

Media's symbolic power: RT and The Guardian' discursive construction of the EuroMaidan protests and Crimean annexation

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Abstract

Media, through its discourse has the power to create meaning and thus shape the perception of the issues it chooses to portray. Therefore, analysing the display of the competing interpretations on a particular subject should be an important aspect of academic research in order to balance the uneven distribution of power between discourse producers and its consumers. Moreover, it will lead to a better understanding of how discourse is intentionally shaped and its implications on the generation of widely accessible meaning which can potentially influence the minds of a global audience.

Therefore, this thesis explores the particular discourses of two online transnational media, The Guardian (theguardian.com) and RT (rt.com), regarding the two subsequent recent events in Ukraine: the EuroMaidan protests and the referendum and annexation of Crimea by Russia, and their discursive strategies for meaning creation. Moreover, as two widely reported events which have reached a global audience, these two acknowledgedly ideologically different discourses will purportedly have different takes on these, particularly on its protagonists and their reasons: Ukrainians (including ethnic Russians and Russophobes), and Ukrainian and Russian authorities.

Moreover, through the use of the theoretical and methodological fields of Critical Discourse Analysis, Semiotics, and Multimodality, applied on the analysis of a data corpus acquired through the emulation of an online search on google.com, I have explored, discussed and compared the discursive strategies used by both sources, and uncovered its meaning creation strategies and implications. I found clear signs of biased and stereotypical discursive practices revealing ideological inclinations (The Guardian – pro-Europe and pro-West, and RT – pro-Russia and pro-East). On the one hand, during the EuroMaidan protests, The Guardian portrayed the protesters as a relatively uniform group of symbolic heroes whose main reason for demonstrating was a willingness to be European and thus evolving in to a more developed state of an idealised west. Moreover, it demonised Ukrainian and Russian authorities as symbolic villains who bloc the demonstrators legitimate path. On the other hand, RT

portrayed the protesters as a uniform and violent group perpetrating unnecessary violence, and whose reasons for demonstrating are discursively delegitimised. Moreover, authorities, Ukrainian officials and politicians are portrayed as victims of these overly violent protesters. Regarding the Crimean annexation and referendum, both sources adopted opposing ideological stands. On the one hand, The Guardian, demonstrated to be pro-west, particularly pro-United States, where the US is seen as all powerful and ensuring Ukraine's rights as in a father figure. On the other hand, RT showed a pro-Russian ideology in which the West sanctions are considered unfair because the referendum is a democratic and legitimate tool to fix a mistake done during the Soviet Era. Moreover, RT's discourse revealed an underlying imperial ideology in its discourse, in which Russia should come back to its natural state as a great world power. Overall, both The Guardian and RT, overlooked significant contextual factors, thus giving place to an oversimplification which often led to objectifying and creation of otherness in a dichotomy of 'US' vs 'Them'.

The work performed on this thesis as led to the uncovering of both sources' discursive strategies and helped expose deeper and underlying intentions manifested through discourse. Moreover, if these are assimilated as true by a particular audience, it will lead to a one sided perspective of the events and its participants. Finally, by having a critical eye on media's discourse, it has allowed for a better understanding of its mechanics and thus the viewing its discourse as a perspective influenced by external and internal factors.

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Introduction and problem formulation

"A democratic civilization will save itself only if it makes the language of the image into a stimulus for critical reflection — not an invitation for hypnosis." (Humberto Eco, 1979, p. 12)

I would argue that Umberto Eco's appeal to critical thinking can be extended to any text that we encounter in our everyday lives, particularly through media consumption. Media, through all its forms, has acquired the status and power of a fourth estate (Glaeser, Gentzkow, & Goldin, 2006). Moreover, as arguably one of the main sources of information for most individuals in the world, particularly through its discourse's increasingly global reach, media has acquired the potential to affect an audience's perception about any topic. Today, access to news is at a distance of a click. Goods, services and information are steadily moving on to the digital medium, and as a result of the increasing democratization of technology and access to the internet, audiences are now being bombarded with a load of information unimaginable until only a few years ago.

Therefore, because media is often an audience's main source of information in a world where it has become omnipresent in everyday life, and its discourse has the potential to change conceptions and beliefs, there is the need for a critical thinking regarding its portrayal of a particular event, culture and its actors. Moreover, media's capacity to quickly make a particular discourse reach a great number of people, is in itself a powerful tool able to create social change. As Kellner (1995) puts it, "media culture is now the dominant form of culture which socializes us and provides materials for identity in terms of both social reproduction and change" (p. 1). Therefore, this thesis main focus is the analysis of media's discourse because it has the ability to shape the social fabric.

On the one hand, through the news, 'we' are informed and educated about events of distant suffering around the world. The growing world's interconnectedness as a result of an increasing cosmopolitan gaze, generates a mix between cultures and identities, augmented by today's dynamics of capital and consumption (Beck, 2000, p. 79). As a consequence,

external events such as the ones in the scope of this thesis, EuroMaidan protests in Ukraine and Crimea's referendum and annexation by Russia figuratively in to our doorstep.

On the other hand, one can ask who 'we' are in the aforementioned equation. Is there a discursive construction of 'us' vs 'them' implying the creation of difference, particularly through the reproduction of mental concepts of 'them' as the exotic and distant 'others' (Said, 1978). These questions depend on Media's own discursive purpose, which is particularly affected by its ownership and increasing marketization (Chomsky & Herman, 1988). As a result, one can assume that the portrayal of people places and events such as the recent protests in Ukraine is shaped by aspects such as media's ideological inclination, ownership and cultural background in which a particular media is inserted.

By taking in to consideration the relations of power at work through media's discursive practices and their ability to shape opinions and society itself (Fairclough, 2007), the particular purpose of this thesis is to perform a discursive and semiotic analysis of the reporting on the EuroMaidan protests and Crimea's annexation and referendum by two major transnational news outlets – The Guardian (theguardian.com) and RT (rt.com). The analysis of these two news sources, with different ideological positioning, presents itself as an opportunity to uncover particular discursive strategies used in order to apply persuasive power over the reader's or viewer's minds. On the one hand, The Guardian with a western liberal perspective, belonging to a British news conglomerate; on the other hand, RT, owned by the Russian government and whose assumed purpose is to present the news from a Russian perspective as a response to western media's wrongful portrayal of Russia and Russians around the world. Furthermore, the discursive differences found through a discursive and semiotic analysis will allow for the comparison of both discourses, particularly on how different they are at presenting the events and the actors involved, and its implications for the creation of meaning and potentially bringing about social change.

Today, the still ongoing crisis in Ukraine has triggered a global discussion regarding the legitimacy of each side's actions in which Media's discourse plays a pivotal role in shaping a large global audience's perception, whose main source of facts about the events is media

itself. Therefore, in this thesis, three complementary research questions regarding both news sources discursive practice are raised:

- *How did 'The Guardian' (theguardian.com), and 'RT' (rt.com) chose to portray the events in Ukraine during the EuroMaiden protests and the process of the annexation of Crimea by Russia?*
- *Is there discursive manufacturing of difference, thus giving place to a dichotomy of Us vs Them, West vs East?*
- *Are protesters (Ukrainians and ethnic Russians) being unfairly portrayed and demonized, if so, how is discourse shaped to achieve this end?*

Context

In order to better understand the issues at hand, this chapter introduces historical, economical, and social contexts, followed by research on media practices and the introductions of both sources under analysis in order to allow a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. Furthermore, the outlining of the background surrounding both events will contribute to a coherent and objective discursive and semiotic analysis.

Finally, I would like to remark that during the search for the sources used in this section, I found that a good part of the information regarding the events is available mostly through online media. Therefore, and despite the fact that in this thesis I critically analyse media's discourse, facts quoted on media sources (considered legitimate) had to be used in order adequately build this contextual section.

EuroMaidan Protests

On 21 November 2013 a group of protesters gathered on the Maidan Nezalezhnosti ('Independence Square') in Kyev, to peacefully protest against the Ukrainian President, Viktor Yanukovich, and his government's decision to suspend the preparations for the signing of an association agreement and a free trade agreement with the European Union, which would

established deeper economic relations with the EU, and open the doors for further integration (Grätz, 2013).

Mr Yanukovych justified this sudden shift in direction as a matter of national security, and argued that the country would not be able to stand the strong economic pressure that Russia would apply if the agreement with the EU went forward (ibid.). Therefore, under pressure, Mr Yanukovych decided to accept deeper economic relations with Russia, after the promise of a substantial loan and the continuation of discounted gas prices from Russia, by far its main supplier (ibid.). In addition to the financial help, Ukraine would also be joining the Russian-led Customs Union in a near future (Wolczuk & Wolczuk, 2013).

The Ukrainian President's decision served as a catalyst for many Ukrainians' deeper resentment against Ukrainian politicians and oligarchs who had been conniving in the high corruption levels that brought the country to near bankruptcy (Lichtenberg, 2014). They started gradually gathering in the Maidan Nezalezhnosti, Kiev's central square, on 21 November 2013, in the initial peaceful protests.

The location of the protests, the Maidan Nezalezhnosti, is a place of high symbolism for all Ukrainians. It received its recent name following Ukraine's independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. As Kiev's main square, the Maidan was the stage of major popular demonstrations and uprisings: In 1989 there was the student "Revolution on Granite"; in 2001, the "Ukraine without Kuchma"; in 2004, the "Orange Revolution", and in 2013 the "Euromaidan". All protests, excluding EuroMaidan, were successful at peacefully pressuring the governments in power to resign (Kamara, 2012).

In the ongoing research project, "Ukrainian Protest Project", by Olga Onuch and Tamara Martsenyuk, through the thus far 1,203 participant protesters surveyed (Onuch, 2014) – conclusions about the EuroMaidan protesters' composition can already be drawn:

- 69% where older than 30 years old – 24% where older than 55, and 8% older than 65
- 76% where employed, 63% had higher professional education and 9% were retired

- 33% where Ukrainian Orthodox and 25% Greek Catholic
- 59% where male
- 82.8% said Ukrainian was their mother tongue but only 67% and 68% used Ukrainian and at work and at home respectively
- 30% where Russophobes
- 38% did not participate in previous protests and 37% did not participate in the 2004 Orange Revolution (ibid.)

According to Guliyev & Akhrarkhodjaeva (2014) the protest movement was composed of heterogeneous and broad-based groups in which the ultra-nationalists from the Svoboda party and Pravy Sektor were also included. Although mainly composed of members of civil society, from 30 November far right groups began coordinating teams of between 100 and 200 armed individuals (Onuch & Sasse, 2014). These right-wing extremists were most of the time involved in the violent incidents but were never in control of the protests (ibid.). In an interview to the International Business Times, Sarah Phillips, anthropology professor at the Indiana University School of Global and International Studies, and author of several articles and two books on Women in contemporary Ukraine, stated that the EuroMaidan protests were mainly composed of civil society "in vibrant action as citizens of different backgrounds and political commitments" worked together. Moreover, the anthropologist argues that the protests were not so much about closer ties and possible integration in the EU, but more about eliminating injustice and corruption in the country: "The women protesters I have talked to say their patience with the corrupt state has run out and this is why they are protesting—in the hopes of a life that does not require daily navigation of corrupt power structures," (Phillips, 2014).

The protests spiralled in to deeper violence after the 18 February, when the Berkut (Ukrainian riot police) used severe tactics to repress the demonstrations. In a violent storming of the Maidan protest camp in Kiev there were approximately 90 dead and 600 injured (from both sides of the barricades, but mostly protesters) (Onuch & Sasse, 2014). According to Ukraine's Health Ministry, the death toll resulting from the clash between EuroMaidan protesters and

the police - by 11 April 2014 - was of 105 confirmed deaths (Interfax - Ukraine, 2014b). There we also close to 1.500 injured, from which 120 still remained in the hospital on 11 April 2014 (ibid.).

Occupation and annexation of Crimea

Following the instability in Ukraine provoked by the EuroMaidan protests and the escape of its former president to Russia, on February 26, 2014, pro-Russian separatists wearing military uniforms without insignias started taking over government buildings and communication hubs in the semi-autonomous region of Crimea which is inhabited by a Russian ethnic majority (58.5%), Ukrainians (24%) and Tartars (12%) (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, 2001). Soon after the initial incursion, Russian president, Vladimir Putin, acknowledged that these were Russian military sent in order to defend ethnic Russians whose safety and rights were being threatened by a radical and "illegal" Ukrainian government (RT News, 2014c). The international community was swift to condemn Russia's actions and declared economic sanctions against Russian officials and their assets, particularly in the US and the EU (Spetalnick & Mohammed, 2014). NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, also condemned Russian actions in Ukraine by classifying them as a "military aggression" and a "blatant breach of its international commitments and it is a violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity" (Dews, 2014).

Gradually, Russian authorities took over every official building in Crimea, including military bases. On February 27, 2014, the Supreme Council of Crimea voted to hold a referendum on the status of Crimea amid uncertainty on how many members of the Ukrainian parliament were present during in the voting session (Interfax - Ukraine, 2014a).

On March 16, 2014, after a ten day campaign period, where pro-Ukrainian television stations were taken of air in the peninsula, the "All-Crimean referendum of 2014" had two questions for Crimeans:

- "Do you support Crimea's unification with Russia as a subject of the Russian Federation?"
- "Do you support the reinstatement of the 1992 constitution of the autonomous republic of Crimea and Crimea's status as a part of Ukraine?" (Oliphant, 2014).

None of the two questions presented the option to maintain the current status quo. The first, as implied, meant the returning of Crimea to Russian sovereignty. The second meant the returning to the 1992 Constitution approved after the Soviet Union's collapse, in which Ukraine would gain effective independence while still symbolically remaining part of Ukraine. The pro-Russian Crimean parliament would have the power to decide its own course, including its relations with other countries such as Russia (Sneider, 2014). Crimean Tartars decided to jointly boycott the referendum because of their "doubts about the legality of the referendum," as expressed by the chair of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people, Refat Chubarov (ukrinform, 2014). Finally the 'yes' to be part of the Russian federation won with an overwhelming 97% of the votes. Result which most western leaders were quick to dismiss and consider illegal (Associated Press, 2014).

Nevertheless, and despite wide international criticism regarding the legitimacy of the referendum, in which the only international observers were part of european far-right parties not approved by the EU (Oliphant, 2014), on March 21, 2014, Russian president Vladimir Putin, signed the law on the reunification of the new Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol with the Russian Federation (Klimentyev, 2014). On March 27, 2014, The United Nations General Assembly voted 100 to 11 with 58 abstentions, to deem the Crimean referendum illegal, (Falk, 2014). Nevertheless, and despite all economic sanctions and international pressure, Crimea is now a territory of Russia.

The events that lead to an almost unanimous international condemnation of the annexation of the former independent region of Ukraine by Russia, received and apparent massive support by the Russian people both living in Russia and in Ukraine. In a poll conducted by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VTsIOM) in the beginning of March 2014, Vladimir Putin's popularity was in fact increasing among the Russian population in Russia,

reaching a three-year high popularity level of 71.6%, up by 9.7% since mid-February 2014 (Taylor, 2014). This trend is corroborated by another poll by the independent polling center, Levada Center, which points to a 72% approval rating. Contrastingly, there is a substantial difference when compared to U.S. President's, Barack Obama 43% approval rate, and French President's, François Hollande, 79% disapproval rate (ibid.).

Finally, regarding the Crimean's willingness to be part of Ukraine, already in 1991, in the Ukrainian independence referendum from the USSR, despite voting favourably for independence (54%), Crimea registered the lowest level of support of all Ukrainian regions. Nevertheless, with a turnout of 60% and no differentiation between ethnic groups, its representativeness can be questioned (Kolstø, 1995, p. 191).

Historical and socioeconomic factors

According to Korostelina (2013), Ukraine still rests a great deal on its Soviet past as reflected in the still embedded Soviet mentality and structures which contribute to the enhancement of the ethnic division in the country affecting Ukrainians and ethnic Russians. Ukraine's power and wealth are still concentrated in the hands of few oligarchs who control most of the country's resources (p. 34-35). As a consequence of widespread corruption, the majority of the Ukrainian people, including ethnic Russians, still live below the poverty line – as an example, in 2013 Ukraine was ranked as the most corrupt nation in Europe by Transparency International (Transparency International, 2013). Moreover, as Shelley (1998) argues, nowadays "Ukraine's very independence is threatened by its inability to satisfy its citizens' financial needs, a problem severely exacerbated by the endemic corruption and the hijacking of the privatization process by former members of the nomenklatura (party elite)" (p. 648). In addition, "nationalism, a potent force for state construction in Ukraine, cannot alone counteract the corrosive impacts of crony capitalism and organized crime" (ibid.). At this point, Ukraine's future appears uncertain, and a successful transition in to a less corrupt and more democratic state is yet to be proven. Nevertheless, after the signing of the delayed association and trading agreement with the EU on 27 June 2014 (Peter, 2014) – at the

moment, Ukraine's future, regardless of most of its citizens will, seems to be more inclined towards Europe.

Russian politics and oppressive/expansionist shift

Horvath (2011) argues that there is a perceived internal threat by the Russian authorities, a fear of internal instability which has resulted in a shift in action since 2005. Horvath (2011) contends that this shift came from a fear of 'velvet' movements arising inside Russia which could lead to new 'Velvet Revolutions' – a set of peaceful revolutions in former Soviet States preceding the dissolution of the Soviet Union. During Russian President's, Vladimir Putin, first term, despite the atrocities committed during the second Chechen war and terrorist attacks in some Russian cities, the Kremlin showed an apparent compromise to a liberal democratic project (p. 1). According to Horvath (2011), only in 2005 during a period of apparent stability did the Russian regime started a more evident effort to 'control' the Russian public sphere (ibid.) The increasing in control was achieved through actions such as the creation of the state-sponsored youth organization Nashi, intended as an antidote to the pro-democracy youth groups that had spearheaded the Ukrainian and Georgian upheavals (p. 15); the imposition of severe restrictions to the actions of both foreign and foreign supported NGOs in Russian territory, and the preventing of political opponents from running for public office (p. 2). Russian authorities had the growing perception that the country was facing an imminent revolutionary threat fruit of a "velvet ferment" (ibid. p. 2), to which the Kremlin had to respond in a preventive way. Therefore, to prevent this 'velvet' scenario, the Kremlin produced extensive and widespread xenophobic and conspirational propaganda, by blaming the recent upheavals on Russian borders, such as the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, on Western incitement, and the vilification of the Russian opposition as puppets of the West (ibid.).

Accordingly, through the discursive analysis of Russian foreign policy documents regarding the construction of a Russian identity, Kassianova (2001) found that Russia "in its wavering search for a new identity, will follow the easier route of accentuating difference, using the

tactics of representing the West as the 'other'" (p. 822). However, Kassanova did not find supporting evidence of the anti-Western stereotype as an intentional resource for achieving domestic identity consolidation (p. 828). Regarding the former USSR republics, such as the case of Ukraine, Kassanova (2001) argues that there is a preoccupation with these republics ethnic and territorial conflicts which are considered to directly concern Russia's security (p. 830).

The seeds of the Orange Revolution

According to Horvath (2011), "what transformed 'velvet revolution' from a diplomatic challenge into a catalyst for fundamental change within Russia was the upheaval in Kiev in late 2004" (p. 6). For the Russian's regime policy makers, the overthrow of a pro-Russian regime in a major regional power was a major set-back. Furthermore, their defeat was augmented by Vladimir Putin's "blatant efforts to influence the outcome of the Ukrainian presidential election" of that same year (ibid.). As a consequence, there can be established a parallel between both the Orange Revolution and EuroMaidan protests and Russian authorities' reaction to the pro-Russian regimes overthrow. Although the reaction, and actions to the latest have had a much bigger impact both domestically, in Russia and internationally.

In Russia, the Orange Revolution also boosted the beleaguered Russian democratic movement inside its borders. Several Russian human rights activists publicly supported the Ukrainian upheaval. As Horvath (2011) puts it: "for the first time, Putin's carefully cultivated image as a national saviour was under assault" (p. 7). In addition, Horvath (2011) argues that despite the obsession with the foreign puppet masters put in place by the western powers, in fact, "Kremlin's political technologists were reacting to domestic realities" (p. 23).

"By the end of Putin's second term, Russia had ceased to be a flawed, 'transitional' democracy. The political and civic forces that offered a political alternative to the regime had been neutralised. A new generation of militant cadres had been mobilised on the streets, indoctrinated with the tenets of sovereign democracy,

and inspired by the idea that they were the custodians of Putinism's posterity. The suffocation of 'velvet revolution' had inaugurated an era of 'velvet authoritarianism'" (ibid).

