative was too mainstream to remain neglected (Engelhardt 2021, p. 2). Here is where Russian intellectuals applied to misinterpreting and mislabeling different concepts in their response to Western-style post-colonial thought. For example, Il'in writes: "a Russian survey of the Western discourse on postmodernism labeled Edward Said a 'well-known literary scholar of a leftist-anarchist orientation' and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak a 'socially engagé feminist deconstructionist'" (Il'in 1998, pp. 107–08, 125). In any case, no attempts to validate and appropriate Western post-colonial thought would have been successful without allowing the post-Soviet subaltern to speak, which Russian academic discourse fails to exercise.

Conventional post-colonial thought has been developed in the attempt of the Global South to resist the Global North. In the battle between the First and the Third World, the colonial story of the post-Soviet world was largely neglected. Russia is not a typical Western empire; even though initially designed as such, it is still deviating from the classic European trajectory of imperial development. Russian imperial history and tradition no longer align with the global world's binary that shifted from the international East/West antagonism to the global North/South. In the dichotomy of black and white, the Russian case falls into the grey area, where Russia becomes a Subaltern to the West while subjugating the subalterns of its periphery.

As Morozov writes in his *Subaltern Empire*, Russian denial of its colonialism comes from deep insecurity stemming from the defeat in the Cold War. The frustration from the loss of pretensions to world hegemonic status makes Russian elites, including academic elites, feel "threatened by what it perceives is an expansion of the Western empire. [...] This feeling of insecurity provokes a series of defensive moves" such as suppression of critical

voices and doubling of efforts to silence the local subaltern (Morozov 2015, p. 135). A Caucasian author, Madina Tlostanova, shares: “I am also of the South (Caucasus) and the Orient (Central Asia), but inevitably of the poor North (Russia) as well, as the defeated empire trapped its colonial subjects like myself in a truly deadening way, closing rather than opening the new possibilities connected with globalization” (Tlostanova 2011, p. 2/67). Finding itself an outsider in the Global agenda and failing to get accepted by the European global elite, Russia became a subaltern empire that internalized the inferiority complex and projected it onto its ex-colonies (Tlostanova 2011, p. 8/71). This position creates a double victimization for the South of the Poor North as it becomes not only a subject to colonization but also a subject to absorption of Russian defeatist reactions.

This situation makes Russian modernity fundamentally different from that of the West: it is a modernity of the defeated, those who find themselves in the ambiguity of their role in the region and striving to sustain the traits of leadership in a state of anxiety. Deep insecurity and different social, historical, economic, and geographical circumstances prevent a proper contextual adaptation of the intersectional framework among Russian intellectuals. Intersectionism, as an underlying perspective of third-wave feminism and post-colonialism, was imported to Russia as a ready-made package that was not prepared for the Russian case yet was expected to be applied to this empire without consideration of its complexities (Engelhart 2021, p. 4).

Thus, the core value of this research is to derive an additional stance and discover new ontological and ethical approaches to apply to understanding of hierarchy and reproduction of violence in Russia. Instead of trying to apply the terms developed by the post-colonial authors of the Western token, we might take Russian and the Western colonial past to the common denominator using what Walter Mignolo labels as cultural “connectors.”

Mignolo argues that it is essential to find, describe and systemize specific “connectors” (in other words, analogous concepts) that exist in different ideational spaces for understanding its hierarchy, the idea of peace, and the patterns of violence. Even though these “connectors” may be analogous, they are unique in the world view that they inhabit (Mignolo 2000, p. 92).

There is a need to recognize and validate the differences between the Russian and Western-trained ideational systems while accepting their similarities. The way Russians see and frame hierarchy, colonialism, violence, and peace, provides an interesting stance on the colonial hierarchy absent or underrepresented in the Western and other non-Western ideational spaces.

Conceptual Framework & Researchers’ Positionality

The purpose of the current study is to uncover the discursive tactics used by state-dominant groups to maintain the legitimacy of Russian regional hegemony as a colonial legacy. In this endeavor, my proficiency in Russian, familiarity with the cultural context, and understanding of the cultural implications of discourse will be beneficial because they will allow me to conduct the analysis from within and more effectively delve into the verbal complexities. As a post-colonial author, I recognize the importance of positioning myself within the given context, identifying my own positionality concerning my identity and relationship to the subject under investigation, which is Russian political discourse. I acknowledge that self-awareness and a self-reflection are necessary to determine, formulate, critically assess, and map my positionality in the social context.

Thus, I am a thirty-four-year-old, white, ethnically Russian female born and raised in Kazakhstan by my Russian mother and a stepfather who is Kazakh by ethnicity. My family

and surrounding have always been perplexed about the anti-Russian sentiments raised in Kazakhstan after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It was shocking to my Russian peers that they must now learn the Kazakh language and respect local customs since they are the descendants of the assumed founders of this state. The Russians perceived the cultural shift and revival of nationalism in Kazakhstan as an ungrateful move. I have always wondered why my Russian peers and I were treated with resentment among my Kazakh classmates at school.

After realizing the irreversible de-russification of the Kazakh state, my family and I moved to Russia in 2001 during the Chechen wars. These wars triggered an explosive fascist movement called “skinheads” that was thriving on top of the state’s nationalistic and anti-separatist mottos and manifestos. Some of the “skinheads” happened to study in my new school in Russia. Interestingly enough, my new Russian classmates referred me to the category of non-Russians because of my Kazakh background and systematically bullied me for being non-white as they saw me. Here, I became aware of my identity’s ambiguity and unreliable reference point to my homeland.

Upon my experience in the United States and introduction to Western-trained postcolonial studies, I realized that I am a descendant of Russian colonizers who settled in Kazakhstan. The colonial past was never addressed in my history classes in Kazakhstan or Russia. Additionally, I noticed a need for more representation of the post-Soviet region in Western-educated postcolonial works.

What I did encounter, however, was cultural and societal differences that I was able to experience as a foreigner in American academia. These factors undoubtedly had repercussions on the interpersonal and familial relations in the West that I was able to discern

as well. Specifically, I found these factors affected the understanding of personal boundaries and functional/dysfunctional family dynamics that I observed in Russian and American settings. It is important to note that the observations cited below are generalizations that represent my personal experience and explain nothing but my journey as a researcher. By no means are they cited to explain variations within cultures and family dynamics. Substantial further research and analysis would be needed to fully understand the differences in understanding personal boundaries and functional/dysfunctional families in Russian and American cultures, respectively.

My personal experience was that Russian culture places a strong emphasis on a hierarchical structure, collectivism, and interdependence within families, which in the case of my mixed family, led to more permeable personal boundaries within the family unit, where physical, verbal, and financial abuse is not a topical subject of concern despite its presence. The compensation for more porous personal boundaries is essentially the acceptance of norms of punishment, obedience, and lifelong accountability to parents. In fact, “traditional family values” that represent the norms mentioned above are included in the official strategic doctrine of the Russian government, which aims at preserving the untouchability of inner family issues.⁶ American culture, on the other hand, as I saw it, values individualism and independence, which may result in stronger personal boundaries between family members but excludes the normalcy of domestic violence and violations of children's and women's rights, recognizing them as more vulnerable subjects in the family system. The

⁶ Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of July 2, 2021, N 400 "On the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation" includes an article on the protection of traditional Russian spiritual and moral values, culture, and historical memory, which include point No. 3, which states the need to strengthen the institution of the family, preserve traditional family values, the continuity of generations of Russians (<http://duma.gov.ru/>).

concept of criminalizing domestic violence, restrictive orders, and transparency of familial issues before the law was strikingly new to me.

Additionally, the concept of a functional family varied in the two cultures for me. In Russia, a functional family is defined as one in which the members are closely connected and are expected to provide mutual support, regardless of the sacrifices it may take and the presence of conflicts and differences in viewpoints. In contrast, in the US, a functional family is defined as one in which there is minimal conflict and a strong sense of personal cohesion as a priority before the cohesion of the family.

In order to psychologically adapt to a new environment, I had to undergo substantial psychotherapeutic treatment, and reassess my personal boundaries and sense of individual sovereignty. This path led me to encounter Western-trained authors in psychotherapy, specifically in family systems theory. I discovered an array of authors who discuss family systems and their dysfunctions. One stream of psychology that I found particularly intriguing was Dr. Murray Bowen's family systems theory. Unlike classic Freudian psychoanalysis, this theory considers familial systems, not individuals, to be an emotional unit of society (Bowen, 1978). Thinking of an individual as not only a standalone psyche but a part of the psycho-system of origin leads to explaining one's behavior respectively about the whole (family). Bowen suggests that, on the one hand, personal behavioral patterns are most of the time informed by familial patterns. On the other hand, the deviation from the way in the behavior of one of the members may well affect the functioning of other members as their respective identities are primarily defined through each other (Bowen 1978, p. 212).

Traditional individual psychoanalysis frequently addresses the individual psyche as the main leverage to generate change in the relationship and oneself. However, instead of

employing traditional psychoanalysis that addresses often explores the individual's inner psyche, Bowen's family system theory, to my eyes, was closer to the reality of Russian families because it considers an individual as a part of a family system rather than a standalone system for itself. As an individual's behavior changes, this shift usually alters the familial structure it originates in, which makes families extremely interdependent (Bowen, 1978, p. 3).

According to Bowen and his followers, kinship among family members is almost unbreakable even if they are geographically distant; the interdependence persists over an individual lifetime. This strong, cohesive nature of a family system was, as Bowen argues, designed to condition its members to cooperate, protect, nurture each other and act as a collective unit. The relationship in the family system is reciprocal. Bowen cites an example one of the family becomes dysfunctional when one or some of the family members takes an unbearable responsibility to accommodate the needs and expectations of the family and falls victim to perpetual anxiety, aggression, and attempts to administer and dominate the aspects of the family life that are beyond her control (Bowen 1978, p. 209) The person who is the most overwhelmed with the obligations towards the members' needs becomes the most prone to mental or physical illness (Bowen 1978, p. 211).

Other works that build upon Bowen's theory, such as "Triangulation and adolescent development in the U.S. and Japan" by Bells and Nakata (Bell, Bell & Nakata 2001), Cross-cultural psychology: Research and applications" by Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis, and Sam (2011) gave me some clarity on how family systems vary in different cultural settings and how social values system reinforces or challenges dysfunctional family dynamics. Another work that develops Bowen's theory, "The problem of gender in family therapy theory," uncovers the effect of gender norms accepted in society on family dynamics (Hare-

Mustin, 1987). These additional readings helped me contextualize the theory in an international and gendered context. The studies on family dysfunctions and mechanics of abuse inside the family explained why many relational mechanisms and phenomena were labeled as pathological in Bowen's family system theory but were accepted as a norm in the social setting (at least in the surrounding) that I was coming from. My guess was that not only do social norms affect families, but it is a system-agent connection: people appropriating certain norms in their family further replicate them or rely on them in their social life and, more specifically political life. The encounter with post-colonial authors reinforced my curiosity about this trajectory.

I noticed that, indeed, some post-colonial authors employ a psychoanalytic approach to explore social micro-foundations of hierarchy in its complexity. They show how racist and/or misogynist images drawn by the colonial discourse are persistent and frequent enough to get internalized by the consumers of these images to shape their neurosis, fantasies, phobias, and ambitions and further translate themselves into encouraging certain abusive social and political practices (Hook, 2005). Employing psychoanalysis in their studies, post-colonial theorists access the tool that allows them to study the impact of ideology on the human psyche as itself an important subject of study (Foster, 1991).

My further introduction to feminist authors also contributed to my vision that private dynamics and the order inside the family matter in building the political texture of society. Such scholars as Carole Pateman, Shulamith Firestone, and Rachel Pain demonstrated how it is possible to employ the dynamic conventionally considered inhabitant in the private sphere of human life in the discourse on political matters. For example, one of the groundbreaking works promoting personal space to the top of the political agenda was *The Sexual Contract* by Carole Pateman. Pateman suggests that the problem with gender

hierarchy is not that women are not capable of renegotiating the social contract; rather that the contract is a problem in itself (Hirschmann, 1990). The liberal social contract is designed to perpetuate their oppression within an institute of family and leaves no room for an alternative dialogue. As a feminist version of the Hobbesian social contract between the man and his ruler, Pateman offers to consider instead the sexual contract as a non-negotiable hierarchy where men exercised the patriarchal right over their women. She argues that when monarchy collapsed the patriarchal family of the state, did not destroy the oppressive hierarchy but turned it into a new version, where the brotherhood of men has replaced the patriarch on top of the social pyramid. Now, the new rulers of the patriarchal fraternity of men are in the position to subordinate the women (Pateman 1988). Sexual contract, according to Pateman, is the basis for the social contract; the difference between its “fraternal” version and that of the “paternal” version is that now it silences the relations between men and women or is depicted as natural or voluntary (Pateman 1988).

Another revolutionary feminist philosopher, Shulamith Firestone, in her *The Dialectic of Sex*, made her case that the foundation of oppressive social hierarchy lies in the structure of the biological sexual duality. Here, she regards the injustice and divisions of labor between sexes as a primordial basis for normalizing despotism elsewhere: in the relations among races, classes, and between humans and the environment. The cause of oppressive hierarchy in society is the biological family that confines those more vulnerable in a state of inevitable dependence. She points out that there is no sustained evidence that women ever ruled some societies, and the reason is women's vulnerability due to childbearing, pregnancy, and childbirth. Firestone states that this dependency creates psychosexual distortions of reality in females and leaves them no other option but to get indoctrinated into an oppressive social hierarchy (Firestone 1970).

Rachel Pain also contributed to linking the idea of hierarchy and violence in public and private domains as interconnected and, in fact, mutually conducive concepts. In her “Everyday Terrorism: Connecting Domestic Violence and Global Terrorism,” Pain draws parallels between the structure and dynamics of terrorism experienced in the interstate realm of relations and the household. Moreover, she claims these two phenomena to have shared foundations and to be mutually reinforcing. She critiques social sciences, primarily geographers, for neglecting household terrorism as an object of study and overlooking the connection between private and public types of violence. According to Pain, this disproportionate representation of the public types of terrorism in social studies is the reason for the reductionist view on both of these types of violence. It limits our toolbox to respond to them (Pain 2014).

These mentioned authors convinced me that it is helpful to employ a feminist post-colonial paradigm as an ontological foundation for my research and look at the regional post-Soviet hierarchy through the lenses of family system theory. This was when I encountered the work of Patricia Owens, *The Economy of Force*, where she offered a perspective that I draw upon when conducting the present research. Owens suggests a notion of a colonial household as a holistic model to regard international hierarchy (adding to the habitual and most fundamental understanding of what social hierarchy is). She elaborates on our context: is it all social hierarchy or, instead, a macro-version of domestic hierarchy – a household? (Owens 2015).

The difference here between public (political) and private (domestic) hierarchies, as Aristotle argued, is that the political space (polis), unlike the domestic (oikos), required a hierarchy formed through elections and official consent, where a multiplicity of equal actors and opinions thrive. At the same time, oikos (the domestic, the household) was founded on

an oppressive hierarchy where one opinion was enforced through violence and one interest (that of the household head) and, thus, was meant to prevail (Booth 1993, p. 2 in Owens 2015, p. 92). There was direct opposition between the forms of human association taken to define each of those locations. In Aristotle's words, the *oikos* was established 'as a means of securing life itself, [however, the *polis*] is now in a position to secure the good life' (Aristotle 1962, p. 28; Booth 1981, Nagle 2006 in Owens 2015, p. 94).⁷

In Owens' interpretation, the domestic hierarchy is oppressive and includes all aspects of identity, discursive, colonial historicity of development, and psychological aspects that post-colonial authors view as intrinsic to social hierarchy. To emphasize the distinction between political Owens cites Bobbio (1993, p. 2): "The principle of legitimation of political society is consent; this is not true of any other type of natural society. In particular, it is not true of domestic society, that is, of the family/household" (Owens, 2015, p.7).

First, what makes Owen's view stand out is that contrary to most political and international theory scholars, she states that the ideational content of the modern society of people and states still upholds the patterns of their predecessors - household forms of rule. The embodiment of the domestic hierarchy in Owens' theory is an ancient Greek household, "Oikos," that is a hierarchical domain created to maintain and amass the wealth of its head (the despot) and empower him to participate in the public affairs of the cities (*polis*). While

⁷ Our primary concern here is not whether Aristotle's distinction between *polis* and *oikos* reflected actual life in the ancient city-states, nor is it to downplay the forms of resistance to household despotism practiced by women and slaves. Instead, note the degree to which assumptions about the character of life in the household gave meaning to the political and military activities of the *polis* whether or not the two domains were analogized or opposed.

the members of the household were viewed as belonging to the household, the head of the household (despot) was distinct from all the members of his private domain and was called to benefit from the products of oikos, represent it in the public sphere, and exercise an “absolute legal authority over members of the household” (Owens, 2015, p. 5). The rule of the despot could be indeed despotic, yet also included responsibilities to secure the unity and “diversity of household members: women, slaves, children, and animals” (Owens, 2015, p. 5). Those duties were the justification for his privilege of undivided authority over his oikos. At the same time, the most vulnerable, dependent, and subordinated members – wives, mistresses, servants, slaves, and animals – contributed the most to the household’s needs (Owens, 2015).

Second, contrary to all other theories, Owens offers historical and theoretical evidence that the modern international hierarchy mimics the same governance dynamics as that of an ancient household. She claims that the social hierarchy has been understudied because the concept of “social” itself was not problematized enough (Owens, 2015). Owens offers the genealogy of the social realm tracing it from the ancient times to the contemporary era leading us through the journey of the household transformation during the middle age, the era of colonization and capitalism. She notices that the language of “oikonomia” at some point was replaced by the terminology of “economy.” Under feudalism, there was no gap between polis and oikos. The territorial and estate hierarchy was organized as one household that was subject to lords’ governance (Aristotle 1962; Xenophon 1923 in Owens 2015, p. 2). Like Pateman, who pointed out that familial hierarchy is perceived as *natural* and largely unregulated in traditional society, Owens’ system of the household was organized as a “violent subordination in accordance with what has usually been conceived as *natural* hierarchies” based on gender, age, and race (Pateman, 1995; Owens, 2015, p. 2).

Owens challenges the notion of social domain per se as the organization of human co-existence and mentality. She questions the constructivists' concept of social norms and takes the constructivist thinkers to task for failing to trace the historicity of that phenomenon while attempting to define it (Barnett 2002; Kratochwil 2006; Reus-Smit 2002 in Owens 2015, p. 13). At the same time, she praises Neomarxists for an attempt to offer a genealogy of the social as a matrix of households (where the latter is a fundamental element the capitalist society that is a source of goods and a channel of consumption) even though they still fail to map a household in a historical macro-space of political evolution (Wallerstein 1991 in Owens 2015, p. 116).

Tracing this gap in the knowledge about the becoming of social space, Owens finds some authors who point out that the language of "oikonomia" was replaced by the terminology of "economy"; they trace the starting point of political economy and find its origins in household rule (Habermas, 1962/1991: 15; Tönnies, 1887/1955 in Owens 2015, p. 96). The structure of the feudal law did not distinguish polis and oikos. In fact, entire empires were based on the concept of domesticity. The lord was formally a master of the feudal household had access to almost unlimited power over his vassals while those lower in the ladder of the domestic social hierarchy had to submit unconditionally. With the advancement of the capitalistic era, the concept of the household was replaced with a narrower concept of the bourgeois family that was limited to the reproduction of individuals (Spencer-Wood, 1999: 162–189 in Owens 2015, p. 7). Even though this new type of household was more susceptible to political intervention due to human emancipation, it remained private.

Again, Owens partially incorporates Pateman's argument, stating that societies continued to be regulated according to the ancient household (domestic) race-class-gender-

sexuality order, which was helpful for valorizing certain forms of labor (including population reproduction labor) at the expense of others (Pateman, 1995 in Owens 2015, p. 116). Unlike ancient Oikos, that was a source of production, new households became a channel for consumption of the products issued by the “market economy” and political space – the public domains (Lord, 2002; cf. Folbre, 1986 in Owens 2015, p. 116). Thus, according to Owens, these public domains appropriate the functions of Oikos as well as the model of hierarchy it employs to sustain and reproduce itself (Owens, 2015).

The capitalist social matrix shrank the scale of a basic household into a private union of individuals who reproduce people and goods. The domain of the family is no longer entirely political or economic but a private domain which made the family more dependent on the larger realm of the polit-economy (Lord, 2002; Folbre, 1986 in Owens 2015, p. 116). Owens states that there is still persistent similarity between the ancient household consisting of the master and his menages and the world system consisting of the global hegemon and other subordinate states. Here, Owens echoes Pateman in her *Sexual Contract*, who also pointed out that human emancipation could not reach its entirety unless the private dynamics are also addressed (Pateman 1995, Owens 2015).

Owens problematizes the concept of domesticity that has been obscured because of the household transformation and the need for more attention to this process in the social sciences. She argues that there is a much more important meaning to derive from the notion of domesticity for the thought of international relations than is addressed by the analysis of the domestic analogy (Suganami, 1989; Bottici, 2009 in Owens 2015, p. 6). Instead of analogy, Owens offers to consider *homology*, that she defines as “correspondence in type and structure, not merely an analogy, between forms of distinctly social regulation at the national, imperial and international levels that is captured through historical, and Homology

is from the Latin *homologia* for sameness and Greek for agreement” (Owens, 2015, p. 7). The notion of homology reverberates with H.W. Brands’ concept of fractal history, which suggests that the behavior of social groups contains repetitive patterns that are less random than the behavior of the individuals within those groups. To put it simply, when individual behaviors are observed and analyzed, they display a certain level of randomness. However, when those behaviors are aggregated and analyzed at a group level, patterns begin to emerge that are less random and more predictable (Brands 1992, p. 10/503).

Owens, thus, does not simply draw the analogy between the household and the contemporary social hierarchy, but rather homologizes the systems of social regulations at the social, national, and international (Owens 2015). She argues that “a modern social realm is a distinctive form of household.” Even if the realm of the “social is normally associated to the public sphere of the society that plays up to the rules of the polis, [...] it is more likely to be associated with the rules of the oikos – an underregulated oppressive hierarchy that persists in accommodating the survival of humans through the oppression of women on the first place, and other vulnerable members to sustain the interests of the despot” (Owens 2015, p. 5).

Third, Owens also draws attention to the etymology of the household rule. She states that “the term ‘domination’ derives from the Latin *domesticus*, from *domus*, meaning house. The first recorded English usage from 1521 similarly indicates that domestic is to be of or in a household, an ‘inmate of a house’” (Owens, 2015, p.1). Owens views colonial hierarchy as a “domestic space” (Owens, 2015).

Fourth, the colonization process has disseminated the household order patterns from the Global North to Global South, along with the concept of the state and nation. However,

household forms are still historically and geographically variable and are pre-conditioned by the cultural settings of the colonized people. The original Oikos meant “a form of rulership over those who resided within the household and, above all, was related to the fundamental human activity of managing basic life needs” (Aristotle, 1962; Xenophon, 1923 in Owens 2015, p. 2). The household routine implied accommodating biological necessities and security of the human body, which historically involved the exercise of violence and oppression in hierarchical structures based on gender, age, and degree of physical abilities.

The household members were imagined as belonging to a household, separately from a master who had almost unlimited power over his menages. In Roman law, the master of the household possessed absolute legal authority over the household members: women, slaves, children, and animals. This hierarchy is now envisioned to scale up onto modern social structures, exposing the remnants of the ancient household-like organization on a different macro-space of the social. However, the social space is not necessarily a copy of a household structure but rather a homological replication of it. In Owens’ context, “homology is most used to refer to organs that correspond to a fundamental type in another animal or plant, or different organs in the same species” (Owens 2015, p.7). The social space of modernity is a homological version of the household, mutated into a unit of a larger scale where the social processes of the included members still reflect the dynamic of the Greek oikos. The prevalence of liberalist thought in the 19th century, the notion of the household changed its meaning and transformed into domestic space of the bourgeois family. This obscured the broader sense of the household and its role in building the social domain (Spencer-Wood, 1999: 162–189 in Owens, 2015, p. 6).

There is a strong connection between Owens and Pateman’s narrative, since Owens’ household domestic/public distinction is a pivotal point for marking the difference in

different societies. Both Pateman and Owens acknowledge that traditionally the family or household and domestic sphere is associated with women and men are identified as mapped in the public sphere and the economy.⁸ The affinity between a woman and the domestic is correlated with her natural function of childbearing and emotional warmth, while men with the cultural function of politics, law, and economy (Lasch 1977 in Helliwell 2018, p. 2). Pateman's *Sexual Contract* and Owens' *Household* are always gendered because they acknowledge the distinction between the spheres of the domestic and public that are regulated differently. They both recognize that domestic historically refers to the assumably feminine roles such as childbearing and accommodation of basic life necessities, while the realm of public commonly is associated with masculinity – protection, exploration, politics, and trade (Helliwell 2018, p. 1, Owens 2015, Pateman 1995). This dichotomy of public and private is the foundation of gendered dynamics in society and the duality of natural and cultural (Lasch 1977 in Helliwell 2018, p. 2). This means that the head of the household is in the position to (self) prescribe gendered roles and impose gendered attributes on the household members' identities.

At the same time, Owens' household is not synonymous with the bourgeois family or Pateman's nuclear family. The former can include several families, and their members can have no familial relations, yet they are always organized hierarchically “around the administration of life necessities with activities arranged hierarchically according to the assumed biological and other status attributes of different members” (Owens, p. 8). Even though the household is normally oppressive, there are variations of its despotism: it can be

⁸ It is noteworthy that the gender binary has repeatedly been criticized by feminist writers as being overly simplistic and reductive. The complexities of gender go far beyond the binary of femininity and masculinity. The purpose of mentioning this concept here is to recognize the historical differentiation between the private and public realms in gender terms, and to acknowledge the impact of classic feminist authors on Owens' theory of household.

direct and centralized or indirect and decentralized. Owens points out how different household systems may reverberate with various empires or constitutional orders: “decentralized household rule occurs through proxies, the financing and arming of local despots to govern, to domesticate local resistance” (Owens 2015, p. 8).

Originally, the theory of household is not claimed by Owens to refer to the post-colonial paradigm as she does not address the discourse of the household and the human experience, nor does she take an explicit normative stance. Instead, she explores the practices of the hegemon (despot) towards its subordinate states (household menages). While describing the tactics of the US global hegemonic strategies, Owens does not apply theory to the American colonial image because it does not entirely fit the plantation economy during slavery in the US. There, the slaves were somewhat outside of the household. The plantation in the pre-1864 US did not look like a household in the sense of a subsistence community based on hierarchical relations. Instead, it was rather a space of production and a tool to extract profit. The master here did not take responsibility for the well-being of his slaves; he only wanted to preserve their labor because it created profit for him. The colonial system categorized “blacks” as non-humans but rather as assets that were subject to control and investment. The ideology that sustained the explicit inequality principle was titled “white supremacy,” which classified blacks as racially inferior.

For example, by law, African American women could not be defended from rape because it was declared that they “were naturally promiscuous and, thus, could not be raped” (Green 2018, p. 28/212). Green also reminds us that “before 1774, killing a slave was not even a criminal offense, which demonstrates the reluctance of lawmakers to value slave lives, as opposed to slave bodies” (Green 2018, p. 22/212). Because the hierarchy was framed in explicitly utilitarian language, the discourse of authority was not expressed

through sexual, familial terms or promises to provide shelter and security but through explicit demeaning rhetoric that systematically forced black people into a position of inferiority. One salient distinction between the slave in the Greek Oikos and enslaved the Black American is that the element of social death to which slavery in the U.S. condemned blacks, exposing the ongoing oppression as evident and unmasked. This eventually created the image of colonialism as an undeniable evil that cannot persist in the civil society in its original form (Green 2018, p. 28/218). This form is hardly identified with a household system, even the most abusive ones.

In contrast, Owens' household may well provide a helpful framework for the Russian case and could possibly explain the deep-rooted denial of its colonial past. The hypothesis is that Russian imperial discourse offered different colonial imaginaries framed in less dehumanizing terms of familial ties and the household hearth. These imaginaries often sound less explicit and less utilitarian and, for that reason, are more persistent, as I suggest, elements of today's world-making in post-Soviet reality. The quest is exploring if the Russian story of colonization remains an unrecognized plot of its modern history because of the tsarist legacy of the household that employs familial terms to legitimize its imperial project. The language of the household creates imaginaries that make it possible to view its regional politics as somewhat benevolent and natural, in other words, domestic. Prince Esper Ukhtomskii, a prominent figure in the imperial publicist industry who actively promoted Russian expansion in the Far East, once stated, "Russia, in reality, conquers nothing in the East, since all the alien races visibly absorbed by her are related to us in blood, in traditions, in thought; and we are only knitting together closer the familial bonds between us and that which in reality was always ours" (Morrison 2020, p. 26 in Inozemtsev 2016, p.

3). This stance demonstrates that the ideas of ties and family kinship may well be employed to legitimize control and imperialist doctrine.

Thus, I offer to apply the logic of the private space, which is the household governance, to the regional level of the post-Soviet space and explore narratives that allow a regional hegemon, Russia, to legitimize its assumed right to leadership. Also, I find it helpful to search for the homological patterns of hegemon governance and implicit and explicit coercive tactics that the despot of the household would display towards other household members. The first is expressed through tangible incentives and punishment, such as economic assistance or deprivation thereof, protection, or use of force against the household member. The second way to exercise power refers to the control over the subordinate actors' value system and maintaining it in a way to coincide with that of the hegemon/despot and in a way that would allow the subordinate to perceive the hegemon as such (Bancroft, 2003; Ikenberry and Kupchan, 1990). The crucial aspect to consider is that the practices of both forms of leadership are interrelated, much like the various facets of leadership such as mental, financial, emotional, and physical. In a scenario of benevolent leadership, which is based on the consent of subordinates, all these elements are in harmony. On the other hand, in instances of abuse and oppression where the subordinates are disregarded and their resistance ignored, this balance is disturbed. In the latter cases, abusive behavior patterns are sustained and legitimized through discourse and actions directed at financing, protecting, nurturing, and patronizing. Thus, my goal is to explore if regional hegemons use the narrative of the household rule to govern the region and legitimize its violent or benevolent actions abroad and represent them as natural.

Moreover, using Owens' concept of the household and following the example of some post-colonial authors, I apply the terminology borrowed from the psychoanalytical

concepts to find out if there is an intertwining of household ideology and psychoanalysis. Analyzing the discourse of household governance, I use concepts that come from family system theory. According to Bowen, people in a family system have a common thinking brain wired collectively through language, culture, and the way they, in combination, condition the human psyche in the memory, making this psyche intertwined. I borrow the concept of the family system and incorporate it in the methodology of the research: the logical blocks of discourse analysis that I employ in my work are categorized in terms of the cultural and emotional systems that evolved over thousands of years and that has been governing human and state relationships in the region. This cultural and emotional system is a source and a product of reproducing itself household ideology and is one of the principal driving forces of the unfolding political events in the regional constellation.

The assumption is that the common emotional skin becomes a foundation that the head of the regional household uses to affect the members of the regional household through specific types of discourse. Because the common “regional” language is so abundant with the ancient linguistic constructs that are emotionally charged, and the emotions in the regional family system are so interdependent, the household ideology, if found existent and persistent, becomes a solid binding tissue for all the members of the colonial household. If the family originated as an oppressive and hierarchical unit, the language that prevailed throughout this family developed concepts that legitimized oppression and violence. This language is reflected in interpersonal communication in the private space and further reproduces itself bottom-up and top-down. The abusive household language on the political level might embody the intersubjective social contacts and find its way into decriminalization of domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, and intimate partners’ violence, and mutually reinforces itself on the higher level of political contacts. I suggest

that violent hierarchy transmits intergenerationally and produces more linguistic constructs that travel to the political discourse affecting the most primal emotions. Because the household is heteronormative, it might also support legitimizing gender-based violence and child abuse. Once the identity is feminized or infantilized, the violence against that identity becomes legitimate.

Attributing myself to post-colonial scholarship, I once again recognize that my life history affected my ethics, personal integrity, and social values that particularly influence my research, labeling process, terminology, and categorization of the language constructs. However, even though my biography influences my orientation, I would claim that my experience living in Russia and the US allows me to carry the advantages of being the insider and the outsider simultaneously. I had a chance to compare the language of political discourse with that I encountered daily in Russia. On the one hand, as an insider, I can easier access the political language being studied and ask more meaningful research questions (due to possession of a prior contextual experience). I can produce more authentic interpretations and insight into the culture of language and better understand the sense of humor and hidden meaning of the words. At the same time, being exposed to the US political culture and discourse for more than six years, I am still less inherently or unknowingly biased or overly sympathetic to Russian culture and not fearful of asking provocative or taboo questions. As a scholar in US academia, I can bring an external perspective to the process. Thus, I consider my social-historical-political location to benefit me as a researcher in the study of the chosen subject.

As to the importance and contribution of the study, I argue that it is helpful to take Owens's theory of household to the regional level. I suggest that regional hegemony is specifically crucial for the analysis as they commonly hold different positions in the global

arena. However, they still hold the position of “head of the household” in the region they represent. I argue that it is most helpful to regard the household system from the regionalist perspective, for it would help avoid ethnocentric views or universalistic generalizations (Acharya 2014, p. 1). In addition, as Buzan notices, “security features at the level of regions are durable. They are substantially self-contained not in the sense of being free-standing, but rather in possessing a security dynamic that would exist even if other actors did not impinge on it” (Buzan 2003, p. 6). This relative independence makes regional hegemony stand as the heads of legitimate households. The regional “despots” manage their internal “private” dynamic, where they shield their household from interference in their “private matters.” I suggest that households use different means and tools to shield their private zones from intervention.

Another novel attribute of this work is the contribution to a post-colonial, discursive perspective on Russian colonialism. I claim to take a feminist post-colonial stance because I introduce the terms that originated in the private space (conventionally feminine domain) and apply them in the discourse on public space. The present research is, on the one hand, an attempt to enrich Russian post-colonial thought, most specifically its reflectivist category of authors; it is an attempt to label intricacies of post-Soviet social hierarchy in its intersections and the interplay of power reproduction. On the other hand, it is an effort to suggest a different ontological angle of understanding Russian imperialist ideology, add complexity to the discourse on Russian colonialism, and prevent a reductionist, generalized, and unrealistic picture of social hierarchy in Russian political discourse. Another contribution of this study that I consider worth mentioning is adding an “affective” element to the study of Russian colonialism in a feminist post-colonialist tradition. My post-colonial stance in this work is expressed, among other aspects, in validating the emotional dimension

of political discourse that engages with the audience creating a feeling of belonging to an imaginary community.

Research Design

In this work, I borrow the post-colonial ontological stance, which suggests that written, verbal, and visual discourse can well be used as an instrument to legitimize oppressive practices and normalize violence and abuse of power in the hierarchy and is one of the main tools to sustain hierarchies that reproduce injustice. The research aims to explore the dominant discourse on regional politics in search of expressions of the household patterns discovered by Patricia Owens throughout different historical periods.

Discourse can shape reality and construct a figured world that is widely accepted but contingent on perspective and interpretation. In the human world, nothing is there before we see and interpret it. The language we use is not only about saying but also about being, meaning, and doing. What and how we say or do forms certain practices, norms, and games. These practices enact or build institutions and social groups (Gee 2011, pp. 9-12). As soon as we enact a certain language, we enact the associated practice and sustain a respective culture, institution, or social groups. Each time a person who affects the power discourse appeals to a certain language, they create a space to fit the conventions necessary to construct a certain paradigm of reality (Gee 2011, p. 68). In the broadest sense, the narrators also engage in self-construction in familial terms by talking to and about other countries. This creates an actual context of use, where the actions of the peripheral countries are interpreted and evaluated from the point of view of the head of the household.

Thus, I will employ discourse analysis because I want to grasp how the dominant narrative constructs the meaning of crucial actors describing and embodying the regional

household throughout Russian history. To interpret the discourse, I categorize the sources, samples, and make inferences of the content and the context. The discourse analysis will include texts produced by Russian officials, prominent historians, philosophers, political and military decision-makers, and influential religious and intellectual figures from the origin of the Russian state to modernity. The choice of the sources of discourse within each epoch of Russian history is dictated by the historical context and the way the discourse was dispersed and delivered. The flow and richness of the discourse depended on the political regime and the toughness of censorship, the literacy level, the publishing industry's development, and the narrative producers' prominence. I find that Russian power discourse is highly monopolized by the authority which makes the sources of information selection easier for the research. The remarkably designed dynamic of fear (who fears whom) and resources (who is investing in whom) is built in the regional disposition (Buzan 2003).

The first part of the research focuses on the imperial stage (16th-19th centuries). It analyzes prominent historiographic and periodic texts documenting Russian imperial conquests from the 1500s to the 1800s. The Imperial epoch is characterized by the low literacy level of most of the population and, thus, the relative scarcity of written discourse. The most prominent political figures did not consider it necessary to convince the people that their actions were justified, therefore, did not communicate much with the population, nor did they put much effort into defending the elite's position through political speeches, interviews, or debates as happens nowadays. Also, the publishing industry was largely dependent on imperial doctrines. Thus, I will largely take historiographers approved by the emperors and other elites for publication. I also take the creative literature and art literature that significantly affected educated layers of Russian society and constructed the figured world through images and allegories. In addition, the classic Russian literature to this day

affects the mindset of the population as it is an intrinsic part of the educational programs in high schools around Russia and the neighboring countries.

Thus, the majority of the discourse sources are the works of contemporary Russian historiographers and classic colonial writers, memoirs of colonial administrative officers, and military memorandums. The choice of the sources is determined by the prominence of the author or the document: whose hypotheses on Russian state origination and development was widely accepted and became the backbone of the household ideology. Here, I also pay attention to the practices described in the historiography that will help contextualize the discourse and show how it translated into tangible actions.

The second chapter accounts for the Soviet period (20th century). Here, the level of widespread literacy significantly increased. The discourse becomes more affluent, more direct, and monolithic. The regime changed, and now the elites spoke directly to the masses, realizing the necessity to maintain the legitimacy of the world created figured through discourse. The message was clear, and consistent and came from multiple written sources. The talks of the power structures became more documented and ordered. Prominent historiographers largely inform this part of the research of the epoch, manifestos of the most prominent political figures and activists, periodic propagandistic materials of the Soviet press, and documented decrees and provisions of the ruling party. While analyzing the discourse, I constantly consider the research questions: what linguistic expressions and ideas characterize the ideology of “household” to frame Russian regional politics? In both chapters, I use an inductive approach, meaning that I derive the categories from the texts and analyze them. Also, I pay specific attention to metaphors and allegories in the rhetoric as they usually underlie the themes most straightforwardly. In addition, I draw attention to the

linguistic connections that indicate some causal relations, similarities, and differences between the chunks of text.

The final part of the research concentrates on contemporary Russia. To work with contemporary narratives, I take a different trajectory from imperial and Soviet household analysis. Due to the development of digital tools and social media, power discourse has expanded and modified its volume, reach, and sources. The contemporary Russian landscape of public discourse is denser and more participatory. Thus, unlike in the previous two chapters, where I employ archival research, I use NVIVO Software to conduct the discourse analysis here. I observe the main themes emerging in the discourse. Thus, this chapter closely examines printed official statements of several most influential contemporary Russian politicians. The collected published political statements are processed using the inductive method of theme discovery. The repetitive linguistic patterns are grouped in themes and labeled concerning their relevance to Owens' theory of household. Here, I pursue several tasks: 1) discovering micro-themes; 2) lumping micro-themes into a manageably few macro-themes; 3) forming a hierarchy of themes; and 4) structuring themes according to the theoretical models.

Despite some methodological differences among the chapters, the three chapters share a conceptual core. Here, I have adopted a method related to the theory of power and ideology that was developed by Fairclough, Wodak, and van Dijk called “Critical Discourse Analysis” (CDA) (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak 2011, p. 1). This framework builds on theories within social sciences to explore power dynamics, propaganda, and ideologies in dominant discourses (Blommaert & Bulcaen 2000, p. 3/449). CDA is based on linguistic and critical theories, which regard influential narratives as acts and practices, and considers the

social context necessary in interpreting the discourse (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak 2011; Blommaert & Bulcaen 2000).

In other words, CDA offers a structure for examining discourse which rests on three corresponding processes of analysis connected to a particular aspect of discourse — discourse as a discursive practice, socio-cultural practice, and discourse as a text. Discourse as a text means that it is represented in specific linguistic texture and formulations which are readable and traceable. Discourse as a socio-cultural practice means that discourse is an instrument to explore ideology that manifests the power dynamics within society. CDA rests on the assumptions that most of the ideological-discursive constructs belong to certain social institutions and there is normally one ideology that is all-pervasive and for that reason is hard to reveal (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak 2011, p. 3). Discourse as a discursive practice implies that the language is understood as a fusion of text and its context and unveils the ideology of Household. That it can indeed open a new avenue to comprehensive understanding of the discourse around the Russian regional politics.

The household ideational constructions build things in the real world and form a certain paradigm where violation of international law is commonly justified with common history, good heart, affection, and the best intentions to protect and nurture. This process might resemble constructing a real building simply using words. While it is obvious that words are not bricks, they still can be powerful enough if said in a context of power to enact identities, practices and institutions, and prompt significant changes (Gee 2011, p. 16).

Conclusion

Western-trained and English-speaking post-colonial authors are known to have paid special attention to social hierarchy and embraced a variety of attributes of identity to

account for. Russian post-colonial tradition builds upon a different agenda and begins to follow an introspective/intersectional trends only in the early 2000s. Earlier, upon the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian post-colonial studies were introduced mainly by either Western-educated authors, or by Russian authors who still imported terms and instruments from the studies on Western colonialism. Post-colonial theory, which developed from the conversations between the Global North and South, did not consider Russia's unique experiences. As a result, the country, which was once an empire but is now a revisionist state, finds itself excluded from international post-colonial discussions. Russia is seen as both a former empire disengaged from the Global North/South dialogue and a defeated Northern empire that avoids addressing the challenges posed by its rising South. This self-isolation from these crucial conversations has led Russian academia to look for validation in alienated spaces, where harmful ideologies such as Eurasionism, espoused by Dugin, are legitimized and even incorporated into political strategies.

As a helpful framework to study the Russian colonial legacy, I apply a model introduced by Patricia Owens. She suggested a concept of the household as a framework for the global hierarchy headed by the United States. Her concept is not originally contextualized as postcolonial. However, I employ this concept because it provides of a model that can depict a multifaceted system of hierarchical relations that includes race, gender, and sexuality in its totality of expression and response to the political discourse of Russia across centuries till nowadays. I find that Owens offers a concept of a holistic hierarchy and calls the audience to question the nature of social hierarchy: is it social, or is it a domestic hierarchy of a larger scale (Owens, 2015)? Owens's interpretation contrasts with the political hierarchy. Domestic hierarchy, unlike the political one, is violent, oppressive and discriminates among its members based on identity.

Household-like hierarchy, according to Owens, uses different leverages to sustain itself: discursive method, colonial historicity of development, and psychological triggers that other post-colonial authors view as intrinsic to social hierarchy, but Owens only attributes to the domestic one. In this research, I take discourse as snapshots of the household continuum because I believe that the discourse is powerful enough to shape participants' knowledge, beliefs, and values system. I analyze Russian power discourse throughout its historical retrospect to derive the most precise interpretation of the household ideological linguistic maneuvers and trace their impact on the immediate surrounding.

The hypothesis here is that rather than operating utilitarian terms manifesting dehumanization, Russia positioned its colonial territories as subject to legitimate exploitation less straightforwardly. Even though the Russian colonial household was undoubtedly oppressive and exploitative, the hypothesis is that it was framed in language that portrayed it to be caring, nurturing, and disciplining while appealing to the most primordial feelings of the included individuals. Regionalist engagements with Russian post-colonial literature and practices may disclose unique examples of alternative conceptions of conquests as something different from Western colonial tradition.

I suggest that the post-Soviet region is a post-colonial hierarchy that, compared to Western-led hegemony, displays fewer signs of public debates, and attempts to renegotiate power positions toward its more equal distribution. Instead, the post-Soviet regional hierarchy mobilizes itself for a struggle to concentrate power and abuses it. The main focus of postcolonialism in the region is Russian interventionism and imperialism. Russian power discourse portrayed peripheral states and peoples as the "other" and distinct from core ethnic Russians, which is a common feature of imperial discourses written or spoken on behalf of the imperial metropolis. The hypothesis is that unlike European powers that justified

domination over their colonial subjects as an endeavor in the name of civilization or progress, successive Russian supremacy is mainly based on a hierarchical regional household model. I explore discursive constructs about imaginaries that depict Russia into the role of the senior household member naturally called to protect, discipline, and care for the entire familial unit.

In addition, in my analysis and labeling process, I will borrow terminology from psychoanalysis, as I account for psychological triggers embedded in the household ideology that engage human psychical stature. To do that, I will rely on the concepts coined by Murray Bowen and developed by such authors in the field of psychoanalysis as the Bells, Nakata, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis, Sam, and others. Those concepts lie in the framework of a theory of the emotional system that considers an individual not as a standalone unit but as a particle of its family of origin. Each dysfunctional family member is regarded as co-dependently bonded with her family of origin. Thus, she is limited in her thinking and actions before she is separated from that family psychologically, financially, and physically. I apply Bowen's theory to Russian regional household dynamics and incorporate some of the terms from this concept in categorizing the logical blocks I derive from the discourse analysis.

Chapter 2: The Becoming of the Russian Household

Introduction

This chapter demonstrates how the household concept is embedded in the discourse of colonial historiographers, philosophers, classic prominent Russian authors and publicists, and influential political activists. The speech considered is produced by the figures who shaped public opinion, included in the all-Russian educational school programs, and were the most famous narrators in their contemporary ideational world. The chapter analyzes how each region is seen as an additional member of the imperial household and unveils how the violence of colonization was covered by the narrative of domestication, marriage, childbearing, and love affair. All these themes are underlying historiography, memoirs of colonial administrative officers, political manifestos, and classic literature and art that targets Russian regional politics. I will trace the discourse line of these themes and show how they help legitimize the regional hierarchy and sustain Russian hegemony over time.

Russian power discourse develops a narrative on kinship or sometimes “romantic” connections with the peripheries in gendered or familial terms. It imagines the Russian Empire as a household regulating the relations among its members. The Russian elites throughout history promoted authors who would emphasize the prominent feature of Russian colonialism and contrast it to other empires as more benign and natural. In this chapter, I will provide evidence of this narrative’s existence since the foundation of the Russian Empire. The images drawn by the power discourse are not claimed here as the truth at the first instance and violence, but rather a narrative that pervasively penetrated the influential rostrum, generating the storyline needed to legitimize the bloodshed, the violence, and the oppression inherent in the imperial expansion.

Normalization of violence and the Russian people's acceptance of systemic hierarchical oppression as a verbally accepted part of domestic and public life may be influenced by a 16th-century monumentally influential publication called “The Building of the Household” [Domostroy], which offers guidance on various aspects of human and family life, including social, economic, family, and religious matters. This work is particularly well-known for its mid-16th century edition, attributed to Archpriest Sylvester, one of the most significant religious figures at that time. “Domostroy” is known as a “family code” that was created to organize and standardize the personal lives of Russian households during the reforms of Ivan the Terrible.

The reforms of the Chosen Council under Ivan the Terrible, connected with the expansion of Russia's borders to the east and the need to formalize the hierarchy of statehood, led to the final rooting of the autocracy and the formation of a class-representative system of government. The transformation of the central administration of power was also directly related to the growth of the state's territory and the acute shortage of administrative resources. It was necessary to structure the system of public administration, highlighting the groups of cases and areas that should be dealt with by individual political institutions (Skrinnikov 2008, p. 81). To establish a strong foundation for the hierarchical structure of society, a set of rules and regulations – “Domostroy” - was created to govern the personal lives of Russian citizens and ensure that they lived by both church and state laws.

The book provides detailed instructions on various aspects of family life, including how to properly venerate hierarchical ranks, honor the Tsar and obey all rulers, decorate a house with holy images, dress appropriately, and choose appropriate food. It also emphasizes the importance of children honoring and attending to their spiritual fathers, raising them with fear of God and using fear and violence as necessary, and instructs on how children should

love and obey their father and mother in all things. The book also includes instructions on how to praise and punish wives properly, how they should dress, and how to discipline disobedient servants. The book contains many prescriptions covering nearly every aspect of family life (Domostroy, 1994).

Russian sociologists and marginal religious figures critiqued “Domostroy” as detrimental to social progress and emancipation. For example, a Professor of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Archpriest Georgy Mitrofanov, criticizes the family model outlined in “Domostroy”: “Although ‘Domostroy’ is still popular among us in many circles, including Orthodox, from the Gospel point of view, it does not show us the way of life of a Christian family [...]. In ‘Domostroy,’ we are offered the cult of a large patriarchal family, more reminiscent of not Christian but Muslim. The woman there is put in the position of an almost inanimate ‘apparatuses’ for the production of children and the arrangement of life” (Mitrofanov 2008, p.1).

However, the historiographic narrative describing the traits of emerging Household discourse will concern the epoch earlier than when “Domostroy” was formulated and formalized. I will first provide the fundamental myths about the foundation of Rus’ (the original state that gave birth to Russia in its modern version), which launched the discourse of household narrative in the colonial policies of Russia. Further, I will introduce the practices and lessons concomitant to the colonization of Siberia (that is, the period of the Russian state becoming) and show how the process of Siberian colonization unfolded as domestication. Then, I will touch upon the colonization of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus describing what roles and images were assigned to the annexed regions in the Russian household. The descriptions of the colonial experience contain the suggestion that Russia is not a conqueror but a powerful lover or relative who is there to unite the regional

habitants and create a joint regional household. This chapter will unveil how imperial discourse is developing this idea and makes the figured world⁹ of the home hearth of the Empire.

Social Contract or Prenuptial Agreement? “Marriage” as a Foundation of Russian

As one of the few historiographers, Alexander Etkind offers a cohesive interpretation of the works of Russian historians from a post-colonial angle. He suggests considering such historians as Tatischev, Klyuchevsky, Uvarov, Karamzin, Yadrintsev, Khomyakov, Solovyov, Shchapov, Milyukov, and Znamensky as the most prominent historians who built up the conventional narrative on the origination of the Russian state and its evolution into the Russian Empire. According to Etkind, Vasily Tatischev (1686-1750) was the first to articulate the story of the foundation of Rus’, the nascent Russian state, in his book titled *The Tale of Bygone Years*. Tatischev was Emperor Peter’s trusted official and a fascinating writer but hardly a reliable writer (Tatischev, 1994; Tolochko, 2005; Etkind, 2011). Exploring the writings of Tatischev, it becomes evident that the text of the *Tale of Bygone Years* is the starting point of the “regional household” narrative.

During his career, Tatischev went through three large wars with Sweden, in which one ended in defeat and the other two were victorious. During the truce, he spent two years in hostile Sweden and developed the idea that the Russian state was founded by conquest. As a result, he felt embarrassed that the alleged conquerors, the Vikings, were the ancestors

⁹ In discourse analysis, Gee defines the "figured world" as the social, cultural, and historical context in which discourse or language is used. This context shapes the meaning of the discourse, and it is made up of various social identities, relationships, and power dynamics reflected in the language used. Gee argues that the figured world is not fixed or static; instead, it is constantly being created and re-created through language use and discourse. Furthermore, Gee posits that the figured world is not just something that exists within language, but it is something that is actively constructed through language use and discourse. It shapes how people understand and interact with the world (Gee 1999).

of Russia's current enemies, the Swedes (Etkind 2011, p. 70). Thus, the first published work on the emergence of Russia became a prominent part of the household discourse and established a narrative that mitigated the language and presented the encounter of the two tribes as if it was a marriage. He writes: “The coming of the Rurik and his Vikings humiliated the Slavic family and its language” (Tatishchev, 1994, p. 344). In this passage, the author discusses the assumed founder of Kievan Rus' Rurik. According to the 12th-century Primary Chronicle, Rurik was a Varangian Viking who somehow took control over Slavic tribes inhabiting the western lands of modern Russia around Lake Ladoga and established the Holmgard settlement near Novgorod, which used to be the capital. He was the founder of the Rurik dynasty, the tsar descendants who ruled over Kievan Rus' and Russia until the 17th century.

Tatishchev found some consolation in the hypothesis that Rurik and his Vikings, who came to Russia, were all men. At the same time, Slavic population predominantly consisted of and was led by women, the Slavic Amazons. However, there was no evidence that the Slavic tribes indeed consisted predominantly of women. Patriarchal philosophy coexisted with alternative history in Tatishchev's work. He insisted that the Slavs descended from the Amazons - women warriors Herodotus placed in Scythia. According to Tatishchev, in ancient times, the Amazons migrated from Africa to the banks of the Volga, where they became Slavs. He cites Feofan Prokopovich, the Archbishop of Novgorod and a highly influential spiritual counselor to Peter the Great, as his source. In Tatishchev's historical imagination, these Amazons, the ancestors of the Russians, played a unique role. According to his idea of marriage as a model of contractual relations, he believed that the agreement between the Vikings and the Slavic tribes was, in fact, a marriage (Etkind 2011, p. 72). These were relations where the Vikings played a male and the Slavs - a female role. The Russians,

he argues, became good warriors because they came from a marriage of Vikings and Amazons.¹⁰

Another prominent Russian historian, Vasiliy Klyuchevsky, referred to Tatishchev's hypothesis: "The history of Rurik is way too smooth, even idealistic, but realistic" (Klyuchevsky 1956, p. 140). He also talks about the voluntary agreement concluded by the Vikings with the Finno-Slavic Amazon tribes, as if the Slavic party invited the Scandinavians to come and rule over the Slavic land and people. Regardless of the gender dispositions, Rurik was still a foreigner; it was not easy for the emergent Russian nationalism to embrace the idea that someone from abroad founded their state. Thus, retelling the story of the Russian foundation, Tatishchev had to re-establish the legitimacy of this kind of foundation. He, firstly, puts forward a claim that without some *paternal* sovereign power, there is no civil peace, and secondly, it doesn't matter whether the sovereign will appear from outside or inside the tribe. Thomas Hobbes made the first of these two points, and in the 18th century, Hobbesian ideas became the political mainstream. The second statement was somewhat unusual but became more acceptable in gender terms (Etkind, 2011, p. 76).

Like many modern scholars, if not even more vital, Tatishchev perceived the story of the Varangians as an incarnation of the Hobbesian "Leviathan." According to Tatishchev, "there was no truth among the Slavs [meaning peace among Slavs], and a clan stood up against a clan, and there was a strife and cruelty among them," until they said to

¹⁰ Later, and probably independently from Tatishchev, Catherine the Great created a real cult of the Amazons, including elements such as "Amazonian" clothing, the riding method of the "Amazonian" and the female "squad of Amazons" — armed noble wives who greeted Catherine in the conquered Crimea (Zorin, 2001; Proskurina, 2006). Seeing herself as an Amazon, Catherine even wrote to Diderot that in St. Petersburg, she lacked those first Slavic Amazons, the "real Russian women" (Diderot, 1992, p. 123).

themselves: “Let us look for a master who would own us and judge us by right and justice” (Tatishchev 1956, p. 214). Using the Hobbesian concept of the social contract, Tatishchev justified the violence exerted by Rurik with the argument that in its absence, the Slavs would resort to even greater violence among themselves. *The Tale of Bygone Years* thus claims that the Slavs offered their obedience to the Vikings, and the latter promised their security in return. Postcolonial researchers are familiar with how the conqueror seeks to turn the seizure into a treaty. Here, the said treaty of the Russian foundation was explicitly gendered.¹¹

In his narrative of marriage between Vikings and Slavs, Tatishchev contrasts the marriage contract with the classic Hobbesian social contract. To ensure security in anarchic conditions, people are called to join communities. For Hobbes, this asylum community is a state framed in a social contract; for Tatishchev and Klyuchevsky, this community is primarily a family organized based on a prenuptial agreement. Like the social contract, the marriage contract is subject to preliminary discussion, but after the conclusion, it is indestructible, just like the state’s hierarchical structure (Etkind 2011, p. 76). In a family, a husband “by nature” rules over his wife and children, and the monarchy stands on the same basis: “The monarch is like a father, and subjects are honored as children, no matter what order they do” (Tatishchev, 1994, p. 359). In this statement, wives are silenced for the assumed notion that a wife, just like children, is under the husband's control and protection.

Reflecting on the Amazons and the marital model of state formation helped Tatishchev connect the conquest of the Slavs to the Hobbesian concept of the social contract, but he modifies it in gendered terms. The conqueror becomes a husband, the inviting party becomes the wife, and the idea of voluntary marriage allows this agreement to maintain

¹¹ The discourse on the state origination create a narrative signaling that Slavic peoples desired pacification through a created Leviathan. This neglects the alternative scenario, where Vikings abused the Slavs through their domination.

legitimacy. This combination naturalizes the hierarchy of the Russian state, in which the Varangians-Rurikovich dominated the submissive Slavs. Then the logic of such normalization could be developed in two ways. The first, which historians turned to later, was to downplay the differences between the parties to the agreement (the Vikings, Slavs, and Finns) and represent society as a multi-ethnic family who chose its master by consensus. Tatishchev, instead, exaggerated the differences between the Vikings and the Slavs and then combined them with the help of gender metaphors and the marriage model of the state (Etkind, 2011, p. 77).

The followers of Tatishchev, such as Uvarov and Karamzin, also significantly impacted the formation of the Russian historical image. Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin was a Russian historian and prominent writer of the sentimentalism era, is known as the “Russian Stern.” He was responsible for penning “History of the Russian State,” a pioneering multi-volume work covering the history of Russia (1803-1826), as well as serving as editor of highly regarded periodicals within the Russian Empire, including “Moscow Journal” (1791-1792) and “Bulletin of Europe” (1802-1803). In addition to his contributions as a historian and writer, Karamzin also held important positions in government and served as a counselor. He was highly respected and had various honors, such as being an Honorary Member and President of the Imperial Academy of Sciences and the Imperial Russian Academy. He is best known for his role in shaping the official ideology of the Russian nation.

Karamzin and Uvarov represented the autocratic hierarchy that had developed from the family heart of the Vikings and Amazons as organic and amicable (Uvarov, 1864; Karamzin, 1989; Etkind, 2011). According to both Tatishchev and Karamzin, the Slavs were better off under the rule of the Varangians than they were in the anarchy caused by internal conflicts. Karamzin, in particular, emphasizes the benefits of Rurik's conquest by contrasting

his benevolent rule with that of Western monarchs: “Everywhere else autocracy is established through the sword of the mighty or the cunning of the ambitious ... in Russia, it was established with the general consent of the citizens: this is how our chronicler narrates” (Karamzin, 1989, p. 93). This means that the state itself has nothing to do with civic opinion and engagement but only with the “natural hierarchy” of a marriage (Karamzin, 1989, p. 93 in Etkind, 2011). It can lead to the logical thought that if this story is told and retold, democracy can hardly appear as a good idea.