In the case of the EuroMaidan protests, despite not drawing similar political activism in other post-Soviet semi-autocratic regimes, it has drawn significant attention to existing opposition activists in Azerbaijan, Russia and Belarus. Weeks after the ousting of Viktor Yanukovych, the feeling among the Ukrainian protesters' leadership was of a hope for the extension of the protests towards Russia - as one of its organizers, Mustafa Nayem, stated on Twitter: "The biggest danger for Vladimir V. Putin is that Ukraine's revolution will eventually spread toward Russia" (Guliyev & Akhrarkhodjaeva, 2014).

Ethnic Russians in Ukraine

An argument often repeated by Russian officials in order to justify the occupation on Crimea is the one of the necessity for the protection of Ethnic Russians in Ukraine – who are allegedly being threatened by an illegitimate fascist regime (Guliyev & Akhrarkhodjaeva, 2014). In fact, in Russian law, ethnic Russians living abroad are called *sootechestvenniki* or 'compatriots', even if they do not share a common 'fatherland' with Russians in Russia. Russia adopted the law 'On Relations with Sootechestvenniki Abroad' in 1999 and it still remains in force. The law declares that "'Sootechestvenniki who reside abroad are entitled to support from the Russian Federation in the realization of their civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights'" (Kolstør, 2011, p. 159).

In Ukraine, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, over time, many ethnic Russians have in fact integrated in to Ukrainian culture. In regions of Eastern Ukraine, where Ukrainians and Ukrainian russophobes are almost in equal numbers, differences tend to be blurred (Fournier, 2002). Moreover, according to Fournier (2002), today there is a relative absence of nostalgia toward Russia within Ukrainian present borders:

"Russians whose ancestors have lived on Ukrainian territory for centuries indeed consider themselves indigenous to Ukraine, a complete contradiction to a diasporic self-identification. In any case, supra-ethnic identities such as the 'East Slavic' or 'Soviet' identities (i.e. ones that allow for the expression of both Russian and Ukrainian elements) are common among Russians, especially in Eastern Ukraine. This kind of self-identification contradicts the notion of Russians as an ethnic group wishing to maintain strong boundaries with the local culture in view of an eventual return to the homeland" (p. 416).

Accordingly, empirical research lead by Kolstø (2011) shows that Russians living in non-Russian republics after the fall of the Soviet Union are increasingly dissociated from a 'Russian' Identity. They have been going through a process of dissociation from the Russian core group. This process started even before the countries they were living in broke from the Soviet Block. However, despite the fact that many ethnic Russians have been adopting Ukrainian cultural traits, an equal part did not went through a process of assimilation (p. 153). Nevertheless, ethnic Russian's solidarity towards the Russian 'motherland' has been weakened by a progressive adaptation (ibid.). As a consequence, according to Kolstø (2011), the potential for the use of the 'diaspora' discourse for political and ideological mobilization among ethnic Russians lost most of its efficacy.

Shulman (2004) found that civic national identity in Ukraine is substantially stronger than an ethnic national identity (p. 53), and that language is the most important marker which separates Ukrainians from Russians. In a large scale survey in Ukrainian territory, civic national identity was shown to be stronger than ethnic national identity in most measures. The stronger national identity was found to be the Eastern Slavic complex (ibid.). The Slavic identity sees the Ukrainian nation as founded on two primary ethnic groups, bi-lingual and bi-cultural (Ukrainian and Russian), which are unified by their embeddedness in a common historical and cultural space (ibid. p. 39). Moreover, in the 10 measures that show majority mass support of one national identity over the other, seven are in favour of the Eastern Slavic identity complex (ibid. p. 54). The three measures which reflected preference for the Ethnic

Ukrainian complex were all related to language, and to the fact that this group gives more emphasis to the fact that language is an important cultural marker (ibid.).

Similarly, Sztompka (2004) argues for the existence of an evolving Eastern European collective identity which originated as a consequence of specific common historical circumstances, particularly the Soviet occupation (p. 487). Moreover, as a consequence of the political and military division of Europe, after the Second World War a Soviet "satellite mentality" developed and slowly pushed East-Europeans away from the "rest of Europe" (ibid. p. 489). However, according to Sztompka (2004), today there is a process of slow return to a closer European identification - especially among the younger generations - which has been taking place since the revolutions of 1989 (p. 493).

According to Fournier (2002), within Ukraine, there is an ethnic Russian resistance which persists even in the general absence of exclusion on the basis of ethnicity (p. 415). This resistance happens not because of a Russian identity, but because of language differences. Most members of the group identify themselves as 'Russophones' or 'Russian-speakers' – in which, ethnic Ukrainians whose daily language is Russian are also included (ibid.). Therefore, the author argues that ethnic Russians' current discontent is against a perceived linguistic/cultural exclusion as 'Russian-speakers' (ibid.).

Furthermore, Fournier (2002) argues that the exclusion felt by ethnic Russians in Ukraine is mostly caused by previous Ukrainian government's policies which have been perceived as a threats to Russian culture and language. The most recent case of this perceived discrimination happened in 2012, when the Ukrainian parliament passed a bill reaffirming the Ukrainian language as the country's only national language. Moreover, despite the fact that local and regional governments could still designate Russian as an official language in towns where Russian was spoken by more than 10% of the population (Batta, 2013, p. 7), the passing of the language bill caused an outcry among the Russian speaking population and lead to demonstrations to which the government did not respond (Fournier, 2012, p. 416). Similarly, Pavlenko (2008) found ongoing efforts by the Ukrainian authorities of derussification in Ukraine with emphasis on language, particularly in the western part of the country (p.64). This

apparent exclusion can be argued to be one of the reasons why many ethnic Russians (30%) (Onuch & Sasse, 2014) and Russophobes participated in the Euromaidan protests – with heavily suppressed supporting demonstrations happening in all major cities in eastern Ukraine (BBC News, 2014).

Janmaat, (2007) examined how ethnic Russians have been portrayed in two generations of Ukrainian history books. In early books, it was found that its discourse was mostly highly condemning of Ukraine's main ethnic other (Russians) in the shadow of the foreign ruler (p. 307). By contrast, recent history books do not present the same highly biased accounts of Russians as ethnic others. In fact, there are instances where negative judgements about Russians are often counterbalanced with an equal criticism of some of the actions by ethnic Ukrainians, or through the highlight of conflicts of interest within the Ukrainian ethnic group (ibid.). Nonetheless, there is still an absence of any positive evaluations of ethnic Russians, which in combination with the harsh judgment on Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union, may still generate strong feelings of alienation among Russians and other minorities in Ukraine (p. 320).

On the other hand, Kolstø (2011) also argues that Russian Media, widely available in Eastern Ukraine, especially through television, still plays an important pull on many ethnic Russians living in post-Soviet states:

"It is probably true that most Russians in the new states today are just as up-dated on Russian politics as on politics in their state of residence, if not more. By watching Russian soap operas, reality TV, and talk shows they also become in a sense a part of a Russian virtual space (p. 158).

Therefore, because our conceptions of self are strongly influenced by media's discourse (Ibid.) - for e.g. "when the anchor man on the evening news says 'here' or 'we have', the viewers do not have to be told where 'here' is, or who 'we' are: it is 'in our country' and 'our nation'" (ibid.) - one can argue that ethnic Russian TV viewers, particularly in Eastern Ukraine, are affected

by a Russian centred media which potentially exercises a pull on their Russian origin to keep the attachment to the 'motherland'.

Finally, regarding Crimea's annexation (inhabited by a majority of ethnic Russians), one can argue that as soon as the unifying power (pro-Russian Ukrainian state) was over-thrown, instantly the question: "why should "we" be governed by "them"?" (Jedlicki, 1999 p. 229) arose. Consequently a dichotomy of 'us' and 'them' was potentially reinforced on both sides of the rapidly restored dividing line.

Research on stereotypes against Russians and Eastern Europeans

The literature corpus on portrayal and stereotypical discourse about Russians and Eastern Europeans shows a substantial negative bias towards these groups. For e.g. Lawless (2014) research on James Bond movies found a consistent portrayal of Russians and their culture in a negative manner. Russians were often seen as the others and subjected to negative labelling and generalisations. The construction of otherness was achieved through the discursive construction of the binary opposition between 'us' and 'them', giving place to a stereotypical representation of Russian culture and framing of Russians as the 'others' (ibid. p. 14). Interestingly, according to Lawless (2014) this stereotypical representation has hardly changed, even throughout the new millennium (ibid.)

Moreover, the European Commission, in its report, 'Intolerance, Prejudice and Discrimination' by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Forum Berlin (Zick, Küpper, Hövermann, German, & Fenn, 2013), found that in all EU countries "anti-immigrant attitudes, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim attitudes, sexism, homo-phobia and even racism are supported or at least tolerated in many sectors of the population" (p. 159). Moreover, the researchers also found that the European population is increasingly leaning to the right, with emphasis on group-focused enmity (ibid.).

Empirical studies on media practices

In a wide comparative study on leading news websites in nine nations it was shown that online news organizations are still "much more inclined to cite the voices of authority than those of

civil society and the individual citizen" (Curran et al., 2013, p. 881). In the study, it was shown that online news sources consistently favoured the voices with authority and expertise over those of campaigning organisations and ordinary citizens. It was also shown that media's main focus is on the home nation, and usually offers a "highly selective view of the world" (ibid. p. 891).

In the ongoing study "Fear in The News" by Altheide & Michalowski (2014), it can already be argued that the word "fear" has a constant presence in news reports across all sections of newspapers; in fact "fear pervades popular culture and the news media" (ibid. p. 476). According to the study preliminary results, the word "fear" is increasingly present in journalistic discourse – for e.g. in news titles its use has more than doubled (ibid.). moreover, the increase of the use of 'fear' is connected to a similar tendency in contemporary western popular culture which is oriented to the pursual of the 'problem frame'. As a consequence, this 'fear' pattern has an impact on social policies and on the reliance on formal agents of control. Furthermore, these agents of social control often tend to promote distrust among audiences (ibid. p. 476). As Altheide & Michalowski (2014) put it: "The prevalence of fear in public discourse can contribute to stances and reactive social policies that promote state control and surveillance" (ibid.).

However, despite media's tendency to be biased (Xiang & Sarvary, 2007), there is a segment of conscious consumers who do not necessarily get 'hurt' by this 'bias'. In fact, they are often able to recover more information from multiple news sources in order to reach the 'truth' (p. 611-622). Nevertheless, Xiang & Sarvary (2007) found that media often increases its 'bias' when there are more conscientious consumers and if these consumers' dislike for bias is large.

Introducing the sources

theguardian.com

The Guardian was founded in 1821 as the Weekly Manchester Guardian. The newspaper quickly gained traction and in 1855 became a daily. Throughout its existence, The Guardian

has been acclaimed for its investigative journalism and attempts of apparent impartial coverage of home and foreign affairs. Overall, the newspaper's ideological stance is considered to be less conservative than that of The Daily telegraph and The Times, which are simultaneously its main British and international competitors. Charles Prestwich Scott who was the newspapers main editor during 57 years (1857 – 1928), described his paper's publishing as a place where "comment is free. Facts are sacred.... The voice of opponents no less than of friends has a right to be heard" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2014).

The Guardian has been supported by the Scott Trust since 1936 which has pledged to preserve the editorial independence of the publication. According to the Fund's statement, all the profits go back to the improvement of the publication - an unusual practice which has helped to insulate the newspaper from economic fluctuations to a certain degree (Columbia University, 2014). This investment policy might be argued to have led to the successful transition to the online platform in 1999 with a 'free content' philosophy, declining to charge for access. The website won the Webby award (given by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences) in 2005, 2006 and 2007, for the best newspaper on the internet. Simultaneously, the website won for six years straight the award for Best Electronic Daily Newspaper by the British Newspaper Awards (ibid.).



Graphic 1 – top 10 newspapers worldwide by unique visitors. Source: comScore

Today, theguardian.com is in the 153rd position among the most visited websites in the

English speaking World.¹ According to the latest comScore stats, theguardian.com ranks third among the top 10 online newspapers (October 2012) *Graphic 1*. In this particular month, 644 million people worldwide accessed online newspaper websites, totalling 42.6% of the internet population. theguardian.com, had 38.9 million unique visitors (ComStats, 2012).

rt.com

RT presents itself as an alternative to western global media. As an international news network formed in 2005, RT came to occupy a new position in the international news scene, historically dominated by western media and news agencies. RT is a transnational media outlet with a Russian perspective on the events it portrays, as it is stated in RT's *about* page:

"RT news covers the major issues of our time for viewers wishing to question more and delivers stories often missed by the mainstream media to create news with an edge. RT provides an alternative perspective on major global events, and acquaints

international audience with the Russian viewpoint" (RT News, 2014b)

In a 2003 pool commissioned by the Russian government on Americans, it was shown that the top four things they associated with Russia were communism, the KGB, snow, and the Mafia, moreover the only positive association with the country, Russian art, came in last (10th). In a pool conducted in 2005 on foreigner's

Country	Percent of Visitors	Rank in Country
 United States	15.4%	469
 Russia	14.1%	71
 Mexico	7.7%	62
 Spain	3.9%	204
 Venezuela	3.3%	63
 Syrian Arab Republic	2.9%	8
 Argentina	2.9%	111
 United Kingdom	2.6%	397
 Colombia	2.5%	58
 Canada	2.3%	277

Figure 1 - rt.com percent of visitors by country - source: alexa.com

¹ According to the analytics website Alexa.com on 9 April 2014.

awareness of Russian brands, the only brands they could think of were Kalashnikov rifles and Molotov cocktails (Evans, 2005).

In 2005, RT (at the time called Russia Today) began a round-the-clock English-language news broadcast – with a team of 100 journalist reporting from around the world. Its creation was part of a larger PR effort by the Russian government to improve the image of Russia and Russians around the world (Ibid.). RT was conceived by former Russian media minister Mikhail Lesin and Aleksei Gromov, former Vladimir Putin's press spokesman (Osborn, 2005). At the time of the news network founding, Svetlana Mirnyuk, the director of the Russian news agency RIA Novosti, also owned by the Russian state, stated: "We would like to present a more complete picture of life in our country" (Ibid.).

Today, RT employs more than 1000 media professionals in 22 bureaus in 19 countries and territories and broadcasts in English, Spanish and Arabic. According to RT, it reaches over 644 million people in more than 100 million countries and around 28% of all cable subscribers in the world (RT News, 2014a). As can be seen in *Figure 1* (p. 21) its main viewership (15.4%) comes from the United States, followed by Russia, Mexico and Spain respectively.

Theoretical perspective

Epistemology

"The existence of a world without a mind is conceivable. Meaning without a mind is not."
(Crotty, 1998, p. 10)

Epistemologically I have a constructionist view of the world. Therefore I assume that "all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and

developed and transmitted within and essential social context" (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). Meaning does not just exist but it is constructed.

Moreover, in this epistemological standpoint there is not a fixed truth with which every human being can relate to. Instead, "meanings are negotiated socially and historically. In other words, they are not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others (hence social constructivism) and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives" (Creswell, 2002, p. 9).

Within the constructionist view point, my own inquiry is not without value. My methodological and theoretical choices are influenced by my own view of the world, hence making this thesis into an inherently interpretivist work. Furthermore, because there are always many interpretations that can be drawn in an inquiry, I acknowledge the ontological relativistic nature of my research. As Guba (1990) puts it: "Realities are multiple, and they exist in people's minds" (p. 26).

Regarding my methodological choices, both the fields of CDA and semiotics and its qualitative analytical tools fit within this constructionist view. Furthermore, both have in their theoretical foundation a conception of the world as social constructed in which meaning is created through discursive practices. As a result, within this research paradigm, I argue that I will be able to observe discursive and visual details, otherwise often overlooked, which will point to a particular discursive construction of the events in Ukraine and its participants.

Identity - conceptualizing Race and Ethnicity

The recognition of difference has become a central concern of contemporary societies (Downing & Husband, 2005), and one of the main vehicles for this tension is Media's discourse on race and ethnicity, social class, and gender, which is populated with implications of fear, particularly in the context of change and 'disorder' in a pluralistic society (Altheide & Michalowski, 2014, p. 499).

Racism, although generally associated with skin colour, is not solely based on appearance, which in fact seldomly comes by itself. Instead, it is a categorization based on differences of origin of the group with its own set of cultural characteristics, such as language, religion, habits, norms, values and character traits (Dijk, 1993, p. 22). Moreover, the properties attributed to the out-group are "inherently related to the racial or ethnic identity of the group" (ibid. p. 23). In the particular case of the data under analysis in this thesis, there will be members of Ukrainian civil society, westerners and Russians portraying each other, and thus there I will be able to observe potential signs of racist and stereotypical discourse. This practice can potentially originate distance between the reader and the ones being portrayed, who can consequently become the distant others (Said, 1978).

Moreover, according to T. Van Dijk (2000), racism circulates within a social system generating and inequality divided in two main sub systems: the first, a social system of discriminatory actions at the micro level and group dominance at the macro level; the second, a cognitive system consisting of racist ideologies which control specific ethnic or 'racial' attitudes – manifested, particularly through prejudice (p. 212).

Downing & Husband (2005) argue that the concept of 'race' derives at the same time from a human psychological "ease" with categorization and from historical formulations that lead to the establishment of categorization based on 'race' (p. 2). Moreover, despite being widely considered to be a poisonous ideology which leads to destructive practices, racist discourses are pervasive throughout society (ibid, p. 1). For e.g., discourses which vilify racism "are more than amply countered by the many other discourses through which racism is made visible, normative and even virtuous" (ibid.).

Stereotypes

The distinction between racism and stereotype can often be a blurred one; for e.g., the simple Google search for: 'difference between stereotype and racism', will present a great number of discussions arguing either for one to be part of the other or completely different types of behaviour. Therefore, and because racism and stereotypical discourses are a powerful tool to

establish the different suffering other (Chouliaraki, 2008), it is essential to establish the distinction between both in order to have a congruent analytical approach.

Utsey, Ponterotto, & Porter (2008) argue that, at its core, racism is about an in-group's prejudiced sense of superiority together with an intentional exercise of power to subjugate an out-group (p. 339). Whereas prejudice is the mere attitude without taking action (ibid.). Michael Billig (1988) refers to stereotypes as psychologically irrational beliefs which speakers/writers attempt to justify and make reasonable by finding external sources of discrimination (p. 91). From a social-psychological perspective, Greenwald & Banaji (1995) define stereotype as "a socially shared set of beliefs about traits that are characteristic of members of a social category" (p. 14). A stereotype guides the judgement and actions of individuals to the extent that he or she acts towards the stereotyped other as if the traits included in the stereotype were real (ibid.). Despite the existence of conscious disavow of stereotypes, several studies suggest that these are nonetheless often still expressed in most individuals. Therefore, even if at an unconscious level, I will assume that no one is free of stereotypes (ibid. p. 15). Concurring, Schaller, Park, & Mueller, (2003) argue that at some level, most individuals perceive specific ethnic groups as source of potential danger – a behaviour (racism) or cognitive process that is directly connected to prejudices one experiences and expresses (p. 638). T. Van Dijk (1993) defines this phenomenon as an intergroup interaction, where categorization, stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination affect the *others* who are thought to belong to a distinct group. These negative properties are then generalized to the whole group and thus to all its members who are viewed as essentially alike and interchangeable (p. 20). Schaller, Conway, & Tanchuk (2002) argue that, at an individual level, one's attitudes and beliefs are "informed by the attitudes, opinions, and beliefs communicated to one by others" (p. 682). The simple act of communication, even in the absence of a persuasive intention, works as a powerful engine of social influence which "contributes to the emergence and persistence of consensually shared beliefs" towards *others* (ibid.).

From a sociological perspective Sztompka (2004) argues that media has an important role in creating and maintaining a collective identity within a society or culture, a type of differentiation which invariably establishes the dichotomy of 'We' and 'Them': "Who we are, who we resemble, who we share with, who we trust, who we are loyal to and with whom we feel solidarity," and "the 'others', from whom we differ, who we oppose, who threaten us, and against whom we must defend ourselves" (p. 482). The construction of the 'them' originates a sense of 'otherness'. On the one hand, the 'others' might be perceived as connotatively positively different, by having an exoticism with a particular kind of worth – a "positive tolerance" (ibid.). On the other, the 'others' may be perceived as foreign and strange, "a necessary and unavoidable burden that has to be endured ... a negative tolerance" (ibid. p. 484). On the negative side of the scale, the 'others' can be seen as 'alien' and as someone to be avoided and rejected. Ultimately, the most destructive conceptualization of the 'others' is when they are considered the 'enemy' (ibid.). These extreme definitions of otherness lead to the construction of boundaries that prevent the establishing of bounds between the 'Us' and 'Them' (ibid.). The construction of otherness is most often articulated by the use of stereotypes based on racial, national and ethnic prejudices which "give rise to practices of segregation, discrimination or persecution." Moreover, "It has been shown that negative stereotypes initiate vicious circles involving isolation, hostility, conflict and wars" (ibid.).