The narrative of family kinship and a peaceful marriage portrayed the Varangian conquest as a non-violent annexation, which distinguished it favorably from Western European colonialism. Historians presented the Norman conquests of France and England as forced and brutal annexations of territories. At the same time, the Slavic tribes joined Rurik of their own free will for marriage and peace (Etkind, 2011, p. 86). Marriage has become a symbol of the Russian colonial style, a way to whitewash the violence and extermination of conquered peoples.

The different element of Pogodin’s background that sets him apart from the previous researchers is his social class of origin: he was only half-noble blood, a “bastard” of a professor at the Imperial Moscow University, and his serf. Russian imperialists are indebted to him for deepening the contrast between Western and Eastern colonial traditions. He was one of the brightest representatives of the Slavophile movement of the 19th century, who sought to isolate the identity of Russians from Western Europeans. He designated the marriage contract of the Slavs with the Varangians as the starting point for repeating the narrative about other colonial regions of the empire. The history of every state “is nothing but the development of its beginning. The beginning of the state is the most important, essential part, the cornerstone of its history, and it decides its fate forever. First, one must

look for the source of the main state phenomena. Further, one sees the differences of Russian history from all the others, western and eastern” (Pogodin, 1859, p. 2; Etkind, 2011, p. 86). As in the West, everything comes from conquest, so for us, everything comes from the invitation, an unquestioning prenuptial agreement, and an amicable deal” for Pogodin, the Russian “sovereign was an invited peaceful guest, a coveted protector, a husband,” and the western sovereign. This generalized western state existed in Slavic communal imagination as “a hated alien, the main enemy from whom the people sought in vain for protection” (Pogodin 1859, pp. 187, 218; Etkind, 2011, p. 87).

In the epoch of widely spread popular psychotherapy, it is recognized that behavioral patterns learned in early childhood tend to be repeated in various forms in adulthood. Similarly, the scenario of the origin of the Russian state became a blueprint for the interpretation of the further colonial conquests of the empire: henceforth, any annexation was broadcast as a reunion with a relative, domestication, or entry into the family of a new member. The image of marriage as a starting point of the Russian state paved the way to frame the following colonial experience in familial terms. The narrative of the household became dominant in Russian historical records and became an eternal center of its political discourse.

Domestication of Siberia

It is noticeable that the term “colony” in Russian historiography is associated with highly negative connotations and is very rarely used. At the same time, it looks like the thinking of Russian patriotic historiographers and political figures is indifferent to the normative side of colonization as an issue in other parts of the world. Instead, they deny the Russian colonial past, choosing other terms to annex additional territories. Accounting for the criticism of the works of such respected scholars of Russian colonial history as Dominic Lieven and Mikhail Voslensky, Russian writers are offended by hints of the colonial nature of the Russian Federation and the Soviet Union (Liven, 2007, p. 13; Voslensky 2005, p. 65). For that, Russian colonial discourse on statehood differs from others in a way that makes the violence of the conquests less obvious, less pronounced, and, thus, more sustainable. The specific nature of Russian colonial expansion is determined by the narrative of “familial kinship” (disclosed throughout this section) that suppresses the narrative of battle and bloodshed, economic injustice, and racism of Russian expansionism. Moreover, unlike some colonial powers, Russia is a country *formed* by colonies that still coexist with each other within a circle of defined political borders (Etkind, 2011, p. 94).

At the same time, Russia exists as the largest state in the world precisely due to its colony - Siberia. Siberia is not conventionally recognized as a colony because it so organically fitted into the body of its metropolis in its time. It is rare to hear that someone associates Siberia with a once independent and then colonized space. However, contrary to the pseudo-patriotic statements of many Russian historians who deny the colonial past of their country, in 1892, one of the most reliable historians, Yadrintsev, published the

monograph “Siberia as a colony,” claiming Siberia for what it is – a colony (Yadrintsev, 1892; Etkind, 2011, p. 92).

The colonization of Siberia is represented in the historiography not as a conquest but as “domestication” in its most straightforward meaning. Zeder defines domestication as “a sustained multi-generational relationship in which one group of organisms assumes a significant degree of influence over the reproduction and care of another group to secure a more predictable supply of resources from that second group” (Zeder, 2015, p.112). Moreover, this is the closest concise description of the process of Siberia’s colonization. This makes a slight distinction with understanding classical colonial relations and processes where the central power system dominates the surrounding land and its components without necessary assimilation, control of reproduction, and cultural infiltration.

The middle and the end of the 19th century were periods of large-scale expansion of European empires (Arendt, 1970). The Russian Empire participated in both carving out North America and the Great Game in Asia. “The Great Game” was an ongoing strategic antagonism between the British and Russian Empires over Central and South Asia and Afghanistan that accompanied political and diplomatic confrontations (Ingram 1980, p. 9/167). Russia was concerned over British trade and military presence in Central Asia, while the British feared Russian imperial ambitions in India and British colonial conquest at that time. This situation founded a ground for constant suspicion, distrust, and the threat of armed conflict between the two empires (Ingram 1980, p. 4/162).

Thus, Russia had to create a competitive vocabulary to talk about what was happening within its vast territories to legitimize its actions and discredit those of its rival, Great Britain. Historians who have mastered the language of world empires also needed to

adapt the foreign idea of colonization to the mentality of provincial Russia. A Moscow historian and professor at Moscow University, Sergei Solovyov (1820-1879), made a conceptual breakthrough. Solovyov originated his genealogy as a historian in Tatishchev's works and the narrative of Tatishchev's predecessor, a German-Russian historian, Ludwig Schläzer (1735-1809), the author of the "Norman theory"¹² of the emergence of Russia.

Solovyov also echoes the writings of another famous historian, Minister of Education Sergei Uvarov. Uvarov and Solovyov conducted furious polemics with the third crucial Russian historian, the leader of the Slavophiles, Alexei Khomyakov (1804-1860) (Uvarov, 1864; Solovyov, 1988; Etkind, 2011, pp. 91-92). Khomyakov's description of the Russian colonial experience in Siberia is filled with a detailed and honest retelling of the brutality, genocide, and violence carried out by the colonialists in Siberia (Khomyakov, 1832; Etkind, 2011, pp. 91-92). Soloviev and Uvarov, nevertheless, call these works "anti-historical fiction." Applying the colonization discourse to pre-Peter Russia, Solovyov denied the very difference between the colonizing Rus' and the colonized Siberia: "It was a vast, virgin territory, waiting for a population, waiting for history: from here ancient Russian history becomes the history of a country that is being self-colonized" (Solovyov, 1988, p. 631).

Solovyov formulated this startling phrase in his review of ancient Russian history. According to him, it makes no sense to distinguish between the subject and the object of Russian colonization. Solovyov vividly described the concerns of the country, which is being self-colonized. There is no greater distance for the colonial consciousness than that between the colony and the metropolis. Solovyov managed to explain this unique phenomenon of Russian colonization (Etkind, 2001, p. 93). For him, Siberia was not separated from the

¹² Norman theory claims that the ancient Scandinavians were the aborigines of Eastern Europe in the territory of ancient Russia and were the ruling elite of the Slavic tribes beginning from Rurik's tenure.

metropolis by the oceans. Instead, it became the core concern of the metropolis because that expansion meant metropolitan power and supply with the necessary life resources. The government needs were continuously increasing, transportation routes became more and more complicated and intricate, and yet the country retained the image of an empire colonizing itself (Solovyev, 1988, p. 631). In his writings, Solovyov uses the verb colonize in a reflexive form, which means the reverse action of the verb on the subject of the activity. In other words, to say “colonizes” means “colonizes itself.” This verb is not characteristic of the Franco-Norman and Anglo-Saxon languages and, on the one hand, removes responsibility from the subject of the action - the colonizer (after all, his oppression is linguistically directed at himself), and on the other hand, blurs the boundaries between the subject and the object of colonization.

In the Western imagination, colonization is a historical process where X is a colonizer, Y is a colony, and Z is colonization; X does Z to Y, as, for example, “Britain colonized India.” This implies that X and Y already existed before action Z., But this straightforward logic does not work in the case of Russian colonization, according to Solovyov and Klyuchevsky (Solovyov, 1988; Klyuchevsky, 1956; Etkind, 2011, p. 100). While Britain was a full-fledged state and then reinvented itself as an Empire through colonization, Russian statehood was formed during colonization. In their formula, “Russia colonized itself,” X made itself with Z. Before Z, there was no X and no collective identity of an existing Y, which would initially be different from X. All of them arose simultaneously.

As Klyuchevsky wrote, the area of colonization in Russia expanded along with its state territory (Klyuchevsky 1956; Etkind 2011, p. 100). Unlike the Western colonies, which were separated from the metropolises geographically and economically, and with the help of special political status, the Russian colonies became part of the state. In other words, the

state absorbed these territories, amortizing their culture instead of exoticizing them. Contrary to Said's idea that the colonies mirror the metropolis because of the contact of natives with colonial practices, mirroring was not initially supposed in the Russian case: on the contrary, the Russian metropolis absorbed and mirrored its colonies, merging with them into one relatively solid state (Said, 2012; Etkind, 2011 p. 100). Moreover, the economic exchange between the metropolis and the colonies was not always to the central parts' benefit. It was often the case when the metropolis had to make economic sacrifices to maintain control over the periphery. The task of Klyuchevsky here, unlike that of Solovyov, was to reproduce the narrative of the colonial history of Russia in such a way as to emphasize the civilizational mission of Russia in its colonies, to add significance to economic contributions and reforms and to devalue or overshadow the violence, bloodshed, and murders of Russian colonizers. (Klyuchevsky, 1956; Etkind, 2011 p. 102).

Solovyov, on the other hand, was more honest in his historiography: he offers more geographical nuances in describing the colonization process, describing the formation of statehood in constant progress from South to North and the colonial process as a movement from West to East. He speaks openly about the methods of colonization that the Russians used on the native population: firearms, bacteria, alcohol, and forced assimilation. At the same time, he distinguishes between the process of colonization and the process of domestication: in the process of resettlement, the native inhabitants were considered as enemies; however, as the resettlement was complete, in the following process of domestication, the locals were considered instead to be colonial subjects who were exposed to more subtle systemic violence, cultural exchange, manipulation of commodity trade and mutual transformation of lifestyle (Solovyov, 1988; Etkind, 2011 p. 98).

Another Russian ethnographer and anthropologist, Afanasy Shchapov (1831-1876), also specializing in Siberian history, contributed a lot to constructing a public image of Russian colonization. Like Tatishchev, he presented colonization not as a stormy and victorious adventure but as an amicable agreement similar to a familial “natural union” (Shchapov, 1862; Etkind 2011, p. 95). Shchapov agreed that Russian history was the history of self-colonization. Born near Irkutsk, located in the middle of Siberia, Schapov was one of the first acknowledged authors who represented the voice from within the colonized space. Shchapov was one of the first historiographers to identify the role of mixed marriages in the colonization of Siberia. As the son of a Russian deacon and a Buryat¹³ woman, he could see colonial dynamics down to family levels and transfer them to the larger map of Siberian ethnography (Etkind, 2011, p. 97).

Another vital contribution of Shchapov to the colonial historiography of Russia is the presentation of history from the ecological point of view. Namely, Shchapov explained that the Russian colonizers pursued the two most essential resources as they were moving east-wards to conquer Siberia: fur-bearing animals (for fur supply to the metropolis and Europe) and sturgeon (for caviar production and its import). He also described in detail the history of these animals’ extermination during the resettlement and domestication of Siberian lands. Shchapov offered a multifaceted picture of colonization, whose scenario consists of several layers: on the one hand, we are talking about human resources and relationships - resettlement, genocide, confrontation, assimilation, mixed marriages, and cultural exchange; on the other hand, the extermination of animals, the cultivation of new

¹³ Buryats are the ethnic group of the colonized Mongolian aborigines that primarily occupied the area around Lake Baikal; now, it is a nationality in the Russian Federation and the ethnic group of Buryat-speaking population, historically formed and united by common culture and history.

plants, the joint harvesting, the distribution of resources (Shchapov, 1862; Etkind, 2011, p. 97).

Another Russian historiographer, Klyuchevsky's student, Pavel Milyukov (who also contributed to the formation of the Russian self-image as an empire), has been connecting history with the political ideology of "household" for decades without hiding the environment of cruelty and injustice prevalent in such a household. In his youth, he participated in the Caucasian War (1877), and after becoming a professor at Moscow University, he was dismissed and convicted for political crimes in Saint-Petersburg (1895). With the revolution of February 1917, he became a minister of the Mensheviks' government, and after the Bolsheviks' coup d'état, he took part in the Civil War. Further, he played an essential role as a political leader of the anti-Soviet Russian diaspora overseas for many years.

Like Solovyov, Milyukov was candid about the cruel bloodshed and the means of exterminating the local population by the Russian colonialists. Using Shchapov's methodology and focus, he showed in detail how assimilation was forced and how those who categorically refused intermarriage were wiped off the face of the earth (Milyukov, 1895; Etkind 2011, p. 102). Even recognizing the violent nature of colonization in Russia, Milyukov continued the tradition of combining colonial subjects and objects and putting them together in a "family-like" unit. This idea of self-colonization gave Russian historians a complex and contradictory but helpful language. Working in the era of colonial quarrels and competition with Western empires, leading Russian historians considered their language on colonization more appeasing and "natural." By radically rethinking the Western idea of colonization, Solovyov, Shchapov, Klyuchevsky, Milyukov, and other historians drew

colonization as an internal process aimed at the subject itself and not as an external process aimed at a distant and alien object.

Some other prominent historians, such as Nikolai Mikhailovich Yadrintsev and Pyotr Vasilyevich Znamensky, regarded Siberian colonization from the point of view of the discourse as a practice. Znamensky is a Russian specialist in the history of the Russian Church, a member of the Council, and Deputy Chairman of the Council of the Kazan Department of the Russian Assembly. He cites the story of a “wonderful miracle” [the fur animals] turned out to be a curse for the indigenous population that found itself locked inside the Russian fur trade system. Tributes in furs were only extracted from non-Russian and non-Orthodox people; Russians paid a poll tax, which was charged in money (Etkind, 2011, p. 107). While the natives supplied furs, it was more profitable for officials to “domesticate” them and keep them “in their primeval condition” rather than baptize them, create schools, and recruit them in the army. Were they to be baptized in the Orthodox Church, they would stop paying the fur tax in the form of furs, and would have to pay tax in rubles (Znamensky, 2007; Etkind, 2011, p. 107).

Nikolai Mikhailovich Yadrintsev, a native of Siberia, Russian publicist, writer, public figure, explorer of Siberia and Central Asia, and one of the founders of Siberian regionalism, writes those local hunters met the conquerors with serious resistance. Some tribes, such as Chukchas, Kamchadals, and Koryaks, managed to master firearms to fight back against the oppressors. Accounting for the evidence of the 18th and 19th centuries, a new and most pervasive method of colonization and obtaining furs from the natives was the tactics of assimilation. This included manipulating or forcing local people into mixed marriages with Russians and taking “emanates” (kidnapping local children to make them full-fledged members of families of Russian settlers). Sometimes Russians kept native

women and children as hostages, allowing their men to communicate with them in exchange for fur. There is no evidence that the hostages were inhumanely tortured physically; instead, they were manipulated into believing that they were now members of the new family that would take care of them (Yadrintsev, 2003; Etkind, 2011, p. 120).

If an amanat lived in a Russian family up until their adulthood, they would master the Russian language; native boys who were brought up by Russians were encouraged to marry Russian women and contribute to the integration of the local population into the body of the Empire (Yadrintsev, 2003; Etkind, 2011, p. 122). In 1788, Russian settlers' camp kept more than 500 Aleut children as amanats. Russian emperors, strongly influenced by enlightenment, legitimized such methods in official documents and believed them to be a "gentle" way to "domesticate the natives" and collect fur tribute. While the abduction of children and forced marriages were widely used among the Russian methods of colonization, these practices were less noticeable in the British, French, and Spanish colonization experience (Yadrintsev, 2003; Etkind, 2011, p. 122).

Dmitry Borisovich Pavlov, Soviet and Russian historian, Deputy Director of the Institute of Russian History of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and Head of the Department of External and Public Relations of Russia, writes that gradually, Cossacks and industrialists established a system that allowed them to exploit the local population without exerting direct physical violence but through domestication (Pavlov, 1972). They were bringing "gifts" to the leaders of the tribes, maintained a friendship with the shamans, married native women, wedded their daughters with the native men, adopted and raised amanats like their own children - these were the usual methods of domesticating the Siberian tribes to supply the royalty with fur (Pavlov, 1972; Etkind, 2011, p. 123).

To conclude, according to historians, artificially established family ties made the Russian colonization seemingly less violent, more sustainable, profitable, and relatively inexpensive. While European metropolises were losing grip on their colonies, the Russian Empire retained control over Siberia and other eastern conquests (except for Alaska). The legitimacy of Siberia's win and continuous oppression was sustained through the appropriated narrative of “domestication”¹⁴ and “household relationships” between Russians and the local peoples. Familial connections are the core of the Russian state and history. To sustain and legitimize these foundations and defend the empire from degeneration and egalitarianism, Moscow pursued the narrative of “household” ties with Siberia. This was a consistent move to continue a narrative of the marriage as the starting point of the Russian household and was further continued by framing other regions as newly added household members.

The “Virgin” Land of Inghermanland

While the Siberian colony was considered part of Russia and was not officially recognized as a colony, the Western conquests of Russian tsars were immediately identified as colonies. Having entered the colonial era of the active development of colonies by the Western powers, Russia continued its expansion to the West. This time, with the advent of the language of colonialism, Russia openly proclaimed itself an empire. In 1721, after the victorious Northern War with Sweden (1700 - 1721), Tsar Peter I was proclaimed the All-Russian Emperor, and Russia became an empire. With the advent of Peter the Great, the vectors of Russia's foreign policy and territorial expansion were determined by the rivalry

¹⁴ Domestication here is the selection process for adaptation of the colonized human activities according to the settlers' or metropolis' preferences. Unlike assimilation, it implies a shift in the routine and identity of both parties: the domesticated and the domesticator.

with its geopolitical neighbors in Europe, mainly successful in the outcome of the war with Sweden. This war led the latter to expulsion from the Baltic states, the loss of Finland in favor of Russia, and the loss of its remaining European possessions (mainly Ingria or Ingermanland), except Sweden. In other words, Sweden as a great power was eliminated.



Picture 1. Swedish Ingria (<https://en-academic.com/dic.nsf>)

During the colonial conquests (of the New World), the multifaceted term *terra nullius* appeared in the international legal discourse. The term was primarily intended to denote the newly discovered territories as belonging to no one; this allowed one to ignore the culture and order of the peoples already present there, to legitimize the establishment of new relations of power, and to reorganize social and economic processes according to the Eurocentric colonial order. The term was employed to support the standpoint of Eurocentric colonial thinking as a “space” that should be filled with new knowledge, practices, and people, and exploited in accord with the interests of the colonialists. Interestingly, even though the *terra nullius* was most actively used in international legal vocabulary, it was

eventually also used in philosophical discourse to characterize the social space, the area of meanings, the formation of ideologies, and political order (Bakaleets 2015, p. 1). During the colonization of the East European lands, Peter I actively operated the principle of terra nullius, reformulating it into the concept of the “virgin land.” Peter represented himself as the founder of the Russian Empire, the Russian state, people, and the title of the Russian Emperor. He changed many laws and institutions and did not hide but somewhat exaggerated the novelty of his undertakings as if he filled the “space” of dark and backward Orthodox Russia with new modern meaning (Wortman 1995, pp. 1, 44; Etkind 2011, pp. 143-144).

The intellectuals of Peter’s tenure glorified him. They emphasized the novelty of his endeavors while presenting Russia’s Pre-Peter version as a naïve ignorant virgin waiting for the man to enlighten her. A century after Peter’s passing, Finance Minister Yegor Kankrin proclaimed that Peter had so greatly transformed the Russians, it would be fitting to refer to them as Petrovtsy and rechristen Russia as Petrovia (Riasanovsky 1985, p. 109). The historian Solovyov believed that “a Russian man of the eighteenth century was completely pure, quite ready for the perception of the new - in a word, a virgin” (Soloviev 1856, p. 500).

Vissarion Grigorievich Belinsky was one of Russia’s leading creators of the cultural virginity concept. Belinsky was a Russian literary critic, theoretician, and publicist of the 19th century. He became the symbol and banner of the liberal intelligentsia and had a significant say in creating a social image of Peter’s epoch. His monograph articles on the work of A.S. Pushkin, N.V. Gogol, and M.Y. Lermontov contained several fundamental aesthetic principles and provisions for revolutionary democrats: nationality, conformity to reality, loyalty to the character of the hero, and modernity. Vissarion Belinsky spoke of Peter’s creation with words taken from the Book of Genesis: “With his power, he” dispersed the darkness of chaos, separated the light from the darkness and called the great country to

a great being, a universal destination” (Belinsky 1954, pp. 5, 117). In the same spirit, Belinsky urged historians to stop arguing about Rurik and focus on Peter, who is “incomparably more important for the creation of the state” (Belinsky 1954, p. 94).

In the discussions of Russian philosophers and critics, the “period of virginity” was more of the time than space idea. Russian “virginity” was materially expressed through establishing a new capital on a brand-new territory. Ideationally, in power discourse, however, the paradigm of “virginity” was applied to a historical period rather than a particular territory. Peter Chaadaev, a scandalous yet extremely popular Russian philosopher and writer of the 19th century, said: “Peter the Great found only a sheet of white paper” and “with a mighty boldness swept all our institutions,” “dug a gap between our past and our present” and “threw all our traditions there in a heap” (Ernichev & Zlatopolskaya 1989, pp. 205-225). Chaadaev and Pushkin called the Petrine transformations “revolution”; some historians agree. Chaadaev used the book of another Russian historian and philosopher, Ivan Yastrebtsov, “On the system that is decent for our time to children assigned to the educated class of society” (Yastrebtsov, 1833) to express his views on Russia and, in this regard, on the philosophy of history. (p. 201); it was here that Yastrebtsov referred to Chaadaev’s idea saying: “Russia is free from prejudice; there are almost no living traditions for her, and dead traditions are powerless. That is why Russia is called young, because the past, as it were, does not exist for her (p. 201). Her further writes: “these [Russian] people have a compliant and obedient nature, lacking stubbornness. In other words, they are like blank pages, upon which one can write anything they choose” (p. 202).

Yasterbtsov’s colleague, Nikolay Nadezhdin, was a Russian scientist, critic, philosopher, journalist, ethnographer, and expert on the schism of the church and its history. Acting State Councilor professor at Moscow University writes in his exchange with

Chaadaev: “With our simple, virgin, infant nature, not spoiled by any prejudices, everything can be done without difficulty, without violence: from us, as from pure, soft wax, all forms of true perfection can be fashioned” (Nadezhdin, 1998, p. 26 in Etkind 2011, p. 148;).

Drawing a picture of pre-Peter’s Russia as a country of torture and ignorance, Vissarion Belinsky saw a lot of “Asian, barbaric, Tatar” (Belinsky, 1954, p. 103). To legitimize and embody his transforming power in natural form, Peter, Belinsky believed, “needed a completely new soil, without tradition, where his Russians found themselves in a completely new field and could not by themselves change in the customs and habits of life” (Belinsky 1954, p. 145). Saint-Petersburg was that soil symbolizing the virginity of the new imperial nation and the “door to Europe.” Saint-Petersburg became a geographical and cultural bridge between Europe and Russia. It has also become a point of reference in a new narrative on the “virginity” of the Empire. Another symbolic trait of Saint-Peterburg is that it was founded on virgin lands, on distant deserted swamps, was very poorly populated by Finno-Ugor tribes, and was hardly suitable for living.

Peter attempted to create an island of civilization on these swamps: as Nikolai Karamzin framed it, Peter’s idea was to “make Russia Holland” (Karamzin 1991, p. 36). Here, Peter got the opportunity to create a new cultural environment and a new royal court. The Moscow elites were formed over centuries based on kinship and family connections. Saint-Petersburg’s higher society was brought up based on the principle of meritocracy: due to military, scientific, or artistic achievements. This principle was a powerful tool to suppress Russia’s religious and cultural identity. The state of “virginity” and capacity to absorb the traditions of eastern colonies was then claimed as backwardness and barbarianism. Simultaneously, this exact “virginity” and openness to western culture and education was treated as a strength and helpful skill that facilitated emancipation. The Petrine reform of

Orthodoxy subjugated the church to the state and offered no room for popular cultural eclecticism. Historians differently depicted Peter's policy, labeling them as “reforms,” “modernization,” or “revolution.” According to Alexander Etkind, the Petrine transformations became another step in the internal colonization of Russia (Etkind, 2011, p. 150).

St. Petersburg is called the “window to Europe,” and its foundation has become a monument, embodying the internal colonization of the Russian population by its monarchs and in favor of Europeanization. Returning from his European trip, Peter demanded that the Russian nobility shave off their traditional beards to look more like European elites. The reforms in the look of the Russian nobility could have been called modernization or reintroducing new traditions. However, unlike modernization, which is commonly rationalized by the benefits that reforms bring to the society, Peter’s policy was, instead, to ridicule the “Russiannes,” condemn orthodox Russian peasantry as the lowest ladder in the social hierarchy that is below all the other conquered peoples in the Empire.

Hence, the characterization of Russian identity as “virgin” and the Russian household becoming Eurocentric was a primary tendency during Peter’s tenure. A significant moment during Peter's internal colonization period was Russia's adoption of a Eurocentric worldview, both materially and intellectually. From that point on, the Russians have centered Europe in their global perspective and situated their practices and self-identity within European norms. The cultural difference became more salient here as the elite became Europeanized. At the same time, Russian nobility again (just like in the case of Rurik’s conquest) gendered itself as a “virgin female” to justify the supremacy of their European normative master.

Malorussia: The Mother of Russian Cities

Unlike Siberia and Inghermanland, whose peoples, despite the policy of “domestication” and “enlightenment,” were considered foreign and culturally distinct, Moscow never perceived Ukraine as an external political body. Kievan Rus’, the birthplace of Russia, has always been seen by Russian monarchs as the place of origin. The foundation of Ukraine preceded Russian states by centuries; moreover, Ukraine is considered the cradle of the Russian state as the latter originated in Kievan Rus'. The foundation of this cradle took place in the settlement of the Polans, the territory that occupied the river’s shores of the Dnieper, Ros, and Rosava Rivers. After the names of this river, the local settlers called themselves “ros” and joined the union of Poland around the 6th century. According to some historiographers, Kievan Rus' consisted of the central, western, and northern territories of contemporary Ukraine and Belarus and was the primary place of encounter between Varangians from Scandinavia and Slavic Amazons.

The time when the territory of Ukraine existed separately from Russia (as well as the desire of Ukrainians to maintain their separate identity) was perceived by the Russians as an artificially created barrier. This section will demonstrate the discourse on Ukraine and Belarus (during the times of the Empire were called Malorossia or Little Russia) that draws the image of this colony as an elderly relative who is culturally outdated yet is still close in spirit. The section will analyze the prominent philosophers, publicists, historiographers, and classic writers who contributed to shaping the image of Ukraine and Belarus as regional household members.

In the 17th century, the territory of present Belarus and Ukraine was considered West Russia, which fell under the temporary control of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth,

present-day Poland) by an unfortunate accident. In 1911, according to Ukrainian historian Stephen Velychko, for the first time in Ukrainian thought, “Mykola Stasiuk labeled the relationship between Ukraine and Russia’s imperial government as ‘colonialist’” (Velychko 2012, p. 9/347). Until then, despite their continuous attempts to maintain economic independence, their own language, songs, clothes, and other on wealth (located on cultural attributes, Ukrainians sometimes recognized themselves as the extension of Russia (Tkachenko 2013, p. 5/177).

Over time, when the Cossacks of Zaporizhzhia, “liberated” under the leadership of Khmelnytskyi, began to lose their autonomy, Russian support became a heavy burden for Ukrainians. Yes, Russians commonly express their friendly attitude towards the Ukrainian people and tend to emphasize that Ukraine is their historical homeland. In this sense, they would seem radically different from Western Ukrainian neighbors - Poles, who have not demonstrated any warm feelings for Ukrainians on a personal level since the end of the second Russo-Polish war. On the contrary, Poles often put forward various complaints, and in sociological surveys, they place Ukrainians far at the bottom of the proposed list of sympathetic nations (Polacy, 2003).

According to a wide-known contemporary Ukrainian poet, translator, publicist, and cultural and political analyst, Mykola Ryabchuk, for the several generations of Ukrainians, this Polish antipathy is more acceptable than Russian “love.” This may sound perplexing, but it has to do with some background of Ukrainian relations with both nations. Even considering their grievances, the Poles still recognize Ukrainians as a separate self-sufficient nation, equal to themselves and worthy of respect. As a part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Ukraine, like Belarus, had powerful autonomy rights and lived on the principle of a political regime that was essentially close to democracy. Russians, instead,

refuse to recognize Ukrainian individual identity and see it only as an extension of themselves. For that, Russians cannot possibly “love” Ukrainians for what they are but rather love the Russianness in Ukrainians. In other words, Polish unfriendliness is more subjective, rooted in some historical grievances, and subject to renegotiations and change. At the same time, Russian “love” for Ukraine has no future for negotiations; it is kindred-like unconditional, rooted in a distorted perception of Ukraine as another breed of Russians, and excludes further dialogue (Ryabchuk, 2012, p. 2/448). Another influential contemporary post-colonialist, Vladimir Tkachenko, writes that the Russian-Ukrainian tandem can be compared with the abusive relationships of an aging mother and an adult imperial son (Tkachenko, 2013). Tkachenko writes, “often from the Russians one could hear that Ukraine is like a dear mother to them, only the government is useless” (Tkachenko 2013, p. 173).



Picture 2. Kievan Rus in the 9th century (<https://whbailey.weebly.com/kievan-rus.html>)

Thus, Kyiv is still commonly recalled according to the famous quote from the *Tale of Bygone Years* that is popular in Russian discourse: “Kyiv is the Mother of Russian cities” (Tatishchev, 1994). Ryabchuck refers to the relationship between Kyiv and Moscow as between a grown child and an elderly mother. The imperial child, of course, “loves” his parent - but only as long as she admits that her time has passed. He cares for her only while she accepts the rules of the game proposed to her and recognizes the colonial subordination

and general superiority of her adult son, his “new” language, and “modern” culture. But once a mother rebel - to proclaim herself a sovereign and equal being, and her culture - self-valuable and self-sufficient - she immediately turns into the most notorious, hated enemy, a traitor who goes against her motherly nature. A “normal” mother dutifully accepts her son’s hugs. An “abnormal mother” considers them excessive, perverted, or humiliating and tries to free herself. Russians sincerely do not understand why Ukrainians and Belarusians are offended when their language is called “the old-fashioned Russian” or the ancient dialect of the Russian language (Ryabchuk, 2012, p. 4/450).



Picture 3. Ukraine, Belorussia, and neighboring countries in the 20th century (stepmap.com)

Reuniting with Malorossia after taking it out from the Polish influence in the second part of the 17th century was a powerful impetus to begin the Europeanization of Russia. The state started increasingly engaging foreigners with its military reforms, arms production, metallurgy, and trade. Russians acquired much know-how from sources derived from Ukrainian libraries translated from Latin and Polish. The Ukrainian scientific heritage became the foundation for technical and humanitarian knowledge and penetrated Russia in the early stage of the formation of the Empire. In this century, a massive flow of immigrants

from Ukraine brought a significant advancement of Russian culture and education: the graduates of the Ukrainian institutions innovated the syllabi in Moscow schools. They established new universities: psalms were replaced by primers. During the reign of Alexei Mikhailovich (the father of Peter the Great), Kyiv's scholars were invited to edit religious texts and design the syllabi for primary schools: Epifaniy Slavinetsky, Arseniy Satanovsky, and others were the founders of civil education in Russia (Ryabchuk, 2012, p. 18/464; Tkachenko 2012 8/180).

Peter's reforms of the Moscow Theological Academy were nothing more than the reordering of education administration according to Ukrainian canons. This particular period was addressed by a famous linguistic scientist N. Trubetskoy, in his article "Towards the Ukrainian Problem," published in 1927 while he was in exile. He focused on Russian-Ukrainian relations during the 15th, 16th, and the first half of the 17th century. According to him, Ukrainian culture was drained after the second Russo-Polish war and slowly isolated by the end of the 17th century. Russian Empire isolated Ukrainian national consciousness, as the world system did not yet recognize it. The idea of common Byzantine Orthodoxy and the unity of the Russian Empire obscured the Ukrainian national identity and cultural heritage. Therefore, both Russian and Ukrainian cultures were interpreted as two versions of the same culture (Tkachenko 2013, p. 5/177). Having cut a "window to Europe" with the Ukrainian intelligentsia's help and founded St. Petersburg, Peter I subsequently (after Poltava) firmly fenced off Ukraine from the West. Thus, while the Russian educational system began to supplement its religious curriculum with the additional secular one, Ukrainian education remained solely religious due to the efforts of Peter I (Trubetskoy 2007, pp. 523–545).

Following the policy of containing and isolating Ukraine from development and Western influence, Catherine reinforced Peter's commencements. Just like the first Russian emperor, she sought to overcome the administrative and political heterogeneity of the country, which at that time consisted of multiple ethnic regions. Following the model of Western European states, in the 1770-the 1780s, she unified the intra-imperial administrative system into uniform provincial administration units (Madariaga 2002, pp. 453-455). Ukraine became a standard imperial unit, but Catherine II was quite popular among the Ukrainian political elites as she appeased them with generous donations. After the Russian imperial army crushed Zaporizhzhia Cossacks' army, Catherine offered to the high-rank Cossacks and hetmans to settle on and own the land "donated" by the "new Empress." In this purposeful colonization, the Cossacks essentially became highly effective "special forces."

Since the victory in the Russian-Polish war, the policy of the Russian monarchs was aimed at isolating Ukrainian culture from European influence and strengthening both Ukraine and Belorussia (as they were included in one unit called Malorossia only as a geopolitical shield against Poland and Lithuania. However, the question arises, why for such a long time, did Ukraine and Belorussia lack any programmatic struggle for liberation? According to Ukrainian historian M. Grushevsky, it was not only due to the corrupted local elites bought out by the empire. This was also the question of choosing the lesser evil (Grushevskoy 1991: 226 in Etkind, 2011). Unlike the case of Siberia, Ukraine and Belorussia were familiar and more technologically developed societies back in the middle of the 17th century when most of their territories were re-annexed by the Russians. The customs, language, and equipment levels among Malorossians were similar and more sophisticated than that of Russians. Thus, there was little to no need to acculturate or assimilate the local people. The local elites were granted more privileges and wealth after annexation to Russian

Tsardom and, later, to the Empire. At the same time, social stratification increased, and relational norms became more hierarchical than those prevalent under Polish rule.

Since then, Russian culture, integrating the intellectual potential of the provinces, and draining them culturally, has become a symbol of spiritual progress. Ukraine, deprived of the cultural elite, has become associated with the peasant nation, cultural backwardness, and provincialism. One of the most outstanding Ukrainian literary critics and academicians, Efremov, wrote: “Up until the 18th century, the higher Russian circles largely consisted of Ukrainian elites who occupied leading positions in education and scientific spheres. The Russians started retaliating for their past, humiliating the position of the “pupils.” There is now different distribution of cultural forces. Ukraine is now synonymous with provincialism, peasantry, uncivilization, and rudeness. Russian modernity started to ridicule Ukrainian culture as a payback for all the enlightenment Ukrainians contributed to the Russian royal court” (Efremov, 1926: 13 in Etkind, 2011). In general, Ukrainians still had the doors opened to the privileged military-bureaucratic caste or another Russian intelligentsia. However, that was only possible if these Ukrainians accepted the Russian language and Russian identity and recognized their place in the social hierarchy (Tkachenko, 2013; Ryabchuk, 2012, Etkind, 2011).

The main elements of the imperial discourse around Ukraine consisted of certain mythologemes, purely political and ideologically constructed. These mythologemes helped Russian authorities complete their imperial task of normalizing and legitimizing the subjugation and absorption of Ukraine. The imperial mythologemes are familiar to generations of Ukrainians from childhood. For many, imperial discourses still retain the authority of objective truth - a virtual reality created by a powerful, dominant Russian extended family.

Of particular significance to these historians is the concept of a “world” Russian nation, transcending the peripheries of the colonized states, as well as that of a particular Ukrainian-Russian shared identity. The distinct commonalities of Ukraine in Russian cultural power discourse are the depiction of occupied lands as ancient, backward, unstructured, archaic, inhabited not by full-fledged people but by pre-human creatures preserved beyond time - outside the accepted common (that is, imperial) history. These concepts form the foundation of Russian exceptionalism birthed in the history of Kievan Rus’ and culminating in the grand imperial ambitions of Peter the Great as described by his master theologian/historian Feofan Prokopovich (Ryabchuk 2012, pp. 452-460; Basarab 1982, p. 16). “The Synopsis, or Brief Description of the Beginning of the Russian People,” written by Prokopovich between 1670 and 1674 in Kyiv and repeatedly reprinted by the Archimandrite of the Kyiv Pechersk Monastery, explores this unifying creation myth. This mythology empowers the Russian people to bring together the Slavic peoples of the earth under the banner of Orthodox Christianity and, in so doing, save the world-- a theme common in its own right with other imperial narratives (Ryabchuk 2012, pp. 11-457; Etkind 2011, p. 76).

The most precise and consistent image of Ukraine and Belorussia was recreated by Vissarion Belinsky, based partly on the images of Ukraine and Belorussia in the works of Gogol, Pushkin, and other contemporary writers and partly on his ideas about the spirit of history (Ryabchuk, 2012, p. 12/458). An 1840s ethnographer, Mykola Markevych, wrote of Ukraine that it was a “parody of a republic,” a “Slavic ghost-republic” not founded on principles of justice but “disorder,” burdened with “potential to be [...] a strong state,” but instead a “caricature,” a “blood-bound child” to whom is offered the grace of art and

cosmopolitan certitude by her more civilized and competent father “fighting the darkness of ignorance” (Markevich, 1843: 60–65 in Etkind, 2011).

The writing of classic authors contributed to the alienation of Malorussia as an old-fashioned entity that lives “in the past”; the image of its culture, thus, became an object of mystification and imaginative reconstruction. The problems of colonial perception of the western outskirts of the Russian Empire are most effectively depicted in the works of Alexander Kuprin (1870-1938). Kuprin also was in a position of authority in the history of Russian literature. His role is highly significant and even unique. Kuprin is “the Russian Kipling“ famous for his narratives about depressed and bored adventure-seekers who found these adventures in the colonial peripheries (Sossinsky 1999). For the entire 20th century, Alexander Kuprin was proclaimed as “one of the widest-read classics in Russian literature,” having multiple movies produced based on his works due to “his vivid stories of the lives of ordinary people and unhappy love, his descriptions of the military and brothels, making him a writer for all times and places” (Sossinsky 1999). Kuprin had a keen sense of the relationship between imperial politics and literature and traces the moment of the archaized representation of Western Russian colonies and described them in a gendered context.

In Aleksandr Kuprin’s famous love story “Olesya” (1898), the protagonist’s devotion and eventual obsession with the daughter of a witch can be construed as a projection of colonial relations with “Little Russia” in gender terms. The story’s male protagonist is a Russian official from a big city who expects to meet the primitive “ancient people, with strange customs, a peculiar language” (Kuprin 2006, 259). But he does not find this aesthetically positive alienness in real Ukrainians. Indeed, Ukrainians appear in the plot as wild. Even simple everyday communication with them is impossible for the main character:

“They refused to understand the simplest questions” (Kuprin 2006, 260). He finds many local customs inappropriate; for example, kissing the hands of dignitaries (in what Kuprin calls the “Polish custom”) repulses him greatly.

However, Olesya, who lives next to these “savages,” does not belong to the same ethnic group. Although illiterate, she speaks Russian (Kuprin, 2006, p. 286; Lekke 2012, p. 16). This narrative of modernization as a loss of authenticity is intertwined with the foreign-colonialist perspective on Ukraine. Olesya, contrary to her convictions, goes to church for the sake of her beloved one. Here, Kuprin contrasts the “Beauty” and the “civilized” world clear when local Ukrainians attack her for being an outsider. In this story, Kuprin seeks to determine social and ethnic groups clearly — Russians and Ukrainians are presented differently from the “witch” with specific ethnic characteristics (Lekke 2012, p. 15).

Although her dimly expressed Ukrainian ethnicity, Olesya is not a stranger but, on the contrary, close and familiar. In the tale, Kuprin expresses her essence as more Russian than even Russian women because she represents the unification between the two worlds of uncolonized wilderness (what Kuprin terms “free nature”) and the confident laxity of the imperial Russians themselves (Kuprin, 2006: 307). Thus, she is opposed to the protagonist colonizer as a natural, authentic being - to a cold, alienated intellectual, or as a body – to the mind. She represents the ancient Russian civilization she carries in her “natural” lifestyle (Lekke 2012, p. 17).

Another influential colonial author, Nikolai Gogol, also subtly felt the dynamics of Ukrainian-Russian relations. Nikolai Gogol was known among his contemporaries as a prominent author and founder of the Russian literary realism school. Even though his writings eventually satirized political corruption in the Russian Empire, his contribution to

the formation of the imperial household image is indispensable (Ilnytzkyj 2007, pp. 3/350, 8/355). A writer with a perfect imperial background, Gogol was born in Ukraine but later moved and lived in the imperial capital, St. Petersburg. In the capital, he experienced two unsuccessful stints, one as an official and the other as a historian, but then gained substantial recognition as a writer. However, he ultimately failed in his pursuit as a political theologian.

In his satirical absurdist story written in 1832-1833, “The Nose,” Gogol gives an example of what Bhabha called “colonial bifurcation” (bifurcation occurs when a slight change in the part of the extensive system significantly transforms the entire system) and described as a necessary aspect of sustaining an imperial colony (Bhabra 2014, p. 2/116). In the story, Platon Kovalev – a collegiate assessor, narcissistic and stupid, proud of his rank – accidentally loses his nose. The latter (the nose) absurdly turns into a state official who now wants to flee to Europe and leave Kovalev forever. As Gogol continues, he elaborates on what becomes a macabre metaphor for empire and dissolution. When Kovalev's nose was intact, he took it for granted as an insignificant part of the whole. Once missing, it compromises Kovalev as an imperial subject and becomes a comprehensive symbol of unfulfilled aspirations and a lost identity.

To Gogol's Kovalev, the character's absent nose forms an extended sequential metaphor for the attained and the unattainable, fetishized when lost. Portraying the faceless colonial administrator Kovalev, Gogol presents “his nose as an imperial fetish” – the tangible symbol of empire. Without the nose in the face of Kovalev (or without Ukraine on the borders of the Russian Empire), the imperial existence is unbearable, and the imperial face is unrecognizable. Kovalev’s identity is irreversibly distorted and damaged without his nose. All that is needed by the whole — power, money, women — is impossible without a nose (Etkind 2011, p. 26).

In Bhabha's analysis, as long as the constituent whole contains a smaller segment, nothing is in danger - the tacit revolt of the part versus the whole is even more existentially dangerous than the rebellion of the serf against a master, for it challenges the deepest foundations of the cultural order of colonial bodies and colonial realities. Colonial relations “permeate all social bodies, including the body of Kovalev and his separatist nose” (Etkind 2011, p. 26; Gogol, 1836; Bhabha 1994: 130, 166). In this subtle fashion, Gogol implicitly ridicules the traditional hierarchies of his nation.

The “archaic” representation of Ukraine and Belorussia was functioning as a tool for sustaining hierarchical disposition and difference between Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Russians, but not excessive. The political distinction was maintained at the level that allowed the completion of Ukrainian and Belorussian integration into a single imperial project. For all their differences, “Little Russia” should remain in the imperial discourse as an archaic version of Russians or an elderly powerless parent of the Russian Empire. Parody of the Ukrainian and Belorussian languages and quotation of mutilated words to ridicule them as obsolete was part of the general discursive strategy aimed at keeping Ukrainian and Belorussian culture in submission (primarily mental) (Ryabchuk 2012, p. 450).

These metaphors, imaginary constructions, and stereotypes played a significant role in legitimizing colonial practices in Malorussia. They obscure the fundamental role that Malorussia played in the development of Russia, its enlightening mission, and its contribution to the cultural growth of the Empire. In fact, while it played a significant role in the history of Russia and enriched the royal court with Ukrainian and Belorussian human capital Malorussia was culturally exhausted and prevented from further development. However, a literary classic of Russian prose, willingly or not, articulated alternative ways of thinking about Ukraine and Belorussia that helped legitimize the metropolis’s actions

towards its southwestern periphery and formulated the latter's position in the Russian imperial household.

In conclusion, the analyzed colonial narrative on Ukraine is consistent with the previous and unfolding discourse projects of the Russian Empire. The imperial efforts to alter social reality by shifting the discourses that construct the legitimacy of imperial policies remained a vital endeavor of the Russian elites throughout the Empire's lifetime. The Russian approach to internal colonization in the case of Ukraine and Belarus significantly differed from the colonial experience with Siberia, Izhora lands, and other regions around Russia. The colonial authors on Malorussia supported the image of the "Slavic alma mater" that has passed its heritage to her imperial child and now must retire. As the discourse of power demonstrates, Ukraine and Belorussia are the Russian regional household's core and origin. They have never been seen as "foreigners." They were credited as "Russians" and thereby deprived of the right to have an independent identity. The Ukrainian language was considered a dialect of the Great Russian dialect. At the political level, the empire was homogenized. However, at the cultural level, "Little Russia" was archaized and presented as a space where the ancestors of the inhabitants of Moscow and St. Petersburg professed ancient, now forgotten, but mysterious pagan rites. Ukraine, not only in Russian but in many ways even in Ukrainian culture, has become a locus of confusion and blurred boundaries between the "Self" and the "Other."

Unavailable Mistress of the Caucasus

Russian reunion with Malorussia in the mid-18th century was followed by a series of Russian colonial campaigns in the Caucasus in the mid-19th century (which in Eurasian historiography are combined into the collective concept of “The Caucasian War”). The close encounter with the Caucasian spirit and culture invigorated Russian anti-tsarist sentiments among the enlightened Russian youth. This section will introduce the historiographical storyline of Caucasian conquests and show how the land and the people of Caucasus were associated in the most prominent literary narratives with an image of the passionate, proud, and unavailable lover of the head of the Russian household. The idea of highlanders’ freedom-loving and readiness to die for independence triggered social movements in the core Russian populace.

The image of a “passionate unavailable lover” of the Caucasus is subtle yet powerful as it simultaneously triggered admiration, guilt, and desire in the Russian audience. The idea of Caucasians injected a new stream of rebellious spirit into Russian social groups who were already prompt to the insurgency. The highlanders’ resistance and drive for freedom and equality influenced many prominent artists, writers, and poets. They turned many into political activists, whose progressive thoughts inspired the attempts to foment revolution.

Moreover, the takeover of the Caucasus facilitated the development of the Caucasian theme in Russian literature known as the “Literary Caucasus.” This literature drew the picture of the Caucasus in the Russian imagination. In many ways, this branch of literary narratives enacted a new aspect of Russian national identity and imperial consciousness appealing mainly to the contemporary elites of the 19th century (Suny and Martin, 2001). According to Professor Ronald Grigor Suny, “Literary Caucasus” was an ethnographic

script, a travel guide, a geography and history manual, and even a war documentary, all at the same time. In Russian figurative geography that glorified the military conquest of the Caucasus, this literature contributed a dissonant overtone admiring the honesty, generosity, and freedom of spirit of the highlanders (Suny and Martin, 2001, p. 45).

In Russian classic literary tradition and post-imperial historiography, the Caucasus is represented as an unavailable passionate mistress in the Russian household in a position of a desirable but unwinnable member. Thomas describes Pushkin's and Lermontov's works dedicated to Caucasus as "then-groundbreaking writings [...] that helped shape views of the region for landed Russians" (Thomas 2010, pp. 41-43). The critical elements of the national imagery they drew were two romantic colonial themes: a native woman as a dignified and tragic victim and a highlander as a noble savage. Russian novels on the Caucasus often portray love stories between partners who are not racially or socially matched (because the male protagonist typically represents the metropolis and the woman originated in the Caucasus), visualizing the death of one of the individuals as a sacrificial act that exposes the underlying historical forces. In a situation of external colonization, such a plot, well-known in the European romantic tradition, was the love of an imperial officer and a native beauty. These plots reflect passion, admiration, and frustration from the inability to fully subjugate and integrate Caucasian people and the simultaneous collective sense of guilt that Russians embraced in their identity as colonizers after the annexation of Caucasian space (Etkind 2011, p. 356).

This admiration and frustration at the same time found its reflection in the colonial policies towards the Caucasus. In contrast to the colonial experiences of other empires, the Russians could not assimilate Caucasian people due to enduring resistance on the latter's end. When settlers realized their usual "household" practice was not an option, they switched

to support their natives' interests and local informal authorities in their grievances against their oppressors. Here, an essential shift in reformatting the region so it would become an integral part of the Russian empire was not possible through the assimilation of the population but only with the help of consistent acculturation of elites. Later, Russians organized a project of great migration that pushed many local inhabitants to Persia and Turkey and pulverized the settlements of the local people.

Multiple reasons exist for a unique approach to the Caucasus and its dramatic picture in the Russian imperial imagination. First, the costs the Russian Empire had to pay for conquering the Caucasus were much higher than in Siberia, Ingermanland, Malorussia, or Central Asia. Russia had to compete with several regional empires with interests, connections, and leverage in the Caucasus. The active social groups attempted several cases of insurgency against the local elites and regional powers like the Ottoman Empire and the Persian Empire.

The Russian conquest of the Caucasus took an entire century from the 1700s to the 1800s. This period was characterized by the most aggressive Russian expansion towards the Black and Caspian Seas. The Empire attempted to stretch its zone of control towards the North Caucasus (the modern region of the Russian Federation) and the territory of modern Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and even some parts of Turkey and Iran. By 1864, Russia had gained control over the last piece in the targeted region. For that, Russians had to wage several wars with Persia and frequent wars with Turkey (Russo-Persian War (in 1651–1653 and 1722–1723), Russo-Turkish War (1768–1774), and Russo-Persian War (1796), war with Persia and Turkey simultaneously (1804–1813), Russo-Persian War (1826–1828)) to occupy North Caucasus, unite and annex Georgia and establish a Russian protectorate in the Caucasus.

On the eve of the North Caucasus accession, this region was a kaleidoscopic mosaic of numerous peoples and languages. North Caucasian societies had almost no tradition of statehood. Most mountain communities of the North Caucasus, especially Chechnya, were militaristic communities with some traits of democracy, such as elections of the forepersons and the leaders of the auls¹⁵ and the absence of visible property inequality. Most Caucasian people professed Islam (except those who populated the territories of modern Georgia and Armenia). Still, the process of Islamization was for many of them only in its initial stage in the 19th century. The Islamic factor - namely, the fight against the “infidels” (jihad) - will subsequently prove to be a severe challenge to Russia in the establishment of its dominance in the North Caucasus (Baklanov, 2014).

During the Caucasian Wars, Russian troops were exposed to the new culture. Highlanders' propagated egalitarian traditions of elections, communal courts, and collective decision-making arising from their culture and social life, which were also crucial in their struggle with the Russians. These attributes distinguished the Caucasus region from other colonial areas of the Russian periphery. Firstly, the people of that region are susceptible to attacks on their freedom and initially hate all power outside their tribe or clan. According to the description of an Englishman who lived among them for about a year, “they quickly get tired of power in the hands of another person. And these superstitious people are so jealous of the observance of their own rights that no one will forsake even the smallest share of them, even formally they will not transfer them to an individual or group of representatives” (Longworth, 1840, p. 307). Secondly, they were initially known in Russia as a “warrior race,” because from childhood, men were raised here as warriors. Their courage, the art of a

¹⁵ Aul is a Caucasian mountain or desert settlement, such as a village.

rider, the mastery of a dagger, a saber, and a gun, and the ability to disguise themselves and act secretly aroused the romantic admiration of the Russians, who were vastly inferior to them in this regard (Jersild 2003, p. 98; Bobrovnikov 2002, p. 14).

Even after the victory of Russian troops and the annexation of the Northern Caucasus entirely to the Russian Empire, Russians failed to establish a consistent relationship with the highlanders. The locals did not consider annexation a legitimate reason to accept the colonizers in their families and create marriages with them. Thus, the attempt to assimilate the population failed here. It was a widespread practice that Caucasian women would commit suicide when captured by Russian combatants or officials for future marriage. Death was a highly preferred option over submission to the colonizers. Thus, instead of assimilation, to encompass the region, Russians had to apply to the acculturation of the local elites and indoctrinate them into supporting the Russian Tzar. The acculturation process became an essential leverage of colonization in the 19th century and eventually became a core issue of ethnopolitics in the region (Khodarkovsky 2008, p. 4).

Acculturation was an already known practice in Russian colonial history, yet before the 19th century, it was less widespread and carried a slightly different dynamic. During the colonial endeavors in various regions, Russian settlers often demanded local hostages (amanats) from the colonized elites as a guarantee of their commitment to loyalty. Yet, Caucasian amanats were not welcomed back in their birthplace. Thus, this practice implied that the hostages would not return to their homeland as they were condemned as foreigners. Instead, the amanats remained in the domain of their captors to serve the Russian military as local officers, ethnographers, or translators. Those amanats who manage to reintegrate into their native society would still carry the attributes of Russian military officers, such as a Russified name or surname and a Russian uniform, yet claim their loyalty to their community

of origin, practicing the local religion and speaking the local language. This way, Russians acquired cultural translators as a sort of pipeline to import Russian legislation, political norms, language, and culture into the indigenous society (Khodarkovsky 2008, pp. 3-4).

The inability to fully integrate the Caucasian peoples and the limited success of cultural assimilation resulted in a significant shift in the ethnic makeup of the population in the Caucasus region. Uncooperative locals were forcibly relocated to the Ottoman Empire and Persia to make room for Russian settlers to secure control, particularly in the Northwestern Caucasus. A large portion of the Circassian population was dispersed to over 40 countries, with only 5 to 10% of the pre-war population remaining in their original homeland. This greatly altered the ethnic composition of the Northeastern Caucasus, with large areas now inhabited by ethnic Russians after the displacement of the native population (Bobrovnikov 2002, p. 261).

Russians put much effort into bringing the natives under the Russian legal system. However, these attempts backfired severely. Eventually, the Russian colonial administration concluded that the local people heavily relied on their laws and customs. Any further attempts to impose new legal norms would lead to disunity and insurgence. Finally, Russians had to accept the local legal system as it is, with the opportunity to appeal to the Russian supervisory departments ultimately. For the first time, the colonizers had to recognize the binary of the legal and social domains and accept an atypical position of the Caucasus in the Russian colonial hierarchy (Khodarkovsky 2008, p. 10).

Another curious trait of Russian fiction is the habitual projection of national ideals and roles in portrayals of the Caucasus. This artistic emphasis carries more weight than historiography in the discourse. In contrast with historical literature, the famous novel about

the Caucasus during and after its colonization has often been linked to romantic relations and framed in several ways. As prominently featured in literature, an indigenous person (“A Man from the Caucasus”) is usually presented in opposition or contrast to the “Man of Culture” - the noble Russian colonizer. While both exist in their environment, they are found in the meeting ground of the novel’s reach- on the territory of the colony.

In these colonial portraits, these two characters are alternately at odds with one another or presented as brothers in arms. One of these types is historical, and the other is idyllic: the “Man of Culture” is usually a representative of the contemporary epoch, and the “Man from the Caucasus” holds prehistoric, atavistic features drenched in aspects of national and cultural specificities. The Man of Culture, possessing both the capability and the aspiration to traverse the cultural realm, delves into the idyllic and unchanging world of the Man from the Caucasus, where he risks staying (Etkind 2011, p. 356).

The intersection of these elements within fiction is further complicated by the possibility of romantic love between a man and a woman, which is a timeless theme in narratives and discussions about the Caucasus. Rene Girard, a Franco-American literary theorist, posits that any representation of romantic desire in literature necessitates a mediator. To craft a love story, the novel must incorporate not just two characters, but three (Girard 1977, p. 73). The competition between two men for the affection of a woman generates the “paradoxical effect of mediation.” The conflict of interest between men who try to surpass and eliminate each other creates relationships of interdependence. As to the novels on the Caucasus, sometimes it is easy to suspect that the woman, the subject of their passion, has no special meaning in the book.

In different texts, rival relations are interpreted as mystical, political, or erotic. Here, the differentiation of the gender structure intersects with class conflicts. Within this framework, both are enclosed within the national space, represented in a symbolic “Caucasian Beauty” by Lermontov (Michael Lermontov was a Russian poet, prose writer, playwright, and artist). His native representation of the spoils of conquest is sometimes presented as passive, but more often, she is given the right to choose between suitors (Etkind 2011, p. 357).

These stories generally hinge around the concept of sacrifice, be it physical, moral, or spiritual: a symbolic exchange that solves the problem Girard defined as the “sacrificial crisis” (Girard 1977, p. 41). Depending on which archetypes the novel presents as a victim of sacrifice – the “Man from the Caucasus,” the “Man of Culture,” or “Caucasian Beauty” – one can distinguish several types of the triangular plot through which the concept of national identity and belonging can be discerned (ibid.).

Lermontov's writing encompasses civic, philosophical, and personal elements that fulfill the critical spiritual needs of Russian society, ushering in a new era of Russian literature and influencing many of the most significant Russian writers and poets of the 19th century. His works garnered widespread interest in the arts, including painting, theater, and cinema. Many of his poems have been adapted into musical pieces such as operas, symphonies, and romantic compositions and have even become folk songs. Forty years before Renan, Lermontov argued in his classic novel “‘The Hero of Our Time’ we are no longer capable of great sacrifices, neither for the good of humanity nor even for our happiness, because we know that this happiness is, in fact unattainable” (Lermontov, 1840, p. 50). Among the characters dying in this novel, the majority are women; the protagonists probably did not consider them a “great sacrifice”; In “Bela,” the civilized ‘nobles’ are

responsible for driving hapless indigenous peoples to their death through the act of love. In this complexly plotted tragedy, a Russian officer first seduces a native beauty and then betrays her, and she dies in torment (Lermontov, 1840).