Finally, media as a generator of widely available and thus powerful discourse, has the ability to spread racism, stereotypes and other forms of the creation of otherness. As a consequence, in the analytical section of this thesis such practices within media's discourse will be critically analyzed.

Media, discourse and power

As cognitive beings, being aware of what is happening beyond our own direct experience engenders a sense of security, control, and confidence, and media has emerged for the satisfaction of this intrinsic human need (Xiang & Sarvary, 2007). Because media detains the symbolic power to construct reality through its discursive practices (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 166),

there is the need to deconstruct and analyse its discourse in order to find how it can shape the reader's perception of the events it chooses to portray.

Teun Van Dijk (1996) argues that media's exercise of power is usually indirect, "whereas the control of intentions, plans, knowledge, beliefs, or opinions that is, mental representations that monitor overt activities is presupposed" (p. 10). Journalists – often subconsciously – choose images and text that have the power to influence how audiences perceive and mentally construct the issues being portrayed (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2008, p. 17). Thus, media's power is generally symbolic and pervasive, in the sense that the media have mostly control over the minds of readers or viewers, but not directly over their actions (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 10). Moreover, the exercise of power is more effective when media consumers do not realize the nature or the implication of such control and when they change their minds by their own free will. For e.g. when they accept news reports as true or journalistic opinions as legitimate or correct (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 11). Furthermore, due to the control of both the cognitive and social dimensions, dominant groups may indirectly be able to control the minds of others (Van Dijk, 1993, p. 21). This potential 'mind control' can be exerted through, for e.g. biased discourse in news reporting (ibid.). Nonetheless, as Fairclough (2007) puts it, discourse narratives are indeed socially constructive, but whether these discursive constructions have an impact on non-discursive social moments is debatable (p. 12).

Van Dijk (1996) argues that media possesses a social power which needs to be looked at beyond a limited social or political approach to power. There is the need to study mental representations, "including so-called social cognitions such as attitudes and ideologies, shared by groups of readers or viewers" (ibid.). This approach becomes particularly relevant when looking at the portrayal of other ethnic groups and cultures in media, such as in the case of this study, where "not all racism is based on spontaneous popular resentment, and that much of the motivation and many prejudiced arguments that seem to inspire popular racism are 'prepared' by elites" (T. Van Dijk, 1993, p. 10). Furthermore, as a result of an unequal power distribution between social groups (Van Dijk, 1993), the ones with access to more

resources are able to establish dominance and create social inequalities such as the portrayal of the actions of a particular ethnic group or individual more favourably.

Considering a potential abuse of media's power – defined as a form of *dominance* by Van Dijk (1996) – there is the need to examine how these elite groups or institutions, who have privileged access to a broader range of potential ways to influence discourse – for e.g. through ownership or social position/status – use this control. As an example, these elites can set or select “time and place, participants, audiences, possible speech acts (such as commands or requests), agendas, topics, choice of language, style, strategies of politeness or deference, and many other properties of text and talk” (p. 12). Therefore, by assuming that these elites tend to dominate the means of representation, it can be argued that they also control the communicative conditions “in the formation of the popular mind and hence, the ethnic consensus (Dijk, 1993, p. 10). As Van Dijk (1996) puts it: “If such elites are able to control these patterns of media access, they are by definition more powerful than the media” (p. 12). In ‘Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media’ Chomsky & Herman (1988) defend that this power is constantly being enacted by those elites who have privileged access to potentially dominant discourses. The power is exercised through the control of resources, creation of rules/laws and ownership of mass media companies – a “propaganda system” (p. 37). For e.g. the creation of *worthy* and *unworthy* victims (ibid.). In addition, regarding the portrayal of distant sufferers, as Höijer (2004) argues, media's reporting on these “may also be part of more cynical commercial interests, in which the media sell human tragedies in a global market place” (p. 516). Therefore, media plays an important role in the reproduction of difference between ethnic groups and the reproduction of racism, both because of their connections with other elite institutions and their “structural influence in shaping and changing the social mind” (T. Van Dijk, 1993, p. 243).

Through a socio-cognitive perspective, Van Dijk (1996) argues for the need to draw from cognitive and social psychology in order to understand in which ways the minds of the reader/viewer might be “accessed” through texts (p. 13). In order to understand the message in the text, besides grammatical visual and textual knowledge, media users need great

amount of properly organized “knowledge of the world” (ibid.). At the core of the processing of discourse by the receiver are *mental models* (Van Dijk, 1993, 1996, 2007, 2009). These mental models consist of the mental representation of an event in the episodic memory of the receiver (Dijk, 2007, p. 290). Mental models are the internal context in which the text is processed and internalized under the influence of the receiver’s mental construction of the situation with, for e.g. his knowledge and opinions about the text and everything that surrounds it (ibid.). Moreover, the internal context is not a static mental representation, but rather a subjective and dynamic construct which is affected by the context of shared social representations such as socio-cultural group knowledge, attitudes, norms, values, ideologies and other forms of social-cognition shared between the members of a social group or community (ibid, p. 291). Externally, context is the social situation in which text (visual or textual utterances) is used (ibid, p. 286).

As Teun A. Van Dijk (2007) puts it, “there is no direct casual or conditional relationship between social characteristics (gender, class, age, roles, group membership, etc) of participants and the way they talk or write. Rather, it is the way participants as speakers (writers) and recipients subjectively understand, construct or represent these social characteristics of social situations that influences their production or understanding of their talk or text” (p. 289).

Stuart Hall (2003) argues for the existence of two processes, two systems of representation acting in the production of meaning in our minds through language:

Firstly, there is a systems by which all objects, people and events are correlated with a set of mental representations “which we carry around in our heads” (p. 17). These mental representations are necessary to interpret and give meaning to the world and everything in it. Every individual has a concept map which allows him/her to organize, cluster, arrange and classify concepts and establish complex relationships between them (ibid.). Hall (1997) acknowledges that each individual understands the world in a unique way. Moreover, he or she is able to understand others and communicate because they broadly share the same conceptual map and therefore understand the world in roughly similar ways (p. 18). Therefore,

because we interpret the world in similar ways, the social world in which we inhabit is understood through a shared culture of meanings (ibid.).

Secondly, because a shared conceptual map is not enough, and we must be able to represent and share meanings and concepts, that can only be achieved through a shared language (ibid.). In order to make and understand meaning through a common conceptual map, we also have the need to have access to a share language in order to be able to represent it. Language is semiotically understood as system of signs – written or spoken words, sounds and images (ibid.) which represents the concepts “we carry around in our heads” (p. 19).

Language and text

In the words of the cultural theorist Stuart Hall (1997), “language is the privileged medium in which we ‘make sense’ of things, in which meaning is produced and exchanged. Meanings can only be shared through our common access to language.” (p. 1)

Through a social constructivist perspective, the world is seen as not available to us as fully formed, but as constructed by us through a process of interpretation based on previous knowledge and experiences (Bax, 2010, p. 30). Moreover, language plays an important role as social constructive process which leads to a particular interpretation of the world. On the one hand it shows how who produces it views and interprets the world, and on the other, how the text is ‘read’ by the interpreter. Furthermore, language simultaneously reflects the world and affects it, thus it plays an important part in constructing *reality* (Bax, 2010, p.30). In addition, It is through it that structured inequalities are expressed, maintained and reproduced (Fox, Morosanu, & Szilassy, 2012).

When interpreting texts we draw on years of words and grammar, on how these are played in context and how natural language is used in real situations (Bax, 2010, p. 5). We draw on this previous knowledge to interpret the function of utterances. Moreover, we have the knowledge that the function of language can be quite different from its form (ibid.), therefore, our experience with language shapes our understanding of the texts we encounter. Moreover,

due to this previous acquired knowledge, while reading a text, we all construct cognitive 'mental scenarios' (Bax, 2010, p. 6), or 'mental models' (Van Dijk, 1991, 1993, 2007) which help us understand language itself.

As we read or listen, we draw on large stores of previously acquired knowledge about the world - about human relationships, about stereotypes or gender relations, about texts and genres, about how sentences link together and about words and syntax. All this previous knowledge is then combined with the information which we draw from the text, and thereby construct an interpretation of the world around us (Bax, 2010, p. 7).

Methodology

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Fairclough (1993) argues that a discourse is a form of social practice, instead of a purely individual activity or a reflection of social variables (p. 63). Similarly, Teo vanLeeuwen (1993) argues that CDA should be concerned with discourse itself as a social practice, a form of action, as an interaction between people, as a way of representing social practice, of creating knowledge, and as something that is said about social practices (p. 193). Moreover, within the theoretical field of Cultural Studies, Stuart Hall (1980) argues that the purpose of the analysis is to understand how the interaction between all these social practices are experienced as a whole in a particular period in what he calls a "structure of feeling" (p. 60).

Discourse is a mode of action to which "people may act upon the world and especially upon each other, as well as a mode of representation" (Fairclough, 1993, p. 63). Therefore, there is a dialectical relationship between discourse and social structure, because discourse as a social practice influences and is influenced by the existing social structure (p. 64). On the one hand, discourse is shaped and constrained by the social structure at a meta-level: "class and other social relations at a societal level, by the relations specific to particular institutions such as law or education, by systems of classification, by various norms and conventions both discursive and non-discursive" (ibid). On the other hand, discourse is socially constructive, and thus is

able to change society. Fairclough (1993) draws from Foucault's discussion on the discursive formation of objects subjects and concepts to argue that discourse is central in the constitution of all dimensions of the social structure (ibid.). In addition, discourse does not just represent the world, but also gives meaning to it (ibid.). Fairclough distinguishes three aspects of the social constructiveness of discourse: Firstly, it contributes to the construction of 'social identities', 'social positions' and types of self. Secondly, it helps to construct social relationships between people. And thirdly, it contributes to the construction of systems of knowledge and beliefs (ibid.). All these constructive qualities in the practice of discourse play an important role in changing and defining society.

Teun A. Van Dijk (1995) argues that one of the crucial tasks of CDA is to uncover and describe the relationship between discourse and social power – to describe and explain how power abuse is enacted, reproduced and legitimized through text by dominant groups or institutions (p. 84). Moreover, the effectiveness of a dominant discourse at creating inequality is dictated by its privileged access to larger audiences (ibid.). Therefore, through the special access and control over the means of public discourse, these dominant groups have the capacity to use text, speech or images in such a way that, as a result, "the knowledge, attitudes, norms, values and ideologies of recipients are – more or less indirectly affected in the interest of the dominant group" (ibid. p.85). In addition, Stuart Hall (1997) argues that these social practices are also cultural practices because the participants in a particular culture give meaning to people, objects and events in a certain cultural context of use. A 'thing' by itself rarely if ever has a single and unchanging meaning (p. 3).

In my analysis I will be focusing on what Fairclough (1992) calls the *discursive practice*, which itself is a form of social practice, and is primarily defined by the process of production (text, images, sounds, etc.) which is simultaneously a form of discursive practice and social practice (ibid. p. 72). Both The Guardian and RT, through their discursive practice, have the ability to shape its audiences perception. Therefore, given the fact that these two media are widely available, and as a consequence have the ability to disseminate their message to a great number of people across different countries and cultures, their social practice acquires a great

deal of power which needs to be scrutinised in order to achieve a balancing of power between different social groups.

Finally, in order to have a congruent textual analysis, I have decided to draw from Norman Fairclough's (1992) toolbox for Critical Discourse Analysis and adapt it to this thesis:

- **Vocabulary choice and word meaning** – the choosing of specific words also implies a choice in meaning creation. By choosing a specific word over other, the author has the power to decide a potential interpretation.
- **Transitivity** – How events and people are connected discursively. Who or what is the text focusing on?
- **Modality** – The use and its implications of modal auxiliary verbs (for e.g. can, must, may, might, will, shall); indication of time (for. e.g. present simple or past tense); modal adverbs (for e.g. maybe, of course); and reservations/conditions (for. e.g. some, a little).
- **Grammar** – How whole sentences, clauses and subordinate clauses affects meaning and the perception reality. Grammar allows the directing or redirecting to important points in the text through the use of the active or passive voice.
- **Cohesion** – How whole sentences or its parts connect with the remaining text. The use of words from the same semantic system. Synonyms and repetition of words.
- **Textual structure** - Text structure and style. Meta analytical view of the text as a whole. As Fairclough (1992) puts it, the "architecture of text" (p. 77).
- **Metaphor and other figures of speech** – As a way of persuading the reader. Shows how the producer/writer perceives and thus constructs the truth.
- **Ethos** – Construction of identities and power relations between the individuals being portrayed.
- **Intertextuality** – Are other texts, images or videos being drawn into the current text in order to create meaning? It is considered interdiscursivity when the text is referring to other discourses without including them.

Semiotics

Charles S. Pierce

In the late 19th century the American philosopher Charles S. Pierce defined images, words and objects as iconic signs, in the sense that they have a physical resemblance with the thing or things they represent. A sign acquires meaning through what Pierce calls "*feelings*" as something that is presented to the mind (Peirce, 1998, p. 45). A *feeling* is activated through the knowledge and experiences previously acquired. When a process of interpretation takes place, the picture becomes indexical because it gets identified with the object it represents. Moreover, Pierce (1998) distinguishes three orders of signs: Likeness, a sign that has no relation with its object but resembles it; the Index, which is physically connected with its object, but there is no interpretation involved yet; and the symbol, which results of the idea of the "symbol-using mind" (p. 50), or interpretation.

Regarding language and text, Pierce argues that no word by itself can convey the slightest information without the necessary previous experience and knowledge to interpret it (p. 48). Moreover, the experiential process of interpretation differs from person to person because not everyone has the same knowledge and processes the information in exactly the same way (ibid.).

Ferdinand de Saussure

Already in the early nineteenth century, the French linguist Ferdinand de Saussure predicted the founding a science that studied the life of signs within society (Saussure, 1959, p. 16). Today we have the flourishing field of social semiotics.

Saussure defined the sign as a compound of signifier and a signified. On the one hand, the signifier is the "form" - the actual word, image photo, etc., according to Hall (1997, p. 31). On the other, the signified is the concept that is triggered in our head every time you hear see or read a signifier (ibid.), it is "not 'a thing' but a mental representation of the 'thing'", according to Barthes (1977, p. 42). Moreover, the two elements are intimately united, and each recalls

the other” (Saussure, 1959, p. 66). This mediation played during the signifying practice depends on a dynamic mental representation which depends on the individual’s knowledge and experience. Therefore, Saussure (1959) argues that the nature of the sign is arbitrary because the bond between the signifier and the signified is itself arbitrary (p. 67). A word does not have meaning by itself without a mental representation which activates a concept, and thus giving meaning to it. Nevertheless, the relationship between signifier and signified although relatively stable, has a non-permanent nature because of historical shifts that affect the conceptual map of a particular culture and therefore the way the world is seen and classified (Hall, 2003, p. 32).

According to Hall (1997, p. 33) Saussure divided language in to two parts. The first is an underlying rule governed structure of language, which enables the producer to communicate by creating well-formed sentences - the *langue* (the language system). The second consists of the particular acts of speaking, writing, drawing, taking a picture, etc., which through the use of the structure and rules of the *langue* allows the creation of speech acts - *parole*.

Roland Barthes

In the famous essay, *Rhetoric of the Image* (1977), Roland Barthes explores how images acquire meaning and how it gets attached to them. Drawing from Saussure’s definition of signs as having a signifier and a signified, Barthes analyses an advertisement containing textual and pictorial components, in which he distinguishes three messages:

First, a twofold linguistic message: On the one hand, the code (language) from which the message has been taken. Its deciphering only requires the knowledge of writing and of that same language (denotation). On the other hand, the message can be further broken down in to the level of signified (connotation) – the mental representation (p. 153).

Second, the iconic message (symbolic message) which is composed of one or several discontinuous iconic signs. This message is equally composed of signifier and signified, in

which the later needs previous general cultural knowledge to grasp its intended meaning, and therefore organize the discontinuous signs in to a mental representation (ibid.).

The third message is constituted by the real objects, "the non-coded iconic message" or literal message (p. 154). One continues to 'read' the image to 'understand' a number of identifiable objects, not just shapes and colours. In the third iconic message, the signifieds are the objects themselves, and the signifiers are these same objects photographed (ibid.) – Barthes argues that this analogical (now mostly digital) representation is not arbitrary "as it is in language" (ibid.). Moreover, although a photograph is affected by choices made by the photographer, Barthes argues that it is not a true "transformation"; as a consequence, it loses equivalence to true sign systems and becomes a statement of "quasi-identity", because it resembles reality. In order to read the image at this 'first' level, we need to have acquired previous perceptual knowledge (ibid.).

Regarding the last two messages, Barthes (1977) describes them as a system that takes over the signs of other systems in order to make them its signifiers - a system of connotation. The literal image is denoted and the symbolic image connoted (p. 157).

In reference to the linguistic message, Barthes defines two functions in relation to the iconic messages – of anchorage or relay (p. 156). On the one hand, *anchorage*, most commonly found in press photography and advertisements, occurs when the text interacts with the iconic message and guides the reader in to a certain interpretation of what he or she sees and reads (ibid.). On the other hand, the function of *relay*, which occurs most often in film and comic strips, happens when the text and image have a complementary relationship - one complements the other without changing its meaning (p. 157).

Social Semiotics and Multimodality

In all domains of the contemporary social world, meaning is made in assemblages by drawing on and consisting of different modes: gestures and speech, objects, text, images, gaze, posture, and other actions all contributing meaning creation. Often with several of these

modes coordinated in complex conjunctions, thus contributing to countless communication possibilities (Bezemer, Kress, Jewitt, Diamantopoulou, & Mavers, 2012, p. 3).

Multimodality provides an important counter-balance to mono-modal approaches to meaning making with special emphasis on the process of semiosis (Iedema, 2003, p. 29-30). A multimodal approach considers all modes than can be used to elaborate discourse – text, speech, sound effects, music, moving and still images – and comes as a response to the increasingly different dynamics of socially situated meaning (ibid. p. 30). As Iedema (2003) argues, there is a constant process of *resemiotization* where meaning making processes affect each other through constant interaction.

Social semiotics is multimodal in its nature. The semiotic process of meaning creation is considered within its social context. Therefore, the concept of 'code' developed by the Paris school of semiotics evolves in to a 'resource' – codes are considered in their context, how they came about, who defined the rules and how and why they might be changed becomes a key issue (Iedema, Jewitt, & Oyama, 2004, p. 134).

In Michael Halliday's *systemic functional linguistics* (SFL), language is described as a complex semiotic system with various levels, or strata (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 24). In this social semiotic approach, Halliday views language as a network of systems for meaning making through a "systemic pattern of choices" (ibid.). Within SFL, language has three basic functions, or *metafunctions*: ideational, interpersonal and textual (ibid. p. 29). These metafunctions are reflected in a large system of meaning potentials with a specific set of semantic features for utterance production (Haratyan, 2011, p. 260). The ideational function consists of the experiential and the logical content of the text, which explains the individual's experience of the exterior world in the environment he is in; the textual function is text-oriented and deals with the cohesion and coherence of text production through the organizing and structuring of the linguistic information in a clause; and the interpersonal function deals with social and power relations between language users and producers – it relates the participant's situational roles within the discourse (Ibid. p. 261). With this systemic-relational principle in mind, where semiosis is analysed in terms of socially meaningful

tensions and oppositions, the analysis of texts goes beyond the application of syntactic criteria and looks at its structures "above the sentence" (Iedema, 2003, p. 31).

Methodological framework

The methodological framework in this thesis encompasses a wide variety of concepts and tools provided by both CDA and semiotics which allow for a consistent and well-grounded analysis. Both CDA and social semiotics provide a view of the production of texts and images as a social practice, as a form of meaning creation which has to be considered within its social context. On the one hand, CDA offers a comprehensive theoretical perspective on the power relations at play between the production and consumption of texts in which power tends to fall on the hands of the producers. Therefore, due to an unequal structural distribution of power, this social practice in the hands of few can influence a large social structure and thus shape society. On the other hand, social semiotics provides a comprehensive set of tools focused on uncovering the meaning vehiculated through multimodal texts (images, videos and text) and the relationships between its different components. Moreover, it provides the valuable analytical concept of connotation, where meaning (which is changeable) is generated individually shaped in the mind of the reader through the activation of mental models based on previous experiences. Finally, multimodality provides a wider view of what can be considered a text. It puts at the same level all modes that can be used to generate meaning through discourse. In conclusion, by applying the theory and analytical tools of these three closely related qualitative approaches, I will be able to perform a complete and effective analysis of the multimodal texts presented in the data corpus.