In another work, “The Demon,” Lermontov depicts a deposed angel who falls in love with a Caucasian woman. Captivated by his otherworldly charm, she succumbs to death with a kiss, as the Demon departs in grief (Etkind 2011, p. 358). In later Russian narratives, the indisputable savagery of the Caucasian conquests is never disputed: instead, these fictional portrayals were designed to foster a unified cultural memory. They are romanticized, particularly regarding the sacrificial nature of the exchanges (Etkind 2011, p. 359). However, despite their prominence, the sacrifices of men in these stories are secondary.

The images of women in Russian literature are traditionally more robust than those of men; they are undeniably and unfairly oppressed by patriarchal society and by nature itself, which makes them natural colonized objects automatically prone to heroism in either way: if they attempt both to resist or sacrifice themselves (Etkind 2011, p. 370). For the Russian critics of the 1860s, colonization of the Caucasus and gendering it in the literature were very much related. The gender and the race of the victim of sacrifice had an underlying political meaning: if the victim was a “Man from the Caucasus,” this brought back the political balance, giving hope for the preservation of the imperial order and triumph over the animalistic, bestial primitivism of the indigenous peoples. If the object of sacrifice was the innocent “Caucasian Beauty,” it elevated the story to the level of an ultimate apocalyptic catastrophe. When the noble, imperial “Man of Culture” falls victim to the sacrifice, it is seen as a justified final revenge on the colonized people who rendered their metropolis morally powerless: by destroying their savior, they have doomed themselves to savagery (Etkind 2011, p. 370; Narimatsu 2012, pp. 286-289).

Lermontov's contemporary, Alexander Pushkin, was a Russian poet and playwright widely recognized as one of the most authoritative literary figures of the first third of the 19th century. In Pushkin's "Prisoner of the Caucasus," the romantic hero travels to the Caucasus for the "merry ghost of freedom" but is captured by mountain peoples who hold him in captivity (Pushkin, 1820; Etkind 2011, p. 357). Desperate to aid his escape, a young Circassian lady does her best to help him but only succeeds at the sacrificial cost of her own life: the poem's poignant final scene shows the protagonist looking back at his drowning love and, abandoning her, pressing on to achieve passage back to civilization (Pushkin, 1820).

These moralizing plots offer a deconstructivist lens for the imperial ideals of the colonizers. The apparent discord between the love story's moral message and the imperial ideology conveyed through prologues and epilogues creates a complex, multi-faceted dynamic that has captivated literary critics for a long time (Pushkin, 1820; Lermontov, 1840; Etkind 2011, p. 357). Another of Lermontov's works, "The Caucasian," captures this romanticized vision of the untamed wilderness that the colonizers found so magnetic. Drawing from Pushkin's "Prisoner of the Caucasus," Lermontov's work delves into the historiography of the colonized cultures: their leaders and family trees, their horses, weapons, and population. The Russian woman Lermontov's protagonist is accustomed "do not seduce him" - instead, he fantasizes about indigenous Circassian maidens (Lermontov 1841, p. 159; Etkind 2011, p. 359). Even amid his fascination, a divide still looms: the hero is "ashamed (of his preoccupation) when encountering visitors from Russia" - his "addict(ion)" to these "poetic traditions" and the perceived savage simplicity of the "poetic life" of the natives make his interactions with his countrymen tinged with duality

(Lermontov 1958: p. 4). Even amid cultural engulfment and conflict, the colonists admire and imitate the mores of the oppressed (Etkind 2011, p. 360).

The point of this analysis is to show how collective participation in the sacrificial rites of the Caucasus, described by the classic Russian literature prevalent at that time, romanticized and eroticized the Caucasus and staged a general sense of desire, admiration, and guilt toward Caucasian people. Suppose some social sciences need statistical criteria to show the salience and importance of the considered distinctions. In that case, the humanities often are left to rely on readers' memory and their centuries-old work of discourse selection and reproduction. When an average Russian reader thinks about an image of the Caucasus of the mid-19th century the suffering and death of a female Caucasian “lover” first come to mind, where the Russian public is left to embrace their collective guilt towards the Caucasian people fully. The novel, retelling a long and challenging story in a straightforward melodramatic narrative, rallied the audience to create a “realistic” understanding of the colonial experience.

Thus, the cruelty of Caucasian Wars and the brutality of Russians against Caucasian people traumatized the inhabitants of this region and planted a seed of unresolvable grievances between the ethnic groups. The blunt hostility of Russian troops on Caucasian soil was hard to cover with the ideology of “civilizing” or “embracing a new household member.” The example of highlanders’ bravery, morale, resourcefulness, and desperate attempts to defend their identity against colonization could not be unseen by the Russians. This left an unerasable mark on the Russian identity, awakening the most enlightened layers of the society to rebel against Emperor Nicholas I (who launched and waged the Caucasian Wars). Russian cruelty against the highlanders and encounter with their relentless resistance and (androcentric) egalitarian norms had a significant impact on all aspects of the life of the

Russian Empire. It generated specific hopes for change and the abolition of serfdom (Bobrovnikov 2002, pp. 57-58; Fedorov 1981, pp. 135-138). The elimination of serfdom was associated with the need for constitutional restrictions of monarchical power. Thus, it provoked the Decembrist uprising in St. Petersburg in 1825, the first attempted coup d'etat against Nicholas I. This uprising was very different from the conspiracies of the era of palace coups in their goals. It has more to resonate with the French revolution and demanded liberty for the lowest levels of the Russian social hierarchy. Caucasian Wars and the Decembrist uprising, which triggered further social unrest, had the most powerful resonance in Russian society, significantly affecting the socio-political life of the subsequent era of the reign of Nicholas I (Fedorov 1981, p. 214).

Colonial practices in the Caucasus affected the other colonial strategies of the Russian Empire in Central Asia that Nicholas I and Nicholas II embarked on later at the end of the 19th century. Russian elites changed their perspective on Islam as an inferior religious category that needed to be eradicated at all costs within the borders of the Russian Empire. Instead, Russians embraced Islam as a competitive system of religious beliefs that were equally powerful and meant to co-exist with Christianity in Russia. During the colonization of Turkestan and other lands of Central Asia, Russians abstained from anti-Islamic policies during settlement and even started to co-fund practices of Islam in Tatarstan (the region in contemporary Russia most saturated with a Muslim population). Thus, unlike what happened with other colonies, Russians could not relate to Caucasian people as barbarians or ridicule them because they realized the fine line between their cultural difference and little to no gap in development. During Caucasian Wars, however, Russians also realized their inferiority relating to their European neighbors. They used Caucasian colonization to project this insecurity onto the Caucasian people by eroticizing and exoticizing their cultural traits.

Russian narratives often romanticize Caucasian temper and label their attempts to resist colonization as savage strategies.

Central Asia: The “Neglected Child” of Russian Household

The infantilization of the colonial subject is a prevalent visual metaphor for American and European imperialism (Burman 2016, p. 5/45; Baaz 2005, pp 2-5). For Russians, however, the imperialist experience in Central Asia was beginning of explicit infantilization of the colonial periphery. Earlier, the colonized regions were imagined in different roles: the domesticated animal, the submissive virgin, the elderly mother, and the unavailable lover. However, feeding, teaching, and nurturing themes were for the first time introduced to the Russian audience as legitimizing colonial practices. Russian colonial discourse and symbolic representation of the Central Asian region in household terms assigned Central Asian countries the most patronized image of “children” designed, produced, brought up, and nurtured by the metropolis.

The Russian narratives disguising hawkish practices in Turkestan¹⁶ under patronizing and infantilizing descriptions were predisposed by several factors. First, many historians and contemporary officials perceived colonization of Central Asia as more innocuous and peaceful than other parts of the Russian periphery. Kazakhs, Turks, Uzbeks, Kirgiz, Sarts, Tadjiks¹⁷ and other peoples of the region were represented as having voluntarily submitted to Russian power as if they willingly embraced patronage and colonization. This image was based on the fact that the area was not too attractive to other

¹⁶ The term is used in modern Russian political science discourse about the five post-Soviet republics formerly part of the Russian Empire: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan (The Big Soviet Encyclopedia, 1978).

¹⁷ The tribes that occupied Middle Asian region before colonization; the names of the tribes are used interchangeably with “Kazaks.”

surrounding Empires and, thus, did not require a bloody war from Russians to take over the region (like it happened in Caucasus, Izhora, and “Little Russia“).

Instead, the leaders of the local tribes (Little Zhuz¹⁸ khans¹⁹) requested the protectorate of the Russian Empire to strengthen their power and elevate their influence among their peers (the Middle and Great Zhuzes). In 1730, Abulhair Khan and his offspring petitioned the Russian ruler, Anna Ioannovna²⁰ to grant Russian citizenship to the Little Zhuz Kazakhs. In 1731, this petition was granted, and a protectorate of Russia was established over the Kazakhs of the Little Zhuz. In 1732, the leader of the Middle Zhuz also pledged loyalty to Empress Anna Ioannovna of Russia. In 1740, Abylay Khan formally recognized Russia's authority over the Middle Zhuz Kazakhs. The Khans of the Little and Middle Zhuz agreed to defend Russia's borders, support its military, political, and economic pursuits within their lands, and make tax payments with animal skins. In exchange, the Russian authorities guaranteed the Kazakhs of the Junior and Middle Zhuz protection from the devastating raids of the Dzungars²¹ and Bashkirs²². Russian officials and authors later used the initiative from Kazakh tribes to seek Russian patronage as evidence of Kazakhs' helplessness and intentional subjugation to the Russian imperial crown in exchange for protection.

¹⁸ Little Zhuz is a group of Kazakh clans and tribes consisting of three tribal unions: alimony, bayuly, and zhetyru.

¹⁹ Khan is a historic title of uncertain origin used in some medieval Central Asian societies to refer to a ruler or military leader (Boyle, 1978).

²⁰ The fourth daughter of Tsar Ivan V (brother and co-ruler of Tsar Peter I). In 1710 she was married to the Duke of Courland Friedrich Wilhelm. After the death of Peter II, she was invited to the Russian throne in 1730 by the Supreme Privy Council as a monarch with powers limited to the benefit of aristocrats (Durasov, 1906).

²¹ Dzungar Khanate is an Oirat-Mongolian state that existed in the XVII-XVIII centuries on the territory that currently belongs to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, China, Russia (part of Khakassia), Mongolia and occupying land from Tibet and China in the south, to the south of Siberia in the north (Elista, 2015).

²² The Bashkirs, the ethnic heirs of the Huns, are also found in a report by Chinese sources about the descendants of the “old Huns” in the Volga basin in the 8th – 9th centuries (Kuzeev, 1947).

Second, despite several revolts of the Turkic population against Russian oppression, the locals' submission was still voluntary in the Russian imagination. This protégé-like image persisted because the Central Asian tribes were not equipped enough to show any significant resistance. The Turks were pursuing a nomadic lifestyle which deprived them of the opportunity to unite and show an organized and empowered counterthrust against the colonizers' abuse of power. Before encountering Russian colonial policies, the Kazak, Kirgiz, Turks, Sarts, Tadjik, and other communities did not have strict frontiers or common identity and were not settled to claim their boundaries. Instead, the local tribes united into auls²³ that would camp together during the winter but then dissolve into separate nomadic groups for the summer migrations (Sabol 2003, p.10). These practices made the imaginary community of the Central Asian people extremely fragmented, which made their sense of identity almost invisible to Russian colonizers.

Third, Russia became particularly active in this region only by the time it gained imperial maturity in its colonial practices elsewhere. Russian profound colonial encounter with Turkistan happened after the transformational process Russia went through during the Caucasus War and Europeanization and integration into Western colonial discourse. Russian monarchs learned their lesson taught by the highlanders of the Caucasus and were more willing to learn and “nurture” new colonial subjects before “civilizing” them. By the time the Russian Empire embarked on its full-fledged colonial strategies in Turkestan (this happened right before Russo-Japanese War in 1895), the former had gained significant experience in its periphery's counterinsurgency. Unlike Caucasians, people of Izhora and Siberian tribes, Russia approached the region with scientific curiosity, engaged with

²³ Aul is a traditional temporary settlement, camp, and community among Turkic peoples and other peoples of Central Asia.

anthropological projects, and developed a structured domestication strategy here in Central Asia. This approach accounted for learning and dismantling local customs and stressed the educational part of nation-building. Interestingly, this time Russian colonial plans did not aim at assimilation but rather at reproducing its image and style of life in a new space through settler colonialism and coercive establishment of new educational, religious, agricultural, and medical institutions. The population was expected to adhere to the new norms and adopt the colonizers' language and mentality (Brower 2003; Sabol 2003; Etkind 2011).

By the 19th century, the notion of a civilizing mission (however understood) was commonplace among writers on Western empires and was freshly adopted by Russian thinkers and policymakers. Paternalism and progress had to be reconciled. It proved ultimately a self-defeating proposition that the metropolis should be seen as a parent that gives birth, disciplines, nurtures, and teaches colonial people. Neo-colonial authors later dismantled this idea, but in times of its popularity in Europe, it was the concept to which Russian liberal reformers subscribed, even though it happened a bit later than in other modern empire-builders.

Western narratives produced by the early eighteenth-century defenders of evolutionary association in the West traveled to Russian elites' ideational space. They were internalized later in the middle of the nineteenth century. The period when Russians adopted the paternalist language of colonial nation-building as "child-bearing" coincided with the intense colonization of Central Asia. Recent studies make clear that arguments over ideals of similarities or differences between European civilization and Asian and African colonial cultures fit within universalistic views of human evolution with their roots in Enlightenment thought. This cluster of ideas proved particularly influential by redirecting the purpose of imperialism and redefining the notions by which Westerners understood the characteristics

of colonial peoples. Their terms framed those fundamental principles of infantilization employed by the Russian Empire in Turkestan. Since Peter the Great, Russian Imperial discourse has been competing with that of the West and borrowing its philosophical foundations simultaneously. European practices in Africa and its description as an endeavor of the “white man’s burden” was a point of orientation in late Russian imperial discourse, even without a direct reference.

Fourth, Russian engagement with the Kazakh Steppes and Turkestan was the most pervasive that the empire tapped into. One of the implications of the Turks’ nomadic lifestyle was the absence of written language, a fractured imagined community, and a blurred sense of shared identity and relatedness among the tribes. Lack of settled boundaries and scarce encounters among each other deprived Central Asian peoples of the ideational umbrella that eventually united the highlanders under the Third Imam in the Caucasus. For the first time in their imperial history, Russians had to develop a nation-building project “from scratch” because of sparse population density and the absence of cultural unity among the tribes. The region of Central Asia was fundamentally redesigned by Russian colonizers and condemned to mimic Russian ideational, moral, and physical infrastructure to the extent that no other part of the periphery was subjected to.



Picture 4. Turkestan in the middle of the 19th century (en-academic.com)

Some historians claimed Central Asian neighbors as initially unprofitable for Russians and even burdensome (Sabol 2003; Gerasimov et al. 2009; Allworth 1995). Peter the Great was the one who extended the interest of the Empire towards the Steppes. Between 1714 and 1735, he sent several missions into the steppe and Central Asian khanates²⁴ to explore trade opportunities. The expedition established a set of fortresses along the northern borders of contemporary Kazakhstan that secured Russia's prominence in the Kazakh Steppes. At the beginning of the 18th century, Russia finally constructed a massive fort spread west to east and built by Siberian Cossacks (Sabol, p. 28).

Empress Anna (1730-1740) managed to spread Russian influence more profound into the Steppe and officially agreed to assist Kazakhs in defense against the Khan and the Little Zhuzh, Abulkhair (Sabol 2003, p.28). One of the contemporary Russian historian-orientalists and head of the frontier expedition, Vasiliy Grigoriev, called this time an outstanding period in the history and termed it as the "voluntary submission of the numerous

²⁴ A khaganate or khanate was a political unit that was a domain of a khan or khagan. This entity is characteristic of the communities of the Eurasian Steppe, and it can be equalized to tribal serfdom, kingdom, empire, or principality.

Horde of Kirghiz (Kazakh) who had formerly been hostile to us” (Grigoriev, 1877, p. 391 in Sabol 2003).

The imperial elites view on the Kazakhs’ submission as voluntarily was, even though false, still turning the local tribes into colonial subjects and reproduced itself further in the reports and memoirs of the colonial officers (Sabol 2003, Brower, 2003). Historians, however, have questioned the motives of Abulkhair for years and inferred that he was soliciting strategic assistance in his on-going conflict with the Dzungars, who attacked him systematically from the east. In his conversations with the Russian colonial administrators, however, he does not refer to the Dzungar threat even briefly but emphasizes his will to come to peaceful terms with Bashkirs, who were in alliance with the Russians at that time (Sabol 2003, p. 28). As soon as Anna embarked on imperial administration of the oath, Kazakhs got resentful and attacked the colonizers, forcing the settlers to escape. Abulkhair revealed to Mirza Kutly Tevkelev²⁵, the mission leader, that he did not exchange the opinions with the elders and had requested assistance from the Empress on his own behalf. The Kazakhs and Russians, however, had a different perspective on the dynamics of the new relations. Abulkhair attempted to amass his own power over the Kazakhs with the help of the Russian protectorate (Sabol, 2003, pp. 27-29). What he sought was rather support than merging. In other words, the eventual oath Abulkhair declared to be the “Khan of all the Kazakhs,” a was more likely an expression of wishful thinking than real circumstances (Sabol 2003, pp. 27-29).

The subsequent years were marked by hostilities and further Russian invasion. In 1740 Ablai of the Little Zhuz pledged allegiance to Russia, an act that seemed directly

²⁵ Tatar Murza from the Tevkelev family, a Russian diplomat, founder of Chelyabinsk, and Major General (1755), participated in the suppression of the Bashkir uprisings of 1735-1740.

connected to Abulhair's commitment to loyalty and enforced Russia's influence (Sabol, 2003, p. 29). The initial neglect of Catherine II shifted and transformed to intense colonial tactics at the end of the 18th century when the Kazakhs initiated two violent rebellions against Russian rule. Kazakhs joined the army of Emelian Pugachev* and, in 1773-1774, recovered dominance over the river Irtish and besieged Orenburg,* the provincial center that resulted in the cruel persecution of the rebels. It is unclear what exact goals the Kazakhs sought to achieve by participating in the Pugachevshchina* because Kazakh khans were neither united nor consistent in their understanding of the end objectives of their actions, changing their sides during the battles, expecting to receive mercy from whichever party would win. This case of insurgence has demonstrated that Central Asian people were not equipped enough to sustain a unified resistance and were fractured in their interests and identities (Sabol 2003, p. 31).

Regardless of the real intentions of Abulhair and the resistance of local elders, the myth about Kazakhs' willingness to be annexed has firmly rooted in Russian imperial discourse. A particular thread on locals' voluntary submission and the will of Turkistan peoples to live under Catherine's benevolent reign was explicit in the reports of administrators like Mirza Tevklev, Hyacinth Bitchurin, and others (Sabol 2003). In the context of colonial Central Asia, Russia's imperial notion of fighting "barbarism" evolved into a duty to safeguard the liberties of the local populations for the greater good.

* Don Cossack, the head of the revolt of 1773-1775 in Russia. Using gossip that Emperor All-Russian Peter III was alive, Pugachev proclaimed himself him; he was one of many impostors pretending to be Peter and the most famous of them.

* The city at the border with contemporary Kazakhstan

* (The peasant war of 1773-1775, the Pugachevshchina, the Pugachev revolt, the Pugachev uprising, the uprising led by Yemelyan Pugachev) - the rebellion of the Yaits Cossacks, which grew into a full-scale war between the Cossacks, peasants and peoples of the Urals and the Volga region with the government of Empress Catherine II.

In their memorandums, local administrators were imagining themselves as liberally and generously offering help to their helpless neighbors, the Junior and Middle Zhuzes, in combating the barbarian Dzhungars and Bashkirs. The alleged public good Catherine was ready to reward the inhabitants of the Steppe's communities with protection from the surrounding aggressors in return for the locals' freely offered loyalty to Saint-Petersburg. Catherine's protégés, authors like Gavriel Derzhavin,* relied heavily on the idea that the peoples of the Central Asian steppes had willingly submitted and consented to Russian rule. She portrayed the empire as a benevolent force that came to defend its neighbors from hostile uncivilized forces. The poet Derzhavin added to this portrayal, disregarding accuracy of time and detail, by presenting the idea of voluntary submission as proof that the Kazakhs had no sense of self or attachment to their own territory (Derzhavin 1782; Etkind 2011 p. 176).

A classic example of this theme is the ode "Felitsa," which Gabriel Derzhavin dedicated to Catherine II in 1782. Born near Kazan and proud of his Tatar roots, Derzhavin became the Olonets governor, Tambov governor, and, finally, the Minister of Justice, but this brilliant career began with Felicia. The Russian Empress is praised as the "God-like mother of the Kyrgyz-Kaisak Horde." The nomadic tribe "Kyrgyz-Kaisak" (Kazakhs) has just been brought under the power of Russia, and the ode glorifies this conquest of Catherine. Following the conventions of the genre, this ode turns Catherine into a model of motherly virtues and the colonized people into modest childish subjects who follow the monarch, climbing the ladder of perfection. But the empress, a German by birth, does not become a source of westernization in this ode, on the contrary, her image is orientalized (she is wearing

* Russian poet of the Enlightenment, a statesman of the Russian Empire, a senator, an actual privy councilor of Catherine the Great

Kyrgyz-Kaisak clothing and the story takes place in “in Baghdad, Smyrna, Cashmere”²⁶) By reversing the order of domination, exoticizing of the sovereign demonstrates how early Russian literature revised the classical legacy of European Orientalism and the political consequences of this revision (Derzhavin 1782; Etkind 2011, p. 176).

Despite the oriental representation of the monarch, in fact, cultural exchange in the Central Asian region was rather unilateral. Unlike other regions, where Russians were open to cultural exchange, mutual readjustment of norms, knowledge, and skills; the Central Asian Steppes were condemned mostly to absorb and imitate Russian cultural and social setting. The customs of Kirgiz and Kazakh tribes did not stick to the colonial settlers because they were perceived as non-existent and were neglected due to lack of settled structure and literacy. Nomadic culture was dismissed as a system and was a subject to complete redesign from its foundations. Unlike the colonialism practiced in Siberia, which mainly aimed at resource extraction, the motivation behind colonial practices in the Middle East was similar to that of the Caucasus and Ingria - expanding the space for people and securing strategic pathways to the Empire's geopolitical goals. However, while Siberian, Caucasian, and Eastern European lands were acquired by the adventurous Cossacks and militants who romanticized local folklore and cultural differences in many different ways, Central Asian lands were initially occupied by peasants who lived off the Russian crown's subsidies during the Catherine era. Later, during Alexander II's tenure (late 19th century), the Steppes were

²⁶ [...But where does your throne shine in the world?
Where, heavenly branch, do you bloom?
In Baghdad, Smyrna, Cashmere?
Listen, wherever you live,
Accepting my praises to you,
Do not think that hats or peshmerga
For them, I wished for you.
Feel the goodness
Such is the wealth of the soul,
Which Croesus did not collect...] “Felitsa” by Gavriil Derzhavin, 1782

actively colonized by armed medical doctors, teachers, pedagogists, anthropologists, and geodesists.

Kazakh art, religion, literature, education, music, industry, and commerce were adapted to their nomadic lifestyle. Kazakhs were Muslims; however, to what extent is debatable. Chokan Valikhanov, presumably the first Kazakh intellectual acknowledged by many scholars, wrote that “among the Kirgiz [Kazakh], there are still many who do not know the name of Muhammed” (Chokan Valikhanov, 1958, p. 187 in Sabol 2003). However, he recognized that Islam was gradually becoming more influential overpowering shamanism (Sabol 2003, p. 22). Levshin recalls asking Kazakhs, “What do you believe?” The response was usually either silence and confusion or something like “we don’t know” (Levshin 1996, p. 313 in Sabol 2003). Schuyler testifies to encountering the same replies; however, he says: “it is only externally that they are Mussulmans. On being asked what religion they have, unaccustomed to such a form of the question, they will say they do not know, but at the same time they would repel with vigor any insinuation that they were not good Mussulmans” (Schuyler 1877, p. 21 in Sabol 2003).

Moreover, Schuyler erroneously claimed that the Kazakhs’ conversion to Islam was a result of Russian religious policies. He argued that “few of their sultans and chiefs had any idea of the doctrines of Islam, and there was not a mosque nor a mullah in the Steppe” (Schuyler 1877, pp. 37-38 in Sabol 2003). The majority of Kazakhs complied with certain Islamic norms, such as circumcision, burial rituals, hygiene, and polygamy; at the same time, secluding and veiling of women were rare among Kazakhs (Sabol, p. 23).

Art and literacy in Kazakh culture also reflect their nomadic lifestyle. Instead of the written alphabet, Kazakhs passed their myths, history, and poetry orally and through aqyns,

who is a Kazakh bard (Sabol 2003, p.24). The habit of migration implied that all the possessions were, by necessity, mobile and minimal. In a nomadic community, according to Lattimore, there are two primary forms of property – the pasture and the livestock which provided Kazakhs with competitive mobility: they could move and migrate faster than settlers who are attached to a particular territory (Lattimore, 1995, p. 332 in Sabol 2003). Therefore, as an object of property, the land was not as attractive for the Kazakhs as the livestock. For that, the conquest of the Kazakh Steppes could not imply the habitual Western concept of conquest (which conventionally means seizing the land one owns) since the Kazakhs had a different land ownership paradigm. The boundaries of the possessed lands had a different structure, were more blurred and flexible than in the imagination of Russians and had more of a symbolic or mythological nature (Sabol 2003, p.26). As Sabol rightfully points out, Kazakhs attribute various meanings to the notion of land: in the Kazakh language, there are such words as zher (land, earth, region), topyraq (land, soil), atameken and atazhurt (fatherland), and el (people, land). The last two terms portray the territorial domain of a tribe as a “native land” that does not merely mean a place of birth but the entire genealogy of a clan or zhuz at hand (Sabol 2003, p.26).

In Russian understanding, community members would only embrace an image of identity with a common sense of solidarity and belonging based on governance, shared written or spoken language, religious beliefs and practices, and shared understanding of exclusive property and territorial boundaries. Kazakhs’ nomadic lifestyle implied that all these attributes of an imaginary community were not enough for Russians to recognize them as legitimate and even violated by colonial intervention. Other regions of Russia’s surroundings held more solid or explicit traits of identity, which helped the locals to unite their efforts and resist or collectively apply to the protectorate of several empires to

manipulate their authority and maintain and preserve their position (the case of Ukraine and Poland, Caucasus, and Persia, Izhora and Sweden). Those regions demonstrated a visible backbone of identity and were perceived by the colonizers as subjects to conquer and extract natural, cultural, or human capital. Here, in the Kazakh steppe, the Russian empire was not interested in artistic or educational exchange, and neither could its leaders acquire any material value from what they had found. They initially aimed at using this territory to secure their trade pathway to China and later as leverage of influence on Manchuria. However, they did not perceive this land as contributing culturally and economically, or requiring sacrifice and attention. Kazakh religion, education, literacy, and social order were perceived as absent and yet to be established by Russian “civilizers.”

After the first wave of Catherine’s settlers, the second influx of colonizers and rising interest in the regions happened at the end of the 19th century before the Russo-Japanese War.* Interestingly, the second wave had not sprung from the intention of conquering or protecting the local peoples. Instead, the new generation of colonizers embarked on the mission of “upbringing” the nation. They came with the logo of cultivating civic society, further modernization and rearranging tribal blood ties of communities into practical, functional units commonly associated with industrialized societies.

Education and pedagogy had become a more essential aspect of Russian colonization in the late 19th century when Russians embarked on asserting their power over the regions through opening new meetups.* Education became central because, after the Russo-Japanese war, the colonial administration demanded more educated Kazakhs. Additionally, Kazakh

* The Russo-Japanese War occurred in 1904; the root of conflict was the rivalry over Manchuria and Korea.

* Kazakh schools

parents began to see formal education as a path to better opportunities for their children. As noted in the newspaper “*Kazakh*,” Baitursynov wrote: “Before us is great emerging, a question about the independent existence of Kazakh nation... [N]ow, when different people penetrate our midst, why can we not live as such, the Kazakh nation, not losing our name, our national character? This question occupies us day and night, disturbing our sleep... only a nation with its own language and literature will survive. The national character of a people who speak their language never disappears” (Baitursynov 1922, pp. 21-22 in Sabol 2003).

Having borrowed Western lenses to view the colonization process, Russian new settlers could grasp that identity cannot be separated from its own expression. Human experiences require intermediaries not only to be communicated but also to exist as experiences. Identity is created through the act of self-expression and communication. Through language, individuals construct their identity by performing communicative acts that reflect who they are. The Russian alphabet and new vocabulary became a powerful semiotic tool to conceptualize the new Kazakh colonial identity and situate it in a Russian household concerning the views of the metropolis. Literacy scripted by Russians for Central Asia played a hugely instrumental role in making Kazakhs conceive of themselves as new selves when placed in a new cultural context. By acquiring literacy, Kazakh tribes acquired new tools that altered their relationship with their changing social, cultural, and cognitive surroundings, allowing for the possibility of coming together as larger units, such as nations. The nomadic tradition has gradually eroded, and people have become more settled.

Russian educators had to find ways to cope with the language barrier and the suspicion of religious subversion that their schools aroused among the population. Both obstacles proved challenging to overcome. The elites of the Russian Empire began to promote the policies of “Russianization and integration” among the people of the colonized

Steppes (Aizhan Qarapaeva 2001, p. 54 in Brower, 2003). For example, the tsarist minister of education, Dimitry Tolstoi, in collaboration with a local educator Nickolai Il'minskii introduced the Russian language in Kazakh elementary schools along with the native language. In the opinion of the colonialist educators, offering bilingual education and including the Kazakh language in the syllabi was a gesture of respect and acknowledgment of the ethnic uniqueness of the Kazakhs while still pursuing the policy of "civic russification" (Brower, 2003, p. 69).

Il'minskii was only rather anti-Muslim and strongly pro-Orthodox. However, the lessons of the Caucasus war showed that fighting the religious sentiments of the aborigines can backfire. Thus, the policy of emulsification had to be based on neutral and secular education principles. Therefore, secular instructions and norms took over Muslim customs even though explicit attacks and disputes over religious views were intensely policed and forbidden. The educational authorities decided to abstain from imposing their culture onto locals. Instead, they chose to win over the local population with its cultural attractiveness and resourcefulness. In time, the Muslim-dictated codes of conduct were included in the school programs and legitimized for non-Christian pupils (Brower 2003, p. 69). This measure was taken to provide the natives with a sense of inclusion and exert influence through trust, re-learning, and creating an image of intellectual superiority of the Russian educators.

The introduction of mandatory schooling played an essential role in codifying national languages for Kazakhs, Kyrgys, Tadjiks, Sarts, and other tribes, as the language had to be standardized in written form for textbooks to be produced. Speakers of a language that had previously only existed in various dialects (sometimes differing vastly from one another) were now initiated into one officially approved 'high' form of their mother tongue. While

the feeling of identification with a specific language had previously been somewhat diffuse, it now gained in strength, giving its speakers a greater sense of closeness to their respective communities and traditions. Thus, the focus of the latest wave of Russian colonizers was not appeasement, extermination, or exploitation of local people and resources but the education of children pursuing the purpose of Russification and reproducing the image of the Russified self. Having to deal with little resistance, Russians could apply their efforts to redesigning social norms, creating written language, and raising the new generation of fully russified Kazakhs. They realized that the elder generation either did not mind or did not see it feasible to resist the change. The Cyrillic alphabet and Russian habitual terms and labels engrained in written languages of Central Asia have established strong cultural ties that connected the region with the Russian household. These ties were designed in a unilateral mode, making it possible for Russians to infantilize the locals in their ideational space further.

The new approach to colonization was also conditioned by Russia's recent experience with war in Caucasia, which had taught the imperial leaders that military methods of periphery colonization were ineffective. The religiously driven movement managed to use inefficient and cruel Russian policies as a powerful motive to unite and invest the energy of their faith into the Holy War against the infidel aggressors (Brower 2003, p.70). Another belligerent conquest would exhaust the empire and lead to colonial failure; thus, the methods of Turkestan pacification were chosen as a way to prevent another Caucasian War. Instead, an order to avoid a new Caucasian War one of Alexander II's close advisers suggested that religious toleration was the foundation of successful colonial practice over the Muslim population (Brower 2003, p.69). Following this suggestion, the commander of the Russian expeditionary force in Turkestan, Dmitriy Miliutin, in 1865 (right after the Caucasian War), claimed that his main goal was to leave give the natives no pretext to think of the Russian

presence as a religious crusade and commanded to his belligerent subordinates to respect Muslim practices of the local population and avoid doing anything threatening to Muslims of Central Asia (Brower 2003, p. 70).

The primary Russian military leader, engineer, and adjutant general, Konstantin Kaufman, led the conquest and colonization of the regions of Central Asia in late XIX Turkistan. Even though Kaufman considered Muslim fanatical and primitive (the stereotypes prevailing among other borderland colonial administrators), he was still able to reconcile his chauvinistic views with the policies of tolerance. The anti-Muslim xenophobia was intrinsic to Russian officials as a residue of the experience with pan-Islamism orchestrated by the Ottoman Empire that led many Russian colonial officers to believe Islam was incompatible with any foreign culture (Brower 2003, p.70). However, Kaufman, unlike the Caucasian military leaders, proved the policy of toleration and appeasement to be more sustainable than a brutal conquest.

Kaufman separated Islam into two categories: ideational and practical religious aspects. The former came from religious leaders whose philosophy and narrative were a threat to the Russian colonial rule in Central Asia. It was political and deserved attention from the borderland administrators and close observation and regulation. However, the latter aspect was regarded as a private matter. Each individual practices their religious inclinations as they wish if that does not affect the public domain of society. Thus, Kaufman tolerated or disregarded practicing Islam as a matter of rituals and customs (Brower, 2003, p. 71).

Defending a unique “infant” role of Central Asia in the colonial household gave Kaufman some legitimacy to claim special administrative privilege for his tenure in the region and take on the part of somewhat advocating for the “rights” of Turkestan natives.

The 21st Turkestan Statute that he issued offered a list of native rights, which included “freedom of religious observance,” “preservation of customary and written practices in all marriage, property and family affairs,” “freedom from physical punishment,” and – what proved to be the most decisive event for Turkestan’s security during the First World War – “freedom from conscription” (Brower, 2003, p.38).

The exemption from mandatory military conscription existing among other citizens of the Empire was highly perplexing to the council in St. Petersburg metropolis. In 1882 the ministers claimed that the absence of conscription was a privilege, not a right, for the Turkistan people over the rest of the population. They sent one of the Senators, Fedor Girs, on a fact finding trip to Turkistan with preliminary instructed instructions to rely on his own judgement in his assessment of the situation with religious and military exemptions in Turkestan. The Senator strongly approved Kaufman’s suggestion to spare the locals from the army. Girs was not supportive of disciplining the locals in a European way and arming them with modern weaponry (Ostroumov 1905, p. 67 in Brower 2003). To this end, Girs recommended that the council accept the argument on the social and cultural uniqueness of the locals and exempt them from military service to preserve the region's security. This way, Turkestan men could avoid the burden of military duties (Brower, 2003, p. 38).

In addition, as mentioned before, due to the absence of written language and their nomadic way of life, Kazakhs could not possibly display signs of religious fanaticism or even homogeneity in spiritual practices. Kaufman writes in his memoirs, “the nomads officially adhered to Islam; in reality, they shunned it and have no specific religious faith.” The conclusion was evident to Kaufman. Islam had to be and could be kept out of the steppes. The “entire future of these peoples depends on Russian policy” (Kaufman 1904, p. 175 in Brower 2003). None of the Turkic tribes sought to manifest a sense of unity and belonging

based on shared religious affiliation through shared rituals, ceremonies, beliefs, or attitudes and behaviors toward symbols of the Muslim holy scriptures (Brower, 2003; Sabol 2003, Knight 2000). The correlation between fractured association with religious and spiritual domains and fragile ties among multiple tribes' identities let Russians to further infantilize the local peoples in the imagination of the metropolis. The decision to spare Kazakhs from military conscription that did spread over the rest of the population of the Russian Empire additionally demonstrates the Russian view of the local people as not mature enough to become a full-fledged colonial subjects who should be combatted or armed.

Kaufman's motivation behind the Turkestan project was to improve the social order, which he considered backward and awaiting development. He viewed Turkestan as material for crafting a new social model that would satisfy his understanding of civil society in such areas as healthcare, gender relations, legal regulations, educational system, and urban structure. The scope of spheres available for intervention and control was vaster than in any other region subjected to Russian colonization but not too extensive if compared to some Western colonies such as British India (Brower, 2003, p. 41).

One of the most preoccupying issues in Kaufman's social policy was the question of the treatment of women and, even more so, children. He viewed his colonial policies in the region as progressive. He launched multiple public campaigns targeting legal, social, and educational areas to reform children's and women's conditions and access to education. The subject of child abuse came to the attention even of the Russian public when the artist Vasily Vereschagin opened his exhibit in 1874 in St-Petersburg. He had spent years at Kaufman's request as an "artist-in-residence" working in Turkestan and assisted Kaufman in organizing an anthropological exhibition drawing natives' day-to-day life. There he presented a painting that portrayed a local custom of child sex trafficking, where a small naked boy was standing

in front of an elderly man who considered purchasing him as the painting was titled “Purchase of a Slave Boy” (Brower, 2003, p. 41).

Alexander Geins was Kaufman's principal assistant in Tashkent until 1870. He also participated in the exhibition program, where he included a catalog of the paintings accompanied by a lengthy essay on Turkestan. Geins had a great affinity to Kaufman in his values and perspective and presumably represented the views of his contemporaries – educated, secular military government administrators. Geins' public presentation of the Sart population was rather gloomy, as he portrayed their “family and daily life” as “miserable and immoral.” The most revealing indicator was the treatment of children deprived of healthcare, education, and access to “healthy” nurture. He also hinted at local customs of child sexual abuse. One of the pictures exhibited (Picture #5) shows graphic details of a slave boy being assessed by an older adult, possibly a potential buyer. Another item of the exhibition (Picture #6) depicts a representative of “bacha” – boy dancers (often enslaved people) dressed up and made up as girls, who were expected to entertain a crowd of men²⁷ (Brower 2003, p. 41).

One of the leverages of cultural colonization that Kaufman also employed in the region was public healthcare. The colonial administration of Turkestan supplied the local settlements with military doctors who were also provided with the authority to supervise public healthcare and sanitary conditions. Russian colonialists realized that Western medicine had become an icon of progress in the recent decade and used it as another tool to demonstrate superiority and create another channel for the relations of dependency. Russian

²⁷Bacha-bazi, derived from the Persian phrase “to play with boys,” has a long-standing history as a practice of child prostitution and sexual slavery that entails young boys who have not yet reached puberty being coerced into performing suggestive dances in the guise of females to an audience, who may additionally purchase them for sexual pleasure. This custom persists, albeit sporadically, in Afghanistan.

medical practices in the region were both a tool to show the progressiveness of their colonial methods and benevolence as agents of health-giving activity and protectors of children and women (they created so called “outpatient clinics for native women and children”) (Brower 2003, p. 71).

The preoccupation with healthcare for children and pedagogy was the central theme of the Steppe’s colonization. These tactics and policies reinforced the narrative of “nurture” and parenting in Russian colonial discourse when it comes to Central Asia. There was little discourse on forceful measures, conquest, or violence but on education, caring for the elderly and children, and the upbringing of an underdeveloped child that was initially abandoned. In Central Asian counterinsurgencies, a Russian official was in the position of becoming a social worker, a teacher, a nurse, or a civil engineer. This phenomenon has prompted some to the term colonial experience in Central Asia as armed social work. While warfare and welfare have been commonly associated in historical literature, this association is based on the idea that mobilization for world wars provoked the development of social welfare. However, not many authors noticed historical moments when armed social work was used as an instrument or a distinct form of colonization in the Steppes.

In Russia, patriotic authors, many of whom were also imperial administrators, were pleased to recognize the foreign origin of many people, ideas, and symbols that defined the Russian empire as an inclusive household. The roots of Russian metropolitan culture can or even should be foreign if only its fruits were national. Empire - a source of wealth for the Russian people and enlightenment for the colonial periphery (although its origin is located among the Vikings and Amazons). In the early stages, even emperors of both sexes did not deny the fact that their poetic portraits were painted with oriental colors, contrasting them with Europe, from where they again, like Rurik, came to Russia. Russian post-colonial

historiography labeled this phenomenon as “negative cultural hegemony” (Etkind, 2011; Morozov, 2015). However, the latest Russian colonization tactics in Middle Asia, were drawn entirely on Western social theory and not all on real evidence, because the Russians believed that such backward peoples had no complex culture and identity. This implied a unilateral cultural exchange (Brower, 2003; Sabol, 2003; Etkind, 2001; Gerasimov et al., 2004).

To sustain Kaufman’s claim to the region’s special status, sparing Kazakhs from religious restrictions and military conscription, he turned to ethnographic research to infantilize local cultural and religious preferences in the Russian imperial imagination. Turkestan’s unique position in the regional colonial household was bolstered by the created images that Kaufman exchanged with his superiors and opponents in St Petersburg. He found a way to appease his subjects and reconcile them with the idea of the special inferior capacities of the natives imagining the local customs and folkways as backward through ethnographic insights into the peculiarities of the Turkestan population. Kaufman could justify his colonial plans by applying scientific information and ethnographic findings (Brower, 2003, p. 42).

The ethnographic expeditions organized with the help of Kaufman’s fellows (such imperial Russian general and statesman as Count V. A. Peroysky) became a tool to collect the knowledge that Kaufman sought of Turkestan Peoples and expose it in the field. One of the researchers on the matter, Dr. Nathaniel Knight, demonstrated how local ethnographers, colonial administrators, and officers attempted to create an appropriate image of nomadic subjects in a way that would serve imperial interests (Knight, 2000; Brower 2003 p. 4). In the view of Russian reformers, an empire as civilized as Russia bore a responsibility of first deriving an appropriate insight into the local culture and ways of living to build a solid

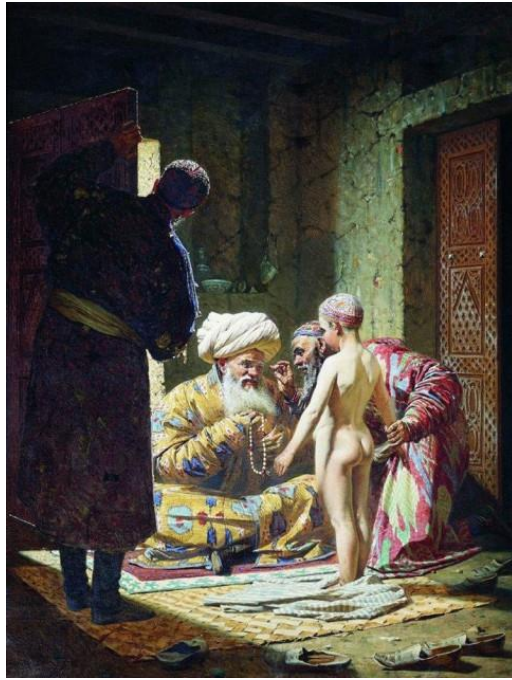
foundation for colonial reforms and encourage progress among the subjected peoples. Kaufman's promotion and protection of ethnographic research of the Central Asian ways of living were primarily supported by the educated imperial reform-oriented elites (Brower, 2003, p. 44). Before the Russo-Japanese war, in the late 1860s, Russian scholars launched a series of ethnographic expeditions in Central Asia that resulted in the first Russian Ethnographic Exposition in Moscow in 1867. Explaining a multitude of exhibits devoted to the empire's peoples, its president justified it by claiming that "the study of our natives" was "a necessity for every educated Russian" (Russian Ethnographic Exhibition 1867, p. 40 in Brower 2003).

Here, colonial power was bound with scientific authority, which appeared to be the backbone of the 1867 exhibition introduced with the help of the Society of Amateurs of Anthropology, Natural Sciences, the Ethnography. The organizing society put authentic effort into bestowing the exhibition with scientific flavor and the image of ethnographic precision. The project was highly successful and attracted the attention of hundreds and thousands of elite visitors. The scale of attention to the exhibition was a sign that the metropolis was prepared enough to perceive a newly colonized land through scientific lenses and acknowledge the cultural and ethnic diversity of the empire. Not only the members of the society but a Tsar himself delivered a message that this was a significant public endeavor promoting the project as an essential imperial ethnographic vocation. Inspired by Kaufman's paradigm around the region, the exhibition became a valuable asset in forming a new stage of the imperial ideology (Brower, 2003, p. 45).

The number of visitors exceeded the most optimistic forecasts; it was 90,000 by the end of the third month of the ongoing exhibition. The works presented there introduced a visual language of empire unseen and unheard before in the Russian Empire. They offered a

version of empire in the style of the nineteenth-century colonial states discussed by Benedict Anderson, using scientific terms to legitimize social hierarchy within the imperial household. These subjects of ethnographic inquiry were “colonized” and infantilized in a manner very similar to the representations of contemporary Western colonies (Anderson, 1991, pp. 85-92; Brower, 2003, p. 45). The organizers of the exhibition avoided the straightforward language of conquest. They attempted to substitute the language of domination they used to apply to other colonized regions before to the vocabulary of educating, upbringing, nurturing, and disciplining (Brower, 2003, p. 45).

The exhibition’s audience was instead fractured: some visitors were colonial administrators who had experienced a hostile encountering Muslim population in the Caucasus, and others were curious Russian upper-class citizenry entertained by the exotic traits of the freshly conquered region. Even though there was a massive gap in how these two categories of attendees perceived the uniqueness of the locals, Kaufman tried to connect to them both. The exhibits were powerful and attractive to the benefit of Kaufman’s colonial plans. Incredibly successful were the works of Kaufman’s temporary artist-in-residence, Vasily Vereshchagin, whose special commission from the governor-general familiarized himself with the social norms, value system, and day-to-day life of the settled and nomadic peoples of Turkestan. Kaufman wished him to create a paradigm of the local peoples comprehensible for the “civilized” world of Russian elites (Brower, 2003, p.49).



Picture 5. V. V. Vereschagin. Sale of an enslaved child. 1872 (The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow)



Picture 6. V. V. Vereschagin. Bacha's portrait. 1867-1868 (The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow)



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Picture 7. V. V. Vereschagin. A Sart Elder. 1867-1868 (The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow)

Kaufman provided Vereshchagin with enough space to express the latter's creativeness during the painter's two expeditions in 1868 and 1870. He allowed the painter to freely produce images of the landscape, architecture, and people according to Vereshchagin's view and to present his drawings and paintings to the metropolitan eyes. Vereshchagin was rather prolific within this project and created over 250 artistic expressions, the majority of which were portraits of local children in the middle of the schooling process, being cured or exposing individuals given specific ethnic, gender, and age attributes of identity like "Uzbek Boy," "A Kirgiz Woman," "A Sart Elder." Works indicating Muslim traits among the population were relatively sparse (Brower, 2003, p. 49). This exhibition was the ultimate way to attach the stigma of childlike people to the nations of Central Asia. The images of the weak, helpless, and dependent appendix of the empire were initially introduced in the literature Catherine's epoch and later reimagined by Kaufman and reproduced by his employed painters.

Conclusion

This chapter endeavors to utilize the framework of the regional household to offer a genealogy of imperial discourse to comprehend Russia's foundational perspective of its place in Eurasia. As sources for the analyzed speech, I employed the dominant figures that the Russian Tsars approved, officially published, and to this day, are mainly mandatory for the school programs' history and literature courses in Russia. Some sources were provided by colonial administrators, others by prominent historians, philosophers, literary authors, and critics, and still, others were represented through exhibitions or popular readings. Changes in printing policies, dissemination of literacy, the development of social sciences, and the accessibility of books and education condition the shift in the type of sources.

Based on the analysis, I suggest that the Russian Empire adopted a language of colonial “regional household” that can be traced as far back as the early Russian Imperial era, beginning in the 16th century. The origin of the Russian state itself was presented as a marriage between the two tribes. The conquests of Slavic tribes by Varangian Vikings were imagined and promoted as voluntary submission of the latter in search of external guidance and rule for the sake of internal peace. Thus, Varangians were depicted as powerful husband who married and gracefully ruled over Slavic matriarchal society (termed as a wife).

The conceptual construct of the Russian Household was founded on the hypothesis, suggested by Vasily Tatischev, that the conquerors of Slavic tribes, the Varangians, were invited to rule over Rus'. He introduces the encounter between the Scandinavian colonizers and the Slavic matriarchal community as a marriage rather than a conquest. This helped Peter the Great frame the written narrative that would support rather than undermine Russian nationalism, which was needed during the Russian-Swedish war. Instead of picturing

Russians as a subject to conquest, Tatischev interpreted the Vikings as being “Slavified” and married Slavic women. Their social contract looked more like a prenuptial agreement of patriarchal supremacy rather than a Hobbesian way of colonial domination. However, the invitation to rule and own that the Varangians allegedly got from the Slavs was only the beginning of the re-occurrent events of including new members in the Russian imperial household.

The process of colonization was introduced through the concept of domestication. The source for the discourse analyzed here was a product of prominent historiographers who described the colonial experience in different ways. Still, they consistently labeled it in terms of kinship and domestication. The narrative and the methods of colonization of Siberia were manipulative rather than coercive. Russian colonizers came to Siberia to access the primary source of trade with the West – fur animals. Hunting these animals and processing them for the fur supply required special skills that Russian conquerors did not possess. Thus, exterminating the indigenous population who specialized in that craft was unreasonable. Instead, the colonizers used *amanat* tactics that implied kidnapping kids and relatives of the natives and adopting them as full-fledged family members. This allowed the newcomers to manipulate family ties to receive the fur regularly at a relatively low cost. Intervening in the locals’ household dynamics let the Russian colonizers maintain control and fur supply using implicit violence and pertain to the narrative of the imperial household. The narrative on the expanding family-like empire helped legitimize the annexation of the Siberian under the veil of domestication.

The following household member entered Russia after the open recognition of its imperial nation. Peter the Great proudly declared himself an emperor and deemed Russia an empire. He applied the concept of virgin land to his new conquests in Eastern Europe after

extracting Ingermanland from the Swedish territories. Peter's radical reform in the legislation, the structure, and the culture of the Russian Empire went under the logo of enlightening the ignorant, naïve, and virgin country. The narrative of contemporary Russian philosophers and critics referred to "virginity" more as the period of history rather than the new land that was conquered. However, Peter still needed a territorial symbol of virginity to establish a brand-new empire. A new capital – Saint-Petersburg – founded on the deserted swamps of Ingermanland became this symbol.

Further, the colonization of Ukraine and Belarus also had its specific flavor of domestication but more through linguistic and cultural means. Because Kievan Rus' is a predecessor of the Russian state, Russian cultural hegemony had more weight than elsewhere in the periphery. The discrimination against Ukrainians was intricately expressed through its hierarchical sub-inclusion into the Slavic family as an inferior archaic part of Russian identity. Russians framed this "inferiority" of Ukrainians through such methods as mocking the Ukrainian language and customs as outdated old-fashioned, and irrelevant. Language was one of the few leverages to distinguish Ukrainians, so closely related to Russian ethnicity, to demonstrate its subaltern position as a powerless ancestor. This ancestor is introduced in the discourse as an elderly "Mother of Russian cities" whose time of glory has ended, yet who is expected to remain available and accommodating. One of the political constructions promoted by the imperial authors was the idea of a special Ukrainian-Belarusian-Russian kinship, an almost shared identity.

Later, Caucasian Wars resulted in the annexation of the Northern Caucasus entirely to the Russian Empire. However, Russians failed to assimilate and domesticate the Caucasian highlanders, leading to a new paradigm of romanization. Moreover, the resistance and independent spirit of Caucasians triggered the most brutal response to the part of Russian

troops. Russian colonizers' hostility during the war in the Caucasus made it impossible to frame the annexation neither as civilizing mission or marriage. This made it challenging to picture Caucasians as alien, barbarian, and naturally predisposed to taming and obedience; Russian narratives found other ways to legitimize Russian domination by romanticizing the temper and passion of Caucasian characters as intrinsic to something wild and putting it in romantic brackets. Thus, Caucasus takes an atypical place in the Russian imaginary “regional household” system as an unavailable mistress that deserves admiration and invokes a sense of guilt, yet still a desirable object of domination and annexation.

Finally, the Central Asian region entered the household taking the role of a child. The imperial vision of colonized population as “big kids” was characterized by a primitive lifestyle and naturally limited intellectual capacity. Promoting this image was one of the ideological maneuvers used by Russians to establish local domination in Central Asia. To reinforce this colonial license, the Russian administrators in Central Asia viewed their position as protectors of people incapable of thinking critically, defending themselves, and needing discipline and guidance. Being childlike is an allegory presenting an object as incompetent, irrational, and ignorant, needing guidance and education. It is employed to justify colonization and action on behalf of the other condemned as animistic, underdeveloped, undeveloped, or incorrectly developed and, therefore, naturally expected to submit (Mills & Lefrancois, 2018, p. 1). Kaufman’s metaphorical appeal to childhood helped him legitimize the special status of the Central Asian region. The complex dyad of child and adult, sane and mad, is one of the central themes of global psychiatry that frames West-and-majority world relations. The derogatory concept of what it is to be childlike in the global colonial narrative reproduces the ideational multi-folded systemic oppression that, allegedly, is in young people’s “best interests” as they are called to be governed.

In the following centuries, the Russian imperial hierarchy was imagined as a regional household where peripheral nations, newly annexed, were assigned the identities of different menages. For example, Siberia was figured as ‘the domesticated,’ the core part of the Russian Empire, Ukraine is drawn as ‘the elderly mother,’ whose legacy is treasured yet ridiculed as outdated; the Caucasus is assigned a role ‘the unavailable mistress,’ who is passionate, attractive, yet unwilling to submit; Ingermanland, the birthplace of the new imperial capital was known as ‘the virgin,’ which symbolized the recognized immaturity of Russian culture to the face of European civilization; finally, the peoples of Central Asia are represented as ‘the helpless child’ of the Empire in need of education, care and protection. These roles helped the Russian metropolis legitimize colonial censorship among the conquered nations and ethnic groups. Using Patricia Owens’ framework on the genealogy of the social realm, the argument is being sustained that Russia’s self-depiction as the ‘master’ of the regional ‘household’ can provide a much-needed conceptual depth to the study of Russia’s regional policy and unveil continuity in its vision for the near abroad.

Unlike the multicultural population of North America that is often referred to as the American “melting pot,” Russian interethnic society is usually portrayed as a large household where there are older, younger, feminized, and masculinized ethnic groups, districts, and territories, the masters and the servants that are united through intricate familial linkages. Although, when compared with a recently generated idea of a “salad bowl” that states that ethnic groups in the United States were mixed but did not melt into a single homogeneous culture (Kalman, 2010, p. 4), the Russian “household” still looks different. Unlike the American “salad bowl,” Russian household members did absorb cultural practices and mindsets of each other to a specific extent; however, despite this exchange and mutual transformation, ethnic hierarchy and *geographical disposition* persisted over time.

All these ethnic groups did not mix; however, as in the case of the United States, they were bound to co-existence. The difference between the two cases here is that in Russian Empire, the ethnically distinguished units became *related* while remaining within specific territorial frameworks. Geographic dispersity, in addition to social segregation, provides fewer reasons and opportunities to challenge social hierarchy within Russian households.

While the peoples that inhabit a particular area of the region have an idea of connection to the imaginary community of Russians, they still realize their standing in the periphery of ethnic hierarchy. Even if finding themselves at the margins of Russian society is frustrating, geographical distance ameliorates this frustration by giving space to the disenfranchised population to maintain their community and benefit from a situation where they are geographically and financially relatively autonomous, yet culturally, mentally, and administratively connected to the core of the state. These conditions are well maintained in the Russian discourse on peoples' "kinship" and "household." The speech largely rejects the violent nature of the conquests of the Russian Tsardom and Russian Empire, which contributes to sustaining the status quo as if Russia was a kind of regional household.

The discourse introduced in this chapter shows that Russian history was imagined as an growing household in many ways. The narrative of annexation, conquest, and colonization was framed in familial or personalized terms. The household paradigm became a tool to normalize violence, oppression, and intervention. At the same time, it also sets the ideology that accommodates hierarchy and order that maintains Russian hegemony conceptually. Household construct reveals itself in the repetitive patterns reflected not only through language but through practices – exchange of family members, child-bearing, focusing on youth education, and nurture. All this is a compelling case of drawing Owen's concept of the household in the regional context.

Chapter 3. The Brotherhood of People: Practices of Russification Behind the Soviet Discourse on “Fraternity”

Introduction

In Marxist ideology, fraternity is one of the central concepts, distinct from the concept of freedom, equality, solidarity, and friendship. Fraternity contains a specific element of mutual duty that sets it apart from other emancipatory notions. This element is a *relational bond* which is characteristic of the members of a fraternal community and which implies that they co-exist as equals, and while possessing equal rights and duties, they, among others, are prescribed with the duty of *mutual aid*. Fraternity becomes a *political* idea when the relational bond between equals prescribes them to help each other which is engrained in political institutions, laws, and practices (Puyol 2019, p. 1).

The concepts of family and the fraternal bond became extremely pronounced in the late Russian Empire and the Early Soviet Union period as it served the ideology by facilitating total mobilization for the First World War and later for the Civil War in Russia. The authorities employed this concept to threaten and inspire potential conscripts. The concept of brotherhood was also convenient to conform individuals concerning new realities of total war; it helped in narrowing the people down to the role of uniform political subjects in the social body of the Empire and later of the Union. The discourse of fraternity that was veiling the attempt to conscript, conform and utilize the population for regime change was supplied with practices of statistical analysis, Russification, extermination, and totalitarianism.

This chapter will disclose the discourse and practices around the newborn concept of fraternity that emerged before the First World War in Tsarist Russia. I will first explain the

theoretical specificity of the Marxist view on fraternal society and how this concept stands out from other emancipatory ideational constructs like solidarity, friendship, equality, and egalitarianism. Then, I will trace how the authorities of the late Russian Empire employed the concept of brotherhood for total mobilization for participating in the Great War. Further, I will explore how the early Soviet leaders modified and manipulated the notion of fraternity to undermine the tsarist regime aiming at total conscription for the Civil War and the Red Revolution in 1917. The following part will reveal the realities of physical and cultural extermination underlying the narrative of brotherhood. Finally, I will describe how the familial terms of framing the nation as a cohesive unit changed during the late Soviet years and the times of Perestroika. This narrative attempted to disrupt the household narrative of the Russian Empire and co-existed based on new ways of bonding. Even though the end of the open imperial narrative did not end the actual colonial practices, the justification for the dynamics in the Eurasian household was now different. It masked the oppression under the notions of uniformity, social conformity, and mutual help.