Data gathering and criteria

The data set under scrutiny in this thesis, as discussed, will be looked at through the complementary analytical lenses of both CDA and Social Semiotics in a multimodal perspective. Regarding the data size, initially I had chosen to analyse three articles from each source for each of the events. However, after initiating the analysis and observing the amount

of pages it took to analyse both sources on the EuroMaidan protests, I decided to shorten the analysis of the Crimean annexation to one article from each source as a consequence of the limit of 80 pages established in the thesis writing guidelines. Despite the difference in the amount of analytical data on both events, I consider that the analysis on the Crimean issue is still valid and will provide useful results which can potentially lead to further investigation on the issue. Moreover, it will also allow for a discursive comparison between both events.

Data gathering choices

Bellow I present the chosen data gathering method in order to reach a satisfying and congruent data set and answer the problem formulation.

The data set was found through a custom search at the search engine google.com as shown in *Figure 2*.

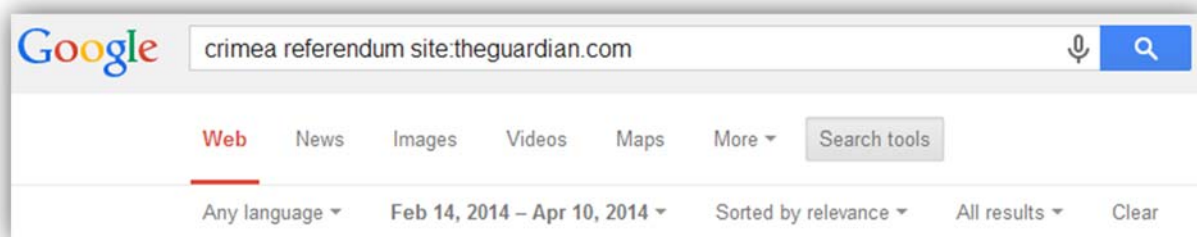
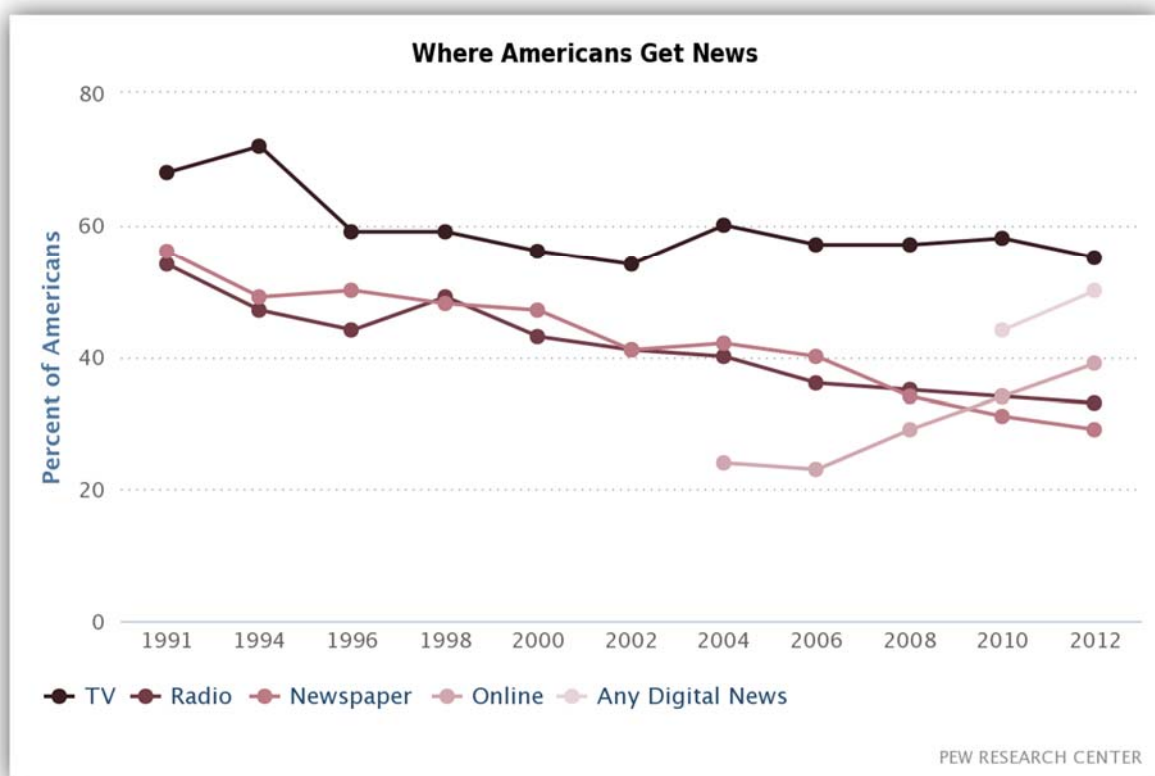


Figure 2 – source: Google.com

Criteria wise, two equal searches were made for both sources. As can be seen in the example in *Figure 2*, two keywords were used in the search for the EuroMaidan protests and the Crimean referendum: 'crimea referendum' and 'euromaidan protests' respectively. Each search was filtered by a custom date range in order to get articles written during both periods. From 22 November 2013 until 10 April 2014 for the Euromaidan protests and from 14 February until 10 April for the Crimean referendum. The filter 'site:' was used in order to only get results from each of the sources.

The search results found in this particular order were acquired on 17 April 2014; therefore, it is important to note that today, its results, as a cause of the changeable nature of online search engines, might have changed its order since then.

Considering the fact that www.google.com is the most used web search engine in the world, ("Alexa - Top Sites by Category: Computers/Internet/Searching/Search Engines," 2014) for e.g. accounting for 67.5% of all search traffic in the United States, (ComScore, 2014) the choice for the data gathering method is justified by its wide reach in terms of sheer numbers; therefore, potentially acquiring a selective power able to influence a global audience. Moreover, a US news consumer research behaviour study by Olmstead, Mitchell, & Rosenstiel (2011) shows that among the top US nationally recognized news sites, Google remains the primary entry point, accounting for 30% of the traffic to these sites (p. 2). The study also shows that Google is still the biggest traffic driver to top news websites. In 2010, it was the top referring site to 17 of 25 major American news websites analysed in the study (p. 7).



Graphic 2 – where Americans got the news in 2012

As can be seen in *graphic 2*, the medium through which Americans access the news is shifting from the traditional TV, radio and newspaper, to the internet (online news). This growth was definitely accentuated by the mainstreaming of smartphones in 2010 and the generalization

of the use of social networks as it can be seen in the *Any Digital News* indicator in *graphic 2*. In this indicator, which merges all online digital news sources and social networks, the percentage of people getting news digitally (50%) approaches the one of the still major source for news, Television (55%) (Keeter, 2012, p. 9). By comparing with the same indicator in 2010 (44%), one can argue that the online platform will soon if not already surpassed TV as the main medium through which people find the news. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that these results come from a western and technologically developed country (US) in North America, the continent with the highest level of internet penetration (78.6%), and therefore cannot be generalized to the whole world – especially considering the 44.3% difference to the world's average (34.3%) (Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2012).

The decision to select the top results regarding each custom search, came as a consequence of the finding that the ten results which appear in the first page when a search is performed on google.com generate 92% of all traffic from an average search (Chitika, 2013). Moreover the top three results account for more than 65% of viewings (*Graphic 4*) (ibid.). Having this in mind, I argue that these first results are the ones that will have more readers and therefore more visibility and arguably more potential impact in the public sphere's opinion.



Graphic 3, percentage of traffic by Google results position - source: chitika.com

Finally, by adopting this data gathering method, besides resembling how a normal search would be performed, it will also provide a view in to Google's own selective choices. The results shown are a result of a secret and

well secured algorithm which through a series of parameters creates a selective filtering and ordering of what the reader should see. Therefore, by considering this selection process as a

powerful tool able to create social change, Google's own choices will be taken in to consideration during the discussion section in this thesis.

Approach to the data

I have chosen to analyse the articles from top to bottom as they would be naturally read, with emphasis on the top three quarters of the article. This choice is based on Jacob Nielsen's (2006) findings on how users read web content in a top to bottom F-shaped pattern. Through the use of eye-tracking visualization analysis, Nielsen (2006) found that internet users have a dominant F-Shaped reading pattern when looking at a webpage, particularly focusing their attention on its top half (see *Figure 4*). Moreover, internet users do not habitually read the text thoroughly - in fact exhaustive reading was found to be rare. Concordantly, journalistic article writing guidelines taught around the world suggest the use of the *inverted pyramid* format (Read Write Think, 2003). In this format the article starts with the key facts summarised



Figure 3 - F-Shaped Pattern for reading web content. Source: Nielsen Norman Group

in a concise lead (Who? What? Where? When? Why?), and then presents the information in a descending order of importance (Mcgraw-Hill, 2014). For the purpose of the analysis, I assume that the main message of the article has been put forward by the journalist in roughly the first half of the article, thus the choice to only analyse the first half in each of the articles. Moreover, as a consequence of structural differences between the two sources, these need

to be addressed in order to have a balance and coherent analysis. Therefore, because in RT's articles there is no subtitle after the title as in The Guardian's articles – I have decided to analyse the title, the first image and the three first paragraphs in RT's articles; and the title, subtitle, first image and the first two paragraphs in The Guardian's data. There is nevertheless one exception in the analytical approach to RT's *Article 3* (p 49) with the title: *"12 most dramatic Kiev videos showing true scale of Ukraine mayhem"*. In this particular article its acknowledged purpose is the showing of audio-visual material, thus I have chosen to analyse its first video in totality, replacing the need for the analysis of a third paragraph.

There will also be slight differences regarding the photo's caption analysis; on the one hand, on the ones in which the caption is embedded in the photo I will analyse them sequentially but with no evident structural separation; on the other hand, in case the caption could stand as a paragraph itself, I will analyse it accordingly, but still interrelating it with the photograph.

Finally, the reason not to analyse audio-visual content but the one video mentioned previously, is due the disparity in this type of content found between both sources - RT always presents one or more videos, while in The Guardian it is uncommon. This factor could lead to an also disparate analysis regarding size and content and thus hinder the analysis as a whole. Therefore, when the first visual material of the article is a video, I chose to only analyse the static image chosen to represent it as a photograph in order to achieve a balanced and congruent analysis of both sources.

Discursive and semiotic analysis

In the analysis, as discussed in the previous section, I have chosen to focus primarily on the EuroMaidan protests; therefore, I will analyse the first three Google search results from each source regarding the EuroMaidan events, and one from each source regarding the Crimean referendum and annexation. The choice to include these two articles about the Crimean annexation and referendum will help establish a comparison about the discursive evolution from Euromaidan to Crimea annexation, and potentially open doors to further research on the later event. Regarding the data disparity between these two events under analysis, despite

possible concern with validity, this was a conscious choice which I consider to: besides providing initial valid evidence in relation to the discursive strategies used by both sources to report on these events, it will also provide a valid comparative analysis which itself might open the door for further investigation.

EuroMaidan protests analysis

RT

Article 1

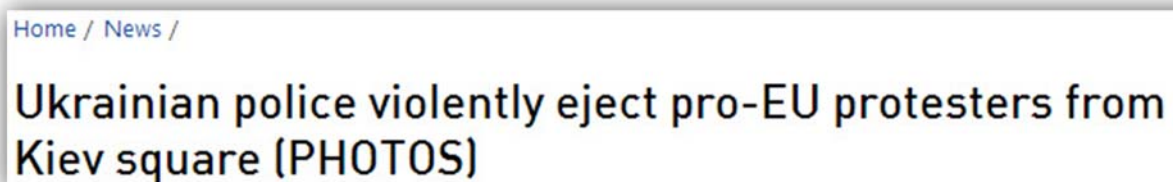
A screenshot of a news article headline from RT. The headline reads: "Ukrainian police violently eject pro-EU protesters from Kiev square (PHOTOS)". Above the headline, there is a navigation bar with "Home / News /". The text is in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Image 1 (Appendix a, Article 1, p. 111).

Published on: 30 November 2013

Web address: <http://rt.com/news/ukraine-police-disperse-protest-509/>

Appendix location: (Appendix a, Article 1, p. 111).

This article reports on the first massive police action to disperse the protestors from Maidan square since the beginning of the demonstrations in Kiev on 21 November 2013.

In the title (*Image 1*) the use of the adverb "*violently*" immediately connotes a negative tone towards the methods used by the "*Ukrainian police*", who did "*eject pro-EU protesters*." In addition, the verb "*eject*" originates a metaphor which connotes the Ukrainian's police's actions as quick and effective as in a mechanical movement – as a tool. The prefix "*pro-*", applied to "*EU*", acting as a compound adjective, establishes the "*protesters*" as solely advocating for closer ties with the European Union. Moreover, the "*protestors*" were "*ejected*" from "*Kiev square*" – by referring to Maidan Nezalezhnosti (Independence Square) by the

shorter and simpler version "*Kiev square*", its connotation with independence becomes relegated to a second plane.

In conclusion, the title connotes a certain degree of disapproval towards the use of violence by the Ukrainian police and establishes the protesters' main demand as Ukraine's integration in the EU.

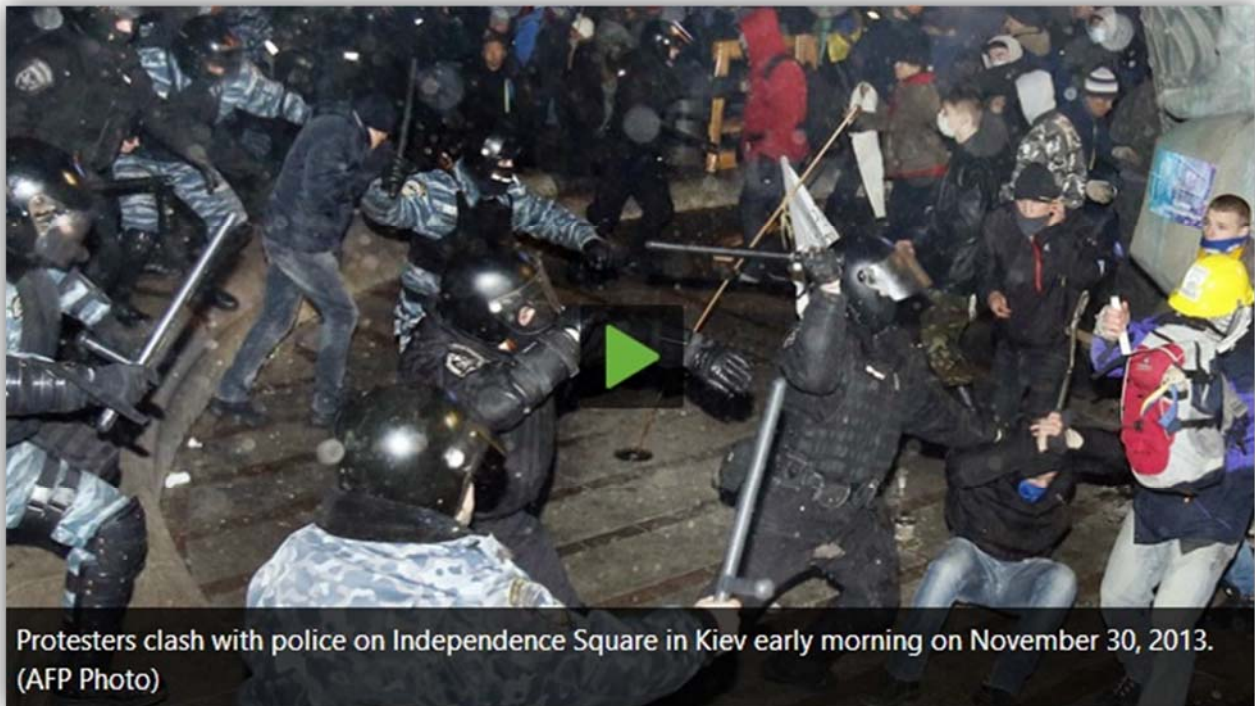


Image 2 (Appendix a, Article 1, p. 111).

The still chosen to introduce the first video (*Image 2*), connotes an overall sense of chaos and violence: the oblique, top to down perspective puts the viewer's gaze at a safe distance but at the same time close enough for him or her to witness a scene of deep violence. The photo was taken at night with little street lighting, consequently making the use of flash indispensable and thus adding to the sense of chaos. The viewer is presented with an extremely violent scene which is made visible to him or her through what appears to be a unaltered photograph - a "quasi-identity" described by Barthes (1980, p. 174) which resembles *reality*. As a consequence, *Image 2* can be framed within the documentary genre, in which it connotatively acquires a higher degree of authenticity and thus potentially an increased legitimacy at the viewer's eyes. *Image 2* is a frame of a perceptible chaotic and violent event happening in almost total darkness. The need for the use of artificial lighting

(flash) so close to the police and protesters to the point of losing unrecoverable detail in the highlights, enhances a sense of emergency and precariousness of the whole scene. Furthermore, there is a sense of movement within the frame clearly demarked by two sides in opposing movement: from left to right, the police is moving forward with threatening body language while holding their batons up high, they resemble attackers, on the other hand the protesters are retreating and trying to protect themselves from what appears to be an overwhelming and brutal force.

The photo's caption achieves a shifting in the roles connoted pictorially: by starting with the subject "*Protesters clash*" without a definite article such as '*the*', gives place to a generalization of all protesters as a uniform group, and thus the individuals portrayed in the photo connotatively come to represent all EuroMaidan protesters. The verb "*clash*" represents a violent confrontation between two completely opposing sides: the authorities and the protesters. Complementing the textual discursive differentiation, on the pictorial side the dress code of both sides is substantially different and once again helps establish the roles of opposing actors within the frame: on the one hand, the police is wearing full protective riot gear connoting violent power used to maintain *order*, on the other hand the rioters seem to be trying to protect themselves from the incoming *wave* which is about to hit them, wearing only improvised protective equipment - such is the case of the man wearing a yellow construction helmet on the right side of the frame using his backpack as a shield. The police looks powerful and almost unstoppable and the protesters appear to be powerless and scared. However, on a closer look, the protestor's dress code (hoodies and other head and face protection) used to obscure their identity, which added to their young appearance and sex (all are apparently male), connotes them with the stereotyped rioter, and therefore the other. Therefore, and although the protesters are being subjected to violence and appear to be powerless, the violence perpetrated by the police becomes positively connoted because it is used in order to restore order which the 'rioters' are known for disturbing.

The setting of the photo appears to be inside a dry fountain where the protesters are seemingly taking shelter, an 'obstacle' which the police overcomes, as a consequence easily accentuating the opposing roles.

The caption then goes on to situate the events in "*early morning*" - emphasizing the darkness and precariousness of the events in "*Independence Square*"; moreover, it gives the exact date (November 30, 2013), and thus achieving a sense of immediacy and relevance at the time it was published. This type of immediacy discourse can be found in the breaking news genre.

First paragraph: "*Police in the Ukrainian capital cleared the landmark Independence Square of pro-EU demonstrators on Saturday morning. Police used tear gas and clubs, while protesters threw stones at law enforcement*" (Appendix a, Article 1, p. 111).

In the first paragraph the verb "*cleared*" is used to describe the police action, as a consequence connoting a sense of cleaning/removal of someone who did not belong - the protesters. Moreover, the adding of "*landmark*" before "*Independence Square*" attributes a higher sense of importance to the place where the events take place - reinforcing the authority's legitimacy to stop an act which becomes connoted with contempt towards a Square associated with Ukraine's own historical "*Independence*" after the break of the Soviet Block. Moreover, because the protesters are *desecrating* a location connoted with "*Independence*" with their *rioting*, they are symbolically put against Ukraine's own independence.

On the second sentence of the first paragraph it is mentioned that protesters retaliated by throwing "*stones at law enforcement*," while "*police used tear gas and clubs*," thus putting them in direct opposition. Moreover, the police is now being referred to by two compound nouns, "*law enforcement*"; this change connotes the Ukrainian police with the concept of law enforcement, a more encompassing, positive and legitimate one. They are enforcing the "*law*" which was made to protect citizens from the ones who break it.

Second Paragraph: *"Authorities in Kiev stepped in to disperse demonstrators at around 4:30 am local time (02:30 GMT). According to opposition activists, around 1,000 policemen from the special task force, Berkut, armed with clubs and shields swept Independence Square clear of the remaining demonstrators that had chosen to stay overnight in the capital's downtown area"* (Appendix a, Article 1, p. 112).

In the first sentence of the second paragraph the subject is now *"authorities"*, which has a more positive and encompassing connotation than *"police"*. The use of the intransitive verb *"stepped in"* implies a firm stance in order to resolve the issue. Moreover, they *"dispersed"* – a verb which connotes efficacy and swiftness. Furthermore, at the end of the first phrase of the second paragraph the reader is given approximate time, both in Ukraine and its GMT equivalent – besides achieving an association with rigorous reporting and fact checking; also demonstrates an intention to mainly target an European audience and thus achieve a sense of parallelism.