Political Ideology of the Brotherhood

Political fraternity, as it was understood during the French Revolution in its republican form, suggests that in addition to solidarity and equality, there should also be a universalization of emancipation. Rawls (1971) argues that fraternity within a society signifies a bond of solidarity, freedom, and equality, which prohibits any attempts at subjugation and requires mutual aid in times of need. On the other hand, Marxist thought posits that fraternity involves certain attitudes and behaviors that should adhere to a specific code of conduct (Rawls 1971, p. 105 in Puyol 2019).

Even though fraternity as a political idea is close to the concept of solidarity (as they both imply equality and mutual aid), these notions are not synonymous. Some authors might use the term solidarity and fraternity interchangeably, and they might be so if one means to release the relations at hand from the burden of any identity traits, such as religion, gender, class, and some emotional baggage intrinsic to the traditional understanding of “fraternity” (Rawls 1971; Puyol 2019). At the same time, solidarity (even though it includes the aspects of mutual aid, equality, and bonding in the spirit of welfare states and international humanitarianism) still does not fully capture the meaning of Marxist political fraternity. On the one hand, fraternity is intolerant of any political forms of exclusion, subjugation, marginalization, exploitation, discrimination, colonialism, and humiliation, all of which are theoretically compatible with solidarity. On the other hand, unlike solidarity, Marxist fraternity implies conformity (Puyol, 2019, p.2). Thus, solidarity seems to be somewhat incompatible with exploitation or discrimination while fraternity seems to be an exclusive concept: the non-brothers are excluded from the community.

The fundamental idea behind Marxist fraternity is that the members of the society are equal because they are equally necessary for the formation and sustaining of the said society. Pablo Gilabert (2015) offers to consider the meaning and the implications of this principle as it was formulated in the thought of Marx. Thus, fraternity, in its Marxist interpretation, differs from freedom and equality. The principle of ‘to each according to their needs and from each according to their capacities’ captures the full meaning of fraternity in Marxist terms. Marxist fraternity implies the duty to assist and protect the less fortunate and uniformity of ways of living.

Marxists used the metaphor of the family to emphasize that they see the individuals of the community as if they indeed were brothers and sisters who bear responsibilities to

protect and nurture each other like in an extended family. As Puyol puts it, “this is also the reason why fraternal equality implies the right to and the duty of mutual aid, which all brothers and sisters should ideally take upon themselves – a right and duty that are not necessarily present in egalitarianism that lacks fraternity” (Puyol 2019, p. 3). In short, fraternity, unlike the concepts of equality and egalitarianism, puts more emphasis on mutual support, contribution to the common good, selflessness, and conformity. This way, political principles of equality and political friendship cannot be substituted with the Marxist idea of political fraternity, nor can it be reduced to emotional inclinations or moral dispositions (Puyol 2019, p. 5).

The ideology of fraternity of Soviet peoples and individual citizens was also called to serve as a foundation for social conformity from birth to death of each brotherhood member. To create a seeming equality among individuals, the members of the “fraternity” were supposed to adhere to strictly standardized ways of being and doing in all aspects of life. Uniforms were implemented in all kinds of institutions, from kinder gardens, schools, social institutions (like Komsomol*), and industries to political organizations. The universal style of clothes, food, interior and exterior of the buildings and other constructions, cars – everything was subject to certain certified standard and uniformity. Soviet bohemian elite – artists, scientists, writers – were condemned to remain in the disfavor of the government as their activity and their entire being was in direct dissonance with conformity and uniformity (Shlapentokh 1990, p. 3). As a proxy for the Soviet party aiming at controlling the fraternal society on every micro-level, like households, communities, and minor administrations, the government created a network of special institutions called “comradely

* The All-Union Leninist Communist Youth Union [Kommunisticheskiy Soyuz Molodyozhi] (Komsomol) was a youth organization of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

courts.” These organizations were situated in factories, housing developments, and collective farms for the popular trial of those who violated the policy of conformity, e.g., wearing outstandingly designed clothes, hair style or daring to express individual preferences and tastes otherwise. One of its main purposes was to foster social conformity through the influence of public opinion and ostracism. It was effective as it dealt with wrongdoing before it reached the legal stage, serving as a platform for “community trials.” The court was viewed as both a deterrent and a means of correction that would ensure social conformity on an informal level yet act publicly and create consequences for a potential or actual non-conforming member (Rogovin 1961, p. 7).

Family Narrative in the Late Russian Empire

In order to understand the origins of fraternal conformity and the new Soviet discourse on brotherhood, one needs to look into the transformation of ideology that happened in the Russian Empire right before-World War I. The narrative about the family of brothers evolved from the original narrative about the Russian imperial family of nations that was launched as a background motive during combatants’ recruitment for the WWI arm forces. Military ideologists who promoted the strategy of Nicolas II (the last Russian czar) fully grasped the main strains of the pre-WWI environment and the need for social reform it brought up. There was an urgent need for total mobilization on a scale unknown before. For that, the new domain of social identity emerged that positioned itself above all other aspects of identities included in the imperial Russian household.

As Peter Holquist points out, the military officers were generators of social studies during the late nineteenth century. The need to research of the social space was dictated by the conventional belief that the Russian empire was socially stratified, ethnically diverse,

and lacked a sense of unity, of identification with a single imaginary community that was necessary to build a cohesive military unit. To make matters worse, the imperial authorities of the late nineteenth century perfectly understood that the imperial political system was against nationalism (even though people were segregated along ethnic lines). For the absence of a nationalistic outlook, the state was in need of an alternative ideology that united the populace in a meaningful way. Thus, the officials needed to trigger and sustain the spirit of unity to mobilize the imperial army (Holquist 2001).

The inconsistency between social and political needs became an important preponderance in the opinion of the reformists. They were rather clear in their view on the modern war, the unseen totality and scale of the upcoming war required not only unprecedented actions but also a serious ideational shift in strategies of social mobilization. Thus, they saw a primary purpose as building a new sense of unity among the population disregarding the imperial anxiety over insurgency. Building community and a common goal became the core puzzle of the social strategies of that time.

At the same time, most of the politicians still avoided *ethnic* nationalism. Although intellectuals and elites were fully aware of cohesive mechanisms intrinsic to such attributes as culture, language, and ethnicity, they also recognized that none of those mechanisms can serve as reliable and consistent means to unite a multiethnic state. Thus, they sought a more viable common denominator that would become a common ground for mobilizing the population. They came up with introducing the nation as a family of ethnicities, cultures, languages, and nations (Sanborn 2001, p. 96).

Operating familial terms as a metaphorical model of internal national connections has transformed from implicit to explicit throughout the early twentieth century. The image

of family hearth was supposed to trigger the sense of unity, love, loyalty, and closeness. During one of the most important wartime Duma sessions of 1915, Mikhail Rodzianko managed to reconcile the heated debates among irritated and estranged deputies appealing to the concept of kinship. “The Russian tsar,” he stated to an enchanted audience, “with his sensitive heart, divined the feelings of the people, and he has heard here the response of a united, harmonious, Russian family... And presently, after a half of a year of unprecedented bloodshed, Russia stands... indivisible, firm in will, and strong in spirit” (Speech of Rodzianko 1915, p. 201 in Sanborn 2001).

Another element of this tactic was to enable a certain policy for the families of the soldiers. If the rationale behind military service was based on the value of nation because it defended the family, then it was imperative that the state had to compensate relatives for the sacrifice of the head of the family to his relatives. The aid incumbent upon the state was first realized as an allowance in cash that was issued to the soldiers’ families. The decree enacting the payments periods, ratios and amounts to the household members was accepted in 1912 (Pyle 1997). This legislation shifted the concept of the state-citizen relationship as it was the first welfare policy in Russian history. From then on, there was an understanding that besides the traditional duty to protect the citizens on the part of the citizens, there was also a claimed and executed duty to protect the family on the part of the state. Importantly, the point of intersection of these new power relations was the family (Sanborn 2001, p. 97).

The new strategy of mobilization, however, implied something beyond the traditional logic that the state has to cover those who are unarmed before the combatants. Instead, there was a logic of reinforcing the value of family kinship behind that policy: the blood family was the thing that the soldier was morally obliged to protect. Supporting this family directly, the state extended the boundaries of kinship entering the circle of relatives. Because the

soldier was supposed to hold family dear, the state asked him to extend these feelings and the sense of attachment to co-nationals, it was concerned that the sufferings of the blood family if unsupported, might incline the combatants to disregard their obligations towards the “extended” family of the nation in favor of more obvious and urgent problems of the closest ones (Sanborn 2001, p. 98).

Another state’s policy of intervention in the family ties was punishing families for the violations done by the soldiers. The person who suggested this idea was an officer of the First Army who was furious when several soldiers wo tried to cross German trenches during Christmas fraternization in 1914 and were eventually captured. He offered that besides the prosecution of the officer who headed the squad to which these soldiers belonged, he would in addition "issue a decree concerning the immediate announcement of the names of the surrendered soldiers to their home region (*rodina*), so that they can cease issuing the ration to their families in their villages at once, and so that all there would know that they betrayed their motherland (*rodina*)!" (Report of the Pension Department to the Stavka 1915, pp. 13-14).

He was also convinced that expelling the families was not a breach of legal ethic, because “in view of the fact that the law undoubtedly intended the provisioning of families only of loyal defenders of the state, it is necessary to realize that families of enlisted men who surrendered to the enemy voluntarily, and in this fashion betrayed their *rodina*, should be deprived of their food ration” (Report of the Pension Department to the Stavka 1915, pp. 13-14 in Sanborn 2001, p. 99). This logic revealed that the state’s payments to the relatives of the soldiers were actually not welfare aid to those families who lost the breadwinner, but a privilege of the close circle of the soldiers – those with a duty to protect. The Council of Ministers passed the decree that canceled the support for the families of deserters in 1915,

and Nicholas approved it in the same year. For all the following years of war, the officers lawfully listed the names of deserters to the local administrations to notify who was to be subtracted from the welfare catalogue. Considering the amount of petitions submitted by the family members of the soldiers who were unjustly deprived of means of survival, this decree was studiously fulfilled (Sanborn, 2001).

The concept of the family was the axis of the power relations among military, state, citizen, and the soldier (Von Hagen 1990, p. 78). At the same time, that idea of a normal family has dramatically transformed. This transformation was triggered (among other factors) by intensive militarization of the Russian social and political domains. The ideal of the family in the pre-war tsarist Russia was radically patriarchal, which served as a foundation and a prototype of the regime itself. As one publicist was writing appealing to the freshly recruited soldiers, “a family can live happily only when all its members subordinate themselves to the eldest [man] in the house. Russia is the same kind of family, the eldest is the Emperor” (Akulinin 1913, pp. 28-29 in Sanborn 2001, p. 100). This patriarchal structure replicated itself among the soldiers and officers. Officers were represented as the heads of the military family, noncommissioned officers positioned themselves as elder brothers, and the freshly recruited individuals played the role of the younger brothers. One of the prominent training experts M. I. Dragomirov has included in one of his manuals that were distributed among the soldiers in the end of the nineteenth century the following parting words: “Look at the unit as your family, at the commander as your father, at your comrades as your blood brothers, and at subordinates as your little brothers; then everybody will be happy and friendly” (Dragomirov 1956, p. 43 in Sanborn 2001, p. 101).

Another officer, Neznamov, in 1906, training the recruits was instructing his subordinate commanders to be strict and demanding as fathers or elder brothers. However, he also pointed out that the goal of the commanders, first and foremost, was to be the elder comrade who is basically equal to the eyes of the nation. With that, he was attempting to create a fraternal society among the soldiers (Neznamov 1909, pp.105-106 in Sanborn 2001, p. 102). Soldiers of one of the reserve detachments in the Priamur province in 1915 declared to their seniors “each of us... willingly showed up when we were mobilized, being sure that we were going to help our brothers smash the enemy” (Neznamov 1909, pp.105-106 in Sanborn 2001, p. 102). Another written complain about policemen’s exemption from the conscription petitioned to submit all 300,000 of the police officers to “the ranks of our fighting brothers” (RGIA 1915, p. 106 in Sanborn 2001).

The image of family was so omnipresent that it even extended to the males who never were recruited to the military service. Kirgiz delegates while requesting the postponement of their conscription in 1916, also highlighted that not only they considered their labor draft not only a legitimate obligation, but also their civic duty (Sanborn 2001, p. 101). “We Kirgiz,” they stated with dignity, “consider ourselves the equal sons of a unified Russia and sincerely hope that the victorious war will serve as a stimulus for the introduction of a rule of law for our motherland, for the passage of reforms necessary for the good of the fatherland, and for the establishment of fraternity between the tribally variegated sons of the fatherland” (RGIA 1916, pp. 41, 42 in Sanborn 2001).

Eventually there was no ambiguity in the strategy of total mobilization by the time that the World War I began. One of the official appeals to the soldiers who violated the military code or deserted called their attention to the fact that they “swore an oath to be loyal to tsar and motherland” and that breaching their vow made them “unworthy to your fellow

brothers and sons of Russia” (Circular from Stepanov 1916, p. 261 in Sanborn 2001). Thus, Russian Empire became the mother, respectively, the emperor was the father, and all military staff were “fellow brothers.” The military reformers became more preoccupied with the soldiers and the noncommissioned recruits rather than with the senior officers. The success of the war tactics became more and more dependent on the cohesiveness, courage and furiousness of the former, rather than on the brilliance and skills of the latter. Thus, the experts and the trainers of the higher ranks insisted that the commanders spent more time to bond, inspire, encourage, and train their “younger brothers.” No wonder, that this kind of attitude and the amount of quality time have made these relations more familial by spirit.

Discourse on “Brotherhood” in the Early Soviet Union

The ubiquitous image of brotherhood was an ideal allegory for the fraternal military society in the last years of the tsarist regime. It was not only paradoxical considering the radicality of patriarchy of the imperial social structure, but it was also a new milestone in the political consciousness of the population – a shift from predominantly patriarchal to fraternal thinking. It is important to notice how overwhelmingly different is a fraternal political community from a patriarchal one. The former severely disturbs the traditional hierarchy of relationship. The unquestioned power of the father over his offspring terminates, also the dynamics among brothers should be reestablished in a different more horizontal manner. Not surprisingly, then, that fraternity becomes the symbol of equality in the upcoming years.

The ending of patriarchal community was nothing new to the human history by the time it happened in Russia. Carole Pateman (1988) addressed the conventional transformation from patriarchal to fraternal political communities in her *Sexual Contract*. Her examination of the envisioned role of women in the social contract, exploring familial

comparisons and their impact on women's involvement in civic society, follows the evolution of Western societies since the time of Hobbes. Then, too, Western absolutism evolved from hierarchical patriarchy to hierarchical fratriarchy. She analyzes the notion of women's imagined role in the social contract, exploring familial metaphors and their impact on women's involvement in civil society, tracing it back to the era of Hobbes. She critiques the idea of “fraternal brotherhoods” from a feminist perspective and labels them as patriarchal but notes that since absolute monarchs have disappeared, patriarchy has ceased to be paternal. Pateman also posits that the contract is established to regulate men's access to women sexually, thus making the social contract a sexual one as well. However, the concept of brotherhood developed by Carole Pateman is not entirely applicable to the Russian case. That is because the revolution itself happened due to the revolt of “sisters” who insisted on their right to vote, equal pay, and withdrawal of the troops (Pateman 1995).

In fact, the day of initiation of the revolution – 8 March (23 February in the old Russian calendar) – was International Women’s Day. That day, in 1917 more than ten thousands of women (predominantly the workers of the textile factories) thronged the main avenue of Petrograd, Nevsky Prospect, demanding to terminate the war and increase welfare. According to the testimonies of the witnesses, including the city’s governor, AP Balk, the crowd also consisted of peasant women, ladies from higher society and young female students. The revolution was initiated by female, not male citizens. The most successful socialist recruitment campaign was also organized by socialist women, including Alexandra Kollontai, Kondordiya Samoilova and Inessa Armand, who established unions and communities to attract and recruit working-class women. They were mainly targeting female textile workers who were left as the main breadwinners while the majority of male population was engaged in the ongoing war waging (Edmondson 1992, p.192). Women were

the core transformational force of the Russian revolution and the instrument of building a socialist regime in its early stages. By the end of World War I, women constituted ten percent of the Bolshevik party which was a lot for the time (Edmondson 1992, p.192).

The basis of social solidarity in Russia transformed in a different way than in Western societies emancipated. The sexual contract was disrupted at the same time as it happened with the social contract. The main philosopher and activist who brought about the synchronicity of these two contracts from 1906 to 1923 was Alexandra Kollontai. She was creative and practical in combining Marxist thoughts with feminist philosophy. As Vest writes, “she worked tirelessly to attract working women to the Socialist party while denouncing the bourgeois feminist movement” (Vest, 2016, p.2). Socialist women’s claims, in contrast to those of bourgeois feminists, insisted that women should not defend their rights as women but as members of the proletariat. Thus, unlike bourgeois feminists who demanded equality within an institution of family as a particle of a status-quo state, socialist women demanded equity and complete reconsideration of the institution of family as well as the institution of the state. Also, in her speeches and writing, Kollontai offered a fresh interpretation of Marxist theory in a way that would problematize and suggest some practical solutions to end the oppression of women. In her statements, Kollontai claimed that women were not only confined by economic and political circumstances but also enslaved by social and psychological conditions (Vest, 2016, p. 2).

Kollontai blamed the advocates of the bourgeois feminists for dividing men and women into separate classes of people, while their classes were not predominantly segregated by sex, but by social, economic, and psychological constructs. With that said, she still agreed that the circumstances that came to exist as a result of the system malfunctioning affected women in a more painful way. A role of female as a housekeeper and a mother

isolated her from her sisters and the society per se (Vest, 2016, p. 6). She supported Marx and Engels in their view that the traditional family is disadvantageous to women and automatically victimizes them and that, moreover, it was preconditioned by the economic structures of tsarist and capitalist societies. In one of her speeches, she claimed, “[T]he isolated family unit is the result of the modern individualistic world, with its rat race, its pressures, its loneliness; the family is a product of the monstrous capitalist system.” Kollontai emphasized, that modern family, in fact, had nothing to do with affection and love towards a women, but only to her confinement and endless dependence on the breadwinner of the family. Proletarian society, in her opinion, was called to provide women with financial stability directly guaranteed directly by the state, not by an individual man (Vest, 2016, p. 6).

In addition, Kollontai one of the first Russian feminists who proclaimed the enslavement of women to be a primarily psychological subjective issue, rather than objective one. Traditional marriage was limiting and oppressive because this system prescribed her a role of an inferior, subordinate subject that cannot pretend to leadership either in the workplace or in her personal life. Moreover, she stated that monogamous kinds of relationships were unnatural, reductionist and created an unlawful belief about partners’ ownership over each other as objects. Finally, patriarchal marriage, according to Kollontai, was an outdated struggle of naturally social creatures to overcome existential fear of loneliness. Along with most of the other Marxists, Kollontai thought that the sense of individualism that was created by the capitalist system was unnatural and torturous for the people, and one partner however beloved cannot fully satisfy the need of belonging to a community (Vest, 2016).

Kollontai strongly promoted the idea that the society can fundamentally transform into female friendly one only when the basic unit – the family- changes its structure. Also, she noticed that this kind of change is deeper and requires more time, psychological and mental efforts (which would take longer) than economic reforms. As a socialist, the measure she suggested to take to address this issue were rather radical: to dissolve the institution of the family altogether. Kollontai stated: “To become really free, a woman has to throw off the heavy chains of the current forms of the family which are outmoded and oppressive” (Kollontai 1909). The duties of the caregiver and nurturer would be transmitted under the umbrella of the state’s responsibilities and communities. This way the individuals would feel the sense of belonging to the society from the earliest ages, and would never belong to one another (Vest, 2016, p. 6).

However, the masses of Russian women struggled to accept and employ feminist ideology a-la Kollontai. Unlike most of socialist women who belonged to the intellectual elite of the socialist party, the majority of Russian women were neither wealthy nor educated nor had they any opportunity to drop their family duties. Although peasant and working-class women had growing support for socialism, they were unable to fully commit to becoming professional revolutionaries due to financial constraints. Most of their activism was limited to addressing personal grievances. In addition, several other socialist feminist contemporary to Kollontai, like Vera Ivanovna Zasulich and Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya viewed her concepts as overly radical, to the extend where it can negatively affect women. They claimed that the concepts proposed by Kollontai, and the excessive liberalization of relations between the sexes she preaches can legitimize the choice of some men to abandon their households and leave their spouses without support.

Zasulich, one of the most prominent female activists of the Russian and international socialist movement, a revolutionary populist as well as one of the first Russian Social Democrats, believed that “the women's issue and feminist organizations distract women workers from Marxism and the class struggle that precedes the problems between sexes” (Zhukova and Ershova 1998, p. 46). At the same time, Krupskaya, considered the “poor situation of women in the Russian Empire” a serious problem that could be solved “only after the success of a socialist revolution” (Zhukova and Ershova 1998, p. 47).

Eventually, Kollontai’s ideas were not meant to be applied to the revolution’s social engineering, and the family structure did not change significantly in practice. However, the declaration of assumed equity between men and women shifted the patriarchal dogmas in revolutionary Russia. Also, new institutions, like kinder gardens, pre-school, and communal foster houses, created a sense of collective responsibility for the children in the community. Fraternity included policies supporting women and equality, reducing much of the friction between the socialist women and the new concept of the fraternal state. The new concept of fraternity created affinity among individuals and made socialist fraternity a more salient and cohesive of idea. In a way, fraternity included policies supporting women and gender equality (Smith 1928, Vest 2016).

The Bolsheviks, on coming to power, indeed, transformed marriage from a sacred hierarchical merger of the two God’s souls into a voluntary civil union between two equal individuals. However, they refused to entirely legitimize a polyamory or communal marriages or erase the family as a unit, according to Kollontai’s suggestions. In times of instability and confusion, the family remained a somewhat familiar institution. It served a political purpose, as the Bolsheviks faced a dilemma created by the need to motivate the recruits to military service and to accomplish the social shifts. Political elites in Soviet Russia

were quick to realize that it was an unaffordable political risk to defend minority ideology in the time of revolution and post-war rehabilitation. Thus, instead of following Kollontai's feminist program directed at dissolving the family, they relied on the family hearth as the most familiar and substantial, basically immortal representation of the new sovereign state.

Manipulation of the family narrative became even more widespread when the Bolsheviks came to power in 1917. This was obvious by the very first vow designed for the Red Army recruits in 1918: "I promise before my brothers in arms to fight for the great cause of soviet power and the triumph of socialism, for which the best children of the worker-peasant family have given their lives" (Korablev and Loginov 1959 p. 75 in Sanborn 2001). The image of family remained predominant throughout the entire first quarter of the twentieth century and overwhelmed military schools' textbooks. One of the educational editions stated that officers and their subordinates should learn that "the leader is required to show respect to his subordinates, because they are both equal citizens of a united Republic, because they are comrades serving in a united army, because both of them, finally, are members of a united worker-peasant family, as a result of which respect cannot fail to be mutual" (Vishniakov and Arkhipov 1926, p. 142 in Sanborn 2001).

The use of familial imagery was a strategy employed not just to strengthen bonds between fellow citizens, but also between soldiers. The nation was envisioned as a family unit, as was the army and even the soldier's immediate combat unit. The intention of using familial ties as a blueprint for new societal relationships was deliberate and a staple tactic used by the military throughout the 1900s (Sanborn, 2001). Totally different vocabulary: The main point of contention was whether leaders in the military should substitute familial bonds within the unit or expand those relationships to include a larger group of individuals. Those who supported extending the ties believed each soldier should abandon their prior

family, “forget temporarily his old hometown interests, had to devote himself completely to service, had to merge with his company, had to look at it as his new family”(RGVIA 2000, p. 3 in Sanborn 2001). Novice troops had to abandon their native place as having soldiers stationed close to their homes would only enhance their attachment to their families and affection towards it, and never foster a sense of belonging to their platoon or military unit (RGVIA 2000, p. 3 in Sanborn 2001).

Even though total conscription has detached many men from their families, and it would have been logical to weaken their ties with the homes they left, the contrary happened. Instead, the Soviet elites were enforcing the perceived value of blood kinship because they promoted the image of army as being just like the family, but not a substitution of the family. The recruitment propaganda overwhelmingly promoted the metaphorical similarity between the army, the civil community and family. At times, the image of the blood kinship in among the combatants was the main fuel to overcome objective hardship and severe conditions of life. One of the soldiers in 1919 was writing to his family: “Almost all the guys are barefoot...” he wrote, “[but] the relationship between soldiers is comradely, like a single family” (RGVIA 2000, p. 590 in Sanborn, 2001).

Just like their predecessors, Bolsheviks also recognized the state’s responsibility to support the families of the combatants. However, they applied an even harsher policy towards families of the deserters to encourage the soldiers to remain loyal at the battlefield. In 1919 the Red Army established a law that prescribed to redistribute the property of the deserters’ family among those whose relatives were “honorably serving” according to the military code (Pyle 1997, pp. 334-343 in Sanborn, 2001). The system created was highly effective: it prompted the soldiers to fight selflessly not only for the Revolution, their brotherhood and homeland, but directly for their families, who in the conditions of famine

and scarcity were condemned if deprived of the last means of survival (Sanborn, 2001). In addition, it was also an allegedly “fair” principle of wealth redistribution that was aligned with the socialist mindset (Report from Central Desertion Commission, 1921).

This cunning manner of family ties manipulation helped the Bolsheviks in taking over their political counterparts - the Mensheviks.²⁸ The primary issue that became the cornerstone between the two parties was the patriarchal views of the Mensheviks: they feared that the notion of fraternity carried the risk of anarchy. Their great detriment was that they failed to recognize that the people’s drive to voluntary conscription and inspiration to rebel was fraternity-based, not patriarchy-based (Brusilov 1917; Sanborn 2001). This was no surprise then that once Bolsheviks came to power, they reaffirmed their reliance on fraternity (Wildman 1980, pp. 279, 379-380 in Sanborn 2001). In fact, taking into account the preceding history of the European socialist movement, brotherhood was a central concept in fighting monarchy, thus, it was logical that the Bolsheviks gained momentum operating the notion of brotherhood (Podvoiskii 1918; Sanborn 2001).

During the Bolsheviks’ tenure the element of equality and conformity characteristic of the idea of fraternity was omnipresent. With the rise of the radical leftists, the soldiers became even more convinced that the “defense of the motherland and the revolution” is supposed to be “mandatory in an identical fashion both for command staff and for soldiers.” The protests if happened among the army were commonly a result of collective action taken to address some occasion of injustice towards one or a group of their “brothers.” One of the Red Army combatants of the 1918 wrote in his memoirs: “we are achieving fraternity and

²⁸ Mensheviks (Social Democratic Labour Party) and Bolsheviks (Radical Far-left Marxist fraction) were the dominant political opponents during the Revolutionary times. The disputes between their heads: Julius Martov and Vladimir Lenin respectively were lasting since 1903 up until 1917.

equality, but nevertheless, we see a distinction in salaries, and there should be no difference in the salaries between command staff and rank and file soldiers” (GARF, 1918 in Sanborn 2001).

The Red Army fraternity was based on such principles as equality, solidarity, and loyalty, that eventually formed the foundation for the interaction and cohesion among different ethnic groups included in the multinational state. The new notion of “brothers of people” appeared in the slogans of the Revolution once it concerned any peripheral republic of the USSR: “Long live the World Revolution!” claimed the slogan of one regiment, “Long live the fraternity of peoples!” (GARF, 1918 in Sanborn 2001). Thus, the enthusiasm for fraternity travelled successfully from the military narratives to political statements and statecraft toolbox. Brotherhood was a perfect ground to establish a new principle of order and routine preserving the element of power and control (Martin, 1996). The language, the practices and the philosophical stance of fraternal family once developed and tested among the military units, were ready at hand when it was the time to construct a greater fraternal community – a multiethnic state. Even though multiethnic brother identity promoted by the military intellectuals was not so convincing among individuals in the army, it still diminished the importance of ethnicity. The reward and punishment system launched in the army and extended to the civil population managed to deform the ethnic identity of the people in favor of their political identity and adherence to a regime.

Practices of Physical Extermination Behind the Narrative on “Brotherhood”

The new discourse of the fraternal family of equal brothers and sisters helped to sustain a new common sense of reality and co-existence. New ideology aimed at abrupt abolition of the previous traditional hierarchies and dismantling the household mindset that

framed these hierarchies into a cohesive big picture of the empire. Verbal attempts to break from parental bonds with absolutism that implied submission and domination and to substitute them with fraternal bonds of solidarity were heard from every corner. Specifically, this intention was pronounced in the international proletarian anthem* – the anthem of the communist parties, socialists and anarchists, the official anthem of the Soviet Russia (1918-1944), and the USSR (1922-1944). One of the most popular fragments of the socialist international anthem (that did not exist in its French original version but was added by the Soviet author A.A. Kots after its translation to Russian) concerned exactly the building of the new world and abolishing the old social structure of life (Lemaire 2003):

We will destroy the whole old world of violence -

To the ground, and then -

We will build our brand-new world -

Those who were nothing will become everything.

The early Soviet “fraternal” policies, unlike the discourse, cannot by any means be described as benign or altruistic; instead, they entail considerable damage to the population. The abrupt change of discourse did not cause the same abrupt change in habits of mind. In the case of the tsarist regime, this ideology was covering global imperialistic aims; after the Red Revolution, it was a façade for the desire to establish new communist states and to support shaky totalitarian regimes that completely pushed feminist narratives aside. Legitimizing the new “fraternal” thinking, the imperial colonial and later, Soviet elites came up with the new strategy of “elements extraction,” which actually meant “cleaning” the

* The text belongs to the French poet, anarchist, member of the 1st International and the Paris Commune Eugene Potier. It was written in the days of the defeat of the Paris Commune (1871) and registered based on the Marseillaise; published in 1887. Music by Pierre Degeiter (1888). It was first performed on June 23, 1888 and published in the same year. Widely distributed and has been translated into many languages. In 1910, at the Congress of the Socialist International in Copenhagen, it was adopted as the anthem of the international socialist movement.

fraternal body from the undesirable members who either do not comply or fit the community. The officials who promoted these tactics also relied on some scientific justification and methods to realize their ideas.

This paradigm of social cleansing is neither a Russian, nor purely Soviet, but rather European one. The understanding of the homogenous society came to exist only after the notion of the “social” domain appeared as an independent concept, that in turn, made it possible to act upon designing, building, measuring, and editing the “social” body using specific techniques. Social statistics that became increasingly popular in the military at that time were just the right instrument to pursue the newly launched social policies. Among Soviets, statistics quickly transformed from a field of abstract categories to applied discipline that functioned as means to manipulate the society as if it were a group of political aggregates that were counted as either “in” or “out” of the ideal fraternity (Holquist, 2001). Other social sciences, such as economics, sociology, anthropology, history, and economics were also handy in formatting a new philosophy of Soviet fraternity and were ascribed quite definite qualitative attributes such as proletariat background, certain ideological beliefs, and ethnicity. These disciplines were used to form an image of the “reliable” and “unreliable” element of the social body and promote a policy of cleansing based on the characteristic of “reliability.”

The beginning of the 20th century among European Empires was characterized by their desire to categorize their subjects in order to control them: they were convinced that counting and knowing their population would help contain its restlessness and reduce imperial anxiety. Thus, social sciences became more of the practical tools of aggregation and control rather than simply studies. The deviance of the individual element was now perceived as a serious threat to the health of the entire social body. The social disciplines

were called to police and defend the social order from degeneration and deviant elements (Hacking, 1990; Holquist 2001, p. 112). Here we have a hint of removal of the old, organic household and its transformation toward something that thinks of the collective more as a mechanism or machine (which makes a quite modernistic metaphor).

Prominent Soviet statisticians bluntly claimed in their textbooks issued for the college courses that statistics was not simply a discipline but an instrument of the statecraft, while the object of statistical analysis was the elements of social masses. The military experts specialized on the intersectional discipline of geopolitics and social statistics played a critical part in forming the view on the means of populace administration (Rich 1998, pp. 621-639).

Framing social processes in a scientific way reinforced the officials' belief that they had a necessary toolkit for manipulating and controlling these processes. Military statistics bestowed the category of "ethnicity" a meaning that public activists would give to a category of "class" or in the same manner that colonial administrators in India used the category of "castes" (Holquist 2001). Moreover, military statistics was one of the first blueprints for the late imperial and early soviet elites to catalogue their populace. While the imperial government was regularly launching the revisions of "taxable souls," the qualitative attributes of the people counted did not matter, for the revision was organized due to fiscal concerns.

Instead, the new population census was more focused on the attributes of the identity as the center of inquiry. Now the ethnic, the class and the political background of the family largely defined the reliability of the social elements. This may seem odd given that the tzarist regime counted population for fiscal purposes (which makes a lot of sense, from a

government's perspective). However, by the beginning of the First World War, such security issues as reliability and ethnic predisposition to loyalty to the Empire played overwhelmingly more significant roles. The cleansing of population and military reforms unfolded under the veil of the new ideology of brotherhood. The reforms in the army made it possible for the military principles to intervene the civil social realm and made military tactics of discipline and tribunal instruments of social engineering (Holquist, 2001, p.113).

The First World War transmitted colonial practices of extermination implemented by the European metropolis in their dominions back to the heartland of Europe. In the process, however, the war changed the substance and the scale of this violence. The new extent of army mobilization in its totality destroyed the boundaries between the civil and the military domains and imported wartime practices into the domestic civilian spaces of the countries (Holquist 2001, p. 112). In Russia, the First World War was the milestone of the history when the government for the first time has exterminated and expelled a large mass of its own citizens legitimizing this action with pseudo-scientific inferences about the expelled being “unreliable” for the nation. Military statistics in tandem with the ideology of cohesive “fraternal familial community” undoubtedly triggered already familiar anti-Polish, anti-Muslim, and anti-Jewish sentiments.

The hostilities of the Red Revolution have often been introduced as a result of brutal environment of that time or simply Russian realities and culture. However, when observed not as in the retrospective of the historical plot, the revolutionary violence was not a standalone phenomenon, but a product of the state practices designed and massively applied to the domestic politics during the Great War. One of the Cheka²⁹ reports testify of its battle

²⁹ The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission abbreviated VChK and commonly known as Cheka (Russian: Чека́, tr. Cheká, IPA: [tɕɪ'ka] from the initialism ЧК, ChK), was the first of a succession of Soviet secret-police organizations.

against organized criminals in Siberia from 1920 through 1922 that “the seven-year experience of war [1914-1921] had a marked impact upon the insurgent movement” (Rosenberg 1994, p. 168). Originating from the conceptual matrix and political principles of the total war, late imperial elites, just as early soviet ones consciously segregated the populace into “elements” that were varying in their reliability (Holquist 1997).

As the violence of the Great War and the following revolution had broadened the scope of practices that were earlier implemented and experienced in the colonial regions to the core of the Soviet state and then back to the periphery. The concept of fraternity was extremely convenient to veil extermination missions throughout the 1920 in Chechnia and in Central Asia (Holquist 2001, p. 132). Those practices were not just the methods of colonization intrinsic to Russian imperialism or socialism, neither it was an attempt to exterminate the Muslim population. These methods were universally and systematically employed in the USSR toolkit to maintain an illusion of family consisting of complying members. The politics of extermination stretched onto “cleanings” in Ukraine and Tambov (Unshlikht 1925, pp. 145-147 in Holquist 2001). The mass extermination of the soviet population by its own government resulted from the illusion of the possibility to create a securely solid socialist body of citizens that would conform with the requirements to a reliable element. This false belief led to the political turmoil, known in a Soviet history as the Great Terror. Despite claims to the contrary, in Soviet society there scarcely existed “fraternal relations,” “fraternal friendship,” “fraternal cooperation,” or “fraternal mutual aid.” What did prevail is hostility between individuals and nationalities, all alienated from the state and largely from each other.

Mutation of the Ideology of “Brotherhood” into the Ideology of “Russian Elder Brother”

As the Civil War concluded, the stabilization of the “fraternal” structure of the society, ideology of brotherhood began to slowly mutate during the Stalin’s tenure. First, Stalin saw emancipation of women as a threat to social order. A variety of opportunities and political activism distracted women from their reproductive functions. Soviet feminist organizations were largely limited and strictly controlled by Stalin’s nomenclature. Further, the Soviet “Zhenotdel” (the feminist movement office within the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party) collapsed in 1930. Feminist departments and women’s commissions in other domestic structures existed a few years more but were also shut down in the middle of that decade. Thus, Stalinism marked a return to a rigid patriarchal mode both in the Soviet Union and in Communist parties elsewhere (The Great Soviet Encyclopedia).

Second, the mythologem of fraternal peoples changed its shape and form by the end of the 1930s and persisted in its new version until the beginning of the war in Afghanistan in the 1970s. This change became obvious from the attitude to the history of the USSR and its teaching in school. The story itself, with its veneration of traditions and holy names, with the celebration of important anniversaries, has returned to the forefront of official politics as an effective catalyst for the patriotic feelings of Soviet citizens. In 1933, The People's Commissariat of Education first published a history curriculum and three history textbooks for high school. In the future, issues of history would become the object of constant attention of the Communist Party elite, including Stalin personally (Masnenko 2018, p. 191).

In the mid-30s, the national policy of the Kremlin sharply turned to Russian chauvinism. The internationalist principle of “regulation” of the relation of equals in the

USSR, established in the 1920s, was substituted to a hierarchical principle. A peculiar pyramid of fraternal peoples led by the Russians was erected in historical narratives. The Soviet state was more and more often associated with the pre-revolutionary Russian empire. The concept of “brotherhood of peoples” as partnership of equals was supplanted by the idea of Russian supremacy. The central party began to promote Russian messianism as a crucial for Soviet national politics and ideology. This new shift in the ideology based on promoting one ethnic group over another also required implementation strategy of “national enmeshment” in order to create a cohesion in the national identity (Masnenko, 2018, p. 191). Stalin personally proclaimed a new policy course at the 16th Congress of the Soviet Party: “We need to allow national cultures to develop and expand [...] in order to create conditions for merging them into one common culture with one common language.” During the 17th Congress, Russian chauvinism that used to be regarded as a threat before the 1930s, has not been mentioned as a threat anymore. Instead, “local nationalism” was considered the only threat to national integrity. The special role of the Russian people in the “fraternal family” of the peoples of the USSR was also fixed semantically - at first they began to call it “the first among equals”, and then - “the great Russian people” (Newspaper Pravda 1936, 1937).

As Masnenko writes, the official Communist Party discourse was picked up by historians. One of the first to use the epithet of “the first among equals” was the editor-in-chief of the leading historical journal of the USSR, Boris Volin. Volin created an imaginary of newly created empire that consisted of “Soviet people” who, even though they had different ethnic backgrounds, is a homogenously Russian-speaking community each member of which is proud their belonging to the great country created by the Russian people (Volin 1938, pp. 1-17). During one of the meetings of the Politburo of the Central Committee and most prominent Soviet historians, Stalin said that “the Russian people in the

past united different peoples, and now can unite the same people too” (Litvin 1994, p. 56). The message of the speech was clear: Stalin took a course on rejection the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural background of the country in favor of a historical narrative that emphasized the dominant importance of the Russian leadership in political construction of the Soviet household (Masnenko 2018, p. 191).

This turn in the ideology reverberated with the imperial narrative of the past which brought the Soviets to the rehabilitation of tsarism and its conquests. Official historiography until the mid-1930s embarked on intense rehabilitation of tsarism precisely because it “gathered” peoples who “moaned under the yoke” of “foreign enslavers” and sought to be saved through “voluntary” accession to Russia (Masnenko 2018, p. 192). An indispensable role was assigned to historians. They had to legitimize the Stalinist Terror drawing the practices of exterminations, cruel repressions and genocide as historically justified rightful practices: they were doing so, using an old family mythologeme of elder brother that attempted to bring ethnical diversity of the empire to the common all-Russian denominator. Once again social sciences and education in the form of propaganda were called-upon to imperialism as a regional household.

History of the USSR was first introduced in the end of 1930s and was understood as the historiographic projection of the “fraternity of the peoples of the Soviet Union” on their entire previous history. It demonstrated the “common historical destiny” and “close historical ties” of the peoples of the USSR, which were supposed to testify to the historical justification for their unification within a single unitary state. In addition, the new doctrine, in essence was echoing the tsarist narrative of the family (Masnenko 2018, p. 192). It censored (independent) stories of non-Russian peoples and adapted them to the history of Russia (Yaremchuk 2009, p. 30). Subsequently, the theme of brotherly ties drawing familial

yet again hierarchical kinship between the peoples of the Soviet Union took over the historical narrative of the Soviets.

The idea about the greatness and legitimate supremacy of the Russians as an “elder brother” of the new colonial family had to find its backbone in propaganda and the historical narrative of the Soviet Union. Both were called to impose of the thought of Russian exceptional significance in the past. The most prominent textbook “History of the USSR” was written in a way that emphasized the initial hierarchical structure of the ethnic community: it did not consist of equal components (the stories of each of the included nations). Instead, the history of the USSR formation was described as an organic process of colonization framed in egalitarian terms, where the Russian story was the main plot (Masnenko 2018, p.193).

The stories of non-Russian peoples were either ignored or portrayed in a way that would fit the narrative on the asymmetric brotherly relations. The Soviet historians did everything they could to picture Russian conquest and colonization of the borderlands as a benevolent, even selfless, act of fraternal help. An encounter with the periphery was described as fruitful for the colonized people while Russian settlers had an image of noble enlighteners and caring brothers (Shestakova 1937). One of such historians was A. Shestakova, who edited the Short Course on the History of the USSR (1937), where the history of the entire community of ethnic entities was drawn as an insignificant add-on to the mainstream of Russian history. There, she draws a historical line of the narrative starting from Kievan Rus through the Moscow Principality and the Romanov empire to the Soviet Union (Shestakova 1937) as if there were no other protagonists in the story line except for Slavs.

Starting from the late 1930s, the fraternal policies were not only applied to supply the Great Terror, but also to veil cultural oppression of the ethnic groups that survived. In an attempt to create a uniform Soviet brotherhood Stalin's cultural policy applied universal knowledge of the Russian language around the young Soviet brother-nations (Blitstein 2001, p. 267). Subsequently, in 1938 the Soviet administration established a law that proscribed all the Soviet non-Russian schools to include Russian language as a mandatory subject of the educational program (Pravda vostoka, 1938; Blitstein 2001, p. 267). This was in addition to the previous decree as of 1918 that employed obligatory native-language education everywhere in the Soviets.

Obligatory inclusion of Russian language in non-Russian schools' curriculums was a signal that the USSR is intended to become a unitary and culturally homogenous nation-state that needs a common language for intranational connection. Although the Commissariat of Education (Narkompros) had been continuously preoccupied with the lack of Russian "elements" and cultural presence in the regions, the requirements to make Russian language mandatory came from the highest levels of authority (Narkompros, 1946). The issue of Russian language infusion into the educational programs in the regions was raised by Stalin in October 1937 at a Plenum of the Central Committee (TsK), supposedly due to an expected massive inflow of non-Russian speaking conscripts into the Red Army. The admission of non-Russians into the army was forthcoming due to some changes in the legislations that cancelled some ethnicities' immunity to military recruitment (Reese, 1996, p.93). Thus, the new content of the military elements required a common language to communicate and act cohesively. As Stalin claimed, "There is one language in which all citizens of the USSR can more or less express themselves—that is Russian" (Reese, 1996, p. 95).

The Stalinist period of Russification was veiled by the narrative about tightening of the brotherhood kinship and fraternal closeness. However, the emphasis was on the instrumental comfort for non-Russians to speak Russian. The environment of the Great Terror, however, predisposed a priority for Russian language as a national language for processing, sending out and receiving the uniform propaganda materials. This new narrative was strengthened during the World War II and persisted in the Soviet power discourse up until Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 (Yakupov and Yakupova 2019, p. 88). Indeed, in the era of total anxiety, xenophobia, paranoia, and Russo-centric supremacy of the late 1930s, the establishment of the Russian language as mandatory obviously demonstrated that the Stalin administration took on a trajectory of total Russification of the USSR.

The Communal House of the Late Soviet “Perestroika”

The narrative that framed the ideology of the Soviet Union has stagnated ever since Stalin’s policies of propaganda were accepted. The Soviet verbal framework was able to disregard the fluid and ambiguous Soviet reality due to the strict top-down control of the public discourse. The mechanism of control was significantly shaken by the events connected to the War in Afghanistan in 1979³⁰ and loosened up by Gorbachev’s policies of “glasnost’.”³¹ The narrative was able to adjust according to the changes of realities when

³⁰ The Soviet War in Afghanistan, also known as the Afghan War (1979-1989), was a military engagement in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (subsequently known as the Republic of Afghanistan since 1987). It pitted the Afghan government, bolstered by Soviet soldiers, against the armed Mujahideen forces (commonly referred to as "Dushmans"). The Mujahideen, who received political, financial, material, and military assistance from the chief members of NATO, China, and the conservative Islamic world, constituted the opposition.

³¹ Glasnost is a doctrine of utmost transparency in the functioning of government establishments and liberty of knowledge. Presently, the expression generally refers to the transparency strategy carried out by Mikhail Gorbachev in the USSR during the latter half of the 1980s. The concept conveyed the prohibition of concealing domestic economic issues, notably loosening censorship, and eliminating numerous communication obstacles that existed within Soviet culture. "Glasnost" was formerly employed in politics and legal principles.

the alternative voices were allowed to intervene in the mainstream press and express the shift of paradigm in the population's mindset regarding the Soviet Union's social contract. The economic and human expenses of the Afghan war revealed a complex of social problems that existed but was systematically silenced in the society. This was the time of the first encounter with the globalization trend of human rights promotion which caused a series of anti-war protests and pacifist sentiments around the population. Rising civil resistance to propaganda and totalitarianism provoked the increase in political repressions and against the opposition, who largely included the families of the veterans, scientific community, artists and independent journalists. Political antagonism also inflicted ethnic tensions and separatist movements across the peripheral republics of the Soviets (Yakupova and Yuakupov 2019). For the first time, the reality of the on-going war was open to the popular attention which immediately led to widespread protests with the demand to withdraw Russian troops from Afghanistan.

The social costs of oppression were high and turned out unbearable for Soviet leadership. The highly militaristic country, where almost every citizen had a family member who participated in World War II, experienced increased pacifist sentiments that provoked collective civil disobedience (Reuveny and Prakash 1999, p. 2/694). The truth about war crimes committed by the Russian army in Afghanistan has caused a tremendous decrease in the prestige of the military service and caused polarization among the Russian youth (Yakupov and Yakupov a 2019, p. 89). By the mid-1980s, Russian young people divided largely in two ideologically driven groups "hippies / pacifists," who advocated for the rights of veterans and demanded the end of the war, and "nationalistic skinheads," who insisted on the Russian supremacy and promoted imperial/fascist (Central Intelligence Agency 2019). Far right movements among Russians along with the restricted political repressions and

tightening control over the non-Slavic population caused nationalistic response in the borderlands of the Soviets: most of the non-Russian conscripts (in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and other republics of Middle Asia and Caucasus) refused to obey their military officers, those who were the subject to mobilization were trying to avoid military service by all means (Yakupov and Yakupova 2019, p. 90). In his memoirs, Colonel General Gromov writes who participated in the Afghan war testifies: “The officers had to face the fact that the soldiers called up from Central Asia openly refused to take part in the hostilities ... the Mujahideen tried, and not without success, to create an intelligence network through them. Often they managed not only to find out in time about what was happening in one part or another, but also in some way influence the course of events” (Gromov 1994, p. 145). This, in turn, increased the suspiciousness on the part of Moscow and their doubt about the political reliability of the non-Slavic people.

Initial reaction of the Soviet leadership to the arising widespread disobedience was reflected in the change and toughening the legislation in various areas of society: restricting border control, the fight against deferrals in the army, increased regulatory censorship, widespread use of criminal norms to combat unwanted speech. But with the advent of M. S. Gorbachev, reactionary measures of transformation rushed into measures of rehabilitation. The ideology of “glasnost” became the basis for withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan and marked a new threshold in the history of “social contract” between the Soviet population and the Soviet government (RGASPI).

Once the representatives of power expressed the readiness for amendments and acknowledgment of errors it turned out that the long-standing Soviet household of fraternity was no longer seen as a “family hearth” for the majority of the population. The ideology based on the familial bonds rapidly transformed into a discourse about a “house” (Adyasova

2014, p. 8). The metaphors of house and housebuilding are among the most common ontological metaphors of the late 1980s, which represent many areas of human activity and politics in the post-Soviet space also during the years of Perestroika (Budaev 2008; Adyasova 2014). “Perestroika,” [literally, means the “re-building of the house” or “reconstruction of a building” in the Russian language] which was a key political metaphor for the era of M. S. Gorbachev, was especially popular during Yeltsin’s tenure after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Adyasova 2014, p.5). After the dismantling of the family narrative, the Soviet Union was conceptualized as an apartment or a house where neighbors of different nationalities used to live on equal terms.

Economic depression and political pessimism triggered this metaphor of the house and de-activated talk of the “family bond” in recent years of the Soviet Union. There was a fast weakening of the familial connections’ ideology among the Soviet nations. As Arutyunova notes: “This metaphor makes it possible to single out a basis (foundation) in society, various structures (infrastructures, superstructures), bearing supports, blocks, hierarchical ladders” (Arutyunova, 1990, p. 14-15). The Soviet Union has become a global construction site. The process of “construction” has unfolded in multiple areas of Soviet life. It was the beginning of construction of new factories, new architectural objects, buildings. At the same time, while the discourse on the previous periods of Russian imperial history was generated with different versions of the domestical metaphors, they all contained some aspect of personal connection, relativeness, kinship (brotherhood, parent-child relations, the imaginaries of lovers, domesticated animals), perestroika was creating an image of the community of the co-habitants or roommates in a common house. The “reconstruction” then

concerned the rebuilding of the house applying new European standards to the architecture. So called “Euroconstruction” of the Soviet apartments stepped became trendy.³²

The 1920s metaphor of a new household implied the complete destruction of the old patriarchal dysfunctional household, and that there was a new house to be built on top of the ruins for a new fairer family system. Thus, both components were present - the elimination of the older household and creation of a new version of family and the brotherhood of nation. In the early 80s the metaphor of family was exhausted and substituted by an ideation, the concept of a protracted construction project. Instead of building something new in place of a crushed architectural foundation, the new metaphor of perestroika meant re-construction of the old, repairing or reordering (the social hierarchy and the ties among the units of the system), the reconstruction of the old house so that it functions in a new way (Adyasova 2019 p. 5).

Thinking of reconstruction and repair, one conventionally may suggest that these concepts cause positive emotions: it is improvement of something not viable enough to go on in its current state. However, perestroika did not cause much delight in popular opinion; instead, it was accepted with disdain and sorrow. Was it for the way perestroika was handled or due to resistance to change in the society? It is hard to answer with confidence. However, negative emotions are often associated with the “perestroika” token, since the “reconstruction” of the system did not end with improvement but only with protracted works. In the following context, from the newspapers, the perestroika period unfolds in the form of a holistic scenario (using a construction metaphor) (Adyasova 2014, p. 5).

³² “Evroremont” was a trendy concept appeared in the late 1980s that meant expensive reconstruction of the Soviet times real estate according to European standards and using the materials from Europe.

The metaphor of the Union implied that Soviet Union is a reliable construction, a house that is unbreakable as it is based on the foundation of strong family kinship, brotherly bonds and common values. The events of 1991 reformed the national linguistic consciousness, planting such concepts as collapse, wreckage, destruction, ruins etc. portraying the existed union as an unreliable house of cards. The entire complex of Soviets was then associated to the illusion about solid ground in the place of fragile or non-existent connections. Reasonably, the realization of the failure caused the majority of the involved population nothing but disappointment, aggression, depression or grief. We read in the media: the devastation, the USSR collapsed, lay in ruins, cracked at the seams, crashed into 15 parts, fell apart, broke up (Adyasova, 2014, p. 5).

Most often, in the media discourse the responsibility for the failure falls on the shoulders of Mikhail Gorbachev: “they remembered Gorbachev, who “criminally destroyed [“razvalil” – the verb is only applicable to the notions of buildings, houses and other constructions] the Soviet Union” (Platkovsky & Chernyak, 2002, p.12). Many Russian journalists, both, independent and recruited by the state agencies, historians and bloggers (such as Valeriy Butaev, Alexey Kolesov, Aleksey Makurin) and others habitually employ the term “razvalil” [razes a construction] when describing the collapse of the Soviet Union (Makurin 2014). For example, Andrey Baranov in one of his statements with regards to Russian contemporary imperialism writes: “in addition, more recently, we gave a third of our country free and almost voluntarily: the Russian political elite was among the main forces that destroyed [“raszvalili”] the Soviet Union” (Baranov, Butaev & Makurin 2002). However, more often the verb is used in a depersonalized version: as if there was no active role in the process or a person who either initiated or facilitated the collapse of the union,

which means it was an organic process that happened naturally and expectedly on its own (Adyasova, 2014, p. 5).

The idea of a building or construction, being one of the most essential aspects of its concept, becomes for the modern consciousness a certain distinctive symbol of the late Soviets. The end of the USSR has more meaning for modernity than its “construction” or other developmental moments. The question of ownership was also raised in the times of perestroika. It was implied that the “house” of the Soviet Union was a common home for everyone, yet none of the members of the household could claim the right of the ownership of the house openly. Communist ideology suggests that all the property is common. As perestroika began, the separated national governments of ex-soviet-republics embarked on the process of privatization. Now, every room or floor in the Communist house was formally purchased by a relevant “roommate.” That is why the image of a communal apartment becomes the embodiment of the latest Soviet era (Adyasova 2014, p. 7). So, having lost familial connections, mutual connections and co-dependent relationship, the members of the union became merely neighbors. The roommates in the Soviet communal apartment were set free to crawl out of the ruins into which they had slipped over the years of political discord and design their rooms with respect to their own choice. However, the focus on buildings in the disintegration time of the USSR also left the family or the people (neighbors, by then) who live in the buildings potentially intact. This left an avenue to reconnect to that old narrative later.

Conclusion

Fraternity as an ideology developed during the late Russian Empire and the early Soviet Union implied familial bond on a new social scale – the bond among the soldiers and

between the population and the elites. The concept of fraternity was introduced in altruistic terms and assumed the exchange of goods and talents among the individuals and exchange of wealth among the nations. Fraternity did account for a certain level of conformity but in ideological narrative was more inclined to the meaning of equality.

However, in practice Soviet fraternity was an attribute of states and people not bonded but dominated by the Soviet Union elites, dependent on it and invariably behaving in conformity to Soviet will. As a value category, “fraternal” is widely used in reference to relations among the military officers and among Soviet nations. It conveys the impression of close, altruistic friendly interstate ties. However, it was called to disguise racist practices of cultural cleansing, Russification and physical extermination that were not regarded as conforming enough to belong to the Soviet brotherhood. The phrase “fraternal help” (“bratskaya pomosh”) is used to conceal the brashness of the Kremlin’s interference in the affairs of the communist states. Soviet “fraternal help” has little to nothing to do with altruism or affection, instead it is characterized with an intent to dominate and colonize. Even when it entails considerable material assistance, it cannot count as a sacrifice, since it is dictated by imperialistic motives. To this end, Soviet propaganda employed the category of “fraternal help” to maintain totalitarian regime and disguise the violent means of social regulations. The Soviet leaders have advanced the thesis of the responsibility of Russia for the national and political development of communist countries as her brothers, veiling practices of cultural and physical genocide.

As soon as economic devastation brought political pessimism around Soviet mentality, the grievances over the extermination and oppression have been recognized and pronounced. The realization of the Soviet “familial bonding” as illusionary and in fact meaningless activated a new narrative on the “communal house” around the Soviet people.

Now, the included nations were no longer brothers, but neighbors happened to live under the same rotten roof.

Chapter 4: Deconstructing Contemporary Russian Household

Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the construct of household in Russian contemporary political discourse. I show how Russian regional politics of the 21st century is framing the idea of post-Soviet space as if it were a regional private household. Thus, I follow the initial research questions and apply them to the modern Russian discourse. The questions are as follows: How does modern version of the “household” re-emerge in contemporary Russia? Does the modern political discourse reproduce the Imperial and Soviet models of the household? What linguistic themes characterize the ideology of “household” to frame significant political events in the Russian periphery?

Unlike the previous parts of the work, this chapter accounts for the discourse produced by historiographers, literary authors, critics, colonial administrators, and military officers as well as the sources of Soviet propaganda, this chapter consumes a different scope of discourse. The analysis of the contemporary discourse will be provided by the Russian pro-Kremlin mass media, and more specifically citations of the narrative produced by the most influential Russian political figures. Due to the emergence of TV, social media, and a formal call to democracy, Russian political discourse became richer and more participatory. For that, politicians have more agency in public opinion formation and more access to a variety of channels with a greater reach to the audience. Thus, I analyze the speech acts produced by top political figures, whose statements affected Russian political ideational

space during the last decade. I search for the themes reoccurring in their speech that involve mentioning peripheral countries and the attitude towards the events in the region.

Analyzing the speech acts in search of broad themes, I seek repetitions. The most prevalent themes in the collected data are “the topics that occur and reoccur” and can be termed “recurring regularities” (Ryan and Bernard 2003, p. 85). In addition to manual coding, I use NVIVO to reveal some subthemes or additional logical categories using logical trees and maps to code the texts and assign labels (Miles & Huberman 1994 p. 44). The main intellectual tool for delineating themes and creating broad categories is the principle of constant comparison, to establish boundaries of the themes, assign labels to the categories and condense the content of each category. The goal here is to tease out conceptual similarities, discern the salience of categories, and notice the patterns.

First, I then explain and justify the time frames of the chosen discourse. This is the period of Russian history where the power discourse reverses its rhetoric on the ‘house reconstruction’ (‘perestroika’) and comes back to familial relations. The time from 2008 to the present is marked by the emergence of the ‘power vertical’ created by Vladimir Putin’s administration.

Second, I will explain the choice of narrators. I have included four main political figures that exert a significant effect on public opinion in Russia and have access to the most powerful channels of information. In the following sections, I explain the rationale behind the chosen world of power discourse: why I consider these figures to be the most influential in forming public opinion on regional politics; how their images are imprinted in the perception of Russian auditory; how these images are both intentional and non-subjective. These narrators consciously or subconsciously play the role of ‘inventors’ of the discourse.