On the second sentence of the second paragraph, the subject *"opposition activists"* – a more positive way of referring to the *"demonstrators"*, become the article's source by reporting that the authorities consisted of *"around 1000 policeman"*. Moreover, it adds to the legitimacy and authenticity of the reporting. In addition, the fact that these are *"policeman"* connotes a male only *"special task force"*, the *"Berkut"*. These are not just any force, they are *"special"* therefore acquiring a threatening connotation – they are usually called in as a last resort. To the non-Ukrainian layman the name *"Berkut"* is probably unknown, but because he or she now knows that they are from *"a special task force"* he can create the mental concept of what it is by association. Moreover, the fact that there was the need to call a special force arm of the Ukrainian police to *"disperse"* the protesters represents them as dangerous and difficult to control. In addition, the *"Berkut"* achieved this dispersing by being *"armed with clubs and shields"* an almost medieval terminology which associated with *"swept"* and *"clear"* – acquires a metaphorical sense related to the cleaning of Kiev – symbolically representing the protesters as dirt in *"Independence Square"* that needed to be removed.

Third paragraph: *"It was horrible. We were holding a peaceful demonstration and they attacked us," a protester told AP. "They threw us away like garbage"* (Appendix a, Article 1, p. 112).

The third paragraph consists of a short quote from one of the demonstrators who says that "it was horrible", thus becoming connoted as a victim of a violent and terrifying attack. On the second sentence the pronoun "We" transforms the voice of this particular protester in the voice and experience of all other protesters that were in the Maidan. Furthermore, the "demonstration" is modified by the adjective "peaceful" which delegitimizes the violent action carried on by the police. Moreover, the using the verbs *attack* and *threw* to describe the police actions is drawn from a war like scene discourse, connotes the use of excessive force and consequently removes legitimacy of the police's actions. Finally, they were thrown "away like garbage" – by comparing the way protesters were treated as "like garbage" the police becomes further connoted as being cold, and violent. To a certain degree the "Berkut" becomes demonized with this particular statement.

Article 2

Home / News /

Ukraine truce fails, rioters renew offensive in Kiev, death toll rises to 35

Image 3 (Appendix a, Article 2, p. 120).

Published on: 20 February 2014

Web address: <http://rt.com/news/ukraine-maidan-rioters-offensive-880/>

Appendix location: (Appendix a, Article 2, p. 120).

The title suggests a discursive change from *Article 1* regarding the Ukrainian protesters, who are now referred to as "rioters". Connotatively, rioters do not necessarily have a purpose in their actions such as a protester, instead the act of rioting symbolizes violence and destruction often with no reasonable purpose but the one to pile or destroy. In fact, the action of

"offensive", again contrarily to *Article 1*, connotes the rioters as the attackers and causers of destruction and death. Moreover, the title implies that the *"rioters"* are to blame for the previous *"truce"* failing – symbolizing a violation of agreed peace - and therefore symbolically bringing death upon themselves. The *"death toll"* connotes the rioters' actions has having a *"toll"* - they are paying a high price - , which in this case is the concrete number of *"35"* deaths. The specifying of a number already in the title, adds to an overall sense of authenticity and reliability, and potentially anchors a shocking effect from the beginning.



Image 4 (Appendix a, Article 2, p. 120).

By pursuing an F-shaped reading pattern, the reader encounters a video waiting to be played (*Image 4*, p. 47). The still chosen to represent the video reveals a chaotic scene with predominant dark colours. Denotatively, there is a group of men carrying a person on what appears to be a white door. It is a heterogeneous male group from different age groups, wearing different types of protective clothes. Denotatively, all these signs signify the aforementioned destruction and chaos. Moreover, this chaotic sense is also connoted through elements such as the wet ground covered by ashes and the smoke in the background.

The frame is tilted and the perspective is distorted due to the use of a wide angle lens. As a consequence closer objects and persons appear bigger while distant objects and people appear distant and therefore become connotatively less relevant. These technical derived photographic effects contribute to increasing the emotionally shocking component vehiculated through the photo. Moreover, the emphasis on the elements in the forefront highlights the pain and chaos. They carry their own dead as a consequence of their destructive actions.

Moreover, by taking the title's connotation in to account, these are "rioters" who are either carrying a dead or wounded rioter. Because the person being carried is wearing a jumper with Ukraine's flag colours, he is symbolically representing all Ukrainians and their suffering, and becomes connoted with a martyr. In addition, he is being carried on a white door which is connoted with the divine in a religious sense – it is as if he is being carried to heaven. As a whole, the visual signs originate a visual metaphor, the scene metaphorically resembles the one of an improvised funeral of Ukraine's rioters. Going back to the title's anchoring, this scene represents the death and destruction which the protests have caused and brought upon themselves because they have disrupted the "truce" – a sign of potential peace which should be pursued and respected.

First paragraph: *"The battle for Kiev's Independence Square has reignited as rioters clash with security forces amid sniper fire. The death toll has increased to 35, the Ukrainian Health Ministry confirmed"* (Appendix a, Article 2, p. 120).

On the first paragraph the reader is now being given more information about the "clash" between the protesters and the police. The verb "clash" achieves the reinforcing of two completely opposing sides which interact violently. Moreover the use of the noun "battle" to describe the stand of between the two sides draws from military discourse and reinforces the sense of an ongoing violent battle. In addition, the fact that the "battle" is "for Kiev's Independence Square" raises ambiguity towards who is in fact fighting for the "independence" of which this particular square is a symbol of. The first sentence is a metaphor, which through

the use of the verb *"reignited"* together with *"as rioters clash"* associates the rioter's actions as the causing of destruction and death in a repetitive way.

The second sentence of the first paragraph, as in the title, makes use of concrete numbers as a way of potentially giving a sense of legitimacy, which is further increased by the use of a connotatively reliable source, *"Ukrainian Health Ministry"*, further reinforced by the verb *"confirmed"* which connotes the number *"35"* as an unquestionable fact – despite the unclarity of from which of the sides these dead are from - *Image 4* (p. 50) clearly puts them on the rioters side. Finally, the mentioning of the *"Ukrainian Health Ministry"* as the only source, connotes trust and acceptance on one of the sides of the *"clash"*, in addition the use of the verb *"confirmed"*, adds to the trust deposited in the source and thus emphasizing its legitimacy.

Second paragraph: *"It has also announced that 505 people have been injured in the turmoil, with around 300 of those admitted to hospital"* (Appendix a, Article 2, p. 121).

The second paragraph serves a complementary function to the end of the subtitle. It mentions again concrete figures about the number of injured people (505) and admitted to hospital (300). Moreover, the injured are now described as *"people"* a generalist definition left open to interpretation and establishing uncertainty who these people are - demonstrators or police forces? The use of the noun *"turmoil"* to define the events connotes a great sense of disturbance, confusion and uncertainty about the future, in this case of Ukraine. Again, one can assume that these numbers came from the *"Ukrainian Health Ministry"*, and thus reinforcing the sense of its reliability.

Third paragraph: *"Rioters have reached the Rada building (the country's parliament), while the police have been pushed back into Mariinsky park nearby. An emergency evacuation has been declared and parliament members and employees are leaving the building"* (Appendix a, Article 2, p. 121).

On the third paragraph, the protesters are once again fitted in to a uniform group called "*rioters*". Moreover, they are now seemingly powerful because they were able to push back the police. The verb "*push*" demonstrates great force, almost as if bullying the police because they are more powerful than the authorities themselves. The rioters "*reached ... the country's parliament*" a building which represents a country's democratic institution from which connotatively social and economic stability is maintained through governance. The fact that the rioters have reached this particularly building, symbolically connotes an eminent anarchical state about to be established. Moreover, the "*rioters*" power has become so great that an "*emergency evacuation*" has been declared, transmitting a sense of catastrophe, where the last resource is to abandon the ship. The evacuees are parliament members and employees, who become connoted with victims of this almost hooliganism and forced to escape their own work place. The naming of the place from where they had to escape (*Rada building*), and the one they went to hide (*Mariinsky park*), adds to the realism of the events and emphasizes the anarchical state in which the country, particularly Kiev is in.

Article 3

Home / News /

12 most dramatic Kiev videos showing true scale of Ukraine mayhem

Image 5 (Appendix a, Article 3, p. 124).

Published on: 20 February 2014

Web address: <http://rt.com/news/horrifying-videos-kiev-maidan-901/>

Appendix location: (Appendix a, Article 3, p. 124).

The title (*Image 5*) begins by telling the viewer that he has at his disposition a compilation of the "12 most dramatic Kiev videos" – thus immediately showing an intention to raise an emotional response from the viewer, which is achieved through the use of the determiner "*most*" (a superlative of many or much) and the adjective "*dramatic*". The viewer is prepared

for the following shocking images. Moreover, the use of the adjective “*true*” emphasizes the videos as representing the truth of what is happening in Ukraine, leaving no margin for further interpretation. Furthermore, it shows an intention to try to convince the viewer in to accepting the videos as the truth and therefore potentially reducing his or her questioning of how the events are framed in the videos he or she chooses to play. The use of the noun “*mayhem*” together with “*Ukraine*” connotes the whole country as having been taken over by total disorder and chaos – it is a sensationalist discourse purportedly used in order to achieve a shocking effect and thus catch the viewers’ attention. The second half of the title resembles the discourse of war reporting, consequently portraying the events as being part of a civil war that is going on in Ukraine.



Image 6 (Appendix a, Article 3, p. 124).

The first photo (*Image 6*) the reader sees when pursuing the F-shaped reading pattern conveys the same sense of violence and destruction already connoted in the title. In the photo there are three man literally burning in flames – there is a burst of fire coming from the

background causing what can be perceived as an extremely violent explosion involving a great deal of physical pain. It appears to be the particular moment of what most likely was a failed attempt to throw an artisanal cocktail grenade by the protesters. The accidental moment in the photo captured the protesters hurting themselves in a horrible way, consequently portraying them as unexperienced and reckless – as symbolically bringing pain and suffering upon themselves. The arguably most shocking component in the frame is the face of the man in the centre which is being burned by live flames. He is wearing a highly flammable plastic raincoat, adding to the sense of precariousness and recklessness these protesters are in. On a closer look, there can also be perceived a man coming from the flames in the background – he is almost imperceptible because only small parts of his body are not absorbed by flames – once again it shows a great deal of physical pain. Moreover, *Frame 6* could be inserted in the action film genre – its characteristics, particularly the lighting and antique dress code are reminiscent of for example First World War photographs despite being coloured. Furthermore, the scene is cinematographic and hyper-realistic resulting in the objectifying of violence and destruction, and therefore eventually disconnecting the viewer from the suffering he is being presented with. The viewer might look at it as a special effects spectacle. As a consequence of these visual characteristics, a dichotomy of Us and Them (the other) is constructed. ‘Them’ as the Ukrainian protesters who connotatively become mere characters of what could be a movie poster presented for the viewer’s to gaze with awe. The Ukrainian protesters become the other whose suffering is objectified.

Figure 6’s (p. 51) caption anchors meaning to it: firstly by definitely establishing the individuals in it, the “protesters”, and secondly by contextualising the event as the result of “clashes with police” – it confirms Figure 6 connotations and thus establishes what the viewer is seeing as facts. Moreover, by defining the individuals in the frame as “protesters” they become symbolically representative of all protesters - which together with the pictorial connotation, comes out as a uniform group who is violent, destructive and irrational. Furthermore, together with the use of the verb “burn” in the present tense, without any contextualization of the events that caused it, achieves an oversimplification of this shocking event and thus further objectifies the protesters’ suffering. Finally, in the caption the verb “burning” is once more

repeated, and thus causing the reinforcement of an overall sense of destruction, particularly of self-destruction.

First paragraph: *"The center of Kiev has been transformed into a battleground as rioters clash with police on Independence Square. RT has gathered the twelve most horrifying videos that show Kiev's descent into turmoil"* (Appendix a, Article 3, p. 124).

The first introductory paragraph presents the Maidan Square as a *"battleground"*, a noun drawn from military discourse which connotes the events taking place as part of a war. This connotation is further intensified through the use of the verb *"clash"* which implies two complete opposite sides taking violently action against each other. Once again the *"rioters"* are portrayed as responsible for the violent events taking place because they *"clash"* with the police. Furthermore, *"The center of Kiev has been transformed into a battleground"* – a consequence of the *"clash"* – the 'rioters' become responsible for this *"transformation"*. Finally, the use of the noun *"battleground"* once again drawn from historical and military discourse connotes a warlike scene.

On the second sentence of the first paragraph the following videos are characterized as *"horrifying"*, an emotionally charged adjective which achieves a great deal of sensationalizing, thus following the pattern already observed in the title, and in *Image 6* and its caption (p. 51). Moreover the use of the metaphor, *"Kiev's descent into turmoil"*, implies a catastrophic event. The use of the possessive in *"Kiev's"* reveals an intention to portray the whole city in a war like scene, which is aided by the use of *"descent"*, thus connoting an almost a cataclysm in which the city has fallen into. Finally, the use of the noun *"turmoil"*, also previously used in *Article 2, paragraph 2, p. 47*, also connotes an almost literary fiction rhetoric, adding to a sense of the intense negativity and fatalism of the events taking place.

Second paragraph: *"Ukraine has seen some of the worst scenes of violence over the last few days, with over 60 dead and over 500 injured in the escalating conflict."* (Appendix a, Article 3, p. 124).

The first paragraph starts with a personification: "Ukraine has seen" – thus representing Ukraine as a sole entity which is observing scenes of violence in it, moreover through this rhetorical tool, an increased emotional component is added, and thus also potentially drawing a more intense emotional connection with the viewer. The first clause is in the past participle ("*has seen*"), however when combined with: "*over the last few days*", the violence is connoted as continuous and carried on until today.

These are not just any "*scenes of violence*", they are the "*worst*", thus connoting the content that follows the as the most violent and shocking, consequently increasing the whole paragraph sensationalizing potential. On the second clause the reader is presented with the numbers of the dead (60) and injured (500) – which similarly increases the shocking and sensationalizing potential. Moreover, the preposition "*over*" before each of the numbers, also connotes an intention to emphasize the death and suffering. The paragraph ends by characterizing the events as an "*escalating conflict*", an expression drawn from a war like discourse implying an increasing in violence and putting forward the prospect of more of it about to come.

Image 7 Caption: "An exclusive drone video shot by the Ruptly agency, captures a dizzying aerial view of burning Maidan on Wednesday. Massive clouds of black smoke rise from the barricades set ablaze by rioters on Independence Square" (Appendix a, Article 3, p. 124).



Image 7 (Appendix a, Article 3, p. 125).

Before starting the analysis of the *Image 7* (p. 53) and its content, I would like to justify a different analytical approach due to the particular aspects of the article: Firstly, I have chosen to also analyse the first audio-visual material because it consists of the articles' main body of content. Therefore, the potential for at least this first video to be played is arguably greater than on the other articles in which the video content is not as salient. Secondly, I have chosen to start by analysing the caption before the video because it appears before it in the article. The choice to place the caption in this particular place has the potential to help generate mental pre-conceptions about what is about to be watched. Therefore, through the following of a top to bottom approach based on the F-shaped reading pattern, I will follow this analytical logic.

The video (*Image 7*) consist of raw footage with unaltered diegetic sound shot from a drone over the Maidan square. According to the caption, the footage was shot by the Ruptly agency – which is owned by RT. Moreover, it is "*exclusive*", therefore connoting the video as unique and as a new perspective of the events never seen before. This video was shot by a "*drone*",

which despite being an existing technology, still has a sense of futuristic technology as in a film.

The caption goes on to describe the video as "*a dizzying aerial view of burning Maidan.*" It can be assumed that the adjective "*dizzying*" - a sensorial disturbance as a consequence of footage shot from a drone, connotes the aerial view as disturbing. In the second part of the first clause there is a metaphor: the "*burning Maidan*" - managing to enhance the sensation of destruction connoted in the video.

The second sentence of the caption – "*Massive clouds of black smoke rise from the barricades set ablaze by rioters on Independence Square*" – besides the persisting connotation with a sense of destruction, also establishes its causer, the "*rioters*". The use of the adjective "*Massive*" helps starting the sentence in a hyperbolizing way, therefore raising the sense of chaos and putting the protesters in a position of power. Likewise, the use of the adjective "*ablaze*" also serves a hyperbolizing purpose which helps intensify in a negative manner the actions of its causer, the "*rioters*". Furthermore, the noun, "*rioters*" becomes indefinite due to the use of the preposition "*by*". As a result it generates an overall category of *rioters* which connotatively comes to encompass every individual in the Maidan Square.

Regarding the visual analysis, the footage itself is raw and unaltered. During its 58 seconds there are four different relatively long shots of the fire set by protesters in the Maidan square. One can assume that the original sound was kept because the engines of the drone are loud and can be clearly heard. The raw sound of the propellers is loud and unpleasant, it has the potential to increase the dramatic effect and raise a sense of fear due to its almost post-apocalyptic connotation. Moreover, this diegetic sound attributes a hyper-realistic sense to the footage – it becomes more real than reality itself. Regarding the shot type, because it is a predominately extreme wide shot, the individuals in it cannot be distinguished, the viewer only sees a great human mass which seems to be acting with one purpose – of violence and destruction. One of the most salient aspects of the frame is the wall of fire between the protesters and what can be deducted to be the authorities. The burning flame wall and the random explosions symbolically represent a clear division between these two sides and

connotes a great deal of violence in a scene that resembles a war zone. Moreover, the fire generates another great wall of smoke which is carried by the wind to the opposite side of the protesters – it consequently hides and covers the opposing side thus only showing the protesters violent actions. They are seemingly powerful and overwhelming.

The Guardian

Article 4



Image 8 (Appendix a, Article 4, p. 131).

Published on: 04 January 2014

Web address: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jan/04/welcome-ukraine-into-eu-project>

Appendix location: (Appendix a, Article 4, p. 131).

Through its algorithm, Google has elected to show an opinion article as its first result. The genre of opinion news article becomes defined through the section title just above the article's title: "*Comment is free*" (*Image 10*). The title section connotes an editorial intention to, on the one hand, for the newspaper to demark itself from the content in the section, and on the other, openness to opinion and promotion of freedom of speech. Nonetheless, the choice to publish the article inevitably affiliates the newspaper with the views expressed in it and therefore makes it impossible to separate the newspaper's editorial line from the opinion of this particular article's author.

The title (*Image 8, p. 60*), starts by setting a positive tone towards the integration of Ukraine in to the EU by asking its readers to *"restore faith in the project"*. The author engages directly with the reader by addressing him or her through the use of an imperative clause – he is giving an order to the reader. Moreover, the use of the noun *"faith"*, drawn from religious discourse, implies a deep and almost blind belief in this *"project"* – a metonymy for European Union. Due to the title's imperative nature, it becomes implicit that the author considers himself a European (he is Polish). Moreover, the statement comes from a European to his fellow Europeans, thus potentially acquiring a greater degree of legitimacy particularly in the eyes of European readers – who at this point, connotatively become the group targeted by the article.

Subtitle: *"Granting Ukraine accession wouldn't just help Ukrainians, it could end pessimism in the union and build bridges to Russia"* (Appendix a, Article 4, p. 131).

In the first clause of the subtitle, the author once again demonstrates his position in favor of *"Granting Ukraine Accession"*. Moreover, the use of the contraction *"wouldn't"*, together with the adverb *"just"* modifying the verb *"help"*, connotes a possible *"accession"* as helping the European Union and all Europeans to get out of this implicit crisis. The author goes on to further explain his argument: *"could end pessimism in the union"*. Firstly, the use of the noun *"end"* gives more power to the overall statement, therefore increasing the importance of Ukrainian integration as almost vital for the EU's survival – nevertheless, the use of the auxiliary verb *"could"* also attributes a degree of uncertainty to the statement as whole. Secondly, through a metonymy, the European Union becomes *"the union"* thus again implying a calling from a European to other Europeans who are connotatively part of a *"union"* – he emphasizes their connection. On the second clause of the subtitle, the author states that the acceptance of Ukraine in to the EU would *"build bridges to Russia"*; these metaphorical bridges put a potential accession of Ukraine in to the EU as leading to openness and a better relationship equally with Russia. As a consequence, the accession becomes connoted as

essential for the future of Europe, Ukraine and Russia and for the maintaining of peace in the region.



Pro-European supporters celebrate new year in Independence Square in Kiev, Ukraine, 1 January 2014. Photograph: Stringer/Reuters

Image 9 (Appendix a, Article 4, p. 131).

In the first image of the article (*Image 9*), the reader is presented with three Ukrainian women labelled as “*pro-European supporters*” in the caption. Their Ukraineness is emphasized by the fact that the two women in the foreground are seemingly covered by the Ukrainian flag and are wearing the typically Ukrainian flower crown. As a consequence they appear to be representing all Ukrainians in a celebration of victory, a connotation emphasized by the hand on the right side of the frame doing the gesture of victory, a sign of a victorious feeling. Moreover, the artificial lighting coming from behind these women gives them almost an angelical aura, thus connoting them as Ukraine’s saviours. In addition, the white and yellow lighting coming from behind can also be interpreted as symbolically representing the dawn of a new era for Ukraine. Furthermore, at a subliminal level, they are celebrating what is seemingly not just good for Ukrainians, but also for Europeans and Russians as connoted in the title and subtitle.

The caption (*Image 9, p. 59*) serves an anchoring function. Firstly by establishing the women in the photograph as *"Pro-European supporters"*, through the use of the prefix *"Pro-"*, the main cause of their celebration becomes associated with an approaching to further EU integration, which is further emphasized because they are *"supporters" of this cause*. The verb *"celebrate"* once again connotes a great deal of joy associated with a *"faith"* (*Image 9, p. 62*) already referred to in the title. Moreover, the celebration of the *"New Year"* connotatively brings about renewed hope, and it is a period associated with taking time to re-evaluate one's life course and set goals for the New Year ahead; therefore, all Ukrainians and Ukraine are seen as being in a turning point in their lives and history respectively. Finally, the fact that this New Year is being celebrated in the *"Independence Square"*, further emphasizes a connotation with the celebration of Ukraine's independence.

First paragraph: *"In the west, the past two weeks have been a time of respite from politics as people celebrated Christmas and new year. At the same time in Kiev, stalwart Ukrainians in their thousands have spent day and night on "Euromaidan" protesting against the blocking of their road to Europe. It is hard to imagine how someone can stand and sleep on the street in winter for entire days and weeks"* (Appendix a, Article 4, p. 131).

The first paragraph starts by establishing a comparison between, on the one hand *"the west,"* as *"people"* (westerners) comfortably celebrating Christmas, a *"time of respite"* – connoting a sense of living in stability and peace, and on the other hand, *"stalwart Ukrainians"* who protest *"against the blocking of their road to Europe"* in Kiev. Through the use of the adjective *"stalwart"* all Ukrainians become connoted as loyal, dependable and as a group who endures hardships for a cause - in this case, *"against the blocking of their road to Europe"*. Furthermore, it is implicit that the blocking, in this particular case, is being made by Russia, which through the use of the verb *"blocks"* becomes connoted as barrier that needs to be overcome in order to allow Ukrainians to pursue their quest to be Europeans. The use of the metaphor *"their road to Europe"*, makes use of a symbolic *"road"* which connotes the process of Ukraine's integration in to Europe as a logical step; moreover, through the use of the possessive

pronoun "*their*", all Ukrainian protesters, and thus all Ukrainians are portrayed as willing to pursue this particular "*road*".

The use of the metonymy "*Euromaidan*" connotes high symbolism: the short version of Europe, "Euro" in conjunction with "maidan", which means 'square' in Ukrainian, connotatively dilutes the boundaries between both and creates a sense of belonging and togetherness. Moreover, the square's real name is Independence Square, acquired in 1991 after Ukraine's independence from the Soviet Union and stage of Ukraine's main political protests since then; thus, the "*Euromaidan*" metonymy achieves a pro-European high symbolic meaning which is achieved through the connection of the pro-Europe protests and Ukraine's own independence.

The distinction of a generalized West (where for e.g. not everyone celebrates Christmas) and the East is complemented with the notion that Ukrainians appear to want to be part of the European Union; moreover, they are all connoted as wanting to be Europeans and therefore part of the constructed West which is tendentially perceived (by westerners) as more developed and superior to the East, which is usually connoted with backwardness and underdevelopment. Ukrainians are portrayed as united in the wish to be Europeans and their actions are elevated to heroic acts.

The writer ends the first paragraph with an opinative statement: "*It is hard to imagine how someone can stand and sleep on the street in winter for entire days and weeks.*" As a consequence, Ukrainians become once again elevated to heroes who are enduring extreme hardships to be part of Europe; moreover, their effort is so big that it is even "*hard to imagine*" for a westerner sitting comfortably in their home. Westerners are put in a privileged position almost looking down on Ukrainians who just want what they have. This might potentially raise an uncomfortable feeling of guilt in the reader.

Second paragraph: "*The determination of Ukrainian civil society should be admired, not only because the weather in Kiev is poor; but because [sic] the prospect*

for change in government policy is also poor ... the protesters have no new means of placing pressure on the government in the meantime" (Appendix a, Article 4, p. 131).

In the first sentence of the second paragraph, the author addresses the reader in an indirect manner by suggesting that *"the determination of Ukrainian civil society should be admired"*. The auxiliary verb *"should"* connotes a sense of duty, as in the right thing to do - a not so subtle way of trying to influence or change the reader's mind about who the Ukrainian protesters are and represent. Moreover, they are now described as the *"Ukrainian civil society"* and not as protesters, a more encompassing definition in which all Ukrainians are included. The paragraph then goes on to explain why the reader should admire the protesters; firstly, despite their strong endurance during a cold winter, *"the prospect for change is poor"* – the adjective *"poor"* connotes little hope for change despite all this effort; secondly, *"the prospect for change in government policy is also poor"* – there is a discursive parallelism particularly through the use of the adjective *"poor"* once again. Furthermore, there is established a dilemma from which the protesters seem to be stuck in, thus connoting a depletion of options for action. This dilemma is further emphasized because they *"have no new means of placing pressure"* in the government – connoting a tense, but non-violent period, *"meantime."*

Article 5

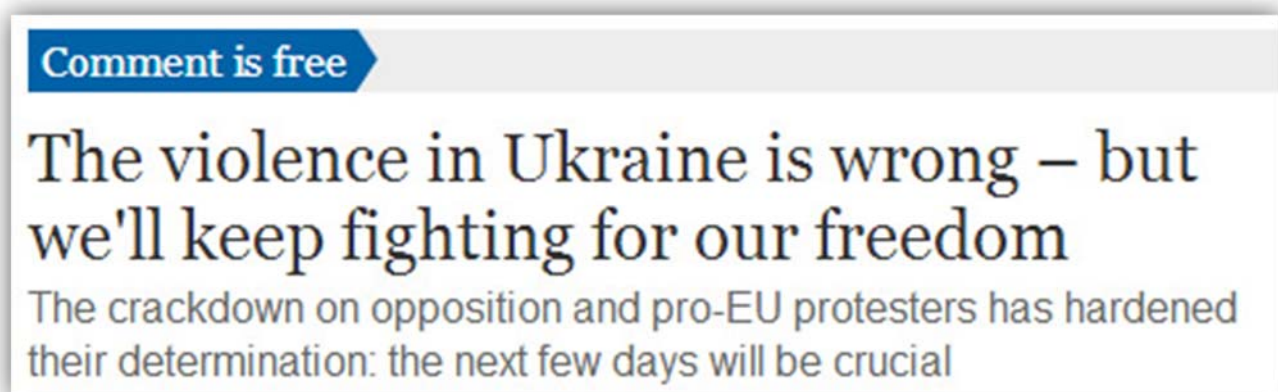


Image 10 (Appendix a, Article 5, p. 134).

Published on: 20 January 2014

Web address: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jan/20/violence-ukraine-wrong-fighting-for-freedom-protesters>

Appendix location: (Appendix a, Article 5, p. 134).

As in the previous *Article 4* (p. 57), Google has again provided an opinion article at the top of its search results.

In the title (*Image 10*, p. 62), the author starts by affirming that the “*violence in Ukraine is wrong*”, however, on the second clause, despite being “*wrong*”, this violence becomes justified and acceptable because it is about “*fighting for our freedom*”. The use of a dash to separate the title’s two clauses reveals a multi-semiotic intention to connect these with the least amount of linguistic signs; consequently emphasizing the potential emotional effect of direct speech. Moreover, the conjunction “*but*” emphasizes the determination of the protesters of not giving up. This “*fighting*” becomes connoted with a fight for “*freedom*”, as in a rebellion in an oppressive regime. In addition, the possessive pronoun “*our*” places the writer as one of the protesters. Similarly, the contraction “*we’ll*”, which includes the pronoun ‘we’ - the first person of the plural, connotes the writer as the active voice of the protesters and therefore their representative.

Subtitle: “*The crackdown on opposition and pro-EU protesters has hardened their determination: the next few days will be crucial*” (Appendix a, Article 5, p. 134).

In the subtitle, the author then describes the government’s “*crackdown on opposition and pro-EU protesters*”, again justifying their “*fighting*” as necessary. The noun “*crackdown*” - a metaphor, as in splitting and cracking - connotes a strong force being exerted on the “*opposition*” and consequently establishes two complete opposite sides, were one (the government), is more violent than the other (the protesters). Moreover, the protesters “*determination*” has “*hardened*” thus creating a metaphor connoting them as strong and persistent as rock – they are here to stay. The second clause of the subtitle generates a sense of urgency and eminent development through the use of the adverbial modifiers of time “*next*” and “*will*”, which together with the adjective “*crucial*” add tension and expectation to the developments of the “*next few days*”.



Protesters clash with police in Kiev, Ukraine, on Sunday. Photograph: Kommersant via Getty Images

Image 11 (Appendix a, Article 5, p. 134).

The first image of the article (*Image 11*) consists of a wide shot of what can be assumed to be a protester throwing a brick while holding a piece of wood. He is not alone, there appear to be many others with the same weapons aiming at a target out of frame. One can assume that this is a response to the “*crackdown*” as mentioned in the title, and thus the “*police*” as anchored by the image’s caption.

The wide nature of the shot distorts the proportions of the image thus bringing the protestor’s face closer to the frame and the rest of his body progressively further away. The main source of light is a predominant purple, giving an overall purple tint to the frame. This almost monotone colour gamut connotes the frame with a sense of emergency and violence. Moreover, the lighting seems to be predominantly over the forefront protestor thus emphasizing his role within the frame; it also gives the photo an aesthetic connoted with the genre of an action film in which this type of lighting is used in order to emphasize the scene’s

spectacularity. The smoke that seems to be coming from the top of the frame creates an isolation of the event in conjunction with the purple lighting coming from the bottom thus increasing the focus on the protester. The other protesters are similarly dressed and use similar weapons, consequently putting them in consonance; they are all fighting for the same cause against the same opponent.

The subtitle's definition of "*clash with the police*" defines again the roles of two opposite sides which have to resort to violence. As a consequence, there can be observed a metaphorical parallelism between the caption and the photo: in which the brick and the club in the hand of the protester, symbolize the "clash" mentioned in the subtitle.

First paragraph: *"One could feel it in the air that something was going to happen. Growing frustration among protesters has suddenly changed to anger after the Ukrainian parliament, Verkhovna Rada, passed laws severely restricting demonstrations including banning the wearing of helmets and gas masks. It took the pro-government Party of Regions only 20 minutes to change Ukraine into a dictatorship simply by a show of hands, without even counting how many deputies voted"* (Appendix a, Article 5, p. 134).

In the first paragraph the writer gives a first person account of how she perceived the events unfolding. The use of the pronoun "One" due to its gender-neutral indefinite nature, connotes a sense of all protesters as one, therefore united in their quest. Moreover, "*feel it in the air*" generates a metaphor which intensifies the sense of imminent unknown dangerous event named "*something*". The second sentence puts emphasis on the protestor's discontent by defining it as "Growing frustration"; moreover, these feelings have "suddenly changed to anger". Therefore, this quick shift - particularly symbolized by the use of the adverb "*suddenly*" - went from "frustration" to "anger", thus implying an evolution to a stronger negative feeling which is implicitly more prone to violent behavior. The "*Ukrainian Parliament*" is portrayed as being the causer of this instability and "*anger*" in the protesters. This is achieved through the portrayal of its actions with the adjective modifiers, "*severely restrictive*", and the verb "*banning*". Moreover, the "*Ukrainian Parliament*" mentioned by its name: "*Verkhovna Rada*" –

it becomes further connoted as a single identity, a discursive strategy connoted with the practice of naming and shaming.

On the second sentence of the first paragraph here repeated: *"It took the pro-government Party of Regions only 20 minutes to change Ukraine into a dictatorship simply by a show of hands, without even counting how many deputies voted,"* there can be perceived an almost resentful feeling towards the *"pro-government Party of Regions"* for taking *"only 20 minutes to change Ukraine into a dictatorship."* Through the compound adjective, *"pro-government"*, this party becomes associated with the Ukrainian government's policies, thus emphasizing the dilemma the protesters are in - the democratic process seems to have stopped working in Ukraine. In addition, the party's actions are further negatively connoted through the mentioning of the little time it took, *"only 20 minutes"*, to *"change Ukraine into a dictatorship."* Consequently portraying the whole Ukrainian parliament as against its citizens. The paragraph ends by further emphasizing the wrongness of the passing of these laws particularly through the use of the adverb *"simply"* and the combination of the preposition *"without"* and *"even"*. These modifiers connote how easy it was for the parliament to take a decision which transformed the country in a dictatorship.

Second paragraph: *"On Saturday, the day before clashes, I tweeted: 'Whatever will happen tomorrow, this day will change Ukraine.' And it did. For the first time in the history of our state, people have crossed the line from peaceful protests and started a huge street fight with police. For the very first time since the start of Euromaidan – the protests that began in November 2013 calling for closer relations with Europe – people booed opposition leaders and didn't listen to their orders"* (Appendix a, Article 5, p. 134).

In the second paragraph, the writer makes use of the intertextuality potential by drawing a tweet in to the article. The author presents a tweet, consisting of direct speech by herself, to confirm her premonition the day before. The rightness of her prediction is further emphasized by the statement, *"And it did"*, immediately after the tweet.

By starting the first sentence with the day of the event ("*Saturday*"), the author achieves a sense of immediacy and relevance, almost as breaking news. Moreover, it was "*the day before the clashes*", thus locating the following tweet in time. The tweet, consisting of direct speech from a social network, starts with the general determiner "*whatever*" – symbolizing an uncertainty about the future; however, on the second clause the author is sure that "*this day will change Ukraine*" – by showing certainty about an event that did not happen yet, the author establishes herself as having an inside knowledge not accessible to others. Moreover, by stating "*will change Ukraine*", the author establishes these events as profound and historically changing for Ukraine.

On the second sentence this "*change*" is further emphasized through the use of: "*for the first time in the history*" – placing the crossing of this metaphorical line as an historical decision. Furthermore, the use of the possessive determiner "*our*" modifying the "*state*", places the author as the voice of the protesters, or even all Ukrainians. In addition, the protesters become further connoted with all Ukrainians through the use of the broader definition, "*people*". Moreover, there is a shift from "*peaceful protests*" to a "*huge street fight*" – symbolizing two almost opposite actions which emphasize the shift. The adjective "*huge*" besides showing an intention to emphasize the size and intensity of the fight, also connotes an informal speech which shows an intention to establish a closer relationship with the reader; in addition, through this form of eloquent speech, the writer also shows emotional connection with the events and its consequences.

On the fourth sentence of the first paragraph the use of: "*For the very first time*", similarly as in the previous sentence, connotes a sense of uniqueness. In addition the inclusion of "*very*", further emphasizes the uniqueness and specialness of the events described, and simultaneously maintains a degree of informality which allows for an increased emotional connection with the reader. In the continuation of the fourth sentence the metonymy "*Euromaidan*" is once again used. As a result, it places European integration as the most important aspect of the protests' demands. The next two sentences, through a set of hyphens, become almost an enumeration of the reasons that lead to the actions taken by the

protesters. Firstly, the reason given for the beginning of the protests is the *"calling for closer relations with Europe"* – thus putting all protesters as being pro-Europe who's *"calling"*, as a demand made by the people, was not satisfied. Secondly, they *"booed"* the *"opposition leaders and did not listen to their orders"* – besides representing an almost infantile discourse, particularly through the verb *"booed"*, it also symbolizes their high level of frustration. Furthermore, the fact that the protesters *"did not listen to their orders"* further emphasizes this connotation. Therefore, the Ukrainian parliament becomes connoted as a symbolic father who gives *"orders"* and the Ukrainian protesters the rebel son or daughter who does not comply.

Article 6



Image 12 (Appendix a, Article 6, p. 137)

Published on: 19 January 2014

Web address: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/19/ukrainian-protesters-clash-riot-police-kiev>

Appendix location: (Appendix a, Article 6, p. 137)

The title starts by immediately establishing a riot like scene through the mentioning of *"Teargas and smoke bombs"*, which are weapons habitually used by police forces to deter protests and riots. Furthermore, because these weapons are habitually used as a last resort, the degree of violence is seemingly higher. In addition, the choice of using the intransitive verb *"used"* without a subject creates uncertainty regarding who used these weapons;

nevertheless, because they are associated with police action the reader will most obviously attribute the use of these to the police.

Moreover, *"Ukrainian protesters clash with the police"*, establishes the roles of two opposing sides, accentuated through the use of the verb *"clash"*, thus implying a violent conflict. Overall, the title shows an inclination towards the protesters because the only weapons mentioned are the ones used by the police. The omission of the weapons used by the protesters inevitably emphasises the violence being exerted on them and therefore contributing to their representation as less violent and as victims.

Subtitle: *"Activists try to force their way past riot police to parliament in Kiev as harsh laws to halt protests are passed by President Yanukovych"* (Appendix a, Article 6, p. 137).

In the subtitle the protesters are now called *"Activists"*, a less prone to violence and positive definition. The fact that they *"try to force"* equally connotes their actions as less negative and violent; nonetheless, the verb *"force"* still implies some form of violent action. Moreover, *"their way"*, represents the protesters as determined and committed in to making themselves heard. Furthermore, the reason for their forcing are the *"harsh laws to halt protests"* – consequently attributing legitimacy to their demands, because, after all, these laws are *"harsh"* and the act of protesting is a democratic right. Moreover, because the laws are modified with the adjective *"harsh"*, these become represented in a negatively way as unnecessarily severe. Because the purpose of these *"laws"* is to *"halt protests"*, the government in power becomes connoted as a dictatorial regime in which any form of protest is repealed with violence. Finally, these were laws were *"passed by President Yanukovych"*, consequently giving the reader a name who he or she can focus his or hers possible indignation towards, he becomes demonised.



Image 13 (Appendix a, Article 6, p. 137)

The following content in the article is a video waiting to be played (*Image 13*). At the lower third part of the frame there is a relatively uniform group of what can be deducted to be protesters. They are connoted as protesters particularly through the predominately dark, but different dress code, the construction helmets serving a protective function out of their element, and the red flag being waved in the front of the group. As a consequence of this portrayal, the protesters are represented as strong group and united in their cause.

The middle third of the frame consists of what appears to be a burning building or large vehicle and several other fire sources. The colours appear to have been slightly adulterer due to the unusual redness of the flames, as a consequence the metaphorical role of a barrier is emphasized. In addition the colour red is connotatively more *evil* than yellow and therefore adds to the danger of the obstacle ahead. Moreover, the flag in the front of the group, being blown by strong wind and waved by one of the protesters, and placed in front of the burning

building or vehicle, comes to represent the protesters unity by portraying them in a march towards a common enemy.

The final top third of the frame is predominately dark, containing what appears to be a neon light sign in the background. This light is behind the fire and can be symbolically interpreted as where the protesters are marching to, it is their goal. As a consequence, this neon sign can be metaphorically interpreted as the Ukrainian government and its president's headquarters. Moreover, because the light is on the top part of the frame, and considering that it symbolises, it is as if it looks from a powerful position upon the protesters; which, as a consequence, besides establishing the two opposing sides of the conflict, it also shows the fight of many (the protesters) against a single entity (the Ukrainian government).

First paragraph: *"Ukraine's simmering protests against President Viktor Yanukovich boiled over into violence on Sunday after new laws banning large-scale rallies brought hundreds of thousands of defiant opponents onto the streets"*
(Appendix a, Article 6, p. 137)

The first paragraph starts by considering the protests as "Ukraine's". This rhetoric seemingly places the protests as happening in the whole country and not just in Kiev's square. The metaphor *"Ukraine's simmering protests"*, connotes the protests as slowly reaching the state which is later described as *"boiled"*, giving place to another metaphor connoting a sudden change of state as in an eruption. As a consequence, the process of violence escalation in Ukraine is emphasised through a potentially more expressive and seductive rhetoric. Moreover, the use of the verb *"boiled"* draws a metaphorical parallelism with the fire in (*Frame 14*), thus interacting with it as an anchor. Furthermore, in the first paragraph, as in the subtitle, Ukraine president's, Viktor Yanukovich, actions are given as the reason for the reaching of this boiling *"over into violence"*. The violence did not happen due to the protester's choice but as a slow process triggered by the then Ukraine president's actions – he is the one to blame. The second clause defines the reason for the increasing protests as the president's *"banning"* on *"large-scale rallies"* - which had the exact opposite effect and *"brought hundreds of thousands of defiant opponents onto the streets."* The use of the adjective *"defiant"* together

with the subject *"opponents"*, besides attributing a sense of braveness to the protesters it also puts them in total opposition with Ukraine's president and thus connotatively his government. Moreover, they were *"hundreds of thousands"*, thus showing the massive disapproval towards these connoted dictatorial actions, as well as symbolizing the unity among protesters. The protesters are being represented as the heroes and Viktor Yanukovich and his government as the villains.