Often, even without hypocrisy, they internalize the effects of this discourse themselves. Their speech acts regulate the population in a way that maintains Russian legitimacy as a regional hegemon. They create the idea of Russia drawing an image of a head of a regional household. The common feature of the narrators is that they are in a position of authority and can shift the ideational climate declaring political ‘truth.’³³

Third, I explain the choice of countries as objects of speeches that I take for the analysis. Because of the density of the contemporary discourse, I decided to narrow down the objects of speech from regions to countries. The chosen countries very much overlap with the historical regions I talked about in Chapter Two but are not – cannot be – completely identical. Yet, the states represent the regions and are considered the closest ones and the most spoken about, which makes them a better fit to demonstrate the despot’s attitude towards the periphery. I refer to four peripheral countries of Russia accounting for their historical background, geographical proximity, and relations to Russia. The four countries are Kazakhstan, Belarus, Ukraine, and Georgia for they attain the most salient heterogenic and homogenous attributes in their hierarchical position in the household. Two of the countries, Belorussia, and Kazakhstan are commonly referred to as obedient, and the other two – Ukraine and Georgia - are mentioned as problematic members of the Russian household.

Fourth, I elaborate on the choice of the sources to from which I derived my data from for the analysis. As a source of discourse, I use primary official informational platforms of the said narrators, primary federal news agencies, the media outlet of the Russian government, the newspaper “Rossiyskaya Gazeta,” and secondary newspapers that also

³³ The research conducted was based on the sources collected prior the war in Ukraine of 2022

represent power speech trumpets in the right-wing conservative Russian media. In the following section, I explain why I chose these particular sources, reveal the hierarchical structure they compose, and what kind of discourse units I extract from them.

Fifth, framing the discourse analysis, I disclose my working process during the initial cycle of coding. I will explain the theory and practice, and how I employed different types of coding to dissect the narrative into meaningful categories for extracting the hints of ideology. I will further show how I categorize the composed set of codes into themes during the second cycle of analysis.

Sixth, and most important, I introduce the findings of the analysis: the themes of familial dynamics. To demonstrate how the speech acts maintain the legitimacy of Russian hegemony, I formulated five themes of framing the regional political dynamics as a household. These themes help to dismantle the modern power discourse of Russian officials and show new tools for the Russian household social re-inventing. The most prevalent themes found in the contemporary figurative Russian discourse are what I coin as familization, patronization, infantilization, enmeshment, and civil partnership. Each theme consists of respective subthemes that are, in turn, built up from codes derived from the narrative. Each narrator has his style, language, frequency, and magnitude of expressing these themes.

The final and also significant section demonstrates how the regional despot, Russia, positions the chosen peripheral countries in the contemporary Russian Household. In other words, I formulate how the modern political discourse configures the roles of each object of speech in the regional hierarchy in familial terms. Each country is assigned a role it is supposed to play in the familial system of the region (from a point of view of the despot).

These roles co-exist with, yet contradict the understanding of international law, sovereignty, and political self-interest. Instead, they manifest connections that are more often intrinsic to dysfunctional families rather than communities of states. I also bring about the analysis of frequency to see what country is more often referred to within a framework of a particular theme.

The Timeframes and the Method

In this section, I explore the dimensions and complexities of the discourse around modern regional politics during Vladimir Putin's tenure starting from 2008. I consider speeches of the most influential Russian political figures cited by the Russian pro-Putin media. The units of analysis – the speeches – that I will account for are spread throughout the time frame beginning from 2008 until 2020.

The articles published in the newspaper have standardized volumes and contain from one page to half of the page, from three to six columns, and from 500 to 1000 words. The unit of analysis is a topic or theme found in the article. The chunks of text within articles are translated by me and are coded concerning the topics (or themes) that they embed. The themes will be described further in the unfolding sections of this chapter. One article can contain three or four topics, thus, the cases of the narratives can include overlapping articles, because the articles contain more than one topic.

I have decided to limit the discourse of my analysis to the period from 2008 to 2020 because it includes the complete cycle of Putin's administration in power: from the very beginning of freshly established Putin's prevalence over the team of the previous president

Boris Yeltsin (called Family Group)³⁴ until the contemporary power position of Putin (Rutland 2013, p. 7). The outcome of Putin's victory in the struggle with Yeltsin's supporters was the adoption of the official legal framing of his rigid power vertical³⁵ that was re-established by Vladimir Putin's administration. The Power Vertical refers to a highly centralized power structure in politics where executive authority lies primarily with the presidency and central government. It involves "top-down" governance, leading to the appointment of government loyalists to key positions for executing policies. (Monaghan 2012, p.1). Thus, this period is when the Russian political system returned to a strictly hierarchical governing system.

Also, in 2007, Vladimir Putin delivered a seminal speech at the Munich Security Conference, wherein he took issue with the post-Cold War power dynamic, and officially declaring the intention to return to regional interventionism as a matter of antagonizing the unipolar world system. This point in history was the breakthrough in Russian power discourse and indicates a slow backdrop towards the rhetoric of the imperial/familial household. Since then, the power discourse of modern Russia employs deeply rooted concepts of household relations (that are juxtaposed with political relations). By dismantling the power discourse of Russian officials, I want to understand the imperial/hegemonic discourse on social re-engineering in their neighboring territories and the functional

³⁴ The Family is the well-known household name for the Yeltsin elites adopted in 1990s. Although, the notion of the "Family" comes from real Yeltsin family, it did not consist of family members only. In fact, only three Yeltsin relatives were included in the Family. Others were some of his colleagues and supporters like Anatoliy Chubais, Yuriy Skuratov and others.

³⁵ The Family group saw its significant decline in influence by 2004 due to the dismissals of Alexander Voloshin, Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov and other prominent members of his cabinet. However, some members of the group managed to maintain their political positions. By 2007, the remaining elements of the Family were removed from politics and the concept of "vertical of power" came to represent Vladimir Putin's administration. During 2000 to 2005, Putin worked to centralize power, particularly with the gubernatorial electoral reforms of 2004-2005 which allowed him to create a unified chain of command and strengthen the executive branch. By 2008, this mission was both legally established and economically sustained.

interrelations between parts of the household ‘social body.’ I want to see how the speech acts undertaken for reasons of control necessity were reconceived and justified in the household terms.

As to the methods, due to the development of contemporary informational space, public discourse became denser and richer than that of the imperial and Soviet eras. Thus, the choice of sources and the narrator for this chapter is more diligent work. Because of this change in discourse volume and outreach, the empirical work on the subject requires a more complex methodology and the use of digital Software (NVIVO) for discourse analysis.

The Narrators of Power Discourse

The crucial aspect in comprehending the essence of a society lies in analyzing and examining the foundation of discourse. Power discourses usually organize around associated spaces or institutions in which they operate as a tool of rules and norms reproduction (Graham, Gordon & Miller 1991, p. 6). The meaning of media dominance is that the thoughts of the ruling class become the ruling ideas of the population. Certainly, this is only one way of looking at the media. Other functions of modern media can include holding elites and the government accountable, representing the voice of the grassroots movements, and holding a public space that is not only dominated by the elites but by the alternative forces. Mass media can serve as a leverage of democracy as well as a mechanism of exercising power over the populace.

However, the difference between the Russian media market and the markets of developed democracies is that the state, represented by the executive power structures, directly or indirectly determines the form and content of mass media messages. This infringes upon the constitutional rights of citizens to receive reliable and diverse information

through all available channels, which is unacceptable in a democratic social environment. According to Gumanitarniy Portal, “printed publications are the most widespread type of mass media in the Russian Federation. By the beginning of 2009, 27,425 newspapers and weeklies were registered in the Russian Federation, but no more than 14,000 of them are in constant circulation. Also registered 20 433 journals, 787 almanacs, 1297 collections, 1519 bulletins, and 214 publications.” In total, more than 51 thousand print media were registered. However, most of them are subject to rigid censorship by the government (Gumanitarniy Portal).

Several important characteristics were considered when selecting the individuals whose discourse I analyze in my work. Their key roles respond to certain functions of household management: economic power, security, moral power, and emotional influence over the population. The range of narrators is preconditioned by the political environment in Russia and the clientelism that prevails as a model of the political structure of Russian society. The official media and power discourse, in general, are largely monopolized by a solid layer of the political elite, whose members are connected in a special type of relationship between the leader (patron) and his followers (clients) – loyal advocates or dependent supporters (Hosking 2000, p. 1; Lo 2015, p. 10). This structure is isolated and rigidly hierarchical, yet informal. Its internal interactions are known but not proclaimed and reflect the struggle for access to resources and control.

Thus, I include several individuals who are included in the power vertical and are influential for the discourse in the long run. Those are President Vladimir Putin, minister of defense Alexander Shoigu, the leader of the liberal-democratic party, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, and the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, Kirill. All of them are preferred based on

their popularity, trust, and the influence they exert on Russian society. At the same time, each selected political figure represents a certain aspect of social control and domestication.

President Putin appeared in the scope of my research as he can boast the highest approval ratings and personal eminent power. Many Russians believe that Putin bears most of the responsibility for the ups and downs of the country's economy and the distribution of the state resources. He also represents legitimacy in its essence considering the monopoly of the Kremlin on the largest informational channels and official media. He is mostly in charge of delivering the official narratives on foreign policy, investments, economics, and strategic decisions (Judah 2013, p. 137).

Minister of Defense Sergei Shoigu is included in the set of narrators studied not only because he is the most successful candidate for president and the most popular politician after Vladimir Putin, but also because he, by the nature of his service, went through all the tragedies of the recent history of Russia. He was the first figure dealing personally with the bombings of houses in Moscow in 1999, the Nord-Ost, and others. Thus, according to some polls, Shoigu is strongly associated with the notion of security, protection, safety, and defense in the minds of Russians (Kroshneva & Mitrofanova 2017, p. 3/24).

Another political character, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, the leader of the LDPR party (formerly Liberal Democratic Party of Russia), was selected as the most noticeable emotional influencer on the political stage of the Russian Federation. He has survived the Yeltsin era and outlived politically all his competitors. According to some references, he is seen as "a showman of Russian politics, blending populist and nationalist rhetoric, anti-Western invective and a brash, confrontational style" (Bruk 2013, p. 2). For 20 years in public policy, Zhirinovsky frequently participated in popular television shows: he sings,

dances, and judges the contestants. He is straightforward in his political activities - he always supports the government. Social media and TV are saturated with scandalous videos that shock the audience with straightforwardness and emotional thrust. Zhirinovskiy is recognized as the emotional component of Putin's apparatus; he is allowed and even assigned to pronounce the needed "truth" in the most unsophisticated, scandalous, and straightforward ways without damaging his popularity while helping the top authority to 'save face' and seem rational and professional (Tsipko & Matthew 1994, 4/267).

Another narrative interrogated in the study is the speeches and interviews of Patriarch Kirill. Even though Kirill is not literally a politician, he can still be considered as a momentous political figure. In the realm of cultural and societal matters, the Church under the leadership of Kirill has worked in tandem with the Russian government and President Vladimir Putin. The Patriarch has supported the enhancement of Russian authority in the regions of South Ossetia, Crimea, and eastern Ukraine. At present, the Russian Orthodox Church holds a position of immense trust among the people of the Russian Federation, serving as a source of moral guidance and shaping the national identity. The ruling party "United Russia" manipulates this trust. On behalf of the Church Patriarch Kirill appeals to the most conservative part of Russian society, bringing up the cult of obedience and separating Russian values from international ones. Not only has this policy affected perniciously the relations between the West and Russia, but it also aggravated misogyny, racism and classism ruled in the society (Anderson 2007, p. 5/188).

The leading political party "United Russia" and Gazprom Holding are willingly using the support of the Russian Orthodox Church in their political endeavors and applying religion as an additional tool of indoctrination. Russian 'religious propaganda' is built upon the 'Eurasianist' geopolitical standpoint; it implies that Russia has its own unique,

exceptional way and suggests returning to Russian traditions and historical roots. Moreover, passing the Rubicon of Russian ‘uniqueness and exceptionality,’ Patriarch Kirill actively promotes the idea of Russian supremacy which relies on the “virtue of Russian richer and more diverse cultural inheritance” (Sperling 2015, p. 236). The idea of supremacy assumes that Russians should not have any feeling of inferiority and should not seek to adopt any norms and ideas somewhere outside of Russian civilization as instead of enriching, it will only contaminate Russia.

Thus, the narrators I have chosen to reflect the set of the most influential speakers that form a space of power discourse. These figures take the top position in the asymmetric relationship between groups of political actors in Russian discourse. Each of them represents different dimensions of power discourse: emotions, security, economic stability, and moral guidelines.³⁶ The following table briefly summarizes the stances of the chosen narrators and helps to map their role and function in the discourse.

Name	Role	Function	Standing
Vladimir Putin	President of Russia	Represents the ultimate political authority in Russia	Indicates relatively neutral expressions, yet recalls familial terms (moderate magnitude of speech)
Alexander Shoigu	Head of Russian Ministry of Defense	Interprets security issues	Characterized by neutral expressions, yet recalls familial

³⁶ The alternative voices are largely represented in unofficial sources such as blogs and social media narratives posted by the oppositional activists such as Ksenia Sobchak, Alexey Navalny, Alexander Ryklin, Mikhail Shneider, Peter Tsarkov and Evgeny Tretyakov.

			terms (magnitude of speech)
Vladimir Zhirinovsky	Leader of the liberal-democratic party of Russian Duma	Transmits and shapes popular emotional attitude towards an issue at stake	Characterized by emotional, abstract, and figurative expressions, ridiculization; often recalls private connections to express affinity to a n object of speech
Patriarch Kirill	Patriarch of All-Russian Orthodox Church	Interprets, transmits, and shapes Russian values system	Characterized by abstract and figurative expressions, often recalls familial terms to describe and explain regional political dynamics

Table 1. Narrators' stances and contributions to the discourse

The Objects of Narrative: Study Cases of Peripheral Countries

The discourse on the selected four countries will be regarded accounting for the attitude of Russian elites towards the foreign policy of those countries. I will take the states that are included in the Russian region and are seen as the members of household considering a common Soviet past and colonial experience. Two of the countries, Belorussia and Kazakhstan are commonly referred to as obedient and disciplined and other two – Ukraine and Georgia - are mentioned as unruly rebellious members of the Russian household.

All four of the states are connected through a common colonial and Soviet pasts which preconditioned their close ties and connections with Russia. The nations are connected

on every layer of social life: cultural, economic, political, and strategic. Both Georgia and Ukraine have been a part of the Russian Empire for more than a hundred years (from 1811 to 1917 and from 1722 to 1917 respectively). Later, a while after the Red Revolution in October 1917, they both almost simultaneously gained independence. However, in the 1920s, Soviet Russian forces overran Ukraine and Georgia and integrated them into the Soviet Union until its dissolution in 1991 (Molchanov 2002, p. 93, p. 268). During the times of Imperial and Soviet Russia household, both countries have been through times of hostility, tension, bargaining, and closeness with the Russian ‘despot.’

The tension emerged because of the territorial and economic disputes of the post-Soviet times. For example, in 2001 Russia alleged that Georgia assists Chechen terrorists, while Georgia indeed provided the Chechen separatists with some support, and reinforcements (BBC 2006). In 2002, Russia made threats of launching cross-border assaults against them; as a response, the Georgian government applied for the help of the USA which further increased the tension. In 2006 Russian–Georgian relations entered a state of long-term crisis due to the Georgian–Abkhazian conflict.³⁷ Georgia accused Russian peacemakers of intentional prolongation of the conflict in Abkhazia and deprived Russia of the role of the mediator in the conflict. The withdrawal from Georgia was completed in 2008, which was followed by the Russo-Georgian War,³⁸ a short period of normalization in 2010, and then 2019–2020 anti-Russian protests in Georgia.³⁹

³⁷ The Abkhaz–Georgian conflict is a geopolitical tension between Georgia and partially recognized Abkhaz republic. The conflict was lasting since the Caucasian wars in 19th century and was aggravated after the collapse of the USSR.

³⁸ The Russo-Georgian War, otherwise known as "Eight Days War," was the war between Georgia and Russia over the self-proclaimed independent republics of Abkhazia and Ossetia. The war was a result of aggravating tensions between Georgia and Russia since the beginning of 2000s.

³⁹ The protests took place in June 2019 as a reaction to a provocative speech of the Russian Communist Party member, Sergey Gavrilov. As a participant in the Interparliamentary Assembly of Orthodoxy, he questioned the authority of Georgian Orthodox brotherhood in Russia, expressed support to independence of Abkhazia (while Georgia intended to establish the protectorate there).

Ukraine experienced similar turbulence in its relationship with Russia after the breakup of the Soviet Union. The Orange Revolution in Ukraine⁴⁰ has resurfaced several problems including ethnic conflict between pro-Russian and nationalist Ukrainian populations as well as the gas disputes. In the conflict of 2009 that developed from a gas quarrel, Russia has been presenting Ukraine as unruly, aggressive, and selfish almost uniformly in its media. The Ukrainian administration was also portrayed as potentially dangerous for Ukraine and Russia as it was about to enter NATO, Russia's political opponent, yet still wanted to take advantage of cheap Russian gas.

During the war between Russia and Georgia in 2008, the trust between the two countries (Russia and Ukraine) significantly deteriorated because Ukraine openly expressed solidarity and provided material support and reinforcement to Georgia. After the February 2014 Maidan Revolution,⁴¹ the Autonomous Republic of Crimea has broken into a crisis.⁴² Finally, on February 24, 2022, Russian troops, parked near the Russian-Ukrainian border after since Crimean Crisis invaded Ukraine. This was the beginning of Russian straightforward aggression against Ukraine that alienated Russia from the Western community. Thus, both Georgia and Ukraine experienced a series of downfalls in their respective relationship with Russia that caused intranational and international turmoil among and within the two states. The tension over territorial disputes and conflict of economic interests between Russia and both countries finally resulted in a full-fledged war, where the

⁴⁰ The Orange Revolution as sequence of protests and political insurgency in 2004 in Ukraine. The protests were organized by the opponents of the newly elected president who was accused of corruption, illegitimate attempts to run the election and unpatriotic intentions for his tenure.

⁴¹ Euromaidan, also known as The Revolution of Dignity, took place in 2014 in Kiev, Ukraine, and developed from a series of riots, protests, and other political events. This eventually resulted in overthrowing of the contemporary president of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovich, and condemnation of the Government.

⁴² The annexation of the Crimean Peninsula, in the North of the Black Sea happened in March 2014, when Russian Federation administered a referendum that allegedly resulted in the majority of the locals voting for joining Russia.

main goal of Putin's actions is the liquidation of Ukraine as a state and destroying the “artificial borders” among the units of the Russian world (Novaya Gazeta, 2022).⁴³

Unlike the mentioned two countries, Belorussia and Kazakhstan were susceptible to much harsher *cultural* influence from Russian colonizers, never seen in Georgia and Ukraine. As a measure of Russification in the last years of the Empire, Nicolas banned the name Belorussia and officially called the country a province of the North-Western Territory. In addition, he forbade the local language in the schools and public offices and prohibited publications in the Belarusian language. At the same time, the Kazakh written language was invented in Cyrillic by Russian colonizers from scratch.

There have also been some minor setbacks in the relations between Russia and Kazakhstan and Belorussia respectively. In the 2010s, both Belorussian and Kazakhstani presidents (Lukashenko and Nazarbaev) pressed for the revival of their nations’ respective national identities. Further, after the Crimean crisis unfolded and Russian troops intervened in Ukraine, Lukashenko claimed that Belarusian people need to be aware of their ethnicity and remember that they are not Russians but Belarusians, pertain their language and culture; notably, his speech was not delivered in Russian as it usually happened, but in Belarusian. In the meantime, President Vladimir Putin during one of the interviews made some controversial claims that disturbed the Russo-Kazakh relations; after one of his negotiations with Nazarbaev, he stated that “Kazakhs had never had statehood” (BBC 2014). This caused a severe response from ex-President Nazarbayev, who warned that he might depart from the Eurasian Economic Union and emphasized that the sovereignty of the state

⁴³<https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2022/02/24/my-budem-stremitsia-k-demilitarizatsii-i-denatsifikatsii-ukrainy-putin-obiavil-o-nachale-spetsoperatsii-v-ukraine-news>

is his “most precious treasure” and that Kazakhs “will never surrender” their independence (BBC 2014).

In 2017 Russian relations with both Belorussia and Kazakhstan were back to economic integration negotiations and conducting joint combat training. Despite all the minor tensions, unlike Georgia and Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belorussia joined Russia in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Eurasian Economic Union, and Collective Security Treaty Organization. They support closer and smoother relations with Russia and maintain economic, cultural, and diplomatic stable connections. Moreover, Belorussia supported Russian aggression in Ukraine and opened its territory for hosting Russian troops to initiate the invasion.

Thus, all four countries share a common history of colonization, cultural and economic oppression as well as the interconnectedness with Russians. Regardless of the emotional attitude toward Russia and the trauma resulting from bonding with the regional despot, it is impossible to deny the influence that Russia exerted on the history of Ukraine, Georgia, Belorussia, and Kazakhstan. These countries happened to resist Russian intrusion and domestication of the local population and way of living. However, eventually, the states found themselves in circumstances where it became natural to belong to a part of the clan rather than a stand-alone entity.

The difference among the countries taken for the object of speech acts is the position they take in the household to the eyes of their ‘despot.’ Both Georgia and Ukraine have very close ties with Russia. At the same time, they continuously experience high levels of tension in this relationship. Being a part of the Eurasian household Georgia and Ukraine, both are economically, politically, and culturally connected to Russia but they to a larger extent

attempt to resist the Russian power assertion. Meanwhile, Kazakhstan and Belorussia took a different stance, trying to derive their best from the traumatic interconnectedness within the Eurasian household.

Belorussia and Kazakhstan are more often praised for obedience and patronized in a seemingly benign way, playing the role of the ‘golden children’ of the regional family. At the same time, Georgia and Ukraine are more often referred to as disobedient and receive critique and disapproval from the despot, who discursively treat them as ‘family scapegoats.’ However, this chapter will be more focused on the roles that the despot assigns to itself about the chosen regional household members. As the narrative unfolds, it becomes clear that the despot is more concentrated on framing the role that it grants to itself. The roles that I will tease out from the discourse analysis show how the head of the household is drawing a picture of a parent or a surveyor of both genders towards its peripheral counterparts. These roles, nevertheless, reflect the despot’s attitude to the chosen objects of the narrative and contribute to their definition of ‘golden children’ and ‘family scapegoats.’

The Sources of the Narrative

To begin a discourse analysis, it is important to locate, map, and justify the discourses being studied. In her research on Western responses to the Bosnian War, Lene Hansen (2006) suggests an efficient method for doing this. She acknowledges that the selection of texts is a challenging task, especially when studying contemporary general material within a historical intertextual model. In these cases, texts should be chosen that meet the following three criteria: “they articulate identities and policies; they are widely read and given attention; and they have the formal authority to define a political position” (Hansen 2006, p. 76). These standards have various advantages in terms of analysis and methodology: the well-defined formulation simplifies the use of discourse analysis methods; the widely

recognized standards guarantee that texts play a central role in shaping dominant discourses; and the formal authority criteria highlight the importance of “status and power” (Hansen 2006, p. 76).

Thus, I choose the sources that meet these three requirements and have a hierarchical structure of authority and rating. On top of the hierarchy are situated the primary official websites of the Kremlin, Duma, and the Orthodox Church (<http://kremlin.ru>, <http://duma.gov.ru/>, <http://www.patriarchia.ru>). Primary sources are official websites of the government and the Orthodox church’s “political speaking trumpet,” which serves as a media organ and an official publication or media outlet that is used to express the views and positions of the political institution. The trumpets are often used as a way for these institutions to claim their official statements, express their opinion on any important political event, promote their agenda, and influence public opinion. The term “speaking trumpet” suggests that the publication or media outlet amplifies the voices and views of the group in a way that reaches a wide audience. The information from the trumpets travels directly to the information agencies and other newspapers and media resources.

The next layer of the hierarchy is news agencies which are among the notable means that play a significant role in power discourse dissemination (RIA Novosti, TASS, Interfax). Russian news agencies are specialized information enterprises that provide services to the media and are tasked with supplying current political, economic, social, and cultural information to subscribers such as editorial offices of various publications and broadcasting companies. The main function of these agencies is to collect and disseminate news: supplying operational political, economic, social, and cultural information to the editorial offices of newspapers, magazines, television, and radio broadcasting, as well as other institutions, organizations, and individuals who are subscribers to their products. In today's

Russian media, news agencies take the place of connecting links that make it possible to bring different parts of the world closer due to the speed of news transmission and weaken the geographical distance factor (Chaginova 2016, p. 20). Russian news agencies are essential components of the media system that play a crucial role in the collection and distribution of information among other media sources (Chaginova 2016, p. 21).

The following level is taken by the main Russian “media outlet” – Rossiyskaya Gazeta. A political media outlet is used to categorize and organize information related to politics and current events. Rossiyskaya Gazeta, as a Russian federal media outlet has sections devoted specifically to political news and analysis, and they also include editorial pages where writers can express their opinions on political issues. In this way, it serves as a platform for discussing and debating political topics and for informing the public about political developments and disseminating the debates in the rest of the media. Additionally, a newspaper serves as a way for political organizations or parties to promote their views and agendas to a wide audience (Media-kit 2021, Mediascope 2019).

Newspapers that are federal political media outlets provide coverage and analysis of federal politics and government and create a structure of the content that is consumed further by the lower-tier newspapers. This might include reporting on the activities of the federal government and its agencies, as well as the actions of elected officials at the national level. A newspaper that serves as a federal political media outlet might also cover national elections and campaign developments, and it might provide a forum for discussing and debating federal policy issues. In this way, a newspaper can help to inform the public and the rest of the media about federal politics and to foster informed political discourse at the national level (Gentzkow 2011, p.1).

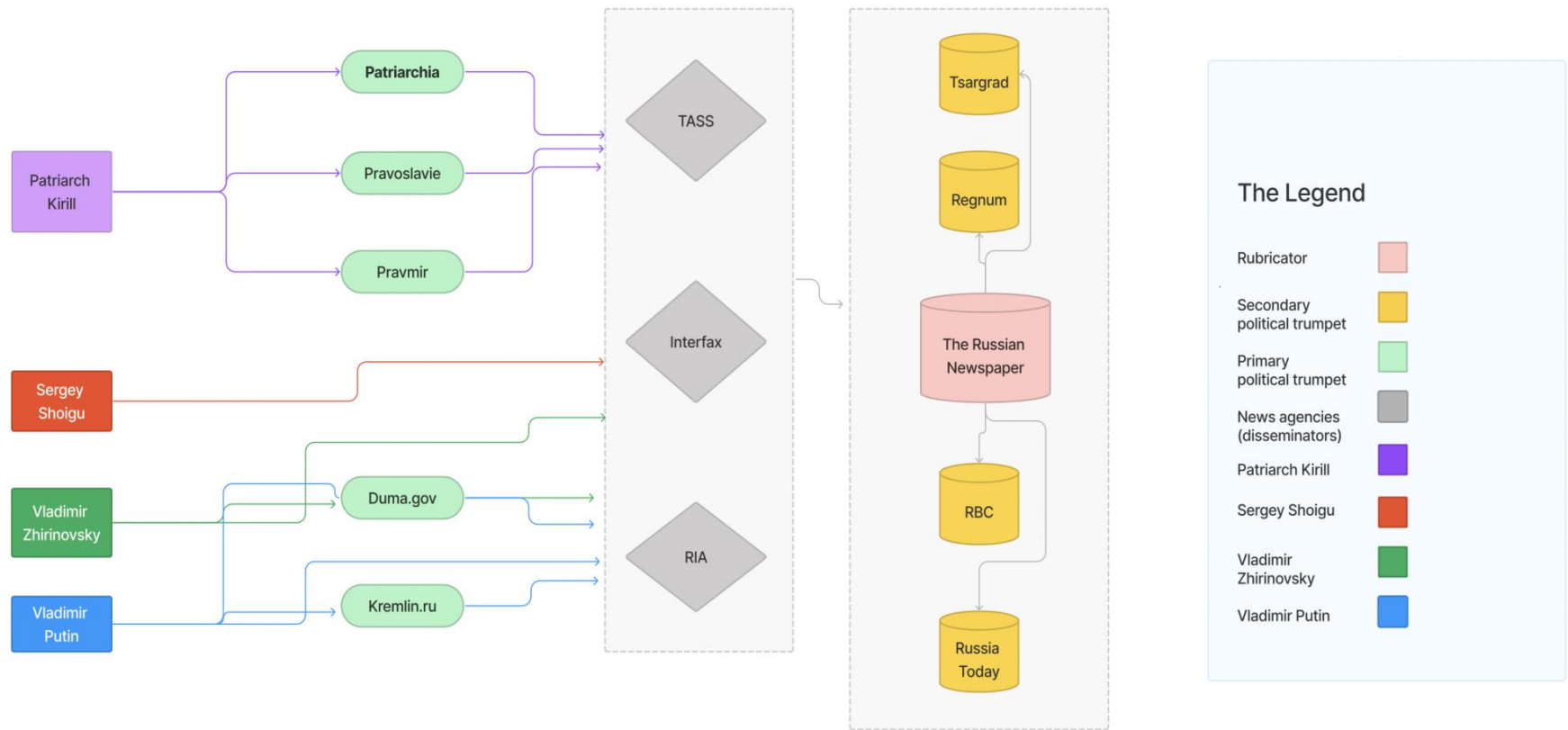
Finally, at the bottom of the legitimacy are accredited informational sources that are included in the so-called “Kremlin pull”⁴⁴ and Orthodox Christian platforms that promote right-wing political views of the Russian church (Regnum, RT, Tsargrad, Pravoslavie, Pravmir, RBC). Pro-Russian World newspapers are publications that are supportive of the policies and actions of Russian President Vladimir Putin concerning the near abroad countries. These platforms and newspapers present a favorable view of Putin and his government and may downplay or criticize any opposition to his rule. These are right-wing conservative newspapers that also promote the political agenda of Putin (Orthodox church including) and his allies, and they present news and information in a way that is favorable to the Russian government. It is worth noting that media outlets in Russia, including newspapers, are subject to significant government control and censorship, and many are thought to be controlled or influenced by the Kremlin.

As such, pro-Putin newspapers may not necessarily provide unbiased or objective coverage of news and events. The list of these sources is conditioned on the fact that they are most likely targeting regional policies and the opinions of the chosen speakers concerning the near-abroad. In a way, they are secondary “political speaking trumpets” for the narrators of choice. These newspapers replicate the information from the primary sources and the media outlet on the held press conferences, organized events, and issued statements on their own. The sources’ structure may include specialized units such as editorial offices of newspapers and magazines, PR, and advertising services. Most of them offer subscriptions to numerous information products of various types, frequencies, and formats. The detailed

⁴⁴ The Kremlin Pool is the informal name for a group of journalists who regularly cover the activities of the government. The journalists of the Kremlin pool do not have accreditation cards and certificates that allow them to freely visit the Kremlin and the working residence of the President of Russia.

categorization, background, political position, and audience of the chosen sources are cited in Appendix #1. The schematic disposition of the sources is also reflected in the diagram below.

Once the sources of the study are determined, the question becomes how many texts should be read. It is not possible to set a specific number of texts as a general standard. One option for selecting the volume of the material is to use a timeline that highlights periods of significant or politically important media activity. This allows for a more manageable selection of material and provides a framework for analyzing the patterns or how discourses persist despite criticism, events, and new evidence (Hansen 2006, p. 78). After creating a timeline and deciding on the appropriate types of sources, political narrators, and subjects of speech in the media texts, I selected 700 media texts for the analysis.



Picture 8. Media Map of the Sources.

Coding Process: Cycle I

The data for my analysis is speeches of the four mentioned political figures (Vladimir Putin, Patriarch Kirill, Sergey Shoigu, and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy) cited in the chosen sources from 2007 until 2020. I interrogate only written articles issued by the mentioned informational platforms and identify speeches where the words of the chosen narrators are quoted and use them for my analysis. The research contains over 700 speeches in Russian that were processed using the inductive method of themes discovery. The fragments of the speeches are inserted in this section as examples of discovered themes; they are translated from Russian into English by the author of this dissertation, yet the original text is cited in the footnotes. They are selected deliberately in a way to best demonstrate the evidence of a theme's salience and the explicit nature of the narrators' figurative political discourse. The theme discovery is derived from the original texts. They were captured and structured in NVIVO as a hierarchy of subcodes and codes, that were further aggregated into a larger set of themes.

For the initial cycle of coding, I used grammatical, elemental, and affective coding which I explain below. The coding process is followed by the second cycle of themeing. Brief overviews of the key traits of each subcategory will be outlined in this section. Every method was chosen concerning the specificities of my research question, the type of data collected for the analysis, and the tools available for extracting logical patterns from the language. Further, I will introduce the second cycle of data processing – themeing the data. This method includes categorizing the collected codes into a hierarchy of conceptual areas and defining common themes in the narrators' discourse.

The first methodological set I used to analyze the chosen speeches is grammatical coding methods. This method is not centered around grammar, but grammatical principles of language techniques used to emphasize a certain emotion or subjective reality. More specifically, I used magnitude Coding (Saldana 2015, p. 72; Miles & Huberman 1994, p. 300) which indicates the intensity of language. I use qualitative magnitude codes as nominal indicators to enhance the description of the narrators' radicalism that is expressed in such words as "always", "never", "entirely", "everyone," etc. These words indicate the narrator's inclination to generalize and introduce subjective opinions and beliefs as truth without discrimination (Saldana 2015, p. 72). Magnitude Codes consist of words that suggest intensity.

To divide the discourse into logical blocks as a foundation for further dissection I used structural coding (Saldana 2015, p. 84; Guest, MacQueen & Namey 2012, p. 5). Structural Coding focuses on the question and builds the research around the research inquiry allowing quickly find and process the data that most likely appears to be relevant to the research question. The initial stage of structural coding for both codes involves categorizing the data corpus to explore similarities, dissimilarities, and connections among comparable segments.

The next method I used was descriptive coding (Miles & Huberman 1994, p. 4; Saldaña 202015 p. 80; Wolcott 1994, pp 10-11). This coding helped me label a chunk of a narrative in a succinct phrase or sentence for the following development of the themes' categorization. Quoting Tesch (1990) "it is important that these [codes] are identifications of the topic, not abbreviations of the content. The topic is what is talked or written about. The content is the substance of the message" (p. 119). The description is the primary instrument for qualitative research, and its foundational purpose is to help the researcher

deliver what she infers from the text and draw a picture of her vision in general (Wolcott 1994, pp. 55, 412), instead of elaborating on details of social processes. This coding frames the initial categorization of the logical blocs helps to label their content, summarize the main point and create themes inventory; it is a foundation for the second cycle of coding and the subsequent interpretation of the segregated data (Wolcott 1994, p. 55).

When in doubt as to how I can categorize a piece of speech, I intuitively referred to it as relevant to the concept of the Household, and I employed In Vivo Coding (Saldana 2015, pp. 7, 23; Charmaz 2006, p. 55). This coding is labeled as “literal coding,” “verbatim coding,” “inductive coding,” “indigenous coding,” and “emic coding” in selected methods literature (Saldana 2015, pp. 7).

Another relevant coding method that I employed was emotion coding (Saldana 2015, Goleman 1995, pp. 11-15) which categorizes the emotions mentioned or expressed indirectly by the narrator or interpreted by the researcher from the narrative analyzed. Goleman (1995) defines emotion as “a feeling and its distinctive thoughts, psychological and biological states, and range of propensities to act” (p. 289). It is recognized widely that emotions are a universal human experience. This means that the acknowledgment of the emotions would provide a more meaningful and insightful perspective on the narrative considering the context, identity attributes, and the circumstances of the narrator.

Another type of affective coding is versus coding. According to Saldana, versus coding “identifies dichotomous or binary terms the individuals, groups, social systems, organizations, phenomena, processes, concepts, etc., in direct conflict with each other” (Saldana 2015, p. 115). Wolcott (2003, p. 43) explains this coding as an instrument to derive the salience of binary or mutual exclusiveness of some two categories, antagonism of two

concepts or phenomena in place. The group dichotomy discovered in the speech suggests strong conflicts or competing goals between inside and outside participants of the household. I abstain from taking “sides” but go for discerning the conflicting power issues among internal actors of the household and external as an important diagnostic for the political regional dynamic

The coding method that adds assessment to the versus coding to narrow down the dichotomies is Evaluation Coding (Saldana 2015, p.105; Patton 2008 p.8; Rallis & Rossman 2003, p. 56). This coding is non-quantitative and assigned to what Saldana, Rallis, and Rossman put as “judgments about the merit, worth, or significance of the actor or its policy” (Saldana 2015, p. 119; Rallis & Rossman 2003, p. 32). Program evaluation is “the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, to make judgments about the object and assess its sanity, normality, effectiveness, or value” (Patton 2008, p. 10).

Finally, to test the hypothesis that Russian power discourse still employs familial terms to frame internal regional dynamics, I used Hypothesis Coding (Saldana 2015, p. 142; Bernard 2011, p. 91; Weber 1990, p.20). This coding is the process of employing the coding manual that was generated and developed by the researcher to evaluate the extent to which the claimed hypothesis is viable. Some codes I developed were derived from a theory and expectations as to what can be found in the data initially, before the research, others have been formed in the process of analysis.

Thus, I have employed several methods of coding to initiate the process of data analysis. Magnitude coding helped me identify the narrators’ style and the level of neutrality of their speech. I extracted patterns of generalization, exaggeration, or black-and-white judgment and profiled the narrators according to the magnitude of their speeches. The

process of structural coding helped me to pinpoint content-rich or conceptual terms that symbolize the area of study within a specific portion of data that is relevant to my research inquiry. Subsequently, the corresponding coded segments are grouped together for a comprehensive analysis and additional coding. Versus coding method helped me identify how the narrators see regional social hierarchy: whom they refer to as “US,” who is figured in the discourse as “THEM.” This method made the inner and alien social groups in the Russian power figure world pronounced and gave them visible separation in their identity. Descriptive and In Vivo coding helped me form an outline of common themes among the codes and were the tool to allow me to see the emerging patterns in attitude, descriptions, and defining. Emotion and evaluation coding equipped me for extracting affective dynamics that are normalized by the power discourse and the image of the “common value system” drawn by the narrators on behalf of the head of the Russian Household.

Through affective coding techniques, I delved into the subjective aspects of the narrators' emotional state (such as emotions, values, struggles, opinions) by explicitly recognizing and labeling those experiences. While some may consider these methods as not being impartial or rigorous enough for social scientific research, affective elements are fundamental drivers of human behavior, response, and communication, and thus should not be disregarded in our studies that accounts for human experiences. Versus helped me state my acknowledgment of the ideational conflict, and divisions among individuals, groups, or systems struggling for power. Evaluation Coding allowed me to trace how the narrators judge the merit and worth of different actors, their policies, and positions. Finally, hypothesis coding allowed me to focus on testing my theory and collect the terms and expressions that support my suggestion that the narrative on Household did not end after Perestroika and is

still prevalent in Russian power discourse as an implicit and almost invisible ideological framework of regional politics.

Themeing Process: Cycle II

After going through the first cycle of coding, I began theming the derived codes. From the derived codes, I developed higher-level theoretical constructs and clustered similar codes together in bigger categories, called themes. The notion and practical application of a “theme” can differ among authors, however, in general, a theme represents a prolonged expression or statement that specifies the subject matter and/or significance of a data unit. Ultimately, I employ a stable definition based on their content analysis: “A theme is an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent [patterned] experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole” (DeSantis and Ugarriza, 2000, p. 362). These themes are statements qua (in the role of) ideas presented by the narrators that summarize common ideational categories that they all apply to the construction of the Russian household. These themes co-sustain each other and “suggest why something is done the way it is” (p. 118).

The Tone and Magnitude of Narrators’ Speech and Their Household Constructs

Throughout the speeches, the narrators often treat actors, events, activities, practices, and discourses in terms of family-of-states politics. They treat “colonial problems” as transcending “household quarrels.” The hegemonic despot voice is co-constructed with the narrators’ personal experience and familial connections as they refer to their relatives disseminated around post-Soviet space. The magnitude and affective inclinations of the narrators differ just as the way they construct the household.

Vladimir Putin's as a Narrator

The prevalent theme when Putin speaks of Ukraine is the enmeshment of identities. The president constantly refers to Ukraine as to “one nation” and “the cradle of Russianness.” He emphasizes common history as a reason to enmesh the boundaries and disregard the sovereignty of Ukraine. He also uses cultural and linguistic closeness as an implicit justification for intervention under cover of an “attempt to reunite the to-be one nation” and protect the protégé state from “internal enemies.” The household paradigm cancels the political will of the nations, as the blood bonding is not to be discussed. It is an inevitable condition for the countries to stay in the same value system, pursue common goals and connect economically, politically, and emotionally. For example, in the following interview, led by the journalist agency TASS, Putin expressed his view on Ukrainian independence as an ethnic group:

The Ukrainians were never truly a separate nation; they were always the people who lived on the borders of the Russian state. The Ukrainians were in Pskov, and they were the ones who defended the south from the raids of the Crimean Khan. In the Urals, Ukrainian people were present everywhere. There were no language or ethnic differences.⁴⁵

The Belorussian theme in Putin's narrative holds similar characteristics of identity enmeshment. However, a stronger emphasis is put on the responsibility to protect. Here,

⁴⁵ [...] Украинцами называли людей, которые жили на рубежах Российского государства. Украинцы были в Пскове, украинцами называли тех, которые защищали с юга от набегов крымского хана. На Урале. Кругом были украинцы. У нас не было никаких языковых различий [...]. 02.21.2020 " Transcript of the second series of interviews with Vladimir Putin for TASS" [Стенограмма второй серии интервью Владимира Путина для ТАСС], Rossyiskaya Gazeta rg.ru. <https://rg.ru/2020/02/21/stenogramma-vtoroj-serii-interviu-vladimira-putina-dlia-tass.html>

unlike in Ukraine, where the alien enemy is mostly employed as the main antagonist, the responsibility to protect Belorussia is expressed through the intention to support the current government against the internal enemies. Also, the talk about Belorussia includes more emotional and unceremoniously patronizing expressions of “love and nurture of the junior brother.” An example of this construction can be his mentioning of Belorussia during the Economic Forum:

We must protect Belorussia from the inner and the outer enemies.

We are tied with Byelorussians as relatives. These are the relations of mutual help and responsibility.⁴⁶

Talking about Kazakhstan, Putin emphasizes the prevalent theme of economic dependency and the fragility of sovereignty. He often recalls the imperial epoch and the fact that Kazakhstan is tied economically to Russia in multiple ways. Moreover, he refers to Kazakhstan as to a newborn state that had no sovereignty before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Even though he gives the credit to the president of Kazakhstan (since Nazarbaev’s policies were most of the time in concordance with Russian interests), this still implies a subservient position and indebtedness of Kazakhstan towards Russia. He often recalls the history of Kazakhstan as the childhood of the family member that was made from scratch, built up with the help of investments, training, and cultivation, and maintained through protection from the “external enemies” from the West and China. For example, in an interview with the journalist agency RIA News in 2008, Putin was excessively emphasizing

⁴⁶ [...] Члены Союзного государства... должны оказывать друг другу помощь и в защите суверенитета, внешних границ, и в защите стабильности. Значит, в этой связи, конечно, у нас есть обязательства перед Беларусью, и Александр Григорьевич Лукашенко так и поставил вопрос. Он хотел бы, чтобы мы оказали при необходимости ему соответствующую помощь [...]. 08.27.2020 “Putin answered questions about the coronavirus and the situation in Belarus” [Путин ответил на вопросы о коронавирусе и ситуации в Беларуси], Rosyiskaya Gazeta rg.ru. <https://rg.ru/2020/08/27/putin-otvetil-na-voprosy-o-koronaviruse-i-situacii-v-belarusi.html>

that Russia and Kazakhstan have particular relations and need to unite in the eyes of external threats:

There is a feature of economic development and relations that are unique to our countries [Russia and Kazakhstan] and inherent, perhaps, only to us. We need a new impulse to start uniting in the swiftly changing environment and rise of the external threat [from the Western countries].⁴⁷

At the same time, during the forum Celiger-1 in 2014, Putin declared that Kazakhs have never had their sovereignty before the fall of the USSR. He clearly stated:

Kazakhs have never had statehood. Nursultan Nazarbayev created it.⁴⁸

Georgia in Putin's figurative world is a brotherly nation that is "naturally" bound to share Russian national interest yet is occasionally held hostage of the traitorous or incompetent leaders that derail the country from the right trajectory. In the moment of crisis in the relationship, he applies to the Georgian government's alienation and emphasizes the historical and spiritual closeness between Georgians and Russians. For example, referring to the armed conflict between Georgia and Russia in 2008, in an interview with the journalist

⁴⁷ [...] Путин назвал отличительными признаками России и Казахстана - особенностями, которые, по его словам, "присущи, может быть, только нам", "значительную часть добывающих отраслей в наших экономиках и ту роль, которую играет нефтегазовый сектор в экономике Казахстана и России". Нам нужен дополнительный импульс для объединения в условиях быстрых изменений и внешних угроз [...]. 12.12.2008. "Putin invited Kazakhstan to create a branch of the St. Petersburg Oil Exchange" [Путин предложил Казахстану создать филиал петербургской нефтяной биржи]. Ria Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20081212/157117431.html>

⁴⁸ [...] У казахов не было государственности никогда. Он (Нурсултан Назарбаев) ее создал [...]. 08.30.2014. "Transcript of Vladimir Putin's conversation with participants of the Seliger-2014 forum" [Стенограмма беседы Владимира Путина с участниками форума "Селигер-2014"]. Rosyiskaya Gazeta rg.ru. <https://rg.ru/2014/08/30/stenogramma.html>

agency Interfax, Putin claimed that Saakashvili did not introduce the will of his nation, and thus, is an illegitimate president:

Saakashvili committed a crime against his people, against Georgia; he achieved the seizure of the territory. Now how to negotiate with these people? He led it to bloodshed.⁴⁹

Sergey Shoigu as a Narrator

Sergey Shoigu is interestingly characterized by echoing Putin's narratives about all four countries. He often refers to his relatives in Ukraine as indirect evidence of the peaceful intentions of Russia towards the Ukrainian crisis. However, his expressions are largely non-judgmental, emotionally neutral, and cautious. He mostly stresses the "duty" to protect and refers to Russia as to a "shield" from external influence. His prevalent themes concern "help", "protection", "support", common security, and brotherhood of nations in each case of the country. The threat that one should be protected from is usually portrayed as the influence and presence of Western countries. For example, in the interview led by a journalist agency Arguments & Facts in 2014, Shoigu said referring to the events of the Ukrainian Crisis:

The revolution in Ukraine is an instrument of external influence. The removal from power of the legitimate president of Ukraine was provoked by the United States and the European Union. They also support the current government of the country to suppress the

⁴⁹ [...] Саакашвили совершил преступление против своего народа, против Грузии, он добился отторжения территории. Теперь как с этими людьми договариваться? Он довел это до кровопролития [...]12.20.2012. "'RG" publishes the transcript of the speech of Vladimir Putin" ["РГ" публикует стенограмму выступления Владимира Путина]. Rosyiskaya Gazeta rg.ru. <https://rg.ru/2012/12/20/putin-site.html>

dissatisfied regions by force. Pro-Western forces are trying to form in this country an advanced line of pressure on the Union State, to influence the sustainable development of Russia and Belarus.⁵⁰

At the same time, Shoigu cannot avoid the temptation to emphasize the common ethnic roots of Slavic countries and frame their relations in familial terms. The common background and historical memory, in his imagination, are guarantees of peace between nations that cancel the risks of war. For example, in 2018 in his interview with RIA Novosti journalist agency dedicated to Russo-Ukrainian relations, Shoigu said:

I consider it impossible for a direct clash to arise between Ukraine and Russia. We have common roots, for many centuries we have gone through the hardest trials together and shoulder to shoulder defended our freedom and independence during the Second World War. Therefore, I am convinced that there will never be a place for mutual confrontation or enmity in our common historical memory.⁵¹

⁵⁰ [...] Цветные революции на Украине - это инструмент внешнего воздействия. Глава Минобороны подчеркнул, что отстранение от власти законного президента Украины было спровоцировано США и Евросоюзом. Они же поддерживают нынешнюю власть страны в стремлении силой подавить недовольные районы. По сути, прозападные силы стремятся сформировать в этой стране передовой рубеж давления на Союзное государство, повлиять на устойчивое развитие России и Белоруссии [...]. 10. 30.2014. "Shoigu and Zhadobin discussed the security of the Union State" [Шойгу и Жадобин обсудили безопасность Союзного государства], Rossyiskaya Gazeta rg.ru. <https://rg.ru/2014/10/29/shoigu-site.html>

⁵¹ [...] Считаю невозможным возникновение прямого столкновения между Украиной и Россией. У нас общие корни, на протяжении многих веков мы вместе пережили тяжелейшие испытания и плечом к плечу отстаивали свою свободу и независимость во время Второй мировой войны. Поэтому убежден, что в нашей общей исторической памяти никогда не будет места взаимной конфронтации или вражде [...]. 07.11.2018 "Shoigu considers a direct clash between Ukraine and Russia impossible" [Шойгу считает прямое столкновение Украины с Россией невозможным], RIA Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20180711/1524351179.html>

Vladimir Zhirinovsky as a Narrator

Zhirinovsky constructs the Russian household in the most colorful and affective terms. He explicitly expresses imperial nostalgia and consistently argues that familial harmony is a natural state of relationship among the post-Soviet menages. For example, in the case of Ukraine, just like Putin, he insists on the common identity of Russians and Ukrainians. However, he is more inclined to stress the economic dependency of Ukraine in terms of energy resources. His main theme is the ridiculization of pro-nationalist Ukrainian governments or opposition to pro-Russian forces, drawing them as fake and delectant.

Zhirinovsky actively uses the formulations of alienation of the West, basing his arguments on Russian and Ukrainian cultural closeness. He denies the Ukrainian right to self-determination juxtaposing Western values as a pervert and extraneous to the Slavic familial paradigm. For example, in 2014 during the Ukrainian crisis, Zhirinovsky entered to a plenary session dedicated to the events in Ukraine dressed in the uniform of a colonel of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. He jokingly explained that this is his personal response to the statement of the Ukrainian authorities about the start of a special operation in the east of the state:

I changed clothes because the imposters from the Kyiv circus also dressed everyone in camouflage⁵²

When Zhirinovsky speaks to Kazakhstan, he seldom fails to refer to it as his place of birth, framing this fact as the reason to consider himself an expert on Kazakh mentality and national interest. He often mixes his personal connection to Kazakhstan with the political

⁵² [...] Началось пленарное заседание с обсуждения событий на Украине. Лидер ЛДПР Владимир Жириновский явился на работу в форме полковника Вооруженных сил РФ, объяснив, что это его личный ответ на заявление украинских властей о начале спецоперации на востоке государства. "Я переоделся, потому что самозванцы из Киева тоже всех переодели в камуфляж, - заявил с трибуны парламентарий. - Уже слышим лязг моторов БТР" [...]. 04.16.2014 "Zhirinovsky threatened the Ukrainian authorities with a military tribunal in Rostov" [Жириновский пригрозил властям Украины военным трибуналом в Ростове], RBC.ru. <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/16/04/2014/57041b459a794761c0ce9005>

knowledgeability of Kazakh policies and ascribes to himself the right to give recommendations to the Kazakh government in foreign affairs. Almost in every mention of Kazakhstan, Zhirinovskiy disputes the sovereignty of the country, boldly claims that Russians gave birth to and brought up this state, and recalls imperial practices of Russians as the series of “child-bearing” acts. Speaking of Kazakhstan, Zhirinovskiy rarely skips mentioning that this is his “minor homeland,” as he was born there accounting for this as a credit to be less politically correct in addressing this state. He continuously denies the sovereignty of Kazakhstan in his speeches. What is also characteristic, is the emphasis on “motherly sacrifice” at the end of Russia and the constant mentioning of “building Kazakhstan from scratch.”

Accusing Kazakhstan of inculcating Russophobic sentiments, he described the relations of the Russian Empire with the ancestors of modern Kazakhs in his characteristic style:

The Kazakh tribes turned to the Russian tsar, begged, and lay at their feet: “Save us, Kazakhs, otherwise, the Dzungars will cut us out”.

The Russian tsar sent an army and liberated Northern Kazakhstan.⁵³

Mentioning Belorussia, Zhirinovskiy labels Russian investments in the Belorussian economy as “motherly sacrifice”, claiming that Belorussia is endlessly indebted to the Russian state and is predestined to become one country with Russians. His “imperial nostalgia” is pronounced the most when he describes the colonial and Soviet political dynamic between Belorussia and Russia. He actively applies mockery when speaking of the

⁵³ [...] Казахские улусы обратились к русскому царю, умоляли, в ногах валялись: «Спасите нас, казахов, а то всех вырежут джунгары [...] in "Zhirinovskiy could blow up relations between Kazakhstan and Russia" ["Жириновский может взорвать отношения между РК и Россией"], Rosyiskaya Gazeta 87 (6359), 01.09.2014

Belorussian government to undermine its competency and capacity to pursue an independent political direction. For example, speaking of possible Belorussian annexation, he said:

If the President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko announced the entry of Belarus into the Russian Federation, he would go down in history as the second Bogdan Khmel'nitsky.⁵⁴

He jokingly compared Lukashenko with a historical figure Bogdan Khmel'nitsky who is commonly represented as a caricature of a leader who deprived his state of sovereignty in favor of protection. In fact, mockery and ridiculization are the main tools that Zhirinovskiy uses to patronize peripheral countries. For example, in the case of Georgia, Zhirinovskiy often comes up with original caricature sobriquets to describe Georgian policies as childish or crazy. He rarely fails to emphasize Georgian economic ties with Russia as Russian alimony and asserts that Georgians are unable to survive without Russian financial support and protection.

We built roads, hospitals, and clinics for them. That's what we need to talk about - they continue to rob the Russian people from 1917 to 2015. Everything that the Soviet government bought - the factories are excellent, a lot, but they plundered all our museums. This is also a robbery. There are factories, but where is our wealth accumulated over 1000 years?⁵⁵

⁵⁴[...] Если бы президент Белоруссии Александр Лукашенко объявил о вхождении Белоруссии в состав РФ, он вошел бы в историю как второй Богдан Хмельницкий [...] in ""Could become the second Khmel'nitsky"- Zhirinovskiy about Lukashenka" ["«Мог стать вторым Хмельницким» — Жириновский о Лукашенко"], RIA Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20190209/1022628617.html>

⁵⁵ [...] Все, что купила Советская власть – заводы отличные, много, но разграбила все наши музеи. Все из музеев вывезли и привезли заводы. Это же тоже грабеж. Заводы есть, а где наши богатства накопленные за 1000 лет [...]