Second paragraph: *"After the main mass protest in central Kiev, hundreds of radical activists started storming a police cordon, attacking riot police with sticks and chains in an attempt to push their way towards the Ukrainian parliament, which was cordoned off by rows of police buses."* (Appendix a, Article 6, p. 137)

The second paragraph introduces the subject of *"hundreds of radical activists"*. The modifier "radical" connotes these activists as a more violent group; however, the use of the subject *"activists"* counteracts with a less negative representation. The change from *"hundreds of thousands"* to *"thousands"* also places this group as a minority within the larger group of protesters. Moreover, their actions become connoted as violent through the use of *"started storming a police cordon"* – the verbs *"storming ... attacking ... push,"* as in a sudden urge of strength against the *"police cordon"* emphasize the violence in this group's actions. Moreover, the *"radical activists"* tendency for violence is further emphasized through the mentioning of the weapons they used: *"sticks and chains"* – representing them as an anarchical and violent group. It can be equally distinguished an anchoring function towards *Image 13* (p. 69) where the protesters represented in it become the *"radical activists"*. Furthermore, the reader now knows that the objects on fire in front of the protesters are the *"police buses"* and that the place they want to reach is the *"Ukrainian parliament"*. Confirming the pictorial connotation.

Crimea annexation analysis

RT

Article 7

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Crimea's referendum corrected Soviet-era mistake - Gorbachev

Image 14 (Appendix a, Article 7, p. 140)

Published on: 17 March 2014

Web address: <http://rt.com/news/mistake-fixed-crimea-gorbachev-422/>

Appendix location: (Appendix a, Article 7, p. 140)

In the title, the last leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, whose policies of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring) are considered to have led to the end of the Cold War and ultimately steered the Soviet Union to its dissolution (Bunce, 1991) – acknowledges the Crimea's referendum as the rightful correction of a "*mistake*" done during the "*Soviet-era*". The title connotes a reminiscent imperial ideology, particularly because one of its former leaders is acknowledging a mistake that led to the loss of sovereign power over Crimea after its accession to Ukraine in 1954. Moreover, Crimea is connoted as historically and naturally belonging to Russia, thus the referendum is returning it to its natural state. At a more underlying level, the title connotes an intent to recall the old glory of the Soviet empire into the present. It connotes a mystic Soviet Union which connotatively should still exist. This new Russia should learn with these mistakes from a different "*era*". Semantically, the use of the verb "*corrected*" connotes the righteousness of the "*Crimea's referendum*". Moreover, it is a verb connoted with doing the right thing and repairing a "*mistake*" which should not have happened in the first place. In addition, the use of a hyphen in the title, besides simplifying the sentence and reducing its size, archives a highlighting effect of the renowned leader that

comes after it - the iconic "*Gorbachev*". Furthermore, the mentioning of only his last name, "*Gorbachev*", can be seen as a consequence of the fact that he is an iconic figure mentioned in history books all around the world and therefore needs no further presentation than his last name. Moreover, the fact that it was "*Gorbachev*" who made this statement becomes as important as the argument itself due to its iconicity and recognisability at a global scale. The fact that this leader, broadly considered as having greatly contributed through his policies to the USSR collapse, is admitting a mistake – despite not during his leadership - reinforces the



Image 15 (Appendix a, Article 7, p. 140)

wrongfulness of the actions that led to the USSR dismemberment and ultimate end. In addition, by having the syntactical compound "*Soviet-era*" (thus becoming one), the whole soviet period becomes connoted with this mistake, and thus a period of mistakes.

The first image of the article (*Image 15*) consists of a big close-up of Mikhail Gorbachev's face. There is apparently one hard (intense and focused) source of light pointing down above his head; the harsh nature of the light source makes the shadows darker and causes the drop down of dark shades, which as a consequence accentuate the contours of Gorbachev's face and emphasize a sense of sorrow and sadness in his expression. Moreover, because the light

source comes from a perpendicular angle, his eyes become darker and less visible adding to a sense of regret. Gorbachev is gazing to the right side of the frame to an unknown object or person, it is as if he is refusing to have eye contact with the viewer due to the wrongfulness of his acts. His facial expression matches his eyes – it appears tense, particularly his mouth which connotes a sense of discomfort. Finally, his hand which is on the left side of the frame and out of focus, is perpendicular in an apparent forward movement acting as a practical element of verbal communication often used in an argument. It emphasizes a conviction in what is being said and also of trying to convince others that his argument is valid. Finally the caption is short and objective, and although the adjective “soviet” is used to characterize the “leader”, its function is mainly of relay and does not change the image’s meaning.

First paragraph: *“The people of Crimea fixed a Soviet-era mistake with the Sunday’s referendum and the will of the people should not be punished by sanctions, said former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev”* (Appendix a, Article 7, p. 140)

The first paragraph starts by connotatively establishing the Crimean habitants who voted in the referendum as *“The people of Crimea”* – thus establishing them as a uniform group inherently belonging to it. Again, as in the title, *“a Soviet-era mistake”* was fixed, consequently implying that Crimea came back to its natural state as a part of Russia. Moreover, as in the title, there is again a “mistake” that needed reparation. Furthermore, the necessary fix was made through a *“referendum”*, which connotatively is a democratic and legitimate way of expressing the majority’s opinion. Moreover, it was the *“will of the people”* – again making use of democratic discourse linked to a fair democratic process, which again connotes the voters with all the people living in Crimea. In the continuation, this *“will of the people”* is considered to be under threat and *“should not be punished by sanctions”* according to *“former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.”* The modal verb *“should”* implies a strong recommendation almost as an obligation. Thus, the punishment becomes connoted as unjust. Moreover, this clause as an underlying message to the western leaders who have threatened to implement financial sanctions against Russian officials as a cause of the execution of the referendum.

The reader now knows that this statement is the paraphrasing of the *"former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev"* – a nomination strategy that adds further emphasis and persuasion power to the statement, because this discourse is uttered by the once powerful leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, an iconic figure associated with the Russian transition to a more democratic state.

Second paragraph: *"'Earlier Crimea was merged with Ukraine under Soviet laws, to be more exact by the [Communist] party's laws, without asking the people, and now the people have decided to correct that mistake. This should be welcomed instead of declaring sanctions,' he told Interfax on Monday"* (Appendix a, Article 7, p. 140).

The second paragraph consist of a direct quote from Mikhail Gorbachev's interview to the Russian news agency, Interfax. In it, Gorbachev starts by recalling Soviet history through the attachment of the adjective modifier *"earlier"* to *"Crimea"*, and thus establishes a parallelism with the beginning of the - relevant to this argument - Crimean history. It is established as when it was transferred by the then Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev to Ukrainian sovereignty in 1954. Crimea is therefore connoted as naturally belonging to Russia. Moreover, the *"laws"* are in the plural and indefinite form thus symbolizing once again the whole soviet period; as a consequence, the *"mistake"* also symbolically becomes Soviet. The condemnation of the whole soviet regime becomes emphasized through the mentioning of the its ruling party: *"[Communist] party's"*. Moreover, by having Communist in between square brackets, the party and the Communist ideology becomes emphasized as the one to blame for this mistake. In addition, the preceding adjective *"exact"*, leaves no doubt about who is to blame.

Furthermore, the following use of – *"without asking the people"* – adds to the negativity of the actions of the Communist party, connoting it as dictatorial regime who does not listen to the *"people"*. Moreover, the use of the definite article *"the"* in conjunction with *"people"*, connotes these people as central, as a mythical uniform group who one can consider to be mainly consisted of Russians living in Crimea. Conversely, the use of this rhetoric resembles the one of the Communist regimes which at their ideological core advocated for the elimination of classes and favored a collective mentality towards the common good of society (Stanford University, 2014).

Furthermore, *"the people"*, is repeated in the following clause showing an intention to emphasize the referendum's result as the will of all Crimeans and having little to do with external factors. There can be established a parallelism between the two historical moments portrayed: on the one hand, in 1954, when Crimea was given to Ukraine without hearing *"the people"*, and on the other hand, in 2014, when finally this mistake was corrected through the manifestation of the people's will in this referendum.

Finally, the last sentence of the second paragraph consists again of an underlying message implicitly directed at the Western countries which threatened Russia with sanctions if Crimea's annexation went forward. Again the use of the modal verb *"should"* connotes a sense of duty, of the right thing to do, almost as in a moral obligation. In fact, instead of *"declaring sanctions"* they should *"welcome"* the people's decision – once again showing an intention to emphasize the legitimacy of the referendum because it is the *"people's"* decision, recalling a democratic discourse which will potentially have a positive impact among a western audience. Finally, the use of *"welcome"*, implies a positive and non-critical assimilation of the referendum's results. Despite the fact that the one's who should *"welcome"* are not mentioned, it is implicit that this message is aimed at a western audience and its governments, particularly Europe and the United States who declared *"sanctions"* after the results of the Crimean referendum.

Third paragraph: *"Gorbachev praised the referendum, stating that it 'reflects the aspirations of Crimea's residents.'"* (Appendix a, Article 7, p. 140)

In the third paragraph, once again Mikhail Gorbachev is referred to by his last name, becoming further emphasized because it starts the sentence. He is an iconic figure who does not need further presentation, and as a consequence what is being said immediately acquires greater discursive power. Moreover, he *"praised the referendum"*, indicating a positive act of approval from a figure with a potentially acknowledged authority to do it.

Furthermore, on the second half of the paragraph consists of a quote from Gorbachev, which due to the fact that it starts with *"reflects the aspirations"*, the connotation with the previously mentioned *"will of the people"* (first paragraph, p. 75) becomes once again implicit. Finally, the

subject “*Crimea’s residents*”, once again puts all Crimeans as a uniform and cohesive group whose aspiration is to be part of Russia.

The Guardian

Article 8



Image 16 (Appendix a, Article 8, p. 142)

Published on: 12 March 2014

Web address: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/12/us-crimea-referendum-criticism-ukraine-pm-visit>

Appendix location: (Appendix a, Article 8, p. 142)

This particular article is about “*US Foreign Policy*”, as it can be read in the section title, placed just before the title on the top of *Image 16*. As a consequence of this article being the first search result on google.com, US’s foreign policy is placed as the most relevant piece of information regarding the events, according to the choices made by Google’s algorithm. Moreover, it indicates whose discourse the reader should read first, increasing its relevancy in the overall scheme of the events.

In the title, the use of the phrasal verb “*steps up*” and the noun “*attacks*” - despite referring mostly to verbal threats and economic sanctions – attributes a metaphorical connotation with an increasing and ongoing violent action. Furthermore, it represents the “*US*” as powerful and as having a harsh and firm hand towards Russia’s actions in Crimea. Furthermore, the attack is being perpetrated on the “*Crimea referendum*”, thus implicitly aiming at the ones executing

the referendum, Russia. By now, there can be already established two clashing and completely ideologically opposing sides – the US and Russia. As a consequence, it can be perceived a reminiscent Cold War like discourse, generating a dichotomy of the United States ('us') versus Russia.

The second part of the title starts with the preposition "as", constructing simultaneity between these two ongoing events, originating tension and a sense of emergency and of imminent danger. Moreover, the second event is the "Ukraine PM" visit to the "White house". As a consequence of using the shorter version of Prime Minister (PM), emphasis is added on the fact that he comes from "Ukraine", thus representing the country as a single entity which is visiting the United States. Furthermore, the portrayal of these countries as single entities who act accordingly, generalizes and simplifies an otherwise complex issue involving its populations and a myriad of factors apparently not being equated. Finally, the "White House", as an icon of American democracy and power widely recognized around the world, symbolically represents a place where Ukraine takes shelter. Moreover, it once again demonstrates US's power by acting as a protector of Ukraine from the threatening Russia.

Subtitle: *"Obama administration insists impending referendum to annex Crimea to Russia 'would have no legal effect'"* (Appendix a, Article 8, p. 142).

The subtitle introduces the subject "Obama administration", a metonymy in which the United States president's last name is used as an adjective to characterize the "administration". As a consequence, it emphasizes the leadership role and powerfulness of Barack Obama in the negotiation table. Moreover, the "administration" becomes personified because it "insists", thus implying a strong sense of trying to convince someone of an argument, moreover, leaving the sense of a repetitive request which has not been responded to accordingly. In addition, the verb "impending" attributes a sense of emergency to this insisting. As a consequence, the "referendum to annex Crimea to Russia" becomes connoted as a deeply negative event caused by "Russia" and which the US and Ukraine try hard to prevent. Moreover - "would have no legal effect" – consisting of direct speech from the "Obama

administration", confirms the US as having the power to protect Ukraine from this perceived threat coming from Russia.



Image 17 (Appendix a, Article 8, p. 142)

The first image of the article (*Image 17*), follows the title's and subtitle's narrative by connoting a sense of agreement and collaboration between Ukraine and the United States. Already at this point, the United States, here represented by John Kerry its current Secretary of State, becomes connoted with the saviour of Ukraine's future. The hand shake is a clear sign of this agreement and collaboration. Moreover, the protective role of the United States becomes particularly visible through John Kerry's right hand covering almost completely the hand of Mr Arseniy Yatsenyuk thus symbolizing its great power. In addition, John Kerry's open right hand with his palm facing the viewer symbolically represents a promise to protect Ukraine as in a brotherly figure which is protecting his younger brother. Moreover, he appears to be waving at the viewer, thus emphasizing the sense of direct engagement and potentially leading to a greater degree of empathy. Furthermore, because both men are gazing directly at the camera, this engagement is further emphasized. In addition, the positive connotation of the agreement is highlighted by Mr Arseniy Yatsenyuk smile (at the viewer).

The camera's oblique low angle, places the viewer's gaze from below, attributing a sense of greatness and power to the individuals in the frame – what they represent and their message is enhanced. The background, consisting of a room in the United States State Department, symbolically represents its stronghold. Finally, there are two flags behind each of these men: in a converse way, the American flag is behind Mr Arseniy Yatsenyuk symbolically emphasizing the protective role attributed to the United States here represented by arguably its biggest symbol, the American Flag.

In the subtitle (acting as an anchor) there is a noticeable difference between the way both individuals are described: *"John Kerry"* is only referred to by his name while the *"Ukrainian prime minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk"* has its title mentioned. It demonstrates an assumption that the US State department leader is an iconic figure who does not need the mentioning of his title. Moreover, it becomes clear that the target audience of this article is clearly a Western, mainly American audience who probably knows who John Kerry is. Finally, the mentioning of *"shake hands"*, despite its obviousness when looking at the frame, demonstrates an intention to emphasize this partnership.

First paragraph: *"The White House is stepping up its criticism of a planned referendum in Crimea as it plays host on Wednesday to the Ukrainian prime minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk in a last ditch bid to prevent Russian annexation of the peninsula."*
(Appendix a, Article 8, p. 142).

The first paragraph starts with a metonymy: *"The White House"*, which symbolically represents the American president and administration through this iconic house where important decision making happens. Its use, besides being a widely recognizable and potentially easier to grasp iconic concept, it also connotes the US as one strong entity - a unified voice from a powerful symbol of America's decision making power-house. Moreover, the use of the phrasal verb *"stepping up"* in the present participle, connotes a threat, and again a showing of power. However, the use of *"criticism"* lessens the degree of threat to what could be connoted as a verbal menace. Furthermore, the criticism is about the *"planned referendum in Crimea"* implicitly directing the threat to its orchestrator, Russia.

In the continuation of the first sentence, there is the conjunction “as” separating the first and second clauses, consequently establishing connected parallel events as in the title (Image 16, p. 81). Metaphorically, the “*White House ... plays host*” adding to the sense of welcoming and partnership between both parties. Furthermore, the United States also becomes a protective figure through its hosting, indicating the offering of shelter and a safe environment to the Ukraine’s prime minister and thus Ukraine. Moreover, the expression, “*last ditch bid*” can be seen as having a direct speech like effect by providing a rhythmic characteristic to the text, particularly through the high pitch in the beginning of each of these short words. As a consequence, this last attempt is emphasized, as if patience is running out. In addition it also presents both Ukraine and the US as trying their best to prevent a connotatively wrongful annexation.

Second paragraph: “*In a statement issued jointly on the behalf of G7 leaders, the US administration insisted the referendum scheduled to take place this weekend ‘would have no legal effect’ and would not be recognised by the international community.*” (Appendix a, Article 8, p. 142)

In the second paragraph, a “*statement issued jointly on behalf of G7 leaders*” puts the “*US administration*” in a position of great power, because it is established as the voice and symbolic leader of this connotatively powerful group of developed Western countries. As a consequence, what the US administration said and is going to say from now on becomes potentially more persuasive because it has the backup of 7 of the most powerful nations in the world. Moreover, the verb “*insisted*”, connotes a last try to avoid an unfair situation; Russia is therefore placed in opposition to the US and these other six powerful countries, thus becoming a minority. Furthermore, the whole statement connotes a warning particularly directed at Russia. Moreover, in a direct quote from the “*statement*”, it can be read, “*would have no legal effect*” – thus establishing Russia’s actions, particularly the “*referendum*” as illegal. As a consequence, Russia is again put against the rest of the (western) world through the mentioning of how “*the international community*” - thus every other country – would not recognize its “*referendum*” in Crimea.

Findings and discussion

Having performed a thorough discursive and semiotic analysis of the data, in this section I will discuss the findings, namely the meaning creation strategies and their potential implications as social practices. Although the research question are not specifically addressed, these are addressed in an indirect way in order to have flow in the discussion, they served as guidelines for the analysis and discussion. Moreover, although I divide the analysis of each source within each event, discursively, I chose to make comparisons and distinctions between both sources when I felt it was appropriate, regardless of its section – this choice came as a natural way of doing the discussion.

EuroMaidan

The Guardian

On its reporting of the EuroMaidan protests, The Guardian portrays the protesters as either victims of excessive use of police force or as heroes who are fighting for a just cause. Furthermore, the fighting happens in a plaza, which because of its name (Independence Square), symbolically represents their path to freedom from a repressive regime often portrayed as authoritarian and violent. Moreover, the protesters' demands are mostly presented as a will to come closer to Europe; thus disregarding the wider context of their frustration with the high level of corruption and poverty still affecting most Ukrainians, regardless of their origin or ethnicity – an oversimplification of the issues. Therefore, because of this reductionist discourse, the surface of the issue becomes only scratched, thus giving place to an oversimplification which favors the view of the European Union and the perspective of belonging to it as the light at the end of the tunnel. The EU becomes represented as a figurative savior which will lead Ukraine and Ukrainians in to a new era.

In addition, the protesters are mostly characterized as being pro-EU, and thus are put in direct opposition to the government in power represented by its president, Viktor Yanukovich, a symbolic villain who has deprived the Ukrainian people of their right for freedom and to

choose their destiny – to be part of the EU. Moreover, the protesters are presented as a uniform and cohesive group of people who aim for the same goal – a generalization which can be criticized due to the lack of contextualization on who perpetrates the violence. Moreover, The Guardian consistently attributes the harsher and thus connotatively negative actions on the police. Therefore, these become the violent tool used by the Ukrainian government, a disciplining actor – the villain who violently represses a group of heroic Ukrainians. Although there is mentioning of violent actions by the protesters, their actions are often described in a less violent manner than the police both pictorially and textually – and thus adding to their demonization. Finally, there can be perceived an establishment of a discursive parallelism between westerners and Ukrainians. On the one hand, westerners are discursively constructed as a privileged uniform group who, for e.g. “celebrate Christmas” (Article 4, p. 64); on the other hand, the protesters who symbolically aspire to be in the westerners shoes – thus the harsh conditions they endeavor just to be part of this idealized democratic EU – are portrayed as wanting to be Europeans. This will to be European can be further criticized because, as argued by Fournier (2002), among the 30% ethnic Russians participating in the demonstrations, a good part was unsatisfied with the current government because of perceived language discrimination, and not particularly because they were pro-Europe.

Furthermore, regarding stereotypical discourse, by creating a parallelism between Europeans and Ukrainians (Article 4, p. 64), where Europeans are placed as privileged and Ukrainians as victims who want to be Europeans, besides oversimplifying the issue, this rhetoric can be connected to a view of Eastern-Europe as backwards and underdeveloped. Ukrainians are seen as not having reached the level of economic and social development which Europeans and people living in the developed West have achieved. Therefore, one can argue that this oversimplification emphasizes differences between Europeans and Ukrainians, and as a consequence glorifies the Western life style and culture as superior. Moreover, The Guardian constructs Europeans as sharing a common culture and economic safety, a misconception which disregards cultural, social, historical and economic factors which differ substantially in different EU countries – for e.g. North and South.