Kirill's Household Construction is characterized by judgmental and righteous references toward the democratization and liberalization of Belorussian and Ukrainian society. His main Ukrainian theme is the "spiritual cradle of Russia" and the religious unity of the Slavic world. In most of his speeches, Kirill invoking a concept of the "world of Russian people" that in his imagination represents a spiritual union of all the countries that host Russian people. He boldly claims that "unity equals identity" of the post-Soviet states. Kirill literally refers to Slavic countries as the "Russian family" and insists that all kinds of conflicts are the consequences of spiritual degradation and deviation from the norm. For example, in response to the critique of one of the Belorussian priests of Kirill's demonstration towards excessive funding of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch responded the following: "To distinguish light from darkness [...] one does not need to "philosophize a lot", but listen carefully to those who talk about light, but in fact are in darkness [...] the forces of evil, who dress up as an angel of light, have risen against the Orthodox Church"⁵⁶

While Kirill's narrative about Kazakhstan is largely positive and the idea of "trust and compassion" is prevalent in the discourse, Patriarch is exclusive in directing his praise at specifically president Nazarbaev. Preservation of the Russian language as the second national language leads Patriarch to constantly stress "pedagogy, education, and care for

in "Transcript of the plenary meeting of the State Duma on 10.11.15 statements from factions" [Стенограмма пленарного заседания ГД 10.11.15 заявления от фракций], 10.11.2015. Duma.gov. <http://duma.gov.ru/legislative/transcripts/>

⁵⁶ Чтобы свет отличить от тьмы ... не нужно "много мудрствовать", но внимательно послушать тех, кто говорит о свете, а на самом деле пребывает во тьме ... силы зла, которые рядятся в ангела света, восстали на православную церковь. "Patriarch Kirill: "autocephalous church" in Ukraine is being built "not from God" [Патриарх Кирилл: "автокефальная церковь" на Украине строится "не от бога"]. 09.12.2018. Ria Novosti <https://ria.ru/20181209/1547687068.html>

children” as means to promote the Russian language as a mandatory part of the school’s syllabi. In most of his speeches, Kirill expresses his appreciation to Nazarbaev for maintaining peace and love among ethnic groups. Love and co-existence in Patriarch’s figurative world are equated to maintaining the interests of the Russian diaspora and aligning the external affairs of Kazakhstan with Russian national interest:

For many years of your hard work in the responsible post of the President of the Republic, you have won the sincere love of your fellow citizens, high authority, and well-deserved respect in the world. You care not only about the revival of the country's economy but also about the preservation of the rich spiritual and cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Therefore, modern Kazakhstan is a state of social stability, interethnic peace, and interreligious cooperation. I am confident that the development of good relations between the leadership of Kazakhstan and the Russian Orthodox Church will continue to be aimed at building social harmony and strengthening traditional spiritual values throughout Eurasia⁵⁷

Just like Zhirinovskiy, Kirill uses his personal relatedness to a country as a demonstration of his special connection to the object of speech. In the case of Kirill, it is Belorussia that he is introducing as his spiritual homeland (he received his education in

⁵⁷ [...] За минувшие годы страна прошла значительный путь социально-экономических преобразований. Отрадно также отметить, что благодаря Вашей деятельной заботе о согражданах в Республике установилась атмосфера межнационального и межрелигиозного мира. Под Вашим руководством люди вместе трудятся ради процветания Казахстана, сохранения его самобытной культуры, утверждения в обществе традиционных нравственных ценностей, духовного просвещения и патриотического воспитания современников [...].16.12.2010 "His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia congratulated the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. A. Nazarbayev on Independence Day" ["Святейший Патриарх Московский и всея Руси Кирилл поздравил Президента Республики Казахстан Н. А. Назарбаева с Днем независимости"], 12.16.2018. Patriarchia.ru <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5316580.html>

Minsk). His main themes here are themes of “love,” “affection” and the “world of Russian people.” He excessively points out Belorussian closeness and oneness with Russians and calls for “spiritual reunion” with Belorussian people as if it was a part of natural family dynamics. In his reference to Russian-Belorussian relations, he says:

So, in our life, there should be something that binds us even more firmly than our blood. We are all one family. And not only because we have blood that goes back to our ancestors, but also because we lived the same history, sharing both joys and sorrows.⁵⁸

In the case of Georgia, Kirill is explicitly emphasizing spiritual closeness and common history. At the same time, he uses the imagery of demonization of the government in the moments of crises and Georgians’ attempts to separate. As an object of demonization, he uses the engagement of the Western countries as the “devil’s hand” that stands in the way of harmony and familial love between Georgians and Russians.⁵⁹ For example, in Moscow, in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, Patriarch Kirill held a memorial service for those killed during the armed conflict in South Ossetia. In his address to believers, he said:

My heart sinks when I see these terrible shots that television brings to us. Unhappy, innocent civilians - women, children, old people; ruined houses, ruined lives, grief, human suffering... And when you look at all this, you involuntarily understand the whole danger of

⁵⁸ [...] Вот и в нашей жизни должно быть нечто, что связывает нас еще прочней, чем родная кровь. Мы все с вами одна семья. И не только потому, что в нас течет кровь, восходящая к нашим предкам, но и потому что мы прожили одну историю, разделив и радости, и скорби [...]. 03.07.2015 "Word of the Patriarch 4th Sunday after Pentecost" [Слово Патриарха Неделя 4-я по Пятидесятнице], Pravoslavie.ru. <https://pravoslavie.ru/80303.html>

⁵⁹ Even though demonization is common to any other religious speech, Kirill’s speeches are especially characteristic with their saturation of familial and kinship terms. The figures that are outside of the traditional values system are represented as a threat to the “Russian family”

human sin. If evil is not stopped in time, it sows even greater evil around itself. Evil, the devil has the most terrible guise - the guise of death. That is why you need to keep spiritual sobriety, and spiritual wisdom, be able to manage your human elements, and be able to correct your behavior, including in the sphere of politics, by high spiritual standards and values that are inherent in the life of Orthodox peoples. No ruler of an Orthodox country can ignore these values, because they belong to most of the people; and any movement aimed at destroying the foundations of the religious, spiritual, cultural, and national life of people, in the end, turns into terrible mistakes and even crimes.⁶⁰

Overall, each narrator has his most typical figured elements of household constructions that they apply when explaining Russian regional dynamics. Vladimir Putin and Sergey Shoigu are in a position where they are expected to maintain an emotionally reserved style of narrative and refer to official political terms. Whenever they apply to the household as a policy-generating ideology, they use abstract language and mix familial labels with official political terminology. They often refer to documents and legislation as the pivotal point of their decision-making, however, employ household narrative on

⁶⁰ [...] Сердце сжимается, когда видишь эти страшные кадры, которые доносит до нас телевидение. Несчастные, ни в чем не повинные мирные жители-женщины, дети, старики; разрушенные дома, разрушенные жизни, горе, человеческое страдание... И когда зришь на все это, то невольно понимаешь всю опасность человеческого греха. Если зло вовремя не остановить, оно сеет вокруг себя еще большее зло. У зла, у дьявола самое страшное обличие - обличие смерти. Именно поэтому нужно хранить духовное трезвенное, духовную мудрость, уметь управлять своими человеческими стихиями, уметь корректировать свое поведение, в том числе и в сфере политики, высокими духовными нормами и ценностями, которые заложены в жизни православных народов. Ни один правитель православной страны не может игнорировать этих ценностей, потому что они принадлежат большинству народа; а всякое движение, направленное на разрушение основ религиозной, духовной, культурной, национальной жизни людей, в конце концов оборачивается страшными ошибками и даже преступлениями [...]. 08.08.2009. "Word of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill before a memorial service for those killed during the armed conflict in South Ossetia" [Слово Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла перед панихидой по погибшим в ходе вооруженного конфликта в Южной Осетии], Patriarchia.ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/715928.html>

occasions, where the Russian side applies to violence or breach of international law. The magnitude of their speech is mild (which means they choose relatively moderate terms to describe the object of speech) and “Imperial family nostalgia” is characterized by the implicit rationalized legend of household history. At the same time, while Vladimir Putin can afford to be more abstract and emotionally charged, Sergey Shoigu, due to his position, sticks to a reserved non-judgmental tone of speech.

Instead, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and Patriarch Kirill are excessively emotional and actively use affective language, metaphorical and figurative expressions as well as verbal images that draw the states of the regions as members of the family with a long history. The magnitude of their speech is high as they often apply radical and out-and-out pronouns and adjectives. Their “Imperial Nostalgia” is straightforward and emotionally pronounced. Interestingly, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy is more emotive, and sometimes even explosive in his speech. He is fearless and seemingly unaware of his tendency to replicate familial relatedness to political dynamics; he disregards political correctness and bluntly compares post-Soviet space with a household. Patriarch Kirill is less emotional but more moralistic, judgmental, and righteous in his views. He often demonizes the “alien” to the Russian household and whatever ideas do not fit the umbrella of the “Russian World.” At the same time, he is promoting the “Russian World” as a Russia-headed family that embraces multiple countries. However, regardless of the magnitude and diversity of verbal maneuvers, all the narratives seem to employ their household terms concerning some common themes analyzed in the following section.

Common Themes

What follows after completing the analysis of the above-mentioned narrators is a qualitative metasummary that compares and synthesizes the key findings of the speeches (Saldana 2015, p.66-67; Major & Savin-Baden 2010, p. 10). This metasummary was developed during the Second Cycle of coding. These are thematic and conceptual categories from the array of the First Cycle codes. For this, I aggregated the codes in Pattern Coding which is a framework for the “meta-codes” – the label given to a logical block that categorizes similarly coded material. These themes are represented in the unfolding sections as follows: enmeshment, parentization, infantilization, familization, and civil partnership. Some of the labels of the themes are derived from terminology related to psychology and psychiatry.

Theme #1: Enmeshment

The first theme derived from the analysis is the theme of enmeshment. The notion of “enmeshment” is borrowed from psychology (see Theme #2 in the Appendix 2). This term belongs to the field of psychology and psychiatry and was coined by one of the family system theory followers, Salvador Minuchin (1921-2017) who offered this label to identify families, whose members do not recognize their boundaries, cannot differentiate their self from those of the other family members and overly preoccupied for others. These family conditions can lead to a loss of autonomy, personal responsibility, and psychological underdevelopment. Enmeshment is characteristic of families where the roles of members are confused, the expectations and emotions are inter-projected, and boundaries that are porous and fragile. These families are cognitively and emotionally fused and bonded in an unhealthy traumatic way that prevents natural processes of separation and cooperation. Children in these kinds of families are expected to adhere to the same values and belief systems as their

parents, deprived of a chance for autonomy and basic human rights (D'Astice & Russell 2019).

Also, the children of enmeshed parents experience overwhelming pressure to meet the expectations of the family regarding their career path, choice of spouse, and maintaining the original family unit as the center of their world. They are strongly discouraged from pursuing their interests, have a life external to their family, pressured into physical proximity and psychological dependence. The decision of children from such families to follow their callings and interests meets firm resistance, manipulations with financial support, guilt, obligation, or fear, and sometimes even abandonment.

In the work of the post-colonialist author, A. Bauman, there is a similar concept in post-colonial discourse, termed “encompassment” (2004, p. 60). Baumann defines encompassment as a hierarchized instance where “the putatively subordinate category is adopted, subsumed or co-opted into the identity defined and, as it were, owned by those who do the encompassing” (Baumann & Gingrich 2004, p. 26). Encompassment, according to the author, “involves including some members of a group that is being othered—though ‘never all’—and downplays the difference of those chosen for inclusion” (Baumann & Gingrich 2004, p.60). The narrators often apply encompassment or enmeshment through the ideational constructions of unity, common roots, shared historical trauma, imperial past, and religious preferences to enmesh the identity of the peripheral countries. Referring to the collective experience of the wars and bloodshed, the narrators apply the memory of development milestones that invoke historical trauma-bond that affect the perception and self-perception of the mentioned countries that are capable of transforming the image of autonomous state to the image of a member of the household. For example, this theme can be observed in Patriarch Kirill’s statements on Ukraine:

As for the basic values, these are the values that were created by our faith, because the spiritual basis of the creation of the ancient Russian state, from which the modern sovereign state, originated in Ukraine, appeared. Kyiv is the Mother of Russian cities. This is a matrix that has shaped people's worldviews, attitudes, and value systems; and this is the matrix that has existed for 1000 years. What efforts were made to destroy it, especially in post-revolutionary times?⁶¹

Thus, this theme includes the chunk of texts where the speakers highlight the ethnic, language, cultural, or historical closeness of the nations as a supposed reason for the peripheral countries to sacrifice certain aspects of sovereignty or to political alignment with the interests of Russia.

Another tactic of enmeshment is hierarchized sub-inclusion which means partial denial or altogether rejection of the autonomy and separate identity of the post-Soviet nations. The speakers consistently assume unilateral sub-inclusion of the nations in a community of Russian Household. This inclusion, however, does not imply equal treatment of the junior “menages,” but their position of subalterns who are naturally supposed to be dominated and managed at the discretion of the central power - Russia.

⁶¹ [...] Что касается наших базовых ценностей, это те ценности, которые рождены нашей верой, потому что в духовной основе создания древнерусского государства, от которого произошло уже современное суверенное государство, рожденное в Украине, религиозные ценности. Киев- мать городов русских. Это матрица, которая сформировала мировоззрение людей, их мироощущение, систему ценностей; причем это та матрица, которая существует 1000 лет. Какие усилия предпринимались для того, чтобы ее разрушить, особенно в постреволюционное время! [...] in "Interview of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia to Ukrainian TV journalists" ["Интервью Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Кирилла украинским тележурналистам"], Pravoslavie.ru. <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/38421.html>

Theme #2: Parentization

A similar prevalent theme in the reviewed speeches is “Parentization” (see Theme #3 in the Appendix 2). Parentization means to draw oneself as a parent of another. In the conventional understanding of parenting, the guardians are expected to provide a child with nurture and discipline. The disciplining role is expressed in parents providing direction, setting rules, drawing the limits, putting forward, and proceeding with consequences, keeping children responsible and accountable for their actions, and explaining moral orient and values. As nurturing guardians, parents fulfill their children's essential needs including nourishment, health services, safeguard, and attire. Additionally, they offer affection, focus, comprehension, acceptance, presence, and reinforcement.

However, in abusive households, the expressions of affection and emotional pain are often connected to disappointment with the child’s behavior and justification for withdrawal or violence. Teaching values is concomitant with shaming, representing the external world as threatening; protection may appear as confinement; help may come across as indebting and lead to blaming for ungratefulness; support and nurture may be rather conditional and used as a means of manipulation. Here is one of the pieces of Zhirinovsky’s speech, where he uses shame as a tool to degrade the political choices of Ukrainians and Georgians to restrict the giveaway of Russian passports to the local population through the reduced procedure.

You will be ashamed. Take the transcript and save it for posterity so that they know that the grandmother or grandfather once again

refused the Russians to accelerate the adoption of citizenship. I am disgusted to be with you.⁶²

Here, Zhirinovskiy produces the narrative that draws the Russian self-image as a parent or supreme “menage” in the household of post-Soviet states. The functions constructed by this narrative enlist figurative undertakings of a semi-dysfunctional caregiver that are directed at his or her wards. Another demonstration of the theme is the piece from Putin’s interview on regional politics that transmits the intention to protect and care to justify interventionism during the Crimean Crisis:

We must protect these people. And this is a humanitarian mission. We do not pretend to enslave someone, to dictate something to someone. But, of course, we will not be able to stand aside if we see that they are being persecuted, destroyed, or subjected to bullying. I would very much like it not to come to this.⁶³

The narrators explain a variety of Russian political decisions concerning the regional actors of speech as gesture protection, nurture, and expression of different kinds of emotions from love to contempt. The speakers also implicitly assume Russian responsibility for shaping the values system of the periphery. In a parental attempt to do so, they actively

⁶² [...] Вам будет стыдно! Возьмите стенограмму и сохраните для потомков, чтобы они знали, что бабушка или дедушка в очередной раз отказали русским в ускорении принятия гражданства. Все государства дают - немцы, Израиль, Венгрия, поляки. Моментально дают гражданство без всяких ограничений, - гремел ВВЖ. - Я в качестве протеста покидаю зал, мне противно с вами находиться, когда вы не голосуете за закон в пользу большинства наших граждан. Позор парламенту, который отказывает в праве стать русскими миллионам наших граждан, проживающим за рубежом. Я покидаю такой зал! Мне с вами не по пути! [...] in "Zhirinovskiy left the hall of the State Duma in protest" [Жириновский в знак протеста покинул зал Госдумы]. 06.19.2019. Rossiyskaya Gazeta rg.ru. <https://rg.ru/2019/06/19/zhirinovskij-v-znak-protesta-pokinul-zal-gosdumy.html>

⁶³ [...] Это соответствует нашим национальным интересам – защитить этих людей. И это гуманитарная миссия. Мы не претендуем на то, чтобы кого-то поработать, кому-то диктовать что-то. Но, конечно, мы не сможем остаться в стороне, если увидим, что их начинают преследовать, уничтожать, подвергать издевательствам. Очень бы хотелось, чтобы до этого не дошло [...] in “Address of the President of the Russian Federation - transcript” [Обращение Президента Российской Федерации - стенограмма], Rossiyskaya Gazeta rg.ru. <https://rg.ru/2014/03/18/stenogramma.html>

shame subordinate countries for political choices deviant from their position in the Russian Household.

Theme #3: Infantilization

Another theme that revealed itself during the process of themeing is infantilization (see Theme #4 in the Appendix 2). This latter term is also borrowed from psychology and psychiatry. The mentioned disciplines define infantilization as treating someone whose mental state is more mature than that of a child as if they were a child for a prolonged time. This term is often used to refer to relations between unskillful parents and adolescent children in situations when the mental and psychological potential of grown children is being underestimated and artificially degraded. It is typical to assume that in modern society, teenagers are perceived as less mature than their actual age allows them to be. When people become subject to infantilization by somebody, they are said to be “infantilized.” According to some studies, those people who are treated in a way that they are infantilized feel like infantilization is a cover for disrespect and violation of personal boundaries. Such people report an overwhelming sense of degradation akin to dehumanization (Maude 2011, p.111).

One of Baumann’s grammar codes of post-colonial discourse, infantilization includes “representations of ‘moral depravity’, essentialization of Aboriginal groups as ‘mired in an unprogressive and non-evolving past’, and accusations of ‘racial inferiority’ (e.g., describing Aboriginal people as childish, irresponsible, and frequently irrational ... [with] proclivities for wanton violence, violent crime, viciousness, and a general tendency toward mayhem)” (Baumann 2004, p. 144).

While parentization is directed at the subject of parenting – the Russian state, a theme of “infantilization” supports the former construct by addressing the peripheral states as immature and infantile. Ridiculization is called to mock the inconvenient policies and

decision-makers of the peripheral countries. The narrators use name-calling, comparing the object of speech with animals, and caricatured characters from cartoons and movies. This degrades the legitimacy of the subordinates' autonomous policies and justifies the violations of their sovereignties to prevent their implementation.

Infantilization also includes condescendence that implies referring to the subordinate states as children, condemning their sovereignty as meaningless or nonexistent. The narrators dissociate the government from the population as illegitimate representatives whenever the government's decisions deviate from Russian doctrine. And vice versa, Russian discourse strongly praises and endorses the government of the subordinates whenever they are aligned with the hegemon's program.

As one of the tools of infantilization that can also be called an instrument of infantilization is a theme of ridiculization of the actions, representatives, or events in the peripheral countries. Ridiculization is drawing a subject of speech as funny, caricature, awkward or inappropriate, in other words, ridiculous (Van Rythoven 2019). In general, telling jokes is an amazingly effective way of delivering a political message; this is an effective and informal way to subtly get your point across.

Sometimes, humor can be unintended, sometimes it can be a gentle warning, a way to connect or devalue. However, in Russian power discourse around regional politics, ridiculization most often is an attempt to portray the subject of the joke as incompetent and delatant. Here, the jokes are often employed to show the inconvenient actions of the government or the people of the periphery as ridiculous, childlike, or simply miscalculated. The jokes are closely tied to Russian folklore that compares the characters with animals, children, clowns, or mentally ill individuals. This creates the picture of peripheral actors as

inexperienced teenagers who are learning to navigate this world independently, being still underequipped for this endeavor. Ridiculization in this sense draws them as foolishly denying the support of their parents, Russians, who know better their interests and the way to achieve their goals (Van Rythoven 2019). Here are the citations from Zhirinovsky's attempt to ridicule Georgian and Ukrainian political doctrine:

How will the end of the presidential campaign in Ukraine turn out?
Poroshenko will bury the country in a quiet way, and Zelensky - with
music and jokes. That's the whole difference. The result will be the
same: the end of Ukraine.⁶⁴

Ridiculization as a part of the theme of infantilization is going hand in hand with such frequent verbal as patronization. The noun “patronization” allegedly comes from the concept of a dominating and powerful patron who acts superior to his or her subordinate or dependent. Also, patronizing is sometimes used to express a superior potential or capacity in intellectual or moral aspects of life. There is a difference though between condescending and patronizing. On the one hand, condescending may include patronizing, while patronization is sometimes defined as adopting a condescending attitude towards someone (Gul & Kupfer 2019, p. 148). However, these both words should be differentiated on the ground that patronization suggests supporting or funding someone, while condescending is free of any hint of the superiority that is attached to the prior support.

⁶⁴ [...] Чем обернется окончание президентской кампании на Украине? Порошенко похоронит страну по-тихому, а Зеленский — с музыкой и с шутками. Вот и вся разница. Итог будет тот же самый: конец Украине [...] in “Zhirinovsky called the main difference between Poroshenko and Zelensky” [Жириновский назвал главное отличие Порошенко от Зеленского], 08.04.2019. Tsargrad. https://tsargrad.tv/news/zhirinovskij-nazval-glavnoe-otliche-poroshenko-ot-zelenskogo_193484

In Russian power discourse on regional relationships, patronization is expressed through positive or negative affective evaluation of the successes and failures of the peripheral states. In case of positive evaluation, patronizing comments are drawn as reminders of the imperial or Soviet investments, strategic support, or cultural enrichment that are introduced as the partial cause of the success. In case of failure, the negative assessment is closely linked to the blame that the country did not follow the pro-Russian trajectory in the economic, political, or spiritual field. Here is the piece that allows observing patronization in its attempt to demonstrate the political choice of the subordinate country as miscalculated and plain wrong:

Many Georgians themselves are unhappy that we did not remove the pro-American regime in their country in 2008 because they understand that Georgia has no future without Russia. Therefore, they came to us themselves 200 years ago. Now Georgia is threatened with the division between its neighbors, and only their vaunted khachapuri⁶⁵ will remain from the country. But they can already be eaten everywhere: from Moscow to New York.⁶⁶

Theme #4: Familization

The following prevalent macro-theme is one that I term “Familization” (see Theme #1 in the Appendix 2) In the context of Russian power discourse, “familization” is the assignment of labels of nepotism to roles and relationships between countries. The use of

⁶⁵ Khachapuri is a traditional Georgian dish made of cheese-filled bread. The bread is leavened and allowed to rise and is shaped in various ways, usually with cheese in the middle and a crust which is ripped off and used to dip in the cheese.

⁶⁶ [...] Многие грузины сами недовольны, что мы не убрали в их стране проамериканский режим в 2008 году, потому что понимают, что будущего у Грузии без России нет. Поэтому они и пришли к нам сами 200 лет назад. Сейчас Грузии грозит раздел между соседями, и от страны останутся только их хвалёные хачапури. Но их и так уже можно поесть везде: от Москвы до Нью-Йорка [...] in “Zhirinovskiy: there will be no khachapuri left from Georgia” [Жириновский: от Грузии и хачапури не останется], 06.25.2019. Regnum. <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/2654084.html>

terms such as “mother nation,” “historical fatherland,” and “brothers and sisters”, and the assignment of family symbols to the post-Soviet space is called to frame regional political relationships in familial terms. The parallel with family ties is complemented by the normalization of political conformity and the denial of the political will of other people. Also, the normalization of mutual assistance and its representation as disinterested, fraternal support, sometimes even under the guise of a mother's sacrifice. This category also includes numerous references by narrators to relatives living in the country of discourse. All this creates the construction of a regional family hearth, in which there is no place for strife and separate national interests. Thus, this theme encompasses the logical blocks that contain literal familial terms that address post-Soviet actors of regional politics as if they were indeed family members. Such words as “brother-nations,” “sister-countries,” “family,” “motherly care” and others persist in the narrative explaining different kinds of cognitive, emotional, material, or political exchange among the nations in the region. The theme was built from the expressions as following (coming from Patriarch Kirill):

So, in our life, there should be something that binds us even more firmly than our blood. We are all one family.⁶⁷

Your desire to preserve the unity of the Russian Orthodox Church and our Slavic brotherhood deserves high marks.⁶⁸

Another aspect of “familization” is underlining political conformity. This means that in the narrative one can observe specific assumptions that offer an axiom of a necessary

⁶⁷[...] Вот и в нашей жизни должно быть нечто, что связывает нас еще прочней, чем родная кровь. Мы все с вами одна семья [...] in "Word of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill in the Brest Fortress on the anniversary of the beginning of the Great Patriotic War" ["Слово Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла в Брестской крепости в годовщину начала Великой Отечественной войны"] *Rosyiskaya Gazeta*, 41 (6612), 22.06.2015

⁶⁸"Alexander Lukashenko meets with Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia" ["Александр Лукашенко встретился с Патриархом Московским и всея Руси Кириллом"], *Rosyiskaya Gazeta*, 37 (5710), 14.10.2012

political alignment among the neighboring countries in the region. The backside of this axiom is alienation and demonization of Western or Oriental political views as foreign to those who are introduced as belonging to the Russian Household. I also relate the statements about the mutual duty of assistance to the theme of familization. Explaining their view on the “comme il faut” of regional relations, narrators often send an underlining message that mutual aid and support should be seen as a duty, not a choice or interest of the regional actors, as soon as they are a “family.” Finally, all the narrators to a different extent, yet across the board cite their private connections (their relatives, alma mater, or touristic experiences in the country of discourse) as well as existing mixed marriages among the people of the neighboring nations as an additional factor of legitimacy in political aspects of interaction:

It is not in vain that Holy Russia is considered the lot of the Most Holy Mother, because few of the European nations have endured as many trials and troubles as the peoples of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine.⁶⁹

Likewise, in Russian power discourse, these tactics are used to shame peripheral countries into sticking to traditional post-Soviet values, representing the external assistance or influence as a threat or perversion. Investments and financial support are recalled as the way to show the country its dependency; imperial times are represented as the period of upbringing, where the “upbrought” state is blamed for ungrateful behavior in the present. The expression of love, affection, and emotional attachment is expressed in the context of

⁶⁹[...] Святую Русь не зря считают уделом Пресвятой Богородицы, потому что мало кто из европейских народов претерпел столько испытаний и бед, как народы Беларуси, России и Украины [...] in "Patriarch Kirill unveiled a monument to Alexy II in Minsk" [Патриарх Кирилл открыл памятник Алексею Второму в Минске], 10.14.2012. Rosyiskaya Gazeta rg.ru. <https://rg.ru/2012/10/14/patriarh2-anons.html>

intervention as a justification of a necessarily violent measure to call the periphery to the disciplined behavior or inevitable punishment for crossing the imposed limits:

I want to say that the people [Russians and Ukrainians] do not want to quarrel, the people on the usual level treat each other well – they are neighbors, and they can be together, so to speak, at work. This [the quarrel] is done by officials who represent the state, leaders, including various labor collectives – this is what we are talking about. Why are they doing this? First, they fulfill the order of their new curators, mainly the United States, to prevent the return of Russia as a country that can influence the situation in these states. And secondly, at the local level, it is beneficial for them to squeeze out the Russians – apartments are vacated. Why would they build something? The Russians are leaving – apartments are free, and jobs are free. This kind of stimulates them to continue whipping up anti-Russian sentiments. And all this hurts us.⁷⁰

Theme #5: Civil Partnership

The narrators also use neutral and ecological terms in explaining and describing regional dynamics. These chunks of discourse I subsumed to a theme that indicates an

⁷⁰[...] Хочу сказать, что народы не хотят ссориться, народы на обычном уровне друг к другу относятся хорошо — они соседи, они могут быть вместе, так сказать, и на работе. В основном это делают чиновники, которые представляют государство, руководители, в том числе и различных трудовых коллективов, — об этом идёт речь. Почему они это делают? Во-первых, выполняют заказ своих новых кураторов, в основном США, — не допускать возврата России как страны, которая может влиять на ситуацию в этих государствах. И во-вторых, на местном уровне им выгодно выдавливание русских — освобождаются квартиры. Зачем им что-то строить? Русские уезжают — квартиры свободные, рабочие места свободные. Это как бы стимулирует их к тому, чтобы продолжать нагнетать антирусские настроения. И нам все это очень неприятно [...] in “Transcript of the plenary session on the draft resolution of the State Duma On the statement of the State Duma In connection with manifestations of a negative attitude towards the peoples of Russia and the common historical past in a number of states of the former republics of the USSR” [Стенограмма пленарного заседания о проекте постановления Государственной Думы О заявлении Госдумы В связи с проявлениями негативного отношения к народам России и единому историческому прошлому в ряде государств бывших республик СССР], [duma.gov. http://duma.gov.ru/media/files/7KLZxBgib3exWaw9IEVpN7d4nyx4lTuc.pdf](http://duma.gov.ru/media/files/7KLZxBgib3exWaw9IEVpN7d4nyx4lTuc.pdf)

ideological vacuum in the narrative, titled as “Civil partnership” (see Theme # 5 in the Appendix 2). In legal terminology, “civil partnership” is a concept in private law that labels legal unions which can be registered by two people who are not related to each other, neither as lovers nor as family members. Unlike conventional marriage, civil partnership is not attached to any religious connotations and does not imply any traditional hierarchy of gender or sexuality, or household roles. That is why it is commonly an option for friends who want to legalize companionship, same-sex, or feminist couples. Moreover, financial relationship in such unions is not rigidly subject to state legislation but to a pre-arranged agreement that can be renegotiated by request (Melina 2010). Here is the citation that demonstrates how financial relations are laid out in moderate terms between equally valuable partners:

Russia and Kazakhstan are interested that the prices for both raw materials and products produced on these raw materials would be fair for both producers and consumers [...] I believe that here too we should not only help each other - what we have been doing so far and intend to do further, but also coordinate our actions deeper.⁷¹

This ideological vacuum is filled with figurative expressions that stress recognition of the peripheral states’ boundaries and independent will. Here, the narrators claim to recognize the regional tandem, that they are a part of, as a project for cooperation consisting of equal or equally valuable actors. The civil partnership theme includes the parts where the speakers show that they account for mutual economic interest, and refer to international law,

⁷¹ [...] Россия, и Казахстан заинтересованы, чтобы цены и на сырье, и на продукты, которые вырабатываются на этом сырье, были бы справедливыми как для производителей, так и потребителей [...] Я считаю, что и здесь мы должны не только помогать друг другу - что мы делали до сих пор и намерены делать дальше, но и глубже координировать наши действия [...] in "Putin invited Kazakhstan to create a branch of the St. Petersburg Oil Exchange" [Путин предложил Казахстану создать филиал петербургской нефтяной биржи]. 12.12.2008. Ria Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20081212/157117431.html>

signed agreements, and conventions that are supposed to regulate the scenario of relationship development. Also, the theme carries formal or moderate terms in explaining the dynamic of the relationship, referring to the possible interests of both ends.

Thus, the themeing process prompts us to infer that the narrators very often describe the events or label the actors more as elements of the private regional space, rather than public actors with recognized sovereignty regulated by international law. They use familial terms to explain political relationships and co-construct the identities of states as if they were relatives bound to share common values, and goals and similarly interpret historical memory. The narrators qualify socially situated identities and silence the voice of the population or the government of the peripheral states in a way that fits the idea of the household. The more the narrator is emotionally charged and finds himself in the position to operate the terms of values, morality, and cordial connections, the broader the spectrum of terms he uses to place political reality in the informal space of regional household. For the sake of concision, I have left the biggest part of the narrative in the appendix 2 (see the appendix 2 following the conclusion).

Comprehensive Analysis of the Themes

The analysis shows that the different themes are more often employed about a certain country and by a certain narrator than others. Thus, the intersection of these categories (narrators, themes, countries) was framed into tables for a better outlook. The tables below represent the results of the analysis, where one can find the themes split concerning referencing the countries included in the discourse analysis. Further, I will continue the analysis of the speakers who create most of the discourse in the discovered

theme talking about a specific country. The tables presented in this section also demonstrate what themes are used more often by whom and about which country of the periphery.

The table below represents the percentage of discourse dedicated to a specific country in terms of each theme extracted from the list of categories. The overall discourse was taken for 100% and each chunk of the analyzed narrative was singled out concerning the chosen four objects of speech. I further offer an analysis of the outcome from the table.

Theme	Parentization	Infantilization	Familization	Ensmeshment	Neutral Discourse
Themes weight	11%	18%	33%	23%	14%

Table 2. Themes' weight in the discourse

According to the table, the most popular theme is familization (33% of the overall discourse). This means that most of the significant discourse on regional politics refers to the objects of speech as to brothers, mother, father, or another member of a household. Also, the narrators are largely inclined to critique the political preferences of the peripheral countries if they deviate from the Russian doctrine representing it as alienation from the regional community. Familization also means that the speeches tend to demonize alternative political regimes and portray themselves as an ultimate political ally for the country of discourse. The narrators emphasize the experience of the states involved while being a single country as an experience of familial belonging. They recall the Soviet notion of brotherhood as a ground for political conformity and economic collaboration. Familization is frequently used to justify interventions as familial aid or disciplinary measure and imagines financial investments in foreign regional economies as a brotherly duty.

The second most popular theme in the discourse is enmeshment (23%). This theme implies that the narrators commonly refer to presumably shared traits of the national character, recalling common historical background or a shared point of ethnic origins. Using this theme, the speakers point out linguistic, cultural, and religious attributes of identity as a ground to follow the united political trajectory of development. They blur the boundaries of the peripheral countries' separate identities to justify actions that violate sovereignty. Enmeshing identities also means recalling shared traumatic experiences as a ground for desirable closeness in the present and direct association with the sovereignty of another state.

The least popular theme is parentization (11% out of the overall discourse). It means that there is an expression of a parental attitude towards the object of speech. The speaker positions himself as representing a superior identity that is either responsible for the well-being of the object of speech or is in charge of the latter's behavior and choices. This theme is commonly used to justify the violation of the sovereignty of a given country as a measure of protection and shielding. Strategic cooperation is portrayed as if it was an act of nurturing, helping, and caring at the end of the speakers' state of representation. The discourse of this theme also includes shaming and blaming for ungratefulness for past colonial investments.

The second least popular theme of the discourse is a civil partnership or, otherwise, neutral discourse (14%). Within this theme, the speaker expresses recognition of the Other's boundaries and independent will. They also portray the relationship with the country of speech as the cooperation of two equal partners and show that they account for mutual political and economic interests. As justification for one's action, the speakers who employ this theme usually refer to international legislation, rules, and laws that regulate the scenario of relationship development. The terms here are also formal or moderate and do not express emotions of high magnitude. The weight of neutral discourse in the overall speeches (14%)

can say that the ideological vacuum in the power narratives is far from being predominant. In other words, the discourse is highly ideological and saturated with household constructs.

The following table will represent the weight of each country taken for the analysis in the discourse.

Country	Weight in the discourse
Belorussia	30%
Georgia	9%
Kazakhstan	24%
Ukraine	36%
Overall	100%

Table 3. The weight of countries in the discourse

As to the object of speech rating, the country that is the most talked about is Ukraine (36% of the overall discourse). This is followed by Belorussia (30%) and Kazakhstan (24%). The least mentioned country in the given political discourse is Georgia, which only takes 9% of the analyzed text. The gap in the frequency of mentions demonstrates, that Ukraine and Belorussia take the primary attention of the speakers. This means that Russia is more inclined to talk about Ukraine and Belarus as members of a family and enmesh their identities which can be largely explained by the significance of these countries as buffer zones before the Western sphere of influence and the shared ethnic origins of the peoples. At the same time, Georgia and Kazakhstan are less preoccupying due to their location and distance in ethnic origins.

The following table shows how the themes are spread around the countries. Which theme is more often referred to as what country and what it means for the construct of the figured world?

	Parentization	Infantilization	Familization	Ensmeshment	Neutral Discourse
Belorussia	17%	29%	30%	37%	28%
Georgia	9%	13%	14%	5%	5%
Kazakhstan	32%	19%	21%	29%	20%
Ukraine	36%	39%	40%	28%	47%
Overall by teme	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 4. Themes' weight in the discourse on a country

According to the table 4, Ukraine takes the most volume in such themes as familization (40%) and infantilization (39%). This means that the speakers draw Ukraine as a member of the family, yet not equally mature. The familization theme frames Ukraine as a younger brother or another junior relative that is not in the position to possess enough competence and mental maturity to take responsibility for political decisions. This is usually through deeming the authority insane or acting against the will or interest of the nation. The frequency of these specific themes may be explained by the Ukrainian Crisis that broke out in 2014 and the ongoing political rivalry related to Crimea annexation and war in Donetsk.

The case of Belorussia occupies predominantly such themes as enmeshment (37%) and familization (30%). The hegemonic discourse is more prone to constructing the narrative that sub-cludes the identities of Belorussians framing it in terms of family ties yet emphasizing the hierarchical structure of this sub-inclusion. In other words, the narrators often enmesh Ukrainian identity with that of Russian while framing it in terms of familial kinship. The reason for this may be an attempt to sound more equal and disguise the

asymmetry of power. This can be largely explained by the dependency of the Belorussian economy on Russian gas and oil. Also, the president of Belorussia is a long-term advocate of the pro-Russian orientation of the country. Belorussia much more often than Kazakhstan is called “the country of the Union,” referring to the Eurasian Customs Union. Ethnic and language proximity also contribute to enmeshing the identities of both nations.

Georgia is less represented overall and takes only a minor part of themes like infantilization (13%) and familization (14%). This means that Russia relates to Georgia as a regional family member and that the narrators frame the relationship with Georgia in familial terms. However, the discourse is prone to question its authority and degrade the legitimacy of the government. Mocking, name-calling of the Georgian government, and dissociating its actions with the interests of the nation – this is all a big part of infantilization. This predominant theme may be connected to Georgian affinity to collaborating with NATO and relatively pro-Western political doctrine.

Kazakhstan is frequently found in the discourse that involves parentization (32%) and enmeshment (29%). This identifies the inclination of the narrators to portray themselves as nurturers and founders of Kazakhstan while blurring the boundaries of the nation. The combination of parentization and enmeshment draws an image of an obedient “golden child,” who rather took after the parent, yet has not reached an equal position in the household.

The following matrix of the dataset will show how the themes are disseminated among each of the countries. Every country is more often referred to using a certain theme of the narrative which determines the attitude and the roles of the objects of speech in the contextual figured world. This data juxtaposition frames the way that the head of the

household imagines the peripheral countries and the way the narrators position themselves in the discourse. The rest of this section will contain the tables that will consecutively introduce the distribution of themes among Belorussia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Georgia respectively.

Speaker/Theme	Parentization	Infantilization	Familization	Enmeshment	Neutral Discourse
Kirill_Belorussia	5%	2%	26%	65%	2%
Putin_Belorussia	7%	23%	41%	27%	2%
Shoigu_Belorussia	6%	10%	25%	23%	36%
Zhirinkvsky_Belorussia	7%	38%	21%	31%	3%

Table 5. The Discourse on Belorussia

According to the table 5, the most popular themes in Kirill's and Putin's speeches respectively are enmeshment and familization. Enmeshment takes 65% of overall Kirill's discourse on Belorussia and about 27% in the same category for Putin. This means that both speakers often refer to Belorussia as a member of their ethnic, linguistic, and cultural community, emphasizing common historical background and common traits of national character. At the same time, familization takes about 41% of Putin's speeches and 26% of Kirill's. What it shows is that often the speakers refer to the objects of the talk as brothers, mother, father, or another member of a household and critique political preferences as alienation from the regional community. They also demonize alternative political regimes and emphasize brotherhood as a reason for maintaining homogenous political regimes and economic ties. Those tools are used to justify the need for a common political trajectory and interventionism.

Interestingly, for Shoigu’s speech, familization takes second place in the rate of themes (25%) while neutral discourse is the primary theme in his speech (36%). This means that Shoigu is the one who tends to recognize Belorussia as a sovereign country, respectfully treat the boundaries of the state, and recognize regional tandem as a cooperation project of two equal units. At the same time, the speaker includes the country in the imaginary regional family and does often refer to Belorussia as a brother country that is unnatural to quarrel with.

For Zhirinovskiy, it is more characteristic to apply to infantilization (38%) and enmeshment (31%). In other words, his speech acts are intended to cause contemptuous laughter at a political figure, nation, or phenomenon to belittle the significance of the object of speech, and make it seem less important, serious, or meaningful. Simultaneously, he tries to enmesh Belorussian and Russian identities to blur the boundaries between the two.

Speaker/Theme	Parentization	Infantilization	Familization	Enmeshment	Neutral Discourse
Kirill_Ukraine	14%	3%	35%	47%	1%
Putin_Ukraine	10%	25%	33%	10%	22%
Shoigu_Ukraine	12%	14%	38%	4%	32%
Zhirinkvsky_Ukraine	12%	25%	44%	19%	0%

Table 6. The Discourse on Ukraine

The table 6 on Ukraine demonstrates that overall, the most popular theme of the discourse on Ukraine is familization. This theme is the most used by Putin, Shoigu, and Zhirinovskiy (33%, 38%, and 44% respectively). This means that most often this country is labeled as a brother nation that is expected to maintain political conformity (the same type of political regime) and economic connections. Investments and supplies to this country (such as that gas and oil) are framed as brotherly aid, not as a strategic move. Moreover, the

speakers refer to some relatives who might originate in Ukraine and use it as a point of reference to family mentality.

The second most popular theme for Putin and Zhirinovskiy is infantilization (25% both). This means that they often question the legitimacy of Ukraine's authority and its competency to take political decisions. Their speech is often called to belittle the significance of political changes in the country of reference and deem them as being close to meaningless. At the same time, they use mocking and condescending humor to reduce the significance of the undesirable (for them) changes in the regime.

In the case of Kirill, familization takes second place in the rate of the themes in his speeches. Instead, he mostly focuses on enmeshing the identity of Ukraine with that of Russia. His speeches are mostly saturated with the theme of enmeshment (47%). This means that he mostly emphasizes religious ties as a ground for the united political doctrine and resists the separation of Ukrainian Orthodoxy from that of the All-Russian Church. He condemns the decision of the Ukrainian Church to become an independent congregation and preaches hierarchical unity as a supreme good for Ukraine.

Shoigu's second most preferable theme is neutral discourse (32%). In other words, he tends to express regard for mutual economic and political interests. He also more often refers to legislation, rules, and laws that regulate the scenario of the relationship unfolding. Being very careful in his expressions, he applies neutral terms to describe the transactions between the two parties and abstains from aggravating the dialogue between the two countries.

Speaker/Theme	Parentization	Infantilization	Familization	Ensmeshment	Neutral Discourse
Kirill Kazakhstan	43%	17%	18%	18%	5%
Putin Kazakhstan	11%	14%	38%	33%	4%
Shoigu Kazakhstan	1%	15%	15%	24%	45%
Zhirinovskiy Kazakhstan	19%	14%	35%	31%	0%

Table 7. Discourse on Kazakhstan

The table above represents the pattern of discourse on Kazakhstan. Here, one can see that Kirill uses most parentization (43%) followed by an equal percentage of familization and enmeshment (18% each). This dynamic gives a hint that Kirill often speaks of Kazakhstan taking the position of evaluator or an ultimate judge that is called to assess the failure or success of the spoken country. Considering that his second preferable themes are enmeshment and familization, his narrative is patronizing and spoken in an off-hand manner.

The theme of the first preference for Putin and Zhirinovskiy is familization of the times (38% and 35% respectively) and enmeshment (33% and 31% respectively). Both narrators often refer to the common historical past, mostly to Soviet times. Here, Zhirinovskiy frequently refers to Kazakhstan as to his birthplace, using it as evidence of his regional expertise. Putin refers to familial terms, such as brothers and relatives. He also is highly approving of Kazakhstan's willingness to collaborate with multiple common governmental organizations such as Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Eurasian Customs union. Economic interactions are portrayed as a dutiful mutual help between family members.

Shoigu, just like in some previous cases, prefers neutral discourse (45%) over all other themes. This identifies him as cautious in his expressions about the political choices of the country. He also uses moderate terms to describe and predict relationships and avoids familiarity. At the same time, he still views the relationship with the object of reference as hierarchical since his second preferable theme is enmeshment (24%). This is usually expressed through emphasizing the cultural origins of the country and direct association with the identity of the spoken nation.

Speaker/Theme	Parentization	Infantilization	Familization	Ensmeshment	Neutral Discourse
Kirill_Georgia	7%	0%	46%	36%	11%
Putin_Georgia	16%	31%	37%	12%	4%
Shoigu_Georgia	19%	14%	31%	3%	33%
Zhirinovskiy_Georgia	31%	31%	18%	18%	2%

Table 8. Discourse on Georgia

In the case of Georgia, the theme of familization is most characteristic for Kirill, Putin, and Shoigu, who have chosen this theme as their second preference (46%, 37%, and 31% respectively). This means that most of the speakers tend to refer to Georgia as a member of the family and justify expectations for political and economic collaboration as dutiful mutual aid among relatives. They would also recall any previous investments as familial, not a political gesture. External influence is often demonized here and portrayed as a betrayal of the house hearth. At the same time, Kirill's second most popular theme here is enmeshment (36%). Again, this is connected to the shared religious institution, which is Orthodoxy, and the fact that it was brought to Georgia by the Russian Empire. Kirill frequently mentions Orthodoxy as a ground for further political harmonization and irrelevancy of conflicts. As

usual, Shoigu's most used theme is neutral discourse. He is rather reserved in his forecasts and estimates and weighs his words deliberately.

The first theme of preference for Zhirinovskiy and Putin when it comes to Georgia is infantilization (31% both). This means that they both demonstrate a condescending attitude to this country as to a disoriented or helpless subject in need of approval, discipline, control, instructions, or education. For Zhirinovskiy, it is quite characteristic to mock the political behavior of the subordinate states, while Putin almost always questions the competency of the authority. In addition, the second preferred theme for Zhirinovskiy here is parentization (31%). He commonly justifies Russian intervention in Georgia as an act of discipline from the sober parent.

These themes lead us to certain summaries of different figured worlds that are used by the political narrators. The narrators seem to apply a widespread figured world that pictures a reality where Russia is not intervening in the boundaries of the sovereign states to maintain its regional power. Instead, it is portrayed as a disciplining, protective, nurturing, and caring Head of the Household. This parent is called to manage immature, junior states and prevent them from self-damaging political decisions. However, the household pattern is only a part of the overall comprehensive picture of the discourse. An ideological vacuum also takes place and encompasses neutral expression and civil terms, describing regional players as equal and independent.

[Building the Household through Language: The Roles of the Despot](#)

Four roles are being enacted by the macro themes included in table below. These roles are derived from the same pull of discourse as the previously discussed themes. The codes, however, were categorized into different logical blocks that respond to the despot's

self-image. Each code is regarded as an attribute of a certain role that responds to the narrator's view of Russia's standing in the household. The table of these logical categories represents the list of roles of the Russian household despot which was labeled as a father-founder, a mother-nurturer, a sponsor of conformity, and a healthy partner. Each role prescribes certain functions and holds some macro-themes as means to realize those functions through discourse. For example, the role of the father-founder implies the realization of the type of authority associated with masculine attributes of domination like protection and discipline (in the case of a healthy version of masculinity), patronization, verbal and physical abuse, and subjugation (in case of dysfunction).

Another role, self-prescribed by the despot, is the role of mother-nurturer which allows the exercising of the despot's authority in its feminine representation. Feminine authority in its ecological form may include such things as care, emotional guidance, and building and maintaining personal connections; yet toxic feminine domination may conventionally be expressed through emotional manipulations, inflicting guilt, imputing unwarranted obligations, and fear of abandonment. The following theme is gender-neutral and is labeled as the sponsor of semblance. This role allows the despot to construct, impute and maintain conformity of mentality and value system among the members of the household. This can be manifested through consistent memorization of common traumatic experiences as an act of bonding, stressing comprehensive semblance based on common origins, and recalling the duty to help each other as an implication of kinship. Finally, the role of a healthy partner predisposes the subject to emphasize the respect for personal boundaries, interests, and choices of the self and the other, as the desire to reach mutually beneficial agreements through open negotiations and self-reflection.

Self-prescribed role of the despot	Macro-themes included
Mother-Nurturer	Using familial terms
	Self-victimization
	Nurture
	Affection and emotional pain
	Private connections
Father-Founder	Patronization
	Protection
	Ridiculization
	Hierarchical sub-inclusion
Sponsor of Conformity	Shared historical experience
	Political conformity
	Mutual aid duty
	Common roots
Healthy Partner	Neutral Discourse

Table 9. The Self-prescribed Roles of the Despot

The table 10 below will introduce the roles constructed by the household language concerning the countries included in the study. It will demonstrate how the despot presents itself in the relationship with different peripheral states and implicitly signal the position of these countries in the household. The table will be followed by a description of the findings and the inferences that can be made as a result of the analysis.

	Belorussia	Georgia	Kazakhstan	Ukraine
1: Father-Founder	49.31%	6.09%	22.28%	22.32%
2: Healthy Partner	2.56%	11.22%	70.83%	15.38%
3: Mother Nurturer	16.17%	30.65%	38.28%	14.91%
4: Sponsor of Conformity	11.26%	18.26%	31.68%	38.79%

Table 10. Self-Prescribed Roles of the Despot concerning countries

According to table 10, it looks like Russian discourse is the most pronounced in drawing a role of a healthy partner in relations with Kazakhstan. On one hand, this percentage may seem surprising considering the background of the relationship between the countries. On the other hand, it may be explained by the lesser level of political threat Kazakhstan represents to Russian elites' interests. The second most explicit role in this tandem is the mother nurturer. In other words, the Russian despot sees itself as nurturing and predominantly respectful to Kazakhstan in comparison to other countries. On the contrary, Ukraine triggers the despot's attempts to patronize and discipline, for that, the most prevalent two roles that Russia plays with Ukraine are father-founder and the sponsor of conformity. Georgia instead evokes the combination of the mother-nurturing sponsor of conformity. This means that the conforming discourse has more feminine symbols of authority. Finally, the self-image of the Russian despot in its connections with Belorussia includes both mother-nurturer and father-founder, which makes it the most "family-like" country that Russia identifies with. These findings show the shift in Russian mindset and self-image in its relationship with its regional neighbors. The multitude of historical events and changes in the international arena reframed the vision of the regional family and ascribed the despot and other members new roles and positions.

Compared to imperial times, it becomes apparent that the roles of the household members and the way that the head of the household positions itself have transformed significantly. Soviet ideology and distancing during perestroika have affected the imaginary community of the Russian household interestingly. For example, Kazakhstan, which was regarded as a neglected child “made from scratch” is now portrayed as the closest to the image of a healthy partner, yet still is envisioned as a favorite child, provoking a motherly narrative of care and nurture. Ukraine transformed from ridiculized elderly mother, whose cultural prevalence has long gone into a somewhat disobedient child in need of the attention of a strict disciplining father. Belorussia has been largely enmeshed in the identity of Russia and is viewed as the closest relative, who takes the position of the most vulnerable and dependent child in need of care and protection. Georgia, as the closest representative of Caucasus, has transformed from an unavailable mistress – passionate, disobedient, and noble - to a largely ridiculized and infantilized teen. The combination of a motherly attitude with attempts to call to conformity says that Georgia is drawn as childish and incapacitated, and taken less seriously than Kazakhstan or Ukraine. The change in the drawn images speaks of the flexibility of the household as a framework for government propaganda and a new stage of adjustment to a new historical reality.

Another important new element in the modern political discourse of Russian household is the emergence of the theme of civil partnership, or in other words, neutral discourse. This means that the collapse of the USSR, the failure in the Cold War and the development of international society as a community of states overall has affected the mentality of Russian political figures and the nation overall. For instrumental reasons or as an end to itself, the narrative has been slightly advanced towards the view of the regional community as a community of equals. The narrative categorized under the theme of neutral

discourse (or civil partnership) may be evidence that there is some sense of general obligation to stick to international norms and laws intrinsic to the modern politicians reflected in their speech. Engaging with international institutions and participation influenced the embedded ideology of the Russian household. Even formal acceptance of such Western values as the respect of sovereignty (international law) contributed to the political mentality transformation of Russians.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I demonstrated how the discourse on Imperial and Soviet household is reconceptualized in modern Russian power discourse. With political, social, and cultural institutions framing the norms around regional political dynamics in the post-Soviet space, this chapter introduces modified ideational constructs on Russian household being reflected in the speeches of the four powerful narrators cited in sources of the pro-Kremlin mass media. By analyzing over 700 speeches, I observe that Household is a dominant ideology in Russian political discourse. The method employed here implies that the language is understood as a fusion of text and its context and unveils the ideology of Household and that it can indeed open a new avenue to a comprehensive understanding of the discourse around Russian regional politics. The narrative was used to investigate the manifestations of the ideological standpoints encapsulated in the content. The relationship with Kazakhstan, Belorussia, Ukraine, and Georgia is strategically important for Russian regional standing. The policy towards these countries usually provokes heavily ideological debates among political groups and voices.

To derive these stances, I defined a general tone of discourse from different narrators, to see how each of the narrators uses his style to draw a household construction.

Some of the narrators, like Vladimir Putin and Sergey Shoigu, demonstrated a neutral, non-judgmental tone of speech and less often than others applied household constructions explicitly. This might be connected to their social position and political responsibility as the president of the country and the head of the ministry of defense, respectively. Others, like Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and Patriarch Kirill, were rather expressive and did not shy away from terming the politics in the regions as familial relationships as they take a different political dimension and are less charged for more radical, moralistic, and emotional language.

In a second step, I connected the codes into common themes to find the overall picture of how the Russian power narrative introduces the relationship with the peripheral countries as if they were family members. One of the most pronounced themes extracted from the discourse analysis is what I coined as “familization.” This theme implies that the narrators often term the actors in the region and the relationship among them as if those were among family members. Literally, they label themselves as “self-sacrificing mother,” referring to their regional neighbors as brothers and sisters, some of them refer to the fact that the countries they are speaking of are their “second motherland.” Others would mention having relatives or family members in the state discussed. Some fewer formal speeches directly term post-Soviet space a “single family” and argue that the ties among them are unbreakable by any armed conflicts or wars. The speakers continuously express their emotions and feelings about the periphery, especially in moments of crisis.

Other common themes that emerged during the analysis indicate that Russian authority figures draw the image of Russia as if it was a parent that is managing a family of less competent, junior members. There is no fixed gender assigned to the identity of this parent. Rather, it is flexible and fluid: sometimes it is a loving self-sacrificing mother; other times it is a strict, protective, disciplining father. Four themes derived from the discourse

analysis indicate this pattern. The first one is the theme of infantilization. Russian power discourse demonstrates a self-talk that implicitly or explicitly denies the maturity in knowledge, sovereignty, or experience to peripheral countries. There is an overlap between the theme of “infantilization” and another theme, “patronization,” that came out as prevalent in the analyzed texts. Infantilization is derived more specifically from defining the object that is being infantilized as incompetent or immature, while patronization is pronounced in the attitude and a sense of hierarchical seniority as well as indebtedness of the object for the previous support and nurture. The reviewed discourse offers a picture, where Russia is drawn as a father-founder, and mother-nurturer of the peripheral states that is in the position to evaluate the achievements of the states, punish them or reward them for their failures and successes, respectively. Infantilization is also happening through ridiculization. Ridiculization includes mockery, and caricatures of the other actors to devalue the inconvenient decisions of the counterpart and introduce the latter as childlike or ridiculous behavior.

The other two prevalent themes are enmeshment and parentization which both diminish the lawfulness of the periphery’s sovereignty and undermine the autonomy of the countries. Enmeshment includes statements that question or straightforwardly cancel the autonomous identity of the object of speech. These statements picture ethnic closeness, common history, and geographical maps of the past as a ground for denying the independent identities of their neighboring countries. In turn, parentization is drawing oneself as parenting, a responsible guardian who is in the position to shape the value system (through shaming and punishing) and to love and nurture (through expressing emotions verbally and supporting materially). Some aspects of these themes form the role of a despot as a sponsor

of conformity who is in charge of maintaining the semblance of mindset and values around the region.

That said, there is a theme that represents ideologically discharged discourse that stresses the states' sovereignty and recognizes their independent will. This theme, titled as "civil partnership" in this work includes statements where the narrators claim to recognize the equal value and autonomy of other regional players. In neutral terms, these statements describe intraregional interactions as partnership and collaboration. The narrators here also emphasize the importance of signed agreements, and mutual interests and actively refer to civil and international legal systems to explain their actions. It is noticeable, that neutral discourse is largely employed by the officials (President Putin and Minister of Defense Shoigu) who are most cited by the international media and who translate Russian political position and strategic interests on the international stage. Less likely it is used by Kirill and Zhirinovskiy who are a religious figure and an internal politician, respectively. They are less influential outside the region, and for that reason, are less limited in their appeal to household constructs. This theme is considered an ideological vacuum that is juxtaposed to the strong statements that frame household narrative and draws the role of the despot as a healthy partner who respects its own preferences, customs, and rights as well as those of its counterparts and asserts its position through agreements and legislation.

The discourse analysis in this chapter suggests that these topics are framed in familial terms that create a perception of the regional household. That said, my findings also indicated a large volume of narratives, which do not reflect a certain ideology but instead, transmit information about events and practices around regional politics, and for that, it appears to be ideologically neutral. The work also derived neutral speech acts that refer to the countries of choice. I framed the themes that consist of neutral speech acts as an

ideological vacuum that reflects a shift in political discourse on Russian regional politics. This indicates the sign that there was room for alternative thinking that is more aligned with international law and the understanding of civil dialogue.

Relatedly, my results from the analysis show that the power discourse intricately raises a matter of significance. The narrators deem their personal connections to the countries, their feelings, and emotions and emphasize the historical background of the relationships as something significant for the power discourse. They draw a system of roles in the household where they represent the leading identity in different forms of it: nurturing mother, disciplining father, a sponsor of conformity, and partner. At the same time, other political aspects as a violation of international law, the sensibility of investments, or political grassroots activism in the referred countries are left in silence or mocked as insignificant.

The Household discourse affects the real world in a way it enacts practices, identities, and relationships, and shapes value systems, and cultural hierarchy. For example, justifying the intervention with intention of brotherly help or uniting the Russian family of nations, the narrators reinforce a practice of inconsequential violation of their neighbor's sovereignty. As another example, mocking a leader of the country and calling him "a baby calf" or a "madman" creates an image of a childlike government that cannot be taken seriously. This identity is prescribed to these nations between the lines and sinks into the consciousness of the auditory. Also, the acts of demonization and labeling certain actors or their actions as human enemies or devil's hands, the narrator automatically excludes the object of speech from the value system of the space he dominates and condemns them as wrong-doing or a mistake.

There are limitations to my findings and approach. I do not claim to capture the complete picture of the discourse around regional dynamics: recall, I used the most popular Russian newspaper and the four most influential narrators in Russia, which also have political and socio-cultural significance. Hence my work did not include personal experiences related to intra-regional connections and the insights gathered from the peripheral countries. I also realize that there might be an interpretation and self-selection bias in the narrators' group and speeches I studied, which means my results cannot be straightforwardly generalizable to other social media or the offline world. More precisely, people in power surface as a prevalent group in my study—further research needs to be applied to explore to what extent this ideological imbalance is reflected in the larger worlds of rhetoric in real life. These limitations notwithstanding, this study introduces a new way to tease out the verbal instruments of legitimization and finds ideology where it seems absent. Moreover, it reveals the homological patterns of governance in private and public spaces and demonstrates how this can be employed to sustain power.

Conclusion

The goal of the research is to explore how regional hegemons employ a set of discursive maneuvers (framed as a concept of regional household) to expose their regional politics as natural and legitimate. As a case study, the research accounts for Russia which is regarded as a regional hegemon. To frame the imperialistic discourse produced by the Russian elites, the study employs a specific model of the household developed by Patricia Owens in her book *The Economy of Force* (Owens 2015). The findings of my research indicate that the concept of the household can well be applied to the Russian type of colonialism where colonial imaginaries are framed in terms of familial ties and legitimacy

of the household hearth which appear to be less dehumanizing than the straightforward colonial discourse of the Western Empires. In the Russian imperial imagination, Russia is a head of a huge regional family, where members are bonded throughout history and assigned different roles.

These roles introduce Russian colonial practices as less utilitarian, and, for that, more subtle. The invisibility of the roles assigned by the head of the household to its menages makes the household discourse extremely powerful as it appeals to the most primal feelings of the population – the feeling of love and familial bond. This narrative is persistent and, as the findings indicate, contributes to the contemporary Russian self-image. This self-image is ingrained into the (sub)consciousness of the Russians to the extent that the majority of them can wholeheartedly support the explicitly aggressive and self-destructive war against their regional neighbors (such as the Russo-Ukrainian war of 2022).

The peril of the household discourse lies in masking the power imbalances and hierarchies tied to colonialism. This ideology perpetuates Russia's imperial aspirations towards the non-Russian populations in its former empire and fortifies its justification for interventionist policies. Household discourse allows overt racism towards Central Asian and Caucasian migrants in Russia to thrive, despite the opposition and activism of a small, but brave and vocal group of Russians. The narrative on the household preconditions is one of the primary differences between the Russian and the Western notions of colonial practices: in contrast to Western democracies where denial or support of colonialism is met with strong opposition, in Russia, those who neglect or implicitly approve of the colonialism hold the backing of the government and the challengers are a weak and beleaguered minority.

Thus, the study attempts to tease out the discursive tools that are employed by the dominant groups to maintain the legitimacy of the Russian household hierarchy. Russian colonial genealogy has served as a study case to draw upon Patricia Owen's theoretical framework. As Owens suggests, there is a homological pattern between the ancient Greek Oikos consisting of the master with its menages and the global system consisting of the global hegemon and other subordinate states. This research traced Russian colonial conquests and inner imperial narratives applying Owens' perspective on the *regional* level while exploring the Russian household dynamic within Eurasia. Russian imperial discourse demonstrates how *regional* hegemon may position itself towards its peripheral states using the rhetoric of the "household rule."

Russia, as a regional hegemon is specifically crucial to understand as it holds an outstanding position in the global arena and can leverage the structure of international relations (depending on if it resists or bandwagon the global hegemon). Also, Russia holds the position of the "head of the household" in the region which is extremely pronounced and uncensored in its discourse throughout centuries. Thus, deploying the language household in the discourse analysis of Russian power narratives reveals specific means of governance in the literature on regional security complexes and social hierarchy.

Moreover, the work attempts to deconstruct the *language* of the household rule. The work offers discursive evidence that shows how violence and control are justified in the dominant discourse. The study shows how unlawful violence and oppression (or seemingly uncalculated support) are made legitimate through speech acts from the "household despot" stance. Household language is a powerful tool to influence populations on a large scale as the familial dynamics are rooted in the mentality and techniques of traditional families and function almost only in the subconscious of the people. Thus, the present research helps raise

awareness as to how these powerful, yet invisible language techniques work through the narrative of power; it helps understand how the people in the position of power use the terms of the household rule to secure the status quo through the reproduction of gender, class, racial and imperial hierarchies since the origin of the state.

At the core of the project is the method of discourse analysis of several types of writings. The analytical part of the dissertation is broken down into three main chapters examining different stages of Russian expansionism. Chapter 2 focuses on the imperial stage (16th-19th centuries). It analyzes prominent historiographic and periodic texts that document Russian imperial conquests from the 1500s to the 1800s. Chapter 3 deals with the Soviet period (20th century). It is informed by propagandistic periodic materials of the Soviet press. Chapter 4 focuses on contemporary Russia. It closely examines printed official statements of several most influential contemporary Russian politicians. The collected historiography and published political statements were processed using the inductive method of theme discovery. The repetitive linguistic patterns will be grouped into themes and labeled concerning their relevance to Owens' theory of household.

The “regional household” power discourse initiates right at the time of Kievan Rus’ state building. The first historiographers of the Russian Empire, like Vasily Tatischev (actively promoted by Peter the Great), tried to find an effective narrative to maintain the Empire’s legitimacy. Beginning from Tatischev’s the Tale of Bygone Years, Russian imperial historiography embarked on building an invisible ideology of “household” through history writing. Like novels, historical volumes are also the fruits of “printing press capitalism”, they only *claim* to be truth and not fiction. However, they also form the core of the nation by appropriating the legends of the past into political tools to create a certain imaginary community. Thus, legend around the founder of Russia, the leader of Varangian

tribes, Rurik, and his mission in the ancient Slavic lands became a foundation of the Russian imperial household.

While writing the Tale, Tatishchev was reflecting on his experience in the war with Sweden that on the first rounds proved Russian military inferiority in comparison to Western Europe. To raise the prestige of the homeland, the historian needed to find a way to dispute the conventional truth about the foundation of the Russian state. It was known that Kievan Rus' was established after the Scandinavian Vikings – Varangians – took over the Slavic tribes. Since Varangians were the direct ancestors of the Swedish nation, Russia needed to cover the shame of being descended from the current enemies' conquest. This cover was invented as a legendary narrative that before the Vikings' occupation, the Slavic community was formed as a matriarchy and consisted of the Slavic amazon community. Thus, Tatischev introduced the conquest in terms of marriage, stating that Swedish predecessors were “slavified” through marriage with Slavic women (Tatishchev, 1994). Thus, the colonizer was framed as the head of a new family, while the conquered community became a voluntary subjugated party – a wife. Thus, Tatishchev founded the tradition of ascribing aspects of the “marriage” or “kindred” union to the imperial conquests of Russia. While Tatishchev was not talking about the actual imperial conquests of Russia but the foundation of Kievan Rus' as a state, further Russian historians were prescribing a similar narrative of “marriage” or otherwise familial ties to the expansion of the Russian state and its transformation from a state to an empire. This narrative was promoted by the power tribunes and served as a curtain for the realities of bloodshed, genocide, and violence during the conquests of the peoples of Siberia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Eastern Europe.

For example, it is uncommon to talk about Siberia as a colony among Russian historians and social scholars. According to one of the most trustworthy Russian historians,

Yadrintsev this denial was made possible because most of the historical literature calls the Russian encounter with Siberia a period of “domestication”, the terminology of the 19th century that was called to substitute the word “colonization.” The methods of colonization of Siberia were indeed more of a “domestic” nature and executed more due to “amanat” tactics. The amanat strategy further mutated to assimilation and practices of forceful marriages that securely tied Siberian tribes with the metropolis.

During Russia’s expansion to the West in the 1700s, with the advent of the language of colonialism, Russia openly proclaimed itself an empire. In 1721, Tsar Peter proclaimed the period of “virginity” in its encounter with the Western culture. To legitimize the westernization of Russia, Peter proclaimed its transformation from virginity to maturity. For that, the emperor needed a piece of virgin land to establish a new start for his empire. Peter found it in Ingermanland, where Saint-Petersburg was established as the new capital of a new empire. This city became a symbol of a marriage with a developed western culture.

In the 18th century, the internal colonization of Ukraine and Crimea took place. The promoted colonial authors were supporting the image of the “Slavic alma mater” that has passed its heritage to her imperial child and now must retire. Ukrainian culture was largely ridiculed by the imperial discourse. In colonial literature and historiography, the Ukrainians are pictured as an archaic and old-fashioned community, whose mentality persists in the dark times. Linguistic and literary tools were used to emphasize the closely related, yet subaltern nature of Ukrainian identity.

Further, in the middle of the 19th century, the colonizers launch Caucasian Wars which unveiled the brutality of Russian troops. Failing to “domesticate the locals” here, Russians turned to hostile colonial practices that were hard to cover with the ideology of

“civilizing” or “embracing a new household member.” Because it was really difficult to introduce Caucasian people as something alien, barbarian, naturally predisposed to taming and obedience, Russian narratives found other ways to legitimize Russian domination by romanticizing the temper and passion of Caucasian characters as intrinsic to something wild and putting it in romantic brackets. Colonial historians created an image of an inaccessible object of passion, a romance with a tragic ending. Thus, Caucasus takes an atypical place in the system of the Russian imaginary “regional household” as an unavailable mistress that deserves admiration and invokes a sense of guilt, yet it still is a desirable object of domination and annexation.

Moving further to the end of the 19th century, Russian monarchs embarked on intense colonization of Central Asia. Here, Russians employed Western tactics of domestication discourse, such as patronizing and saviorism. Russian colonial officers often emphasized the assumed childlike nature of the locals. They based it on tailored ethnographic research aimed at infantilizing local cultural and religious preferences in Russian imperial imagination. The image of colonized people as “big kids” whose intellectual capacity and primitive way of living is different by nature or temporarily limited, was one of the ideological tricks used by Russians to legitimize local censorship in Central Asia, imposed in addition to the metropolitan license.

The Soviet era brought about new discourse and practices around a radical concept of fraternity that emerged before the First World War in Tsarist Russia. The theoretical specificity of the Marxist view on fraternal society sets it apart from other emancipatory ideational constructs like solidarity, friendship, equality, and egalitarianism. Early Soviet fraternity implied the conformity and duty to assist and protect the less fortunate brothers and sisters. Overall, since its origination, the household narrative helps Russia establish a

tradition that constitutes its own legitimacy as a more benign and natural empire than other global and regional hegemons. Economic stagnation and war in Afghanistan, however, brought about disappointment in the fraternal Soviet regime. The narrative on the family hearth was replaced with the image of the house of neighbors and partners. The reconstruction of this house was coined historically as “Perestroika” which in translation from Russian literally means “Reconstruction of a building.” The narrative of brotherhood proved to be ineffective, the failure of the Soviet Union caused frustration in the population and the elites which turned them back to the familiar and thus, more powerful, and safe narrative of the imperial household.

Contemporary power discourse demonstrated pronounced and pervasive discourse themes that draw a specific dynamic in the old imperial household – that of submission, domination, protection, nurture, and affection, intrinsic to techniques of legitimizing power through the household framework. Using familial terms when describing the relationships among the regional actors, the narrative includes ridiculization, patronization, and other linguistic tools called to emphasize the junior character of the peripheral identities. All that is employed to legitimize the idea of Russian regional supremacy and intervention. However, the modern narrative, unlike the previous discursive models, also contains an ideological vacuum of a healthy partnership, respect of boundaries, and recognition of the sovereignty of the neighboring countries.

The value of the study is that it teases out how the discourse of power frames its speech acts about violence, investments, sanctions, and other types of interference in the affairs of the countries of the region through the concepts of household rule. The findings of the research bring awareness about the existing ideology of household in places where the ideology seems absent and undermines the legitimacy of political claims done through this

ideology. This way the work dismantles the common belief that public and private types of violence and governance are separated and are different types of social domains. We should care about the findings of this study because it reveals additional patterns of legitimization of violence and power that silence the oppression of those who are perceived as objects of rule and dehumanization, those deprived of access to the official tribune.

Another research value of the study is that it helps understand how the elite employs deeply rooted concepts of household relations (that are juxtaposed with political relations). By dismantling the power discourse of the Russian officials in power, the work helps understand the imperial/hegemonic discourse on social re-engineering in their dependent territories, the functional interrelations between parts of the household “social body.” It also allows us to see how the speech acts that were undertaken to assure control were reconceived and justified in household terms. These patterns of the power discourse are transferrable to other regions but are crystallized differently with respect to the historical development of household governance in different regions. This transferability allows for exploring the governance patterns in other regions through the lenses of the household and extracting unique themes characteristic for a particular region.

Finally, there are several possible directions for future research that are logically unfolding from the findings of this dissertation. One of the trajectories future research may take can be the contextualization of the discourse and perspective of the peripheral states on the regional household they are a part of. How do these states and peoples resist the roles assigned to them by the head of the regional household? How do other members of the Russian colonial household resist the roles enacted by the Russian and later Soviet states? It would be interesting to explore how the people and the elites of ex-Soviet republics as well as the Indigenous people living within Russia’s borders, respond to their subjugation to the

multilayered relations of coloniality within the household. Another trajectory could be situating the Russian Household on a map of a global one and among other regional Households or applying the concept of Household to other regions.

Appendix 1: Categorization of the Sources

Name of the source	Link to the electronic version of the source	Background & Political Stance	Credits/Reach/Audience
Tier 1 Primary official sources			
The information platform of the state дума the federal assembly of the Russian Federation	http://duma.gov.ru/	<p>The State Duma website offers information about any Duma senator, a transcript of the plenary and the meetings of the committees and commissions. This platform is interactive and allows active citizens to file an appeal and attempt to make an appointment with any party representative. Services provide an opportunity to find out the results of voting on bills and get acquainted with the materials of parliamentary hearings.</p> <p>Here, you can also find information about upcoming events of the State Duma, read the rules for accreditation of journalists, contact the State Duma press service, and subscribe to the newsletters.</p> <p>Material from the official website of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of Russia can be published by any media outlet, on the internet, or on other media platforms without restrictions on the amount or timing of publication. This includes TV channels, websites, newspapers, radio stations,</p>	<p>The audience of the official website of the State Duma of the Russian Federation (duma.gov.ru) includes Russian citizens, as well as individuals and organizations interested in the activities and policies of the Russian parliament. The website provides information about the work of the State Duma, including details about the legislative process, the composition of the parliament, and the committees and commissions that operate within it. It is also likely that the website is visited by people who are interested in Russian politics and current events, as well as by journalists and researchers seeking information about the Russian government and its activities.</p>

		magazines, and internet pages. No permission is required from the State Duma Apparatus for reprinting. ⁷²	
Kremlin.ru	http://kremlin.ru	<p>Kremlin.ru is the official website of the President of Russia, that was initially launched in 2000 and updated in 2001 and in 2022. The website contains publications of the news about the activities of the head of state, transcripts, photographs, video, and audio recordings of events he engages with, texts of the documents signed by the President, information on trips and visits, telegrams, and other current information related to the work of the President and the Administration of the President of the Russian Federation.</p> <p>The platform offers a set of geographic cross-sections of the activities of the President of Russia, this map displays the latest news related to individual Russian regions or countries of the world. By clicking on it, archival tapes of materials for the corresponding region/country are opened. The material published on the website is also a subject to reproduction in any officially registered media without consent to reprinting.</p>	<p>It is difficult to say exactly who the audience of the official website of the Kremlin (kremlin.ru) is because the website does not publish or share its statistical traffic data with the analytical centers. However, it is known that the website is intended for a wide range of audiences, including Russian citizens, international governments and organizations, and other interested parties. The website contains information about the activities of the President of Russia and the Russian government, as well as news and updates about events and initiatives in Russia. It is likely that the website is visited by people who are interested in politics, current events, and the activities of the Russian government.</p>
Patriarchia (Official website of the Moscow Patriarchate)	http://www.patriarchia.ru	<p>Patriarchia.ru is the official informational platform of Patriarch Kirill that is based on the website of Moscow patriarchate in early 2000s.</p> <p>The website delivers the official position of the Patriarch, his speeches, and official documents, his opinion on the status quo of the Orthodox church and Russian regional politics. The information in the source is being replicated and reprinted in other media without restrictions.</p>	<p>The audience of the official website of the Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus' (www.patriarchia.ru) includes Russian Orthodox Christians, as well as individuals and organizations interested in the activities and teachings of the Russian Orthodox Church. It is possible that the website is visited by people who are interested in religion and spirituality, as well</p>

⁷² <http://duma.gov.ru/>

		<p>The resource differs in its official position, it is filled mainly with documentary and news information about the life of the Russian Orthodox Church and, above all, its primate, however, materials related to the Old Believers and non-Orthodox confessions are also placed.⁷³</p> <p>On October 19, 2010, the Berkman Center for the Study of the Internet and Society at Harvard University (USA) named the official website of the Moscow Patriarchate Patriarchia.ru one of the most cited websites on the Runet, along with Pravmir.⁷⁴</p>	<p>as by researchers and journalists seeking information about the Russian Orthodox Church.</p>
Tier 2 primary sources			
RIA Novosti	https://ria.ru/	<p>One of the top three largest operating state news agencies headquartered in Moscow and created in 1991 on the foundation of the Soviet IAN Agency. On December 9, 2013, the RIA Novosti media group was officially disbanded by decree of the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, “On Certain Measures to Improve the Efficiency of State Mass Media.” This change was a concern for many that the news agency will become a channel of Putin’s propaganda.⁷⁵ In 2014 it became clear that RIA is indeed an outlet of the government mainstream discourse when it was approved and certified by</p>	<p>RIA covers 69 cities of the Russian Federation, it is broadcasting at 49 countries of the world, and has 10 press-centers in the CIS countries.</p> <p>RIA is the leading online news resource in terms of traffic and the leader in the citation index in the media category of the Yandex Catalog* citation index - 36,000, is the primary source of information for most Runet resources that form the news picture of the day for users as of 2019.</p> <p>In the terms of the audience, the consumers of the news feed as of 2019 are: men - 54.5%, women - 45.5%, visitors aged 25 to 44 - 47%, managers and specialists -50%, visitors with</p>

⁷³ Goroshko Y, 2012 “The Role of Religious Identity in Social and Cultural Communication,” University of Warsaw, <http://www.obta.uw.edu.pl/pliki/akt/Articles.pdf>

⁷⁴ Pravmir portal, <https://www.pravmir.ru/portal-pra/>

⁷⁵ Herpen, Marcel van. 2015. Putin's propaganda machine: soft power and Russian foreign policy. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, p. 69
<https://archive.org/details/putinspropaganda0000herp>

		<p>Roskomnadzor⁷⁶ as one of the primary Russian news agencies.⁷⁷</p> <p>By 2020, RIA Novosti is a government owned online newspaper and publishes administration approved analyses of financial, economic, social-political, scientific and other subjects in multiple languages, broadcasting throughout CIS countries and more than 40 countries abroad.⁷⁸ The sources of the newspaper include the official government sources like the informational platforms of duma, presidential administration, Federation Council, the local regional governments and diplomatic missions and business associations abroad.</p>	<p>high purchasing power - 44%, residents of the two capitals - 25.7%⁷⁹</p>
TASS Russian News Agency	https://tass.com/	<p>The first largest information agency in Russia, created in 1992 based on the Telegraph Agency of the USSR and retained its original name Telegraph agency of communication and messages (Телеграфное агентство связи и сообщения. Rus.). To this day, the agency is the Federal State enterprise, government-owned that retains</p>	<p>TASS is the leader in terms of citation among Russian news agencies (according to Medialogy data for 2021). In 2021, the agency released over 2.4 million pieces of content across all platforms.</p> <p>The work of TASS in real time is accommodated by about 1.8 thousand employees.</p>

⁷⁶ The federal service for supervision in the sphere of communications, information technologies and mass communications

⁷⁷ Federal service for supervision in the sphere of communications, information technologies and mass communications > Main page > Mass communications > Registers > List of names of registered mass media

<https://rkn.gov.ru/mass-communications/reestr/media/?id=491363>

⁷⁸ The Russian News & Information Agency RIA Novosti: A brief history of RIA Novosti
<https://web.archive.org/web/20130928023413/http://rianovosti.com/docs/about/novosti.html>

⁷⁹ Media-rus. 2016. "RIA News. Internet resources" [РИА Новости. Интернет-ресурсы]. <http://www.mediator-rus.com/images/RIA16.pdf>

		over 70 offices over Russia, broadcasts throughout CIS and 68 other countries, headquartered in Moscow. ⁸⁰	Regional information centers are located in St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, and Novosibirsk, and there are multitude of bureaus operating in all regions of Russia, and also 58 agency offices in 55 states including the CIS and Europe. TASS is an original source of correspondence that produces approximately 3,000 messages and 600-800 photo and video materials from its own correspondents in Russia and abroad every day, creating a comprehensive depiction of events. ⁸¹ The target audience of ITAR-TASS is Russian and international media, heads of large enterprises, senior and middle-level civil servants, representatives of political and public organizations, people involved in life who are interested in receiving up-to-date news. ⁸²
Interfax	https://interfax.com/	Russian state news agency, one of the three leading (along with state-owned TASS and RIA) agencies in Russia. It is a network of over three dozen companies known as the largest information conglomerate, comprised of national, regional, and industry-focused agencies. Unlike RIA and TASS, Interfax is not fully government-owned, but a joint-stock company that was founded during	Interfax controls approximately 50% of the Russian informational market. The bulk of the revenues of Interfax is generated by Subscription-based business, financial intelligence, and analytical business. ⁸⁴ Interfax's parent company includes over 30 news production and media

⁸⁰ Lenta.ru 03/18/2014 "ITAR-TASS will return to the Soviet name" [ИТАР-ТАСС вернется к советскому названию] <https://lenta.ru/news/2014/03/18/tass/>

⁸¹ TASS 09/01/2022 "TASS is Russia's leading state news agency. On September 1, 2022, TASS turned 118 years old" [ТАСС – ведущее государственное информационное агентство России. 1 сентября 2022 года ТАСС исполнилось 118 лет] <https://tass.ru/tass-today>

⁸² Studfiles. 2014. "Printed press in the information society. "Pros" and "cons" of the "network life" of the publication." [Печатная пресса в условиях информационного общества. «Плюсы» и «минусы» «сетевой жизни» издания.] <https://studfile.net/preview/3836903/>

⁸⁴ VashInterfax. 2014. "On the 25-year history of Interfax" [О 25-летней истории «Интерфакса»] https://group.interfax.ru/ftproot/files/Vash_INT_16.pdf

		<p>the glasnost' era (in 1990s) by Mikhail Gorbachev and his team from Radio Moscow that broadcasted at home and overseas. It was releasing news that were received originally from the fax machines.⁸³</p> <p>Quickly strengthening its position on the market of Russian media, it attracted the attention of the conservatives and was largely taken over by the government in the early 2000s by Putin's administration. Right now, the agency is largely owned by the state sponsored Sberbank of Russia.</p>	<p>companies in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, the US, the UK, Germany, and China.⁸⁵</p> <p>Clients are leading Russian and foreign media, major corporate and investment banks. 100,000 unique visitors per day, 200,000 impressions per week.</p> <p>The average depth is 4-6 pages, 82% of visitors are from 25 to 50 years old.</p> <p>Geography by region: 60% - Moscow, 10% - St. Petersburg, 34% - other regions; 10% - foreign audience.</p> <p>In terms of the audience occupation, the split is as follows: 34%- top middle managers of corporate clients, 15% - medium business owners and professionals, 8% - journalists and media representatives, 3% - graduate students, 40% - other professionals and self-employed.</p> <p>Split by gender: Men 53% / Women 47%</p> <p>Split by age: 25 - 50 years (82%).⁸⁶</p>
Federal Media outlet			
Rossiskaya Gazeta		<p>Rossiyskaya Gazeta is the official print organ of the Government of the Russian Federation.</p> <p>After publication in this newspaper, normative legal acts come into force: federal constitutional laws, federal laws (including codes), decrees of the President of Russia,</p>	<p>The official publication of the Government of Russia "Rossiyskaya Gazeta" has long ago turned into a modern large-scale multimedia platform. Daily, it provides reliable information about the most significant events of the federal, regional, and international level. Over the past five years, Rossiyskaya Gazeta has been the leader in terms of audience</p>

⁸³ Vesti.ru. 09/09/2009. "Mikhail Komissar: Interfax's task is to be number one" [Михаил Комиссар: задача "Интерфакса" - быть номером один] <https://www.vesti.ru/article/2182579>

⁸⁵ Vedomosti. 01/12/2012. "Exceptions made from the list of beneficiaries to be disclosed" [Из списка подлежащих раскрытию бенефициаров сделали исключения] https://www.vedomosti.ru/business/articles/2012/01/19/igota_dlya_smi

⁸⁶ Rich Media Group. 2016. "Internet portal "Interfax" www.interfax.ru" [Интернет портал «Интерфакс» www.interfax.ru.] <https://slideplayer.com/slide/4936085/>

	<p>resolutions and orders of the Government of Russia, regulations of ministries and departments⁸⁷</p> <p>The newspaper is rubricating the reports and interviews of statesmen, news, comments on official documents in a way that is replicated in many lower-tier newspapers.</p> <p>The status of the official rubricatpr is determined by the Federal Law of June 14, 1994 No. 5-FZ “On the Procedure for the Publication and Entry into Force of Federal Constitutional Laws, Federal Laws, Acts of the Chambers of the Federal Assembly” and the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation dated May 23, 1996 No. 763 “On the procedure publication and entry into force of acts of the President of the Russian Federation, the Government of the Russian Federation and regulatory legal acts of federal executive bodies”⁸⁸</p> <p>The Rossiyskaya Gazeta RG.RU internet portal, which has been in existence since 1999, is considered an official government information transmitter. Regulatory legal acts from federal executive authorities, decrees and protocols from the Court of the Eurasian Economic Community, and decisions from the Council and Board of the Eurasian</p>	<p>volume in the segment of socio-political and business daily newspapers. The influence of the Rossiyskaya Gazeta is assessed not only by the audiences of print media and the site, but also by the engagement of its readers in social networks, as well as on the news platforms Yandex News, Yandex Zen and Google News (Mediascope 2019).</p> <p>According to the market research institute “GfK-Russia” (a division of the German “GfK Group”), the share of “mobile only” users (access the Internet only from smartphones) reached 35% in Russia by the beginning of 2019, which is almost twice as much a year ago (18%). Moreover, the entire Russian Internet audience amounted to 90 million users, or 75.4% of the country's population over 16 years old. Rossiyskaya Gazeta’s online media outlets in Russian newspaper publishing houses engages mobile audience even faster than the average for the segment (62–64% of mobile Internet media users in November 2018) (Mediascope 2019). The socio-demographic portrait of the audience is as follows. Split by gender: 47% - women, 53% - men. Split by occupation: engaged with civil service – 8,7%, managers and entrepreneurs – 10,6%, specialists – 24,2%. Split by age: 7,76% - 18- 24 years old, 16,5% - 25-34 years old, 22,3% - 35-44 years old, 18,44% - 45-54 years old.⁹⁰</p>
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⁸⁷ Rossiyskaya Gaxeta. 02/22/2001 " Vladislav Fronin appointed editor-in-chief of Rossiyskaya Gazeta" [Владислав Фронин назначен главным редактором "Российской газеты"] <https://rg.ru/2001/02/22/fronin.html>

⁸⁸ Kremlin.ru. 12/20/20 " Federal Law of June 14, 1994 No. 5-FZ On the procedure for the publication and entry into force of federal constitutional laws, federal laws, acts of the chambers of the Federal Assembly" [Федеральный закон от 14.06.1994 г. № 5-ФЗ О порядке опубликования и вступления в силу федеральных конституционных законов, федеральных законов, актов палат Федерального Собрания] <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/6332>

⁹⁰ Media-Kit. Report on Rpssiyskaya Gazeta https://cdnstatic.rg.ru/uploads/attachments/2022/10/19/presentation_rg_october_2022_rus_d19.pdf

		Economic Commission posted on the portal are all official. In 2020, the site had an average monthly audience of around 35 million users, with a daily audience of approximately 3.5 million users. ⁸⁹	
Secondary official sources			
RT - Breaking News	https://www.rt.com/	RT (former Russia Today) was founded by RIA Novosti in 2005 as the main bullhorn of Russian news targeted at the audience abroad, however, is still popular among Russian consumers. RT is a fully government owned and controlled agency that broadcasts in multiple languages and has a substantial network of offices around the world. ⁹¹ In 2008, the agency was headed directly by Vladimir Putin and was listed as an agency of strategic importance. ⁹² It was multiple times accused of disseminating propagandistic messages, fake facts, and conspiracy theories, creating misleading picture of the Russian reality. ⁹³ Its editor-in-	The international information platform RT consists of three transmission channels broadcasting from Moscow in English, Arabic and Spanish. The TV channel is available for 700 million views in more than 100 countries around the world, which accounts for more than 28% of pay broadcast network subscribers. In seven major US cities, more than 2.8 million people watch RT every week. Around 700,000 people in the UK Watch every week. The weekly audience of RT in six countries of the Middle East is 9 million viewers. In Russia, the weekly audience is 1.7 million people. Audience of Russia RT by category is as follows. The split of the auditory by age: 34% - 45-54 years old, 21% - 35-44 years old, 19% - 55+ years old, 12% - 25-34 years old, 9.8% - 4-17 years old, 4, 2% - 18-24 years old.

⁸⁹ Liveinternet. ru "Rpssiyskaya Gazeta: edition of the Government of the Russian Federation" [Российская Газета: издание Правительства РФ] <https://www.liveinternet.ru/stat/rg.ru/index.html?period=month&total=yes>

⁹¹ Max Fisher. 06/13/2013. "In case you weren't clear on Russia Today's relationship to Moscow, Putin clears it up," *The Washington post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2013/06/13/in-case-you-werent-clear-on-russia-todays-relationship-to-moscow-putin-clears-it-up/>

⁹² Press Service Announcements. 12/25/2008. "The Governmental Commission on Sustainable Development of the Russian Economy approved a list of core organizations of strategic importance" <http://archive.premier.gov.ru/eng/events/messages/2883/>

⁹³ Arwa Mahdawi. 11/10/2014. Russia Today threatened with Ofcom sanctions due to bias," *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2014/nov/10/russia-today-ofcom-sanctions-impartiality-ukraine-coverage>

		chief, Margarita Simonyan, compared it with a ministry of defense in times of informational war. ⁹⁴	The split of the auditory by employment: 37% - specialists, 20% - other, 13% - housewives, 12% - managers and owners of enterprises, 12% - students, 6.4% - workers. The split of the auditory by sex: 64% - women, 36% - men. The split of the auditory by income level: 34% - well-to-do, 24% - high-income, 22% - other, 19% - medium-income, 1% - low-income. ⁹⁵
REGNUM News Agency	https://regnum.ru/	<p>Russian news agency and an online publication, founded and owned by Putin's loyalists, including Boris Sorokin and Modest Kolerov from 2002 to this day. The agency is included in the media family of the conservative government-sponsored token that mostly covers events in the regions of Russia and the near abroad and explains Russian regional politics.</p> <p>The Estonian Security Police stated that the agency is politicized and is an instrument of Russia's political influence on the countries of the former USSR. In 2005, journalist Erkki Bahovski of the Estonian newspaper Postimees called Regnum "the most powerful agent of influence" in Russia.⁹⁶</p>	<p>Regnum publishes about 700 news a day from 150 correspondents in Russia and in the near abroad, the news is categorized by topics, federal districts, regions, and subjects.</p> <p>A TNS Gallup Media survey of the Moscow audience of Russian online news services found that REGNUM's audience is predominantly made up of managers and specialists, at 72% (Yandex News claims it being at 63% and NEWS.ru - at 64%).⁹⁷</p> <p>The company owns information agencies Regnum-Volgainform (Samara-Cheboksary), Regnum-Altai (Barnaul), Severinform (Vologda), Regnum-Arkhangelskiye Novosti (Arkhangelsk), regional projects City 24 (Bryansk, Smolensk), Regnum- Regnum- MurmanNews (Murmansk),</p>

⁹⁴ Alexander Gabuev. 04/07/2012. "There is no objectivity" [Нет никакой объективности], *Kommersant*. <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1911336>

⁹⁵ Mediator. 2016. "RT Advertising Opportunities" [Рекламные возможности RT], <http://www.mediator-rus.com/images/RT%20-%20Media%202016.pdf>

⁹⁶ Kaitsepolitsei Aastaraamat. 2005. "General Director Foreword" [Peadirektori Eessõna]. <https://web.archive.org/web/20110807131335/http://www.kapo.ee/cms-data/text/38/44/files/aastaraamat-2005-est.pdf>

⁹⁷ Regnum. 2006. "Gallup: 72% of REGNUM readers are executives and specialists" [Gallup: Среди читателей ИА REGNUM 72% - руководители и специалисты]. <https://regnum.ru/news/762315.html>

			<p>Regnum-Baltika (St. Petersburg), Regnum-Primorye (Vladivostok), MariNews (Yoshkar-Ola), and others.</p> <p>The structure also includes regional editions covering cities and regions in Russia and neighboring countries of the CIS. Platform audience in a split by category is as follows.</p> <p>The split of the auditory by gender: 60% men, 40% men.</p> <p>The split of the auditory by age: 24% - 45-54 years old, 31% - 35-44 years old, 24% - 25-34 years old, 20% - 18-24 years old, 7% - 12-17 years old.</p> <p>The split of the auditory by employment: 45% - specialists, 23% - managers and business owners, 16% - students, 7% - employees, 5% - housewives, 3% - other, 2% - workers.</p>
Pravoslavie (Russian Orthodoxy information Internet portal)	http://www.pravoslavie.ru	<p>Russian Orthodox information Internet portal. It was created in 1999 by the editors of the Internet projects of the Sretensky Monastery of the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church with the blessing of Patriarch Alexy II and his successor Patriarch Kirill.⁹⁸</p> <p>The platform delivers the stance of the Orthodox church on social, political, cultural, and artistic areas in Russia, offers Orthodox church review of the media.</p>	<p>The core of the Orthodox audience of Pravoslavie & Pravoslavie i mir is the age group of 20-30 years old and partly 30-40 years old. These are the most socially active and educated people (26.4% of the 20–30-year-old group and 33% of the 30–40-year-old group have higher education), which, as specialized studies show, make up, for example, 24% of</p>
Pravoslavie y mir	https://www.pravmir.ru	<p>Pravoslavie i Mir (rus. Orthodoxy and the World) (Pravmir) is a Russian independent multimedia Internet portal about Orthodoxy (until 2019) and society created in 2004. It is</p>	

⁹⁸ Konstantin Luchenko. 12/17/2003 “Internet in Orthodoxy” [Интернет по-православному]. *Russkiy Journal*. <https://rusk.ru/st.php?idar=1001056>

(Orthodoxy and the World)		<p>created in January 2004 and represented in Russian and English languages.</p> <p>According to the survey “To whom, how and why to explore the Orthodox world”, conducted by the research service “Sreda” in 2011 among 50 scholars studying religion, “Orthodoxy and the World” took second place in the top five most visited sites by respondents.¹⁰⁰</p> <p>In January and April 2019, according to Top.Mail.ru, monthly site traffic exceeded 5,000,000 unique visitors.¹⁰¹</p> <p>In May 2019, according to the Yandex.Radar service, the portal was in first place in terms of traffic among Russian sites in the Christianity category with 2.2 million unique visitors per month.¹⁰²</p>	<p>the Runet’s audience. The users of Pravoslavie i mir becomes the most loyal part of the general audience.⁹⁹</p>
Digital portal Tsargrad	https://tsargrad.tv	<p>Tsargrad is a ultra-right and nationalist Russian information platform founded in 2015 by Russian businessman Konstantin Malofeev. Malofeev is a pro-Putin Russian entrepreneur, billionaire, politician and public figure, owner of Rostelecom shares, one from the financiers of the “Russian world” aligned with Alexander Dugin.¹⁰³ Since</p>	<p>According to data from May 2019, around 1 million people per month enter “Tsargrad TV channel website” into their browser search bar, adding to the channel's multi-million audience. According to Yandex, Tsargrad TV is one of the five most popular news websites. Radar cited the estimation of the resource audience of 7 million people and up to 10</p>

¹⁰⁰ Research Service "Sreda." 12/22/2011. "What threatens Orthodoxy?" the world of science and the world of faith" [«Что угрожает православию?» мир науки и мир веры] <https://sreda.org/2011/expert-opros-issledovanie/1045>

¹⁰¹ Topmail. Rating of Pravmir. <https://top.mail.ru/visits?id=749211&period=2&days=730>

¹⁰² Yandex Radar. 2019. Pravmir. <https://web.archive.org/web/20200813030503/https://radar.yandex.ru/search>

⁹⁹ Pisarevskiy, V. 2013. “The analysis of orthodox internet audience as exemplified in the social network «Vkontakte»”, University proceedings. Volga region

¹⁰³ Alexey Ponamarev. 11/13/2014. " Businessman Malofeev spoke about ties with Strelkov and Boroday" [Бизнесмен Малофеев рассказал о связях со Стрелковым и Бородаем]. <https://republic.ru/posts/47318>

		<p>2014, Malofeev was sanctioned by the European Union, the United States, Canada and a number of other countries, and since 2017 he has been on the interstate wanted list.</p> <p>The platform delivers the opinions on political and social events from the conservative and monarchist positions, while the channel itself positions itself as “the first Russian conservative information and analytical channel.”¹⁰⁴</p> <p>The channel closely cooperates with Russian public, cultural and religious organizations.¹⁰⁵</p> <p>Since January 2020, the channel's CEO has been Dmitry Skuratov (son of former Russian Prosecutor General Yuri Skuratov). Both figures are under the political sanctions of the Washington consensus countries since 2014.</p>	<p>million views of materials on the site per month. The press service for Tsargrad declared their findings on the channel audience to count 11 million unique visitors on its website and 10 million views on social media monthly.</p> <p>The audience are the right-wing conservative and politically active people (the core of the audience is 34+) who are engaged with entrepreneurship, banking, state service, analytics and other businesses. The dominant audience gender is male.¹⁰⁶</p>
RBC	https://www.rbc.ru/	<p>The RBC Group of Companies (GK RosBusinessConsulting) is a pull of companies that make up one of the largest multimedia holdings in Russia. The company was established in 1993 and is based in</p>	<p>According to Medialogia, as of July 22, 2020, the news site rbc.ru was the most frequently cited Russian internet resource in the media in June 2020 and was included in the Top 30 list of most cited sources in Runet.¹¹⁰</p>

¹⁰⁴ Svetlana Povorznyuk. 09/14/2015 ““Maybe stand on a stool and fit a loop?” Yuri Grymov about the Orthodox canal "Tsargrad", Maidan and the road to the light through hell” [«Может, встать на табуретку и приладить петлю?»] [Юрий Грымов о православном канале «Царьград», Майдане и дороге к свету через ад]. <https://lenta.ru/articles/2015/09/14/grymovgrad/>

¹⁰⁵ Irina Pankratova. 11/19/2019. " Cybermonarchy of Constantine. Malofeeva: how the business of an Orthodox billionaire works " [Кибермонархия Константина. Малофеева: как устроен бизнес православного миллиардера]. The Bell. <https://thebell.io/kiber-monarhiya-konstantina-malofeeva-kak-ustroena-biznes-imperiya-pravoslavnogo-milliardera>

¹⁰⁶ Tsargrad. 09/18.2019. " Tsargrad: The audience reached 8 million people a month " [Царьград: Аудитория достигла 8 миллионов человек в месяц]. https://tsgg.ru/articles/auditoriya-tsargradtv-dostigla-8-millionov-chelovek-v-mesyac_387

¹¹⁰ Medialogia. 06/2020. " Top 3 Most Cited News Agencies - June 2020" [Топ-3 самых цитируемых информационных агентств - июнь 2020]. <https://www.mlg.ru/ratings/media/federal/7578/#internet>

		<p>Moscow.¹⁰⁷ Currently, the holding structure includes a portal, newspaper, magazine, thematic sites, research, and other services.</p> <p>The media holding has been owned by Russian entrepreneur Grigory Beryozkin since 2017. Berezkin is the owner of the Euroseverneft group of companies, who is known for his pro-Putin views. The main areas of activity of the companies are the oil industry and the electric power industry, media, and venture investments.¹⁰⁸ Since July 1, 2022, he was put under political sanctions for supporting the war against Ukraine under the sanctions of Australia.¹⁰⁹</p>	<p>RBC launches regional versions in St. Petersburg in 2012, later regional RBC websites were launched under a franchise in such cities as Yekaterinburg, Novosibirsk, Bashkortostan, Vologda Oblast, Kaliningrad, Krasnodar Territory, Nizhny Novgorod, Perm Territory, Rostov-on-Don, Tatarstan, Tyumen, Chernozem region, Caucasus. Monthly audience of RBC Internet projects: 65,540,000 people.</p> <p>Audience by category is split as follows.</p> <p>Split by gender: 44% - women, 56% - men.</p> <p>Split by age: 28% - 25–34 years old, 24% - 18-24 years old, 23% - 35-44 years old, 17% - 45+ years old, 8.6% - 12-17 years old.</p> <p>Split by income level: 47% - average, 42% - above average, 6% - below average, 5% - no answer</p> <p>Split by employment: 26% - managers, owners, 19% - specialists, 18% - students, 14% - employees, 14% - workers, 7% - housewives, 2% - other</p>
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¹⁰⁷ Meduza. 05/17/2016. "12 editions in five years Dispersal, blocking, dismissal of chief editors: how the government reformed the media market " [12 редакций за пять лет Разгоны, блокировки, увольнения главредов: как власть реформировала рынок СМИ] <https://meduza.io/feature/2016/05/17/12-redaktsiy-za-pyat-let>

¹⁰⁸ Kommersant. 07/06/2010. " Berezkin Grigory Viktorovich " [Березкин Григорий Викторович]. <https://web.archive.org/web/20100914132839/http://kommersant.ru/factbook/note.aspx?objectid=12828>

¹⁰⁹ RBC. 07/01/2022. Australia imposed sanctions against Kabaeva, Nisanov, and Putin's nephew" [Австралия ввела санкции против Кабаевой, Нисанова и племянника Путина]. <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/01/07/2022/62be39ec9a794741fe68da2a>

			Average user is 18-44 years old, with average and above average income, predominantly men, largely specialists, students, managers. ¹¹¹
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¹¹¹ Media-Kit. 2020. "Media Holding BRC" [Медиа Холдинг БРК]. http://www.mediator-rus.com/images/mediakits/Media%20kit%20RBK_.pdf

Appendix 2: Table of Codes and Themes

Codes	Description	Subcodes	Examples
Theme 1. “Familization”			
Using literally familial terms	-referring to the objects of speech as brothers, mother, father, or another member of a household	Kiev is the Origin of Russia, a Mother	[...] As for the basic values, these are the values that were created by our faith, because the spiritual basis of the creation of the ancient Russian state, from which the modern sovereign state, originated in Ukraine, appeared. Kiev is the Mother of Russian cities. This is a matrix that has shaped people's worldview, their attitude, value system; and this is the matrix that has existed for 1000 years. What efforts were made to destroy it, especially in post-revolutionary times [...]! ¹¹²
		Motherly Sacrifice	[...] And we continue to build stadiums, factories, everything there, look: most of the investments go to national regions already inside Russia! At one time, when I lived in Kazakhstan, I thought what a rich Russia: gas was provided fifty years ago, all of Kazakhstan and Central Asia were supplied with gas - and Russia is still without gas, half of Russian settlements are without gas! They gave everything there - asphalt, universities, the cosmodrome was built there - because they were crazy, madmen, these old men were sitting in the Kremlin, they did not know geography, did not understand that it was possible to ratify a treaty of friendship a hundred times, but in five minutes they would break all agreements and they will start any war against Russia as soon as the new owner tells them: “Come on, guys, we will protect you!” As with Syria, today they are yelling: “We will give cruise missiles!” [...]! ¹¹³

¹¹² [...] Что касается наших базовых ценностей, это те ценности, которые рождены нашей верой, потому что в духовной основе создания древнерусского государства, от которого произошло уже современное суверенное государство, рожденное в Украине, религиозные ценности. Киев- мать городов русских. Это матрица, которая сформировала мировоззрение людей, их мироощущение, систему ценностей; причем это та матрица, которая существует 1000 лет. Какие усилия предпринимались для того, чтобы ее разрушить, особенно в постреволюционное время! [...] in "Interview of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia to Ukrainian TV journalists" ["Интервью Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Кирилла украинским тележурналистам"], 19.07.2010, Patriarchia.ru, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1223635.html>

¹¹³ [...] И продолжаем строить там стадионы, заводы, все там, посмотрите: больше всего инвестиций идет в национальные регионы уже внутри России! В свое время, когда я жил в Казахстане, я думал, какая богатая Россия: газ дали пятьдесят лет назад, газифицировали весь Казахстан и Среднюю Азию, — а Россия до сих пор без газа, половина русских населенных пунктов без газа! Все отдали туда — асфальт, университеты, космодром построили там же, — потому что без ума, безумцы, старцы эти сидели в Кремле, географии не знали, не понимали, что можно сто раз ратифицировать договор о дружбе, но за пять минут порвут все договора и начнут любую войну против России, как только новый хозяин им скажет: «Давай, ребята, мы вас защитим!». Как с Сирией, вот уже сегодня орут: «Крылатые ракеты дадим!». Оказывается, это сирийское руководство применяет газы! Уже сказали даже на Западе, что газы применяет оппозиция, бандиты собрались со всего мира, — нет, виноват Асад! Это чудовищно, и все на наших глазах

		Sisters and Brothers	[...] The crisis in Ukraine has also become a challenge for the entire international community, which has grown from a political confrontation into fratricidal abuse. In the southeast of the country, blood was shed for months, until now human rights are violated, people suffer from wounds, diseases, devastation, and disorder. Many thousands of refugees have fled their homes [...]. ¹¹⁴
		We are one family	[...] So, in our life there should be something that binds us even more firmly than our own blood. We are all one family [...]. ¹¹⁵ - Your desire to preserve the unity of the Russian Orthodox Church and our Slavic brotherhood deserves high marks. ¹¹⁶
Political conformity	-critiquing political preferences as	Demonization of the Opposition in the periphery	[...] Today, very difficult events are taking place in fraternal Ukraine: we know how the forces of evil rose up against the Orthodox Church. [...] Therefore, all those who today strive to establish the so-called independent church and for this are ready to

происходит, поэтому давайте уметь быстрее и побольше думать о своих интересах [...] in "On amendments to the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between Russia and Kazakhstan. Plenary meeting of the State Duma" ["О внесении изменений в Договор о дружбе, сотрудничестве и взаимной помощи между Россией и Казахстаном. Пленарное заседание Госдумы"] 14.06.2013. Duma.gov. <https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/166225-6>

¹¹⁴ [...] Вызовом для всего международного сообщества стал и кризис на Украине, который из политического противостояния перерос в братоубийственную брань. На юго-востоке страны в течение месяцев лилась кровь, донныне нарушаются права человека, люди страдают от ран, болезней, разрухи, неустroенности. Многие тысячи беженцев покинули свои дома [...] in "Greetings from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill to the Participants of the XII Annual Session of the Dialogue of Civilizations Forum" [Приветствие Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла участникам XII ежегодной сессии форума «Диалог цивилизаций»], 09.25.2014. Patriarchia.ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3759266.html>

¹¹⁵ [...] Вот и в нашей жизни должно быть нечто, что связывает нас еще прочней, чем родная кровь. Мы все с вами одна семья [...] in "Word of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill in the Brest Fortress on the anniversary of the beginning of the Great Patriotic War" ["Слово Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла в Брестской крепости в годовщину начала Великой Отечественной войны"] 22.06.2015. Pravoslavie.ru. <https://pravoslavie.ru/80303.html>

¹¹⁶ "Alexander Lukashenko meets with Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia" ["Александр Лукашенко встретился с Патриархом Московским и всея Руси Кириллом"], Rossyiskaya Gazeta, 37 (5710), 12.06.2012, Patriarchiaru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5934167.html>

	alienation from the regional community.		destroy the lives of other people, break church life, break in and seize churches and monasteries, is this language of power the language of God? [...]. ¹¹⁷
	-demonization of the alternative political regimes and self-grandiose assessment as political allies. -emphasizing brotherhood as a ground for political conformity and economic	Demonization of the Western Countries	[...] On the background of all this [Western system of values], processes are developing that shock people. All these topics of same-sex marriage, euthanasia, including child euthanasia, which is now allowed in Belgium, all this helps many people understand that something needs to be changed in our civilization. Will we understand all this enough to unite in some specific actions, or will we once again enter a new round of destruction of the human personality and human civilization? And how many such turns are still left to us before the Great and Terrible Judgment of God? No one knows. In addition to a direct threat to human life, we are faced with a deliberate erosion of moral principles. These problems seem to me to be the most important issues of our time [...]. ¹¹⁸
	collaboration.	Freedom manipulation	Listen to those who are fighting for the so-called independent church [in Ukraine], listen to intonations and words, what kind of anger and hatred are there. ¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ [...] Поэтому все те, кто сегодня стремятся утвердить так называемую независимую церковь и ради этого готовы погубить жизни других людей, сломать церковную жизнь, ворваться и захватить храмы и монастыри, разве этот язык силы является языком Божиим? [...] in "Patriarch Kirill: the authors of the branch of the church in Ukraine speak of light, but are in darkness" [Патриарх Кирилл: авторы отделения церкви на Украине говорят о свете, но пребывают во тьме] 12.09.2018. TASS. <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/5890415>

¹¹⁸ [...] На фоне всего этого развиваются процессы, которые шокируют людей. Все эти темы однополых браков, эвтаназии, включая и детскую эвтаназию, которая теперь разрешена в Бельгии, всё это помогает понять многим людям, что в нашей цивилизации надо что-то менять. Поймем ли мы все это настолько, чтобы объединиться в каких-то конкретных действиях или в очередной раз выйдем на новый виток разрушения человеческой личности и человеческой цивилизации? И сколько нам таких витков еще осталось до Великого и Страшного Божиего Суда? Никто не знает. Помимо прямой угрозы жизни человека мы сталкиваемся с сознательным размытием нравственных принципов. Эти проблемы представляются мне важнейшими вопросами современности [...] in "Speech by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill at the Diplomatic Academy of the Russian Foreign Ministry" ["Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла в Дипломатической академии МИД России"], 30.05.2015. Pravoslavie.ru. <https://pravoslavie.ru/79087.html>

¹¹⁹ [...] Послушайте тех, кто борется за так называемую независимую церковь, прислушайтесь к интонациям и словам, какая же там злоба и ненависть. [...] in "Patriarch Kirill: the authors of the branch of the church in Ukraine speak of light but are in darkness" [Патриарх Кирилл: авторы отделения церкви на Украине говорят о свете, но пребывают во тьме] 12.09.2018. TASS. <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/5890415>

	Self-grandiosity versus Degrading	[...] In the opinion of the puppeteers and in the opinion of the President of Ukraine, this cathedral was supposed to unite everyone and create a single Orthodox Church for all of Ukraine. What happened? What happened is that just two schismatic groups united, “the patriarch explained. At the same time, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, headed by the Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine, Onufriy, has been and remains a blessed, spiritual organism [...]. ¹²⁰
	They are being manipulated	[...] They [Kazakhs] love Russians, but they are told: Russians are exploiters, Russia is a prison of nations. They did not understand, but believed: well, we are driving the Russians out [...]. ¹²¹
	They don't know us	In Western countries, and above all in the United States, there was a distorted coverage of events in the Caucasus [referring to the War in Georgia in 2008]. ¹²²

¹²⁰ [...] По мнению кукловодов и по мнению президента Украины, этот собор должен был объединить всех и создать единую для всей Украины православную Церковь. А что получилось? А получилось то, что просто две раскольнические группировки объединились”, — объяснил патриарх. В то же время Украинская православная церковь во главе с митрополитом Киевским и всея Украины Онуфрием как была, так и остается благодатным, духовным организмом [...] in "Patriarch Kirill: God grant that we are always on the side of the world " [Патриарх Кирилл: Дай Бог, чтобы мы всегда были на стороне света], .01.07.2019. Pravmir. <https://www.pravmir.ru/patriarh-kirill-day-bog-chtobyi-myi-vsegdayili-na-storone-sveta/>

¹²¹ [...] Они любят русских, но им говорят: русские - эксплуататоры, Россия — тюрьма народов. Они не поняли, но поверили: хорошо, выгоняем русских [...] in "On the ratification of the Protocol on Amendments to the Collective Security Treaty of May 15, 1992" ["Стенограмма О ратификации Протокола о внесении изменений в Договор о коллективной безопасности от 15 мая 1992 года"], 07.08.2011. Duma.gov. <http://duma.gov.ru/media/files/a5vVhfcGTw0U3XmCvgYsW1AHLWx0khF5.pdf>

¹²² [...] В странах Запада, и прежде всего в США, было искаженное освещение событий на Кавказе [...] in "Russia at the G20 summit" [Россия на саммите "двадцатки"], 16.11.2008. Interfax. <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/45748>

		We are closer than them	[...] It is not in vain that Holy Russia is considered the lot of the Most Holy Mother, because few of the European nations have endured as many trials and troubles as the peoples of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine [...]. ¹²³
		We are more civil than the West	[...] Moscow behaves in relation to the events in Belarus much more restrained and neutral than many other countries - both European and the United States [...]. ¹²⁴
		We the right, They the wrong	[...] This will not lead to anything good out of it [assistance to Ukraine from Western countries], since it is impossible to strengthen democracy without respecting the Law. And the events of recent months, you know, did not surprise me at all when the leadership of this “color movement”, in fact, “spat in the face” of its political sponsors, issuing a decree declaring Stepan Bandera [presumably pro-Nazi Ukrainian activist] a hero of Ukraine. A man who not only stained himself with cooperation with the Nazis, but also distinguished himself with particular cruelty in the reprisals against Jews and Poles. But I would like to hope that this difficult period in the life of the brotherly Ukrainian people is behind us, and it will be possible to build normal, interstate relations, make plans in the economic sphere, strengthen interaction in the social sphere and offer joint work in those integration areas in which this or otherwise, Ukraine took part, let's say,

¹²³ [...] Святу Русь не зря считают уделом Пресвятой Богородицы, потому что мало кто из европейских народов претерпел столько испытаний и бед, как народы Беларуси, России и Украины [...] in "Metropolitan Filaret and Patriarch Kirill unveiled a monument to Alexy II in Minsk" ["Митрополит Филарет и патриарх Кирилл открыли памятник Алексию II в Минске"], Patriarchia.ru, 14.10.2012, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2526625.html>

¹²⁴ [...] Москва ведет себя в отношении событий в Беларуси гораздо сдержаннее и нейтральнее, чем многие другие страны - и европейские, и США [...]. in "Putin said that Russia behaves with restraint towards Belarus" [Путин заявил, что Россия ведет себя сдержанно по отношению к Белоруссии] 08.27.2020. RIA Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20200827/belorussiya-1576376647.html>

			with less activity than it was originally announced. After all, you and I here, just in this place, agreed on the initial processes for the creation of the Customs Union [...]. ¹²⁵
	Western countries are enemies		[...] I want to say that the peoples [Russians and Ukrainians] do not want to quarrel, the peoples on the usual level treat each other well - they are neighbors, they can be together, so to speak, at work. Basically, this [the quarrel] is done by officials who represent the state, leaders, including various labor collectives - this is what we are talking about. Why are they doing this? First, they fulfill the order of their new curators, mainly the United States, to prevent the return of Russia as a country that can influence the situation in these states. And secondly, at the local level, it is beneficial for them to squeeze out the Russians - apartments are vacated. Why would they build something? The Russians are leaving - apartments are free, jobs are free. This kind of stimulates them to continue whipping up anti-Russian sentiments. And all this is very unpleasant for us. ¹²⁶

¹²⁵ [...] Ни к чему хорошему это не приведет, поскольку невозможно укреплять демократию, не уважая Закон. И события последних месяцев, знаете, меня несколько не удивили, когда руководство этого «цветного движения», по сути, «плюнуло в лицо» своим политическим спонсорам, издав указ об объявлении Степана Бандеры героем Украины. Человека, который не только запятнал себя сотрудничеством с нацистами, но и отличался особой жестокостью при расправах с евреями и поляками. Но хочется надеяться, что этот тяжелый период в жизни братского нам всем украинского народа позади, и можно будет выстраивать нормальные, межгосударственные отношения, строить планы в сфере экономики, укреплять взаимодействие в социальной сфере и предложить совместную работу по тем интеграционным направлениям, в которых так или иначе Украина принимала участие, скажем так, с меньшей активностью, чем заявлялось первоначально. Ведь мы с Вами здесь, вот как раз в этом месте, договаривались о начальных процессах по созданию Таможенного союза [...] in Putin: Yushchenko's decree on Bandera is a "spit in the face" of political sponsors" [Путин: указ Ющенко о Бандере - "плевок в лицо" политическим спонсорам], 02.15.2010. RIA Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20100215/209338095.html>

¹²⁶ [...] Хочу сказать, что народы не хотят ссориться, народы на обычном уровне друг к другу относятся хорошо — они соседи, они могут быть вместе, так сказать, и на работе. В основном это делают чиновники, которые представляют государство, руководители, в том числе и различных трудовых коллективов, — об этом идёт речь. Почему они это делают? Во-первых, выполняют заказ своих новых кураторов, в основном США, — не допускать возврата России как страны, которая может влиять на ситуацию в этих государствах. И во-вторых, на местном уровне им выгодно выдавливание русских — освобождаются квартиры. Зачем им что-то строить? Русские уезжают — квартиры свободные, рабочие места свободные. Это как бы стимулирует их к тому, чтобы продолжать нагнетать антирусские настроения. И нам все это очень неприятно [...] in "On the statement of the State Duma In connection with manifestations of a negative attitude towards the peoples of Russia and a single historical past in a number of states of the former republics of the USSR " ["О заявлении Госдумы В связи с проявлениями негативного отношения к народам России и единому историческому прошлому в ряде государств бывших республик СССР"], 04.25.2011. Duma.gov. <http://duma.gov.ru/news/5617/>

Mutual duty to aid	-justification of investments with brotherly assistance; -framing strategic supply with arsenal as brotherly aid.	Friends	[...] If we maintain these relations - and we must do this - I think the friendship between Russia and Kazakhstan, Russians and Kazakhs will be eternal. And this is for the good of both the Russian, and Kazakh people. We will always be loyal to this policy [...]. ¹²⁷
		Responsibilities	There is no need to hide something [about strategic assistance to Belarus], there are relevant articles that say that the member states of the comrade State ... should help each other both in protecting sovereignty, external borders, and in protecting stability [...]. So, in this regard, of course, we have obligations to Belarus, and Alexander Grigorievich Lukashenko raised the question. He would like us to provide him with appropriate assistance, if necessary [...]. ¹²⁸
		We care	[...] We do not have diplomatic relations with Georgia now, and this is the result of the aggression that was undertaken last year by the Saakashvili regime. In other words, there are practically no interstate relations [...]. And we would like to have these relations in the highest sense of the word ... Regimes like Saakashvili, they come and go, but feelings between the peoples remain [...]. ¹²⁹

¹²⁷ [...] Если мы сохраним эти отношения — а мы должны это сделать — я думаю, дружба России и Казахстана, русских и казахов будет вечной. А это на благо как российского, русского, так и казахского народа. Мы этой политике будем всегда верны [...] in "His Holiness Patriarch Kirill awarded the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev Order of St. Sergius of Radonezh" ["Святейший Патриарх Кирилл наградил Президента Республики Казахстан Н.А. Назарбаева орденом преподобного Сергия Радонежского I степени"], 12.21.2015. Patriarchia.ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/4301954.html?ref=tjournal.ru>

¹²⁸ [...] Нет необходимости что-то скрывать, есть соответствующие статьи, которые говорят о том, что государства - члены Союзного государства... должны оказывать друг другу помощь и в защите суверенитета, внешних границ, и в защите стабильности, - сказал Путин. — Значит, в этой связи, конечно, у нас есть обязательства перед Беларусью, и Александр Григорьевич Лукашенко так и поставил вопрос. Он хотел бы, чтобы мы оказали при необходимости ему соответствующую помощь [...] in in "Putin promised Belarus to protect its sovereignty" [Путин пообещал Белоруссии защитить ее суверенитет]. 08.27.2020. Interfax. <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/723465>

¹²⁹ [...] У нас сейчас нет дипломатических отношений с Грузией, и это результат той агрессии, которая была предпринята в прошлом году режимом Саакашвили. Иными словами, межгосударственные отношения практически отсутствуют [...], и мы хотели бы иметь эти отношения в самом высоком смысле этого слова... Режимы, подобные Саакашвили, они приходят и уходят, а чувства между народами остаются [...] in "Regimes like Saakashvili come and go, but feelings between nations remain" [Режимы, подобные Саакашвили, приходят и уходят, а чувства между народами остаются]. 07.25.2009. Regnum. <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/1189944.html>

		We need to care of them	[...] Well, they [Kazakhs] don't want to go to some kind of Europe from distant Kyrgyz villages to fight some kind of Germany - they don't understand this. How our guys did not understand what we were doing in Afghanistan, who we were defending there, what we fought for there ... Central Asia must be protected: they will all return to us [...]. ¹³⁰
Private connections	-mentioning relatives from a country of reference; -pointing out the common traits of national character;	Personal Relatives	We are certainly not indifferent to what is happening there [in Belarus]. This is a very close, perhaps, the closest country to us. And the closest ethnically, both linguistically, culturally, spiritually, whatever. We have dozens, maybe hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of direct family ties. The closest cooperation in industry [...]. ¹³¹
		National kinship	[...] I sincerely wish peace and prosperity to the people of Georgia, with whom we are bound by centuries-old bonds of friendship and kinship [...]. ¹³²