Finally, regarding the authorship of the articles, with two of those being opinion articles, there is a sense that the voice of the protesters is being privileged and is therefore perceived as the most relevant. In addition, this rhetoric is achieved often through the use of direct speech taken from the protesters and Europeans, emphasized through the use of pronouns such as “one” and “we” (Article 5, p. 56), and particularly by having one of the protesters being the writer of one of the articles (ibid.). Moreover regarding the search results, one can detect a clear selective exercise of power by Google who equally seems to privilege the protestor’s and European voices.

RT

RT’s discourse coincides with The Guardian’s in its portrayal of the Ukrainian protesters’ demands as being mostly pro-EU, nonetheless their discursive similarities end here. In almost every other aspect both have opposite stands on the roles of the actors involved. RT rhetorically presents the protesters as unwanted objects that need to be cleaned (Article 1, p. 44). Moreover, there is an emphasis on their wrongdoing, particularly when they are described as “rioters” (Article 1, p. 44) whose only purpose is of generating more violence. Furthermore, the protesters’ actions are described as unnecessarily violent, particularly because these take place the symbolic Independence Square, a symbol of Ukraine’s independence. As a consequence, they are represented as destroying a symbol of Ukraine’s freedom and stability, and thus threatening Ukraine’s own Independence – they become target of demonization. Conversely, in The Guardian’s discourse, the legitimacy of the protesters actions, although violent, is positively reinforced by the establishing of a positive connotation between this particular square, Ukraine’s freedom, and the protesters actions.

Moreover, RT’s articles heavily emphasize a sense of a warlike scene. This connotation is particularly achieved through the use of words such as “offensive” (Article 2 p. 46), “battle” (Article 2, p.47), “mayhem” (Article 3, p. 50), “battleground” (Article 3, p. 50), and “clash” (Article 1, p.42). Pictorially, the protesters are often portrayed as bringing suffering and death upon themselves. Their actions are thus described as wrong and as bringing meaningless suffering. Moreover, their suffering is also used as a sensationalising tool as can be seen on (Article 3,

Image 6, p. 51). As a consequence, the protesters lose their humanity and become objectified at the service of increasing viewership and potentially an intentional demonization. Ultimately, the use of these graphic and textual violent scenes where the protesters are the main or the sole protagonists, contributes to a view of their cause as illegitimate and irrational – they become demonized and unworthy of empathy. Moreover, violent portrayals are pushed to the extreme in order to increase a voyeuristic entertaining function. In addition, as Höijer (2004) argues, this media reporting on distant suffering “may also be part of more cynical commercial interests, in which the media sell human tragedies in a global market place” (p. 516), which According Chomsky & Herman (1988) works through a propaganda system which portrays worthy and unworthy victims according to the states’ interests and ideology; unworthy victims are the ones being treated with equal or greater severity by its own government (p. 38), – in this case, Ukrainians are connotatively the later. As a consequence, a clear separation between Ukrainian protesters and the viewer is established, and thus giving place to a discursive construction of ‘US’ versus ‘Them’. Moreover, discursively, one can observe prejudicial practices through the portrayal of Ukrainians as backwards and irrational. As a consequence, these demonizing and sensationalizing discursive practices, which work as a form of social control, lead to the generation of inequality between the protagonist in this issue (Van Dijk, 2000) – on the one hand the protesters whose cause is constantly delegitimized and thus unfavorably portrayed, and on the other hand the Russian regime who one can argue to be using a ownership position to exercise power and shape discourse according to its intentions.

Crimea annexation

The Guardian

The Guardian portrays the US as a powerful entity represented by the widely known and iconic US secretary of State, John Kerry – a metaphorical father figure protecting Ukrainians, who are seemingly powerless to defend themselves from a perceived Russian threat. Through visual and textual signs such as the ones in Article 6, Image 17 (p. 80), the US is consistently

represented as having great power and a protective role towards Ukraine and its freedom. Moreover, the US's powerfulness is also connoted through its portrayal as the voice of the G7 which symbolically comes to represent the rest of the world. As a consequence of this portrayal, symbolic roles are attributed to each of the countries: Ukraine becomes the victim, US the hero, and Russia the villain. Therefore, a clear sense of separation between Russia and the rest of the world is generated - the West versus the East. In addition, through lack of representation, Russians, both in Ukraine and Russia, are relegated to the role of 'others', which as a consequence, emphasises a sense of separateness between US, the developed West, and them, the Ukrainians, who seem to still live in the past. Moreover, this differentiation is accentuated through the portrayal of Ukraine, Russia, and US as single entities who act as one. This metaphorical tool creates an oversimplification because it disregards a wider socio-cultural context in order to focus on a geo-political and ideological clash. Moreover, throughout The Guardian's discourse there is a sense of emergency made implicit through the use of words such as "*impending*" (Article 5, p. 79), accentuating the gravity of the situation and the need to act quickly against Russia and its referendum in Crimea. Furthermore, one can recall a Cold War like discourse, although in this case the clash seems more diplomatic in the sense that it does not include an obvious near war threat.

In addition, Google's choice to present this article as the first in its search results can be regarded as an exercise of power which despite its intentionality, puts the US as the main actor in this crisis, and its actions as the most important. As a consequence there can be observed a pro-Western ideological inclination through this choice. In addition, the fact that this is considered the most relevant article from The Guardian on the Crimean issue, although further evidence would be needed, also emphasises The Guardian pro-Western ideology already shown in the analysis of its discourse. However, it would be reckless to take definite conclusions from the analysis of just one article. In order to achieve a satisfying degree of validity, research on a wider data corpus would be needed – a possible research project in itself.

Regarding RT's portrayal of the events, as in the Guardian, there is the use of a highly iconic personality, in this case, Mikhail Gorbachev, who voices a Russian view on the referendum's legitimacy. Mikhail Gorbachev's voice has arguably great power, because he was the last leader of the Soviet Union before its collapse, representing an icon of that era who is associated with its dismemberment. Moreover, the use of Gorbachev's voice helps convey an apparent consensual opinion among the ruling Russian power core, presenting a message of the wrongfulness of the Soviet Union's collapse. Although, its ruling regime (Communism) is directly criticised and blamed for the loss of territorial integrity, an argument is made towards the need for the return of Russia as the great power it once was - as a predestined mythical empire that should have not ended. In order to legitimise the referendum, which is arguably the main goal of the article, the use of classic democratic discourse, such as *"the will of the people"* (Article 5, paragraph 1, p. 74), attributes legitimacy to the referendum as a purportedly democratic event. Therefore implying that its result should be peacefully accepted by the West, because Crimea is considered as always been part of Russia and thus, the will of the people has returned it to its natural state.

Additionally, the absence of any mention to Crimea's minorities can be seen as an intentional act in order to connote the natural people and rightful owners of Crimea as the majority of ethnic Russians living in the now region of Russia.

The observed discursive tendency to recall an imperial Russian ideology, in which the Soviet Union should have remained intact, can be seen as a part of current Russia's leadership belief system since at least 10 years as it can be seen in Vladimir Putin's own words already in 2005:

"Above all, we should acknowledge that the collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century. As for the Russian nation, it became a genuine drama. Tens of millions of our co-citizens and co-patriots found themselves outside Russian territory. Moreover, the epidemic of disintegration infected Russia itself." (as in Eckel, 2005).

Although there can be observed two arguably opposing ideological positions, there are similarities in the way the message is put forward. Both make use of highly iconic individuals to make their messages more powerful. This is particularly relevant in the RT's case because it is owned by the Russian government and thus could be considered to represent its stand on the issue being reported.

As it would be expected, these opposing ideologies are presented through the approval or disapproval of the Crimean independence referendum. On the one hand, RT presents the referendum as legitimate and as representing the will of the people; on the other hand, The Guardian, here giving voice to the seemingly powerful US, completely opposes the independence of Ukraine and argues for the referendum to be illegal and therefore invalid.

The resulting effect of these discursive practices, besides defending and arguing for a particular ideological position regarding the referendum's legitimacy, also gives place to a dehumanization of the participants. Ukrainians, Russians and Tartars who have most at stake in this referendum, do not have their voices heard.

Finally, as discussed in the methodology section, although having achieved valid findings through the analysis of these two articles, in order to make further assertions regarding both source's discursive practice and its implications, I acknowledge that a larger set of data would have to be analysed – a potential subject for a forthcoming research project.

Issues of reliability and validity

As in any research work, the decisions regarding the data choices and the reliability of the results from its analysis arise, particularly in a in an interpretativist qualitative approach, as is the case of this thesis.

Reliability, as Golafshani (2003) defines it, deals with the stability of the results across the data analysis, thus a high degree of stability indicates a high degree of reliability (599). In this thesis, as shown in the analysis and discussion, I have achieved relatively stable results across the data analysis, therefore allowing for a satisfying degree of reliability. Nevertheless,

regarding the Crimean data sample, as already discussed, I acknowledge the need to analyse a bigger set of data in order to achieve a higher degree of reliability. In addition, further research on this issue could develop in to a research project on its own.

Validity deals with the means of measurement accuracy and if these actually measure what they are intended to (Golafshani, 2003, p. 599). Therefore, through the choosing of interpretativist methods such as CDA and semiotics, the validity of the research findings can somewhat be questioned, particularly from a positivist perspective, because my own subjective point of view has interfered with the analysis and therefore the results. Nevertheless, as a conscious choice, this qualitative approach allows for findings that I would not be able to discover through a quantitative approach to the data gathering and analysis. Therefore, regarding both internal and external validity in this thesis, I argue for the achievement of satisfying degree of validity within the chosen philosophical approach.

Conclusion

As discussed in the problem formulation, the issues I set out to tackle have been discussed, and through the analysis and discussion of the discourses of both The Guardian and RT, stereotypical, biased and ideological inclined discourses have been uncovered.

The Guardian showed a pro-European and pro-Western inclination, particularly through the portrayal of EuroMaidan protesters as heroes who want to be Europeans; and the authorities, the Ukrainian government and Russians as villains. Moreover, as a consequence of a stereotypical discourse, the dichotomy of US vs Them is emphasised – originating from the oversimplification of the issues, and thus contributing to the creation irreconcilable binary oppositions.

RT showed a discursive practice set out to demonize protesters through the emphasis on the violence perpetrated by them. Moreover, although they are equally portrayed as pro-Europeans, this characteristic is connotatively negative and illegitimate. In addition, the roles become inverted: the protesters become the symbolic villains, and the Ukrainian government

and authorities the victims. Ukrainians are also stereotypically discursively constructed as the 'other', backwards and ill-equipped, who suffer unnecessarily and carry their own dead as a consequence of their actions. Moreover, as in *The Guardian*, there is the establishment of binary positions, particular in the reporting on the Crimean issue, and thus leading to a harmful oversimplification of the issues and people involved.

Doing this research project was a challenge both because at the beginning I knew little about the topic and because the events were still ongoing (and still are) in Ukraine. Moreover, as a consequence of potential further developments in the crisis, my whole problem formulation might have had to be changed in the middle of the thesis. Nevertheless, I consider to have made a good decision, because the sooner a subject is tackled, the quicker a healthy discussion about it can start.

In addition, I acknowledge that my data selection, although defined by a set of rules, can be considered to be subjective due to the narrowness of the search (for e.g. I could have simplified the process and selected the data in a chronological order). Furthermore, by 'trusting' on Google to provide the data I also acknowledge the risk of its changeability and that Google's own choice to show the data in this particular order is an exercise of power which could be further discussed and therefore gain relevance in an hypothetical contextual analysis. Nevertheless, by taking risks and choosing to gather the data through this method, new perspectives on its selectiveness and the way it is accessed can be approached and discussed.

Finally, I would like to remark that doing this thesis was a rewarding experience which I believe to have led to valid findings regarding the discursive practices of these two media and therefore contributed to a more enlightened view on these two media's discursive and social practice. I believe that media should not be given a free pass and that it's discursive analysis and detailed deconstruction helps raise awareness to the power contained within it. Therefore, any type of text, particular media's discourse should be a stimulus for critical reflection and not an invitation for hypnosis as argued by Humberto Eco (1987).

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Appendix a

The full articles are ordered as in the analytical section. Due to formatting and technical limitations, content is often misaligned in several sections. I was unable to uniformise the several types of content.

Ukrainian police violently eject pro-EU protesters from Kiev square (PHOTOS)

[Home](#) / [News](#) /

Published time: November 30, 2013 03:53

Edited time: November 30, 2013 18:32

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Protesters clash with police on Independence Square in Kiev early morning on November 30, 2013. (AFP Photo)

[Download video](#) (43.87 MB)



First paragraph: Police in the Ukrainian capital cleared the landmark Independence Square of pro-EU demonstrators on Saturday morning. Police used tear gas and clubs, while protesters threw stones at law enforcement.

Tags
[Aleksey Yaroshevsky,](#)
[Opposition,](#)[Police,](#)[Politics,](#)
[Protest,](#)[Security,](#)[Ukraine,](#)
[Yulia Shapovalova](#)



Recommend

To deal or not to deal?
Ukraine's EU-Russia
crossroads in facts and
numbers 10

'Another president may
sign it': EU eyes Ukraine
opposition as Kiev rejects

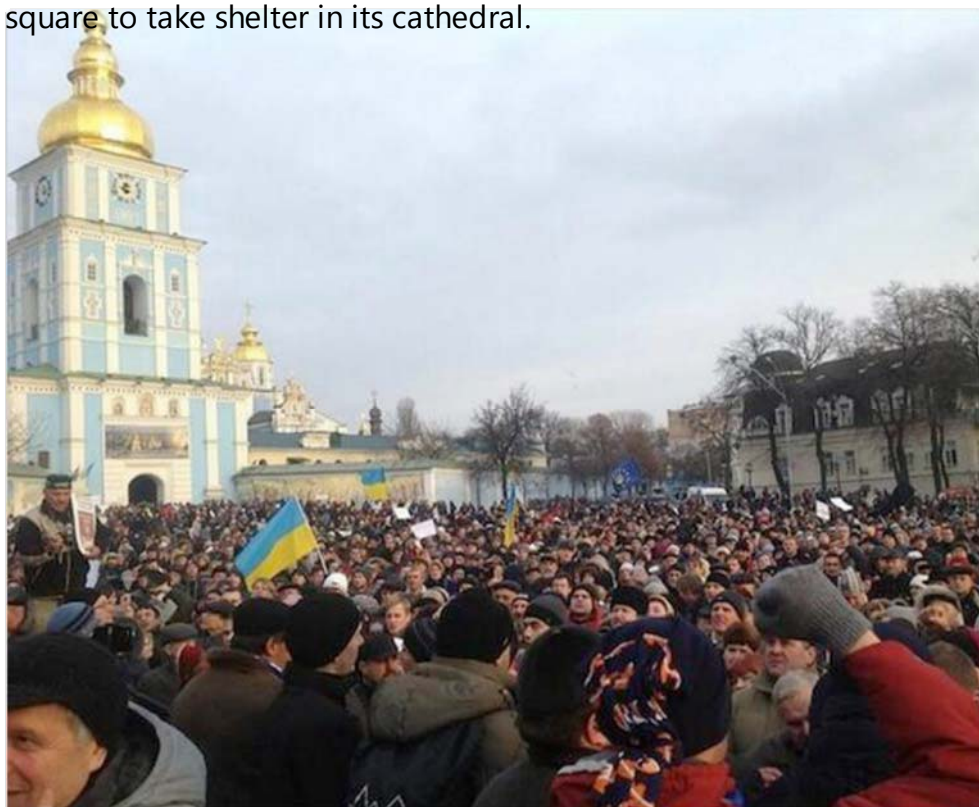


Second paragraph: Authorities in Kiev stepped in to disperse demonstrators at around 4:30 am local time (02:30 GMT). According to opposition activists, around 1,000 policemen from the special task force, Berkut, armed with clubs and shields swept Independence Square clear of the remaining demonstrators that had chosen to stay overnight in the capital's downtown area.

Third paragraph: *"It was horrible. We were holding a peaceful demonstration and they attacked us," a protester told AP. "They threw us away like garbage."*

At least 35 people were injured in the clashes with seven of them still remaining in hospital. Over 30 people were detained.

The square was surrounded by police early in the morning and mobile phone communication in the area was suppressed. After the police used force to disperse the crowd, some protesters went to St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery about 500 meters away from the square to take shelter in its cathedral.



Alexey Yaroshevsky

@Yaro_RT



Yanukovich blew the pandora's box wide open by dispersing the Maidan protest. A new one is gathering already

2:11 PM - 30 Nov 2013

4 RETWEETS

Russia denounces EU over 'harsh pressure' on Ukraine 32

'Don't humiliate Ukraine': President defiant over EU deal proposals 20

EU ready for bilateral talks with Russia over Ukrainian trade deal - official 21

Scuffles with police as thousands of Ukrainians protest shelving of EU trade deal 62

No benefits, just losses: Reasons why Ukraine stepped away from the EU

Putin: EU blackmailing Ukraine over halt in trade deal 43

Europe in shock as Ukraine kills integration plan, says 'mission is over' 92

According to one of the protest organizers, police used tear gas and swung clubs at protesters, Sergey Milnichenko told the AP. The demonstrators stoned police buses in return. Some demonstrators

were detained and taken into custody, activists reported.

Authorities told the Interfax-Ukraine news agency that the decision to break up the protests came after *"a number of incidents and clashes"*

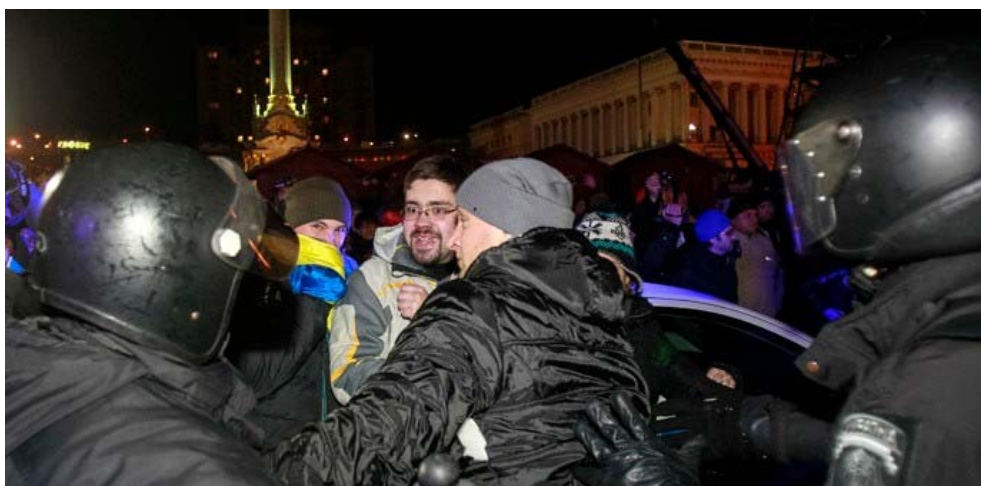
protesters threw rocks and fireworks at police and activists also damaged a police bus.



Police actions followed large-scale demonstrations earlier on Friday that had gathered an estimated 10,000 people, calling for the resignation of President Viktor Yanukovich as he refused to sign the association agreement with the EU.

Arseny Yatsenyuk, leader of the pro-Western faction opposition and a former minister of economy, has announced that opposition forces have decided to form a 'national resistance command' to organize and coordinate a Ukrainian national strike.

Yatsenyuk stressed that the initiative is supported among other opposition factions. The politician has once again said the responsibility for police action against pro-EU demonstrators in Kiev lies with the country's president and Minister of Interior Vitaly Zakharchenko.



Protesters scuffle with the police during a demonstration in support of EU integration at Independence Square in Kiev November 30, 2013. (Reuters/Gleb Garanich)

The EU delegation to Ukraine issued a statement calling on the Ukrainian authorities to refrain from using force on protesters.

In an interview published on Friday, the US Ambassador to Ukraine, Jeffrey Payette, warned against using force against protesters in Ukraine, mentioning "*serious consequences*" on the part of Washington if this condition is not met.

Ukrainian Ambassador to Poland, Markiyan Malsky, was summoned to the Polish Foreign Ministry for an explanation in connection with the beating of two Polish citizens in Kiev during the protests, spokesman for the Polish Foreign Minister, Marcin Wojciechowski, wrote on his Twitter account.

The ministry also issued a statement on its website on Saturday, saying that "*forceful dispersion of peaceful demonstrations does not help the cause of Ukraine's integration with Europe.*"

"We caution Ukrainian authorities against using force as it may carry unpredictable and irrevocable consequences".

Ukraine's Prime Minister Nikolay Azarov considers the government's crackdown on the protesters a provocation, the Ukrainian Independent Information Agency reports.

"What is clear is that the government is not interested in such provocations, but rather it is interested in stability and peace in the country. Therefore the investigation, according to the prime minister, should be transparent