¹³⁰ [...] Ну не хотят из дальних киргизских аулов ехать в какую-то Европу воевать с какой-то Германией — им это непонятно. Как нашим ребятам было непонятно, что мы делали в Афганистане, кого мы там защищали, за что мы там воевали... Среднюю Азию надо беречь: они все к нам вернуться [...] in "On ratification of the Protocol on Amendments to the Collective Security Treaty of May 15, 1992" ["О ратификации Протокола о внесении изменений в Договор о коллективной безопасности от 15 мая 1992"]. 10. 07.2011. Duma.gov. <http://duma.gov.ru/news/6161/>

¹³¹ [...] Нам, безусловно, не безразлично, что там происходит. Это очень близкая, может быть, самая близкая нам страна. И этнически самая близкая, и в языковом плане, и в культурном, духовном, в каком угодно. У нас десятки, может, сотни тысяч, если не миллионы, прямых родственных связей. Теснейшая кооперация в промышленности [...] in "Putin called Belarus the closest country to Russia" [Путин назвал Белоруссию самой близкой России страной], 08.27.2020. RIA Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20200827/belorussiya-1576378435.html>

¹³² [...] Искренне желаю мира и процветания народу Грузии, с которым нас связывают многовековые узы дружбы и духовного родства. Рассчитываю на конструктивное взаимодействие между нашими странами в интересах развития добрососедских отношений, укрепления стабильности и безопасности на Кавказе [...] in "Congratulations to President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili on the national holiday of Georgia - the Day of Restoration of State Independence" ["Поздравление Президенту Грузии Михаилу Саакашвили с национальным праздником Грузии – Днём восстановления государственной независимости"] 05.26.2008 Kremlin.ru. <http://special.kremlin.ru/catalog/keywords/82/events/214>

	-labeling a country of reference as brother nation;		
Theme 2: Enmeshment			
Common roots	-reference to common traits of the nation character; -reference to common starting point in the history of origination; -referring to the common origins of ethnic, linguistic,	Common blood	[...] This leads to the idea that there is something in our life that is able to unite people more than anything – our common blood. From experience we know that native blood is not a guarantee of brotherly relations, and with great sorrow people sometimes testify that love has dried up and the family has collapsed. But at that moment, when the soldiers in the Brest Fortress stood shoulder to shoulder to defend the Motherland, no one had any doubts. There was a genuine brotherhood, which even death could not break [...]. ¹³³
		Common Destiny	[...] Belarus, Russia, Ukraine - three fraternal peoples, linked by a common destiny, a common past and, I am sure, having one common future [...]. ¹³⁴
		Culturally Close	[...] If we keep the main thing, the common thing, we will always be friends, strategic allies, the closest co-workers, which means that the historical community that has

¹³³ [...] Это приводит к мысли о том, что есть в мире, есть в нашей жизни нечто, что способно соединять людей больше, чем родная кровь. Из опыта мы знаем, что родная кровь не является гарантией братских отношений, и с великой скорбью люди порой свидетельствуют о том, что иссякла любовь и разрушилась семья. Но в тот момент, когда бойцы в Брестской крепости плечом к плечу встали на защиту Родины, ни у кого не было сомнений. Там было подлинное братство, разорвать которое не могла даже смерть [...] in "Patriarch Kirill: There must be something in our life that binds us stronger than our kinship blood" [Патриарх Кирилл: В нашей жизни должно быть нечто, что связывает нас прочней, чем родная кровь], 06.22.2015. Pravmir. <https://www.pravmir.ru/patriarh-kirill-v-nashey-zhizni-dolzhno-byit-nechto-chto-svyazyivaet-nas-prochney-chem-rodnaya-krov>

¹³⁴ [...] Беларусь, Россия, Украина - три братских народа, связанные единой судьбой, единым прошлым и, уверен, имеющие одно единое будущее [...] in "Patriarch Kirill: Belarus, Russia, Ukraine - have one united future" [“Патриарх Кирилл: Беларусь, Россия, Украина - имеют одно единое будущее”], Pravoslavie.ru, <https://pravoslavie.ru/146184.html>

	cultural, religious character		formed over the millennium of our common history will find the correct implementation [...]. ¹³⁵
		Ethnically close	[...] The Russian and Belarusian people are, in my opinion, the same thing as the Ukrainian and Russian, they are almost the same, in the ethnic sense of the word and from the point of view of our history and spiritual principles. Therefore, I am very glad that we have such a rapprochement with Belarus [...]. ¹³⁶
		Industrially close	[...] But, in addition to the interreligious aspect, which deserves deep respect, I would like to especially note the economic prosperity of Kazakhstan, its participation in integration processes. Nursultan Abishevich was one of the initiators of integration trends in the post-Soviet space. And now we already have a customs union and a common economic space, and we are striving for even greater integration results. Undoubtedly, Kazakhstan is a very indicative reflection of all the positive results that such an integration policy gives [...]. ¹³⁷

¹³⁵ [...] Если мы будем сохранять, то главное, общее, что есть, мы будем всегда друзьями, стратегическими союзниками, самыми близкими соратниками, а это значит, что будет находить правильную реализацию та историческая общность, которая сформировалась за тысячелетие нашей общей истории [...] in "Everything that is aimed at artificially separating Russians and Ukrainians immediately provokes the deepest division within Ukraine itself" ["Все то, что направлено на искусственное разделение россиян и украинцев, немедленно провоцирует глубочайшее разделение внутри самой Украины"], 08.25.2009. Patriarchia.ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/726785.html>

¹³⁶ [...] Русский и белорусский народ — это, по-моему, то же самое, что украинский и русский, это почти одно и то же, в этническом смысле слова и с точки зрения нашей истории, духовных начал. Поэтому тому, что у нас с Белоруссией происходит такое сближение, я этому очень рад [...] in "Putin did not answer the question about the possibility of leading an alliance with Belarus" ["Путин не ответил на вопрос о возможности возглавить союз с Белоруссией"].12.19.2019. RBC. <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/19/12/2019/5dfb58bc9a794711a23ea316>

¹³⁷ [...] Но, помимо межрелигиозного аспекта, который заслуживает глубокого уважения, я бы хотел особенно отметить экономическое процветание Казахстана, его участие в интеграционных процессах. Нурсултан Абишевич был одним из инициаторов интеграционных тенденций на постсоветском пространстве. А сейчас мы имеем уже и таможенный союз, и общее экономическое пространство, и стремимся к еще большим интеграционным результатам. Несомненно, Казахстан является очень показательным отображением всех тех положительных результатов, которые такая интеграционная политика дает [...] in "Interview of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill following a meeting with the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev" ["Интервью Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла по итогам встречи с Президентом Республики Казахстан Н. А. Назарбаевым"], Pravoslavie.ru, 30.05.2012 <https://pravoslavie.ru/53888.html>

		Language close	For example, in Russian there is no name for the country Kyrgyzstan - there is Kyrgyzstan. We say Tajikistan, not “Tochistan”, as the Tajiks themselves say. So why should an exception be made for the Kyrgyz? Or another textbook example - it is correct, in accordance with the norms of the Russian language, to speak “in Ukraine” and not “in Ukraine”. We do not say “in the Urals,” so why should we change the language for Ukraine? The city in Kazakhstan, where I come from, is called in Russian Alma-Ata, and not Almaty, as some impose. And there are many such examples when many are wrong. It is high time to bring the official Russian language to uniformity. ¹³⁸
		Spiritually Close	I think that our unity - the unity of the spiritual space of Holy Russia, historical Russia - is a huge civilizational project, and it is not meant to be led. It is designed to generate ideas, and this is happening now; it is designed to pose worldview challenges that others will need to respond to. We have the potential to develop a genuine dialogue between East and West, and not a “rider with a horse” dialogue. And only such a dialogue will lead to the building of a united Europe. A united Europe cannot be built according to patterns that were not created by our great civilization, independent and original. If we want to build this Europe, we must agree to create new patterns. Maybe the Lord will lead us to this and we will be able to make our civilizational contribution to building in the world those just relations that many dream of. ¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Например, в русском языке нет названия страны Кыргызстан – есть Киргизия. Мы же говорим Таджикистан, а не «Точистан», как произносят сами таджики. Так почему должны делать исключение для киргизов? Или другой хрестоматийный пример – правильно в соответствии с нормами русского языка говорить «на Украине», а не «в Украине». Мы же не говорим «в Урале», так почему должны менять язык под Украину? Город в Казахстане, откуда я родом, называется по-русски Алма-Ата, а не Алматы, как некоторые навязывают. И таких примеров, когда многие ошибаются, много. Давно пора привести официальный русский язык к единообразию [...] in "Vladimir Zhirinovsky: it's time to bring the official Russian language to uniformity" ["Владимир Жириновский: пора привести официальный русский язык к единообразию"], Duma.gov, 15.12.2017, <http://api.duma.gov.ru/api/transcriptFull/2019-01-17>

¹³⁹ [...] Я думаю, что наше единство — единство духовного пространства Святой Руси, исторической Руси, — это огромной силы цивилизационный проект, и он не предназначен для того, чтобы быть ведомым. Он предназначен для того, чтобы генерировать идеи, и это сейчас происходит; он предназначен для того, чтобы бросать

		Strategically close	Of course, Belarus is our closest strategic partner and ally. We cooperate in all areas, from the military to the humanitarian spheres, solve social issues in the interests of our citizens, develop cooperation ties - both within the Union State, and within the Customs Union, and now also within the Eurasian Economic Union. We have many big, serious plans. ¹⁴⁰
Shared historical experience	-justifying actions that assumedly violate sovereignty with a reference to shared historical experience; -justifying current conflict or	Common History	And God forbid that the further sovereign development of fraternal states be accompanied by the preservation of that community, without which we will not be successful in the future, because our strength comes from a common root. I would like to express my deep satisfaction with the fact that our holiday is traditionally accompanied by a youth festival. How important it is that more and more generations of Ukrainians, Russians and Belarusians should be involved in this holiday, in this perception of our common historical path and our unity. ¹⁴¹

мировоззренческие вызовы, на которые другим потребуется ответить. У нас есть потенциал для развития подлинного диалога Востока и Запада, а не диалога «всадника с лошадей». И только такой диалог приведет к построению единой Европы. Единая Европа не может быть построена по лекалам, которые не создавались нашей с вами великой цивилизацией, самостоятельной и самобытной. Если мы хотим строить эту Европу, мы должны договориться о том, чтобы создать новые лекала. Может быть, Господь приведет нас к этому, и мы сможем внести свой цивилизационный вклад в построение в мире тех справедливых отношений, о которых многие мечтают [...]. in "Speech by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill on the air of the Ukrainian TV channel 'Inter,'" ["Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла в прямом эфире украинского телеканала «Интер»"]. 07.28.2009. Pravoslavie.ru. <https://pravoslavie.ru/31357.html>

¹⁴⁰ [...] Безусловно, Беларусь - наш самый близкий стратегический партнёр, союзник. Мы сотрудничаем по всем направлениям, начиная от военного и заканчивая гуманитарными сферами, решаем социальные вопросы в интересах наших граждан, развиваем кооперационные связи - и в рамках Союзного государства, и в рамках Таможенного союза, а теперь и в рамках Евразийского экономического союза. У нас много больших, серьёзных планов [...]. in "Meeting of Vladimir Putin with President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko" ["Встреча Владимира Путина с президентом Белоруссии Александром Лукашенко"], 08.07.2015. Kremlin.ru. <http://special.kremlin.ru/catalog/keywords/23/events/49888>

¹⁴¹ [...] И дай Бог, чтобы дальнейшее суверенное развитие братских государств сопровождалось сохранением той общности, без которой мы не будем иметь успеха в будущем, потому что от общего корня и происходит наша сила. Я хотел бы выразить глубокое удовлетворение в связи с тем, что праздник наш традиционно сопровождается молодежным фестивалем. Как важно, чтобы к этому празднику, к этому восприятию нашего общего исторического пути и нашего единства были приобщены все новые и новые поколения украинцев, россиян и белорусов [...]. in "Speech of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill at the opening of the International Festival of Slavic Peoples 'Slavic Unity - 2012'" ["Слово Святейшего

	contradictory situation with the past experience of shared sovereignty; -referring to shared traumatic experience as a ground for desirable closeness in present	Condemnation of Soviets	[...] Why are they still not very fond of us there today? Because we forced them to enter the USSR. They entered the Russian Empire with pleasure because there were no states there. When the power in St. Petersburg collapsed, they began to create their own states. This is the same problem! In 1991, everything collapsed there again, they were already accustomed to the Soviet format and did not want to go anywhere [...]. ¹⁴²
		Empire Nostalgia	[...] Once we solved problems in Central Asia under the king. We solved it very well, there were no problems. There were no states there, there were emirates, which themselves signed all the agreements. There were Russian border guards everywhere, there were no problems. From there, cotton and fruits went to the center of Russia, and those goods that the population needed went there. But the Soviet power came [...]. ¹⁴³

Патриарха Кирилла на открытии Международного фестиваля славянских народов 'Славянское единство — 2012"]. 06.30.2012. Patriarchia.ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2314437.html>

¹⁴² [...] За что нас до сих пор сегодня там не очень любят? За то, что мы их заставили войти в СССР. В Российскую Империю они с удовольствием вошли, потому что там не было государств. Когда рухнула власть в Петербурге, они стали создавать собственные государства. В этом же проблема! В 91-м году ещё раз всё там обрушилось, они уже привыкли к советскому формату и не хотели никуда уходить [...] in "On the interaction of border and other departments of the CIS in providing assistance in the emergence and settlement of crisis situations at external borders. Plenary session" ["О взаимодействии пограничных и иных ведомств СНГ в оказании помощи при возникновении и урегулировании кризисных ситуаций на внешних границах. Пленарное заседание"], 05.14.2010. Duma.gov. <http://duma.gov.ru/news/4494/>

¹⁴³ [...] Когда-то мы решали проблемы в Средней Азии при царе. Решили очень хорошо, не было проблем. Не было там никаких государств, были эмираты, которые сами подписали все соглашения. Стояла везде русская пограничная стража, не было никаких проблем. Оттуда шёл в центр России хлопок, фрукты, а туда шли те товары, в которых нуждалось население. Но пришла советская власть [...] in "On the interaction of border and other departments of the CIS in providing assistance in the emergence and settlement of crisis situations at external borders. Plenary session" ["О взаимодействии пограничных и иных ведомств СНГ в оказании помощи при возникновении и урегулировании кризисных ситуаций на внешних границах. Пленарное заседание"], 05.12.2012 <http://duma.gov.ru/news/4494/>

		Empire was the healthiest relations	[...] The healthiest relations were in tsarist Russia, because we, having annexed some territories, did not create a union, did not talk about a federation. It was about a unitary state: Russia is united and indivisible [...]. ¹⁴⁴
Hierarchized sub-inclusion	-direct association with another sovereign nation as one -denial of the nation's sovereignty; independence and invitation to become one	Entanglement through investment	[...] I think that this would be a very good step in normalizing relations between the countries, bearing in mind that it would help people communicate with each other, help Georgian enterprises work in the Russian market, and generally create conditions for a fundamental final normalization of our relations [...]. ¹⁴⁵
		Hegemonic position of Orthodox Church	[...] I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Russian Orthodox Church is not the Church of the Russian Federation. Today we have more non-Russian episcopate than Russian. The Russian Orthodox Church carries out her salvific mission in accordance with the great tradition of Ecumenical Orthodoxy on the territory of many countries, just like the ancient Patriarchates - Constantinople, Alexandria, whose jurisdiction includes all of Africa, Antioch, whose jurisdiction includes the Middle East and the Middle East. Even a small number of Jerusalem Patriarchate is located on the territory of Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Jordan [...]. ¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ [...] Самые здоровые отношения были в царской России, потому что мы, присоединив какие-то территории, не создавали союза, не говорили о федерации. Речь шла об унитарном государстве: Россия единая и неделимая [...] in "On the ratification of the Agreement on the procedure for the application of special protective, anti-dumping and countervailing measures during the transition period" ["О ратификации Соглашения о порядке применения специальных защитных, антидемпинговых и компенсационных мер в течение переходного периода"] 05.10.2011. Duma.gov. <https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/350331-5>

¹⁴⁵ [...] Думаю, что это было бы очень хорошим шагом в нормализации отношений между странами, имея в виду, что это помогло бы людям общаться друг с другом, помогло бы работать грузинским предприятиям на российском рынке и вообще создало бы условия для фундаментальной окончательной нормализации наших отношений [...] in "'We will continue to be brothers': Vladimir Putin met with the Primate of the Georgian Church Ilia II" ["'По-прежнему будем братьями': Владимир Путин встретился с Предстоятелем грузинской церкви Илией II"], Rossyiskaya Gazeta, №13(5989), 23.01.2013, <https://rg.ru/gazeta/rg-centr/2013/01/24.html>

¹⁴⁶ [...] Я хотел бы обратить Ваше внимание на то, что Русская Православная Церковь — это не Церковь Российской Федерации. У нас сегодня нероссийского епископата больше, чем российского. Русская Православная Церковь осуществляет свою спасительную миссию в соответствии с великой традицией Вселенского Православия на

		<p>How can we enmesh them</p>	<p>In the Tsarist Empire they were told: “You are all subjects of the Russian Tsar”, in the Soviet Union they said: “You are all communists of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan”, but you broke both schemes: there is neither the Orthodox Empire, nor the Soviet Union. And what in return? How to unite them, according to what option?</p> <p>Russophobia was imposed on them, textbooks were rewritten, so today we need to write new textbooks for them, restore everything as it was in the old: the good Russian Empire, the good Soviet Union. And today we are ready to help them on a profitable basis: in return - the cheapest meat, cheap vegetables, fruits, cheap vacations, cheap tourism and everything else, no help out of your pocket is wasted.¹⁴⁷</p>
		<p>Independent Church but United</p>	<p>Therefore, it seems to me that the Church that exists today in Ukraine meets the real needs of the people and the country. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church is independent, at the head of the Church is its Primate, His Beatitude Metropolitan Volodymyr, and the Synod, which decides all questions of church life without any interference from</p>

территории многих стран, так же, как и древние Патриархаты — Константинопольский, Александрийский, в юрисдикцию которого входит вся Африка, Антиохийский, в юрисдикцию которого входят Ближний Восток и Средний Восток. Даже небольшой численно Иерусалимский Патриархат находится на территории Израиля, Палестинской Автономии и Иордании [...] in "The Patriarch will arrive in Ukraine on a 10-day visit" [Патриарх приедет на Украину с 10-дневным визитом], 07.24.2009. RIA Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20090727/178729838.html>

¹⁴⁷ [...] В царской Империи им говорили: «Вы все подданные русского царя», в Советском Союзе говорили: «Все вы коммунисты Узбекистана, Киргизии, Казахстана», но вы поломали обе схемы: нет ни православной Империи, ни Советского Союза. И что взамен? Как их сплотить, по какому варианту? Им навязали русофобию, переписали учебники, поэтому сегодня надо написать им новые учебники, восстановить все, как было в старых: добрая Российская Империя, хороший Советский Союз. И сегодня мы готовы помогать им на выгодной основе: взамен — самое дешёвое мясо, дешёвые овощи, фрукты, дешёвый отдых, дешёвый туризм и всё остальное, никакой помощи из кармана впустую [...] in "Transcripts of the discussion of the bill No. 597857-5 "On Ratification of the Protocol on Amendments to the Collective Security Treaty of May 15, 1992" [Стенограммы обсуждения законопроекта № 597857-5 «О ратификации Протокола о внесении изменений в Договор о коллективной безопасности от 15 мая 1992 года»]. 10.07.2011. Duma.gov. <http://api.duma.gov.ru/api/transcript/597857-5>

			Moscow. And our unity lies in the fact that we recognize ourselves as a great and united Orthodox Church, to which 80% of all Orthodox believers in the world belong. ¹⁴⁸
		Absence of boundaries was healthy. Recover Unity	These peoples respected the Russian Empire when they were on its territory, and there were no republics, but there were provinces, there were our governors, there were normal, healthy economic ties. They do not respect us today not as Russians, not as Russia, but precisely as Soviet communists who brazenly deceived these peoples: they promised them independence, and then red regiments and divisions with sabers walked across all the territories of both Central Asia and Transcaucasia, and 40th year came to the Baltic States. That's why they hate, for deception! ¹⁴⁹
		Russian World	“Where did the Russian land come from ...”. And no one in Kiev called himself Ukrainian, but everyone called themselves Russians, Russians. So called us and our ancient ancestors and the Byzantines - the Russians. When the Ross - so it sounded in Greek - attacked Constantinople as enemies, for they were pagans at that time, they uttered these words with fear, they prayed to the Lord that the Ross would not enter

¹⁴⁸ [...] Поэтому мне кажется, что Церковь, которая сегодня существует в Украине, соответствует реальным потребностям народа и страны. Украинская Православная Церковь является самостоятельной, во главе Церкви — ее Предстоятель, Блаженнейший митрополит Владимир, и Синод, который без всякого вмешательства Москвы решает все вопросы церковной жизни. А наше единство — в том, что мы создаем себя великой и единой Православной Церковью, к которой принадлежат 80 % всех православных верующих в мире [...] “His Holiness Patriarch Kirill: ‘The Ukrainian Orthodox Church possesses spiritual strength and the ability to unite the entire people, and what I see here, communicating with people, convinces me of this’,” [“Святейший Патриарх Кирилл: ‘Украинская Православная Церковь обладает духовной силой и способностью объединять весь народ, и то, что я вижу здесь, общаясь с людьми, меня в этом убеждает’”,] 07.29.2009. Patriarchia.ru <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/707283.html>

¹⁴⁹ [...] Эти народы уважали Российскую империю, когда находились на её территории, и не было никаких республик, а были губернии, были наши наместники, были нормальные, здоровые экономические связи. Не уважают нас сегодня не как русских, не как Россию, а именно как советских коммунистов, которые нагло обманули эти народы: обещали им независимость, а потом красные полки и дивизии с шашками наголо прошли по всем территориям и Средней Азии, и Закавказья, а в 40-м году пришли в Прибалтику. Вот за это они ненавидят, за обман! [...] in “Transcripts of the discussion of the draft resolution No. 526752-5 Session No. 226 On the statement of the State Duma In connection with the manifestations of a negative attitude towards the peoples of Russia and the common historical past in a number of states; former republics of the USSR,” [“Стенограммы обсуждения проекта постановления № 526752-5 Заседание № 226 О заявлении Госдумы В связи с проявлениями негативного отношения к народам России и единому историческому прошлому в ряде государств; бывших республик СССР”], 04.22.2011. Duma.gov. <http://api.duma.gov.ru/api/transcriptResolution/526752-5>

			Constantinople. There was no other name for the people who lived in Kiev and throughout all the expanses of the then Rus. From there the Russian world, from our chronicle, from the Monk Nestor the chronicler. ¹⁵⁰
		We are one Nations	“We are one people”: when Russia and Belarus will unite Russia and Belarus will continue to develop cooperation and build the Union State, but they are not going to unite yet. In any case, Russian President Vladimir Putin assured that the parties did not have such plans, speaking at the St. Petersburg Forum. Minsk adheres to a similar position. Moreover, in bilateral relations, the neighboring republics are not going smoothly now. ¹⁵¹
Theme 3: “Parentization”			
Affection and Emotional Pain	-any general reference emotional pain related to the conflict situation	Affection	Today we are talking about Orthodoxy in Ukraine, which is close to our hearts. We believe that the Orthodox Church will stand, that no schisms, no schismatic associations, no participation of secular power, no evil and militant rhetoric will be able

¹⁵⁰ [...] «Откуда есть пошла русская земля...». И никто в Киеве не называл себя украинцем, а все называли себя русскими, русичами. Так называли нас и древних наших предков и византийцы — руссы. Когда россы — так звучало по-гречески — наступали на Константинополь в качестве врагов, ибо были в то время язычниками, то произносили эти слова со страхом, молились Господу, чтобы россы не вошли в Константинополь. Не было другого наименования у людей, живших в Киеве и по всем просторам тогдашней Руси. Вот отсюда Русский мир, от летописи нашей, от преподобного Нестора летописца [...] in " Patriarch Kirill: What is Russia and where are the borders of the Russian world?" [Патриарх Кирилл: Что такое Россия и где границы Русского мира?] 09.07.2014. Pravmir. <https://www.pravmir.ru/slovo-pastyirya-vyipusk-ot-6-sentyabrya-2014-goda/>

¹⁵¹ [...] Мы один народ: когда объединятся Россия и Белоруссия Россия и Белоруссия продолжат развивать сотрудничество и строить Союзное государство, однако объединяться пока не собираются. Во всяком случае, в отсутствие таких планов у сторон заверил президент РФ Владимир Путин, выступая на Петербургском форуме. Аналогичной позиции придерживаются и в Минске. Тем более, что в двусторонних отношениях у соседних республик сейчас не все гладко [...] in ‘Putin announced the acceleration of unification processes with Belarus’ [Путин заявил об ускорении объединительных процессов с Белоруссией]. 06.07.2019. RBC. <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/01/07/2022/62befff9a79476e61c1b5a9>

	with a given country of reference;		to tear the believers away from life in the non-evening day of the Divine Kingdom, from life in the light of God, and no darkness will be able to embrace and destroy this life. ¹⁵²
	-emotional pain referred to the broken ties with a country of reference;	Emotional Pain	With deep sorrow I received the news of a traffic accident not far from the capital of Kazakhstan, which claimed the lives of people. This tragedy echoed with pain in the hearts of the relatives and friends of the victims of the disaster, as well as in the souls of all those who cannot remain indifferent to the misfortunes of those near and far. The Russian Orthodox Church prays for the lost, asks the Lord for a speedy recovery to the victims and consolation for those in grief. May the Almighty grant prosperity and tranquility to all residents of Kazakhstan. ¹⁵³
		Feeling of Hatred	They do not respect us today not as Russians, not as Russia, but precisely as Soviet communists who brazenly deceived these peoples: they promised them independence, and then red regiments and divisions with sabers walked across all the territories of both

¹⁵² [...] Мы сегодня говорим о Православии в близкой нашему сердцу Украине. Мы верим, что Церковь Православная устоит, что никакие расколы, никакие раскольнические объединения, никакое участие светской власти, никакая злобная и воинственная риторика неспособны будут оторвать верующих людей от жизни в не вечернем дне Божественного Царства, от жизни во свете Божиим, и никакая тьма неспособна будет объять и уничтожить эту жизнь [...] in “Patriarch Kirill declared the inadmissibility of creating an independent church in Ukraine” [Патриарх Кирилл заявил о недопустимости создания независимой церкви на Украине], 12.09.2018. Interfax. <https://www.interfax.ru/world/641468>

¹⁵³ [...] С глубокой скорбью воспринял весть о случившемся недалеко от столицы Казахстана дорожно-транспортном происшествии, унесшем жизни людей. Эта трагедия болью отозвалась в сердцах родственников и друзей жертв катастрофы, а также в душах всех тех, кто не может оставаться безучастным к беде ближних и дальних. Русская Православная Церковь молится о погибших, испрашивает у Господа скорого выздоровления пострадавшим и утешения находящимся в скорби. Да дарует Всевышний благополучие и спокойствие всем жителям Казахстана [...] in “Patriarchal condolences to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev in connection with a car accident near Astana” [“Патриаршее соболезнование Президенту Республики Казахстан Н. А. Назарбаеву в связи с автокатастрофой близ Астаны”], 08.23.2012. Patriarchia.ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2423964.html>

			Central Asia and Transcaucasia, and 40th year came to the Baltic States. That's why they hate, for deception! ¹⁵⁴
		Love	[...] The memory of the enthusiasm with which the Orthodox believers of Ukraine greeted their Patriarch all the way from Kiev to Pochaev will forever remain in my heart and will kindle in it a prayer for the peace and prosperity of Ukraine. The divine services and meetings with believers that took place with great spiritual enthusiasm strengthened the awareness that the spiritual unity of Orthodox brothers and sisters of historical Russia, commanded to us from the common Dnieper font, is indissoluble [...]. ¹⁵⁵
		Trust	I would like to say a few words about the life of the Russian Orthodox Church in Kazakhstan. I would like to note that in recent years, the format of relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the authorities of the Republic of Kazakhstan has become as trusting as possible. In this I see the merit of the President of the country, who, as I well know, has deep respect for Orthodoxy; and the local church leadership, first of all, Metropolitan Methodius. ¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ [...] Не уважают нас сегодня не как русских, не как Россию, а именно как советских коммунистов, которые нагло обманули эти народы: обещали им независимость, а потом красные полки и дивизии с шашками наголо прошли по всем территориям и Средней Азии, и Закавказья, а в 40-м году пришли в Прибалтику. Вот за это они ненавидят, за обман! [...] in “Transcript of the plenary session on the draft resolution of the State Duma on the ratification of the Protocol on Amendments to the Collective Security Treaty of May 15, 1992” [Стенограмма пленарного заседания о проекте постановления Государственной Думы О ратификации Протокола о внесении изменений в Договор о коллективной безопасности от 15 мая 1992 года]. 10.07.2011. Duma.gov. <http://duma.gov.ru/legislative/transcripts/>

¹⁵⁵ [...] Память о воодушевлении, с которым православные верующие Украины встречали своего Патриарха на всем пути от Киева до Почаева, навсегда останется в моем сердце и будет возгревать в нем молитву о мире и благосостоянии Украины. Прошедшие с большим духовным подъемом богослужения и встречи с верующими укрепили осознание того, что духовное единство православных братьев и сестер исторической Руси, заповеданное нам от общей днепровской купели, нерасторжимо [...] in “Patriarch Kirill: The first steps of the Orthodox faith began from Crimea” [Патриаршее послание Блаженнейшему митрополиту Киевскому и всея Украины Владимиру], 08.11.09. Patriarchia.ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/718036.html>

¹⁵⁶ [...] Хотелось сказать несколько слов о жизни Русской Православной Церкви в Казахстане. Я хотел бы отметить, что за последние годы формат отношений между Русской Православной Церковью и властями Республики Казахстан стал максимально доверительным. В этом я вижу заслугу и Президента страны, который, как мне хорошо известно,

		Worrying	-There was only spiritual unity This the thing that united the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. Now, why was it necessary to cut it alive and make it bleed. What for?
Self-Victimization	-drawing oneself as a victim of the situation while executing oppressive actions towards the subordinate	We are the victim	[...] Why mock the Russian people? That's just this, in this regard. Leave the Russians where they live, no discrimination. And it is not necessary for national capital to exist. We gave and gave all the time. Now we are doing the same in the North Caucasus - we give them, and we take them from our territories [...]. ¹⁵⁷
		Russia is being unjustly blamed	In all 14 republics, it does not matter whether they are part of the CIS or not, history textbooks for schoolchildren have been rewritten: everywhere Russia is portrayed as a country that allegedly seized their territories at one time, and they were like colonies of Russia, it is written that our country - even tsarist, even Soviet Russia - was an empire for them. And this gives rise to anti-Russian sentiments in all these republics. ¹⁵⁸

испытывает к Православию глубокое уважение; и местного церковного руководства, в первую очередь, митрополита Мефодия [...] in “Speech by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill at a meeting with the public of Kazakhstan” [“Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла на встрече с общественностью Казахстана”], 01.20.2010. Patriarchia.ru <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1045105.html>

¹⁵⁷ [...] За что издеваться над русским народом? Вот только это, в этом плане. Оставьте русских там, где они живут, никакой дискриминации. И не надо... Национальный капитал чтобы был. Мы же все время давали, давали. Сейчас мы в Северный Кавказ то же самое делаем – мы им даем, а отбираем у своих территорий [...] in “Zhirinovskiy predicted the abolition of the Pension Fund” [Жириновский предсказал упразднение Пенсионного фонда], 09.17.2020. RIA Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20201124/pensii-1586053522.html>

¹⁵⁸ [...] Во всех 14-ти республиках, неважно, входят они в СНГ или не входят, переписаны учебники истории для школьников: везде Россия изображается как страна, которая якобы в своё время захватила их территории, а они были как колонии России, написано, что наша страна — хоть царская, хоть советская Россия — была для них империей. И это порождает антирусские настроения во всех этих республиках [...] in “On the statement of the State Duma. In connection with the manifestations of a negative attitude towards the peoples of Russia and a common historical past in a number of states, the former republics of the USSR” [“О заявлении Госдумы. В связи с проявлениями негативного отношения к народам России и единому историческому прошлому в ряде государств, бывших республик СССР”], 04.22.2011. Duma.gov. <http://duma.gov.ru/legislative/transcripts/>

Shaming	-referring the choice in external and internal affairs of a given country of reference as shameful, degrading or not worthy		-You will be ashamed. Take the transcript and save it for posterity so that they know that the grandmother or grandfather once again refused the Russians to accelerate the adoption of citizenship. I am disgusted to be with you. ¹⁵⁹
Protection	-expression of intentions to protect and shield a country of reference from internal and external threats; -justification of violation of sovereignty of a given	We saved them	[...] And I was just talking about history. For example, that it was Russia that saved the Kazakhs from the Dzungars back in the 17th century, and they themselves asked for inclusion in our country. That Stalin drew a map of Kazakhstan with a pencil, and until the 20th century there was no such concept of “the state of Kazakhstan” at all. I said that Russia has done a lot for the rapid development of Kazakhstan, built a huge number of factories there, for example, the Alma-Ata heavy machine building plant, the Alma-Ata auto repair plant, the Baikonur cosmodrome, the huge coal basins Karaganda and Ekibastuz, gasified the whole of Kazakhstan. 50 years ago, and in Russia today, 40% of the territory is without gas [...]. ¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ [...] Вам будет стыдно! Возьмите стенограмму и сохраните для потомков, чтобы они знали, что бабушка или дедушка в очередной раз отказали русским в ускорении принятия гражданства. Все государства дают - немцы, Израиль, Венгрия, поляки. Моментально дают гражданство без всяких ограничений, - гремел ВВЖ. - Я в качестве протеста покидаю зал, мне противно с вами находиться, когда вы не голосуете за закон в пользу большинства наших граждан. Позор парламенту, который отказывает в праве стать русскими миллионам наших граждан, проживающим за рубежом. Я покидаю такой зал! Мне с вами не по пути! [...] in "Shame, I'm not on my way with you!": Zhirinovsky left the State Duma meeting due to the rejection of the bill on citizenship for Russian children" ["«Позор, мне с вами не по пути!»: Жириновский покинул заседание Госдумы из-за отклонения законопроекта о гражданстве для детей русских"], TASS, 07.19.2019, <https://tass.ru/politika/6567544>

¹⁶⁰ [...] А я лишь рассказывал об истории. Например, что это Россия спасла казахов от джунгар еще в 17 веке, и они сами попросили о включении в состав нашей страны. Что карту Казахстана карандашом начертил Сталин, а до 20 века такого понятия «государство Казахстан» вообще не существовало. Я говорил, что Россия сделала очень много для бурного развития Казахстана, построила там огромное количество заводов, например, Алма-атинский завод тяжелого машиностроения, Алма-атинский авторемонтный завод, космодром «Байконур», огромные угольные бассейны Караганда и Экибастуз, газифицировали весь Казахстан еще 50 лет назад, а в России и сегодня 40% территории без газа [...] in “Kazakhstan is studying the possibility of joining the Power of Siberia - 2 project” [Казахстан изучает возможность присоединения к проекту "Сила Сибири - 2"], 11.26.2019. TASS. <https://tass.ru/ekonomika/7199069>

	country as protection and shielding	We need to protect them	[...] It is our duty to protect these people. And this is a humanitarian mission. We do not pretend to enslave someone, to dictate something to someone. But, of course, we will not be able to stand aside if we see that they are being persecuted, destroyed, subjected to bullying. I would very much like it not to come to this [...]. ¹⁶¹
Nurture	-exposing the actions of boundaries violations as a gesture of care -expression of intentions of nurturing, support and help	We are the truth and kindness and the goodness	[...] We remember with great gratitude and warmth your visit to Kazakhstan, to our capital, when you personally consecrated the cathedral, and today I have the honor on behalf of the head of state to present you with an invitation to the IV Congress of Leaders of World Religions and Traditional Confessions, which will be held at the end of May in Astana. As a person endowed with a very high spirituality, you make an exceptional contribution to the cause of peace and harmony not only in the Russian Federation, but also in the world space, and naturally, your appeal to the congress participants would add significance to this meeting [...]. ¹⁶²
		They should be grateful for the respect of Church	[...] The unification of people on the basis of goodness and justice, opposition to the discord of this world, the Russian Orthodox Church has always considered as one of its most important missions. And in this we are very close with the followers of other traditional religions,” writes His Holiness Patriarch Kirill. Pointing out the need for an open and honest interreligious dialogue, the Patriarch also warned about the need to

¹⁶¹ [...] Это соответствует нашим национальным интересам – защитить этих людей. И это гуманитарная миссия. Мы не претендуем на то, чтобы кого-то поработать, кому-то диктовать что-то. Но, конечно, мы не сможем остаться в стороне, если увидим, что их начинают преследовать, уничтожать, подвергать издевательствам. Очень бы хотелось, чтобы до этого не дошло [...] in "Vladimir Putin answered journalists' questions about the situation in Ukraine" ["Владимир Путин ответил на вопросы журналистов о ситуации на Украине"], 03.04.2014. Kremlin.ru. <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20366>

¹⁶² [...] Мы с огромной благодарностью и теплотой вспоминаем Ваш визит в Казахстан, в нашу столицу, когда Вы лично освятили кафедральный собор, и сегодня я имею честь от имени главы государства вручить Вам приглашение на IV съезд лидеров мировых религий и традиционных конфессий, который состоится в конце мая в Астане. Как личность, наделенная очень высокой духовностью, Вы вносите исключительный вклад в дело мира и согласия не только в Российской Федерации, но и в мировом пространстве, и естественно, Ваше обращение к участникам съезда придало бы значимость этому собранию [...] in "His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with the delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan" ["Святейший Патриарх Кирилл встретился с делегацией Республики Казахстан"], 04.23.2012. Patriarchia.ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2099287.html>

			avoid relativism or syncretism “so that believers can find common answers to modern challenges [Western intervention] without changing their ideas about truth [...]. ¹⁶³
Help, support			[...] You know, we have decided to organize the work of the regions of the Russian Federation to provide appropriate assistance to Crimea, which turned to us for humanitarian support. By uniting the regions bordering Crimea, perhaps providing additional support to our regions so that they can support the Crimeans. We will do this, of course [...]. ¹⁶⁴
Theme 4: Infantilization			
Ridiculization	- speech-act intended to cause contemptuous laughter at a political figure, nation or	Crazy-making	[...] And they [Western countries] understand that [Russian capacity is enough to reflect the attack on North Ossetia]. And even mad Saakashvili understands this. The militarization of Saakashvili's regime did not stop even after the so-called five-day war [...]. ¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ [...] Объединение людей на началах добра и справедливости, противостояние розни мира сего Русская Православная Церковь всегда рассматривала в качестве одной из своих важнейших миссий. И в этом мы очень близки с последователями других традиционных религий», — пишет Святейший Патриарх Кирилл. Указав на необходимость открытого и честного межрелигиозного диалога, Патриарх вместе с тем предупредил о необходимости избегать релятивизма или синкретизма — «чтобы верующие люди могли находить общие ответы на современные вызовы, не изменяя своим представлениям об истине [...] in “The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church sent greetings to the participants of the III Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions” [“Предстоятель Русской Православной Церкви направил приветствие участникам III Съезда лидеров мировых и традиционных религий”], 07.01.2009. Patriarchia.ru <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/682811.html>

¹⁶⁴ [...] У нас принято решение о том, чтобы организовать работу регионов РФ по оказанию соответствующей помощи Крыму, который обратился к нам за гуманитарной поддержкой. И мы, конечно, это сделаем [...]. in "Putin: Russia will help Crimea with money" [Путин: Россия поможет Крыму деньгами], 12.17.2014. Interfax. <https://www.interfax.ru/world/362617>

¹⁶⁵ [...] И они это понимают. И даже безумный Саакашвили это понимает», - добавил российский президент. Глава государства подчеркнул, что «милитаризация режима Саакашвили не останавливалась даже после так называемой пятидневной войны [...] in “Medvedev delivers Putin's message to Xi Jinping” [Медведев передал Си Цзиньпину послание Путина], 02.06.2012. RIA Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20221221/poslanie-1840172306.html>

	phenomenon to belittle the significance of the object of speech, make it seem less important, serious or meaningful.	They are ridiculous	[...] How will the end of the presidential campaign in Ukraine turn out? Poroshenko will bury the country in a quiet way, and Zelensky - with music and jokes. That's the whole difference. The result will be the same: the end of Ukraine [...]. ¹⁶⁶
		They are pet-like	[...] There is a Russian proverb: an affectionate calf sucks two queens. The Belarusian leader has sucked everything out of Russia, but we are already talking how much is possible. What does Lukashenka want? A separate state, but let the prices be domestic. Then let's you be a part of our state. And now he is sitting give Russia, give the European Union. How good [...]. ¹⁶⁷
Patronization	-condescending references to the object of speech (a political figure or nation) as to a disoriented or helpless	Children	[...] We are going through very difficult historical circumstances <...> Remaining faithful to the holy canons, faithful to the paternal tradition, we affirm and will affirm Orthodoxy throughout the world. And no one will lead us astray, no one will make us believe that the violation of church canons can take place at the will of someone. We remain faithful to the tradition of the Church, because we want to be faithful to her children [...]. ¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ [...] Чем обернется окончание президентской кампании на Украине? Порошенко похоронит страну по-тихому, а Зеленский — с музыкой и с шутками. Вот и вся разница. Итог будет тот же самый: конец Украине [...] in “Zhirinovskiy predicted the future of Ukraine under Zelensky and Poroshenko” [“Жириновский спрогнозировал будущее Украины и при Зеленском, и при Порошенко”], RT, 10.14.2017, <https://russian.rt.com/ussr/article/439604-ukraina-nato-armiya>

¹⁶⁷ [...] Есть такая русская поговорка: ласковый теленок двух маток сосет. Вот белорусский руководитель все, что можно, высосал из России, но мы уже говорим: сколько же можно. Что хочет Лукашенко? Отдельное государство, но цены пускай будут внутрироссийскими. С какой стати? Тогда давайте вы будете частью нашего государства. И вот сидит: дай Россия, дай Евросоюз. Как хорошо [...] in “Zhirinovskiy compared Lukashenko with an affectionate calf” [“Жириновский сравнил Лукашенко с ласковым теленком”], 02.04.2017. Interfax. <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/548478>

¹⁶⁸ [...] Мы проходим через очень непростые исторические обстоятельства <...> Оставаясь верными святым канонам, верными преданию отеческому, мы утверждаем и будем утверждать православие во всем мире. И никто не собьет нас с этого пути, никто не заставит нас поверить в то, что нарушение церковных канонов может иметь место по воле кого-то. Мы сохраняем верность преданию Церкви, потому что мы желаем быть верными ее [...] in “Patriarch Kirill: the situation in Ukraine threatens the country's national unity” [“Патриарх Кирилл: ситуация на Украине угрожает общенациональному единству страны”], 08.10.2018. TASS. <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/5650531>

subject in need of approval, discipline, control, instructions, education	Condemnation of sovereignty and autonomy	[...] The problems in relations between Moscow and Tbilisi are the result of the mistake of Paul I who, contrary to the arguments of his advisers, decided to include Georgia in the Russian Empire in order to save the country from Turkey [...]. ¹⁶⁹
	Government associated with the population	[...] Everything that has been done recently, thanks, of course, largely to his organizational talent, his political experience, is all in the stream of interests of Kazakhstan as a state ... Nazarbayev is a very competent leader. I think that in the post-Soviet space, maybe the most literate. He would never go against the will of his people. He subtly senses what the people are waiting for [...]. ¹⁷⁰
	Government disassociated from the populations	[...] But I'll tell you the main thing. My attitude towards the current Georgian leadership has changed personally. The Georgian people have not changed. As it was kind and the most benevolent, it remained so. Even in the most difficult time, when military operations were going on in the Caucasus in connection with the events known to you, I will not repeat such things in vain, but even then, the attitude towards the Georgian people was very kind [...]. ¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ [...] Проблемы в отношениях между Москвой и Тбилиси являются результатом ошибки Павла I, который вопреки доводам своих советников принял решение включить Грузию в состав российской империи, чтобы спасти страну от Турции [...] in “Zhirinovskiy named the goal of aggravation in Georgia” [Жириновский назвал цель обострения в Грузии], 08.07.2020. RIA Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20190708/1556306525.html>

¹⁷⁰ [...] Всё, что сделано за последнее время, благодаря, конечно, в значительной степени его организаторскому таланту, его политическому опыту, — это всё находится в струе интересов Казахстана как государства... Назарбаев очень грамотный руководитель. Думаю, что на постсоветском пространстве, может быть, самый грамотный. Он бы никогда не пошел против воли своего народа. Он это тонко чувствует, чего народ ждет [...], in “Transcript of Vladimir Putin's conversation with participants of the Seliger-2014 forum” [Стенограмма беседы Владимира Путина с участниками форума "Селигер-2014"], 08.30.2014. Rpskiyskaya Gazeta rg.ru. <https://rg.ru/2014/08/30/stenogramma.html>

¹⁷¹ [...] Но скажу главное. У меня лично изменилось отношение к действующему грузинскому руководству. К грузинскому народу не изменилось. Оно как было добрым и самым благожелательным, так и осталось. Даже в самое сложное время, когда на Кавказе шли боевые действия в связи с известными вам событиями, не буду повторять всеу таких вещей, но и тогда отношение к грузинскому народу было самое доброе [...] in “Putin said that his attitude towards the leadership of Georgia has changed” [Путин заявил, что у него изменилось отношение к руководству Грузии], 12.19.2013. RIA Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20131219/985132341.html>

		They asked us to be there	[...] Central Asia loves us: they want to study Russian, they ask for textbooks of the Russian language, they are ready to sell everything to us, they are ready to work anywhere, in Russia or at home, if we give them orders. Profitable cooperation from all points of view: Central Asia has the cheapest vegetables and fruits, there the cheapest meat, wool, cotton [...]. ¹⁷²
		They depend on us	[...] Many Georgians themselves are unhappy that we did not remove the pro-American regime in their country in 2008, because they understand that Georgia has no future without Russia. Therefore, they came to us themselves 200 years ago. Now Georgia is threatened with division between its neighbors, and only their vaunted khachapuri will remain from the country. But they can already be eaten everywhere: from Moscow to New York [...]. ¹⁷³
		We built them from scratch	[...] In Kyrgyzstan, the leaders of which in words are crucifying before us, swearing friendship, asking us for loans, in reality there is direct mockery and sometimes physical violence against the Russians. You might think they themselves built all these cities, roads and so on there. There the Russians came to build! My relatives came there in 1940 - they were building the Turkestan-Siberian railway. Build it yourself, and who will come to you then? Why go when there is a road? Build engineering plants. After

¹⁷² [...] Средняя Азия нас любит: они хотят изучать русский язык, они просят учебники русского языка, они готовы всё нам продать, готовы работать, где угодно, в России или у себя, если мы дадим им заказы. Выгодное сотрудничество со всех точек зрения: в Средней Азии самые дешёвые овощи и фрукты, там самые дешёвые мясо, шерсть, хлопок [...] in "Transcripts of the discussion of the draft law No. 597857-5 "On Ratification of the Protocol on Amendments to the Collective Security Treaty of May 15, 1992" [Стенограммы обсуждения законопроекта № 597857-5 «О ратификации Протокола о внесении изменений в Договор о коллективной безопасности от 15 мая 1992 года»], 11.07.2011. Duma.gov. <http://api.duma.gov.ru/api/transcript/597857-5>

¹⁷³ [...] Многие грузины сами недовольны, что мы не убрали в их стране проамериканский режим в 2008 году, потому что понимают, что будущего у Грузии без России нет. Поэтому они и пришли к нам сами 200 лет назад. Сейчас Грузии грозит раздел между соседями, и от страны останутся только их хваленые хачапури. Но их и так уже можно поесть везде: от Москвы до Нью-Йорка [...] in "The State Duma opposed discrimination against the Russian-speaking population in the CIS countries" [Госдума выступила против дискриминации русскоязычного населения в странах СНГ], 06.25.2019. Rossyiskaya Gazeta rg.ru. <https://rg.ru/2011/04/22/sng-site.html>

			<p>all, we have built a huge number of machine-building, oil-producing and construction enterprises there. There is asphalt everywhere. And look at the country roads in Russia. There is one hundred percent gasification of residential buildings - kitchens and heating, while 40 percent of them have not yet been gasified. And in these conditions, they continue to call us an empire that allegedly took something from there. I am a living witness: we did not take anything from them, we gave everything there. It was I who left my three-room apartment for them, my uncle built a house, has already died, left them for them. We built, made, donated, trained them here, gave them money and even today we continue to help, but we must nevertheless watch out for such negative attitudes towards us, towards the Russian people, towards the Russian language, which take place in almost all republics the former USSR. Therefore, I ask you to support this resolution in this format, in the form of a statement, and then the Committee on CIS Affairs ask you to monitor the situation [...].¹⁷⁴</p>
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¹⁷⁴ [...] В Киргизии, руководители которой на словах перед нами распинаются, клянутся в дружбе, просят у нас кредиты, реально идёт прямое издевательство, а иногда и физическое насилие над русскими. Можно подумать, они сами там построили все эти города, дороги и так далее. Туда русские приехали строить! Вот мои родственники приехали туда в 40-м году — Туркестано-Сибирскую железную дорогу строили. Постройте сами, и кто тогда к вам поедет? Зачем ехать, когда дорога есть? Постройте машиностроительные заводы. Ведь мы построили там огромное количество предприятий именно машиностроения, нефтедобывающего комплекса, строительных. Там везде асфальт. И посмотрите на просёлочные дороги России. Там стопроцентная газификация жилых домов — кухня и отопление, а у нас 40 процентов ещё не газифицировано. И в этих условиях нас продолжают называть империей, которая якобы что-то оттуда забрала. Я живой свидетель: мы ничего у них не забирали, всё туда отдавали. Это я им оставил свою трёхкомнатную квартиру, мой дядя построил дом, уже умер, — им оставил. Мы построили, сделали, подарили, обучали их здесь, деньги давали и даже сегодня продолжаем помогать, но мы должны всё-таки следить за такими отрицательными настроениями в отношении к нам, к русскому народу, к русскому языку, которые имеют место почти во всех республиках бывшего СССР. Поэтому прошу поддержать данное постановление в таком формате, в виде заявления, а дальше Комитет по делам СНГ просим контролировать ситуацию [...] in " On the statement of the State Duma In connection with manifestations of a negative attitude towards the peoples of Russia and a single historical past in a number of states of the former republics of the USSR " ["О заявлении Госдумы В связи с проявлениями негативного отношения к народам России и единому историческому прошлому в ряде государств бывших республик СССР"], 22.04.2011, Duma.gov, <http://api.duma.gov.ru/api/transcriptFull/2011-04-22>

		We don't depend on them	Deputy Vladimir Zhirinovskiy refused to supply vodka to President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko, pointing out that the new generation of Russian citizens would not suffer from bad habits. [...] Sorry, but we don't need your vodka at all. The new generation of Russians doesn't want to drink and smoke. Alexander Grigorievich! Instead of advertising vodka, you'd better figure out how to stop the smuggling of your cigarettes to Russia [...]. ¹⁷⁵
Theme 5: Civil Partnership			
Ideological Vacuum	-recognition of the Other's boundaries and independent will. -recognizing the regional tandem as a cooperation project	Formal attitude	[...] Russia and Kazakhstan are interested that the prices for both raw materials and products produced on these raw materials would be fair for both producers and consumers [...] I believe that here too we should not only help each other friend - what we have been doing so far and intend to do further, but also to coordinate our actions deeper [...]. ¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ [...] Извините, но нам вообще не нужна ваша водка. Новое поколение русских не хочет пить и курить. Александр Григорьевич! Вместо рекламы водки лучше придумайте, как перекрыть контрабанду ваших сигарет в Россию [...] in "Deputy Vladimir Zhirinovskiy refused to supply vodka to President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko" ["Депутат Владимир Жириновский отказал президенту Белоруссии Александру Лукашенко в поставках водки"], 02.15.2019. Tsargrad. https://tsargrad.tv/news/zhirinovskij-otkazal-lukashenko-v-postavkah-vodki_184577

¹⁷⁶ [...] Россия, и Казахстан заинтересованы, чтобы цены и на сырье, и на продукты, которые вырабатываются на этом сырье, были бы справедливыми как для производителей, так и потребителей [...] Я считаю, что и здесь мы должны не только помогать друг другу - что мы делали до сих пор и намерены делать дальше, но и глубже координировать наши действия [...] "Путин предложил Казахстану создать филиал петербургской нефтяной биржи" ["Путин предложил Казахстану создать филиал петербургской нефтяной биржи"] in, Ria News, 12.12.2008, <https://ria.ru/20081212/157117431.html>

including two or more equal units. -accounting for mutual economic interest. -referring to legislation, rules and laws that regulate the scenario of relationship development. -formal or moderate terms in explaining the	Moderate terms describing relationship	[...] I think that this would be a very good step in the normalization of relations between the countries, bearing in mind that it would help people to communicate with each other, would help Georgian enterprises to work in the Russian market and would generally create conditions for the fundamental final normalization of our relations [...] ¹⁷⁷
	Our ideology is economy	[...] The Union was based on only one party and ideology. This is impossible, it must be based on the economy. Now we use economics, we do not put forward any political ideology. But again, the economy is in favor of supporting the weak, in favor of neighbors and friends, in favor of the friendship of peoples. And again, we are losing! [...] ¹⁷⁸
	Partnership	[...] It is natural that in the current difficult conditions our countries have chosen the path of pooling their potentials to counter the negative consequences of the global financial and economic crisis [...] ¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ [...] Думаю, что это было бы очень хорошим шагом в нормализации отношений между странами, имея в виду, что это помогло бы людям общаться друг с другом, помогло бы работать грузинским предприятиям на российском рынке и вообще создало бы условия для фундаментальной окончательной нормализации наших отношений [...] "Press conference of Vladimir Putin" ["Пресс-конференция Владимира Путина"] TASS, 19.12.2013, <https://tass.ru/politika/845092>

¹⁷⁸ [...] Основой для Союза были лишь одна партия и идеология. Это невозможно, в основе должна быть экономика. Сейчас мы используем экономику, никакую политическую идеологию мы не выдвигаем. Но опять экономика в пользу поддержки слабых, в пользу соседей и друзей, в пользу дружбы народов. И опять мы проигрываем! [...] "On the ratification of the Agreement on the procedure for the application of special protective, anti-dumping and countervailing measures during the transition period" ["О ратификации Соглашения о порядке применения специальных защитных, антидемпинговых и компенсационных мер в течение переходного периода"] in Duma.gov, 05.10.2011, <http://api.duma.gov.ru/api/transcript/594843-5>

¹⁷⁹ [...] Закономерно, что в нынешних непростых условиях наши страны выбрали путь объединения своих потенциалов для противодействия негативным последствиям мирового финансово-экономического кризиса [...] "Customs Union should become a lever for overcoming financial crisis - Putin" ["Таможенный союз должен стать рычагом преодоления финкризиса – Путин"] 05.21.2009. RIA Novosti. <https://ria.ru/20090521/171867664.html>

	dynamic in the relationship, referring to the possible interests on both ends.	They are sovereign and independent	[...] I just say what your country is called in the UN ..., - Belarus, and I insist on precisely this pronunciation of the name of our fraternal state. It is a truly independent state, a sovereign state, with all the attributes of an independent state [...] ¹⁸⁰
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¹⁸⁰ [...] Я-то как раз говорю так, как называется ваша страна в ООН..., - Беларусь, и я настаиваю именно на таком произнесении названия нашего братского государства. Это действительно самостоятельное государство, суверенное государство, со всеми атрибутами самостоятельного государства [...] "Speeches and transcripts. Interview with Belarusian media" [Выступления и стенограммы. Интервью белорусским СМИ], 11.23.2009. Kremlin.ru. <http://special.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/6078>

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VITA

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| 2016-2023 | PhD in International Relations,
Florida International University
Miami, US |
| 2015-2016 | Veeam Software
Key Account Manager
Amsterdam, Netherlands |
| 2013 -2015 | Master's in International Relations,
St. Petersburg State University,
Saint-Petersburg, Russia |
| 2011-2014 | Sberbank,
Financial Risk Manager
Saint-Petersburg, Russia |
| 2014 | The Washington Center for Internships and Academic
Seminars
Washington DC, US |
| 2006-2011 | Bachelors in Finance,
Major in Corporate finance
International Banking Institute,
Saint-Petersburg Russia |

HONORS, GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS

The Doctoral Evidence Acquisition (DEA) Fellowship at Florida International University, Summer 2020

Graduate Certificate for Women and Gender Studies Center, Florida International University, Spring 2018

FIU European and Eurasian Studies Program Award to complete the project on the Russian gas industry liberalization process, May 2017

Graduate Certificate for European and Eurasian Studies Center, Florida International University, Fall 2017

The Department of State “Opportunity Funds” Scholarship, was selected out of thousand applicants to receive training and funding for applications to the US universities, September 2015

Ford Motor Scholarship, was selected out of more than 1000 students to attend Academic Internship in The Washington Center, August 2014

Russian Federal State Scholarship, was selected out of 2000 students to study in Saint- Petersburg State University, September 2013

Awarded with “Gold Resource” award as the most perspective new employee in 2011 from Deputy Chairman of Northwest Sberbank of Russia, December 2012

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

“Wielding The “Energy Weapon”: The Dilemma of Russian Gas Liberalization and Dual Pricing Policy” published in Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies (ISSN 0193-5941) as of September 2022

"Gendered factors influencing mortality rate of the Russian Federation", published in International Banking Institute Science Magazine, St. Petersburg, June 2009

"Russia's WTO accession", published in International Banking Institute Science Magazine, St. Petersburg, June 2008

Presented at 2020 North-East ISA Annual Convention: “Shame as a Weapon: Mainstreaming the Narrative on Wartime Sexual Violence”

Presented at 2019 ISA Annual Convention in Toronto with two papers: “Sexuality and Gender Dynamics behind Russian Resurgence” and “The Factor of Hegemony in Gendered Conflict Theory”

Presented at the 50th The Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies Annual Convention with the paper on “Nationalism against Gender Equality in Russia”, December 2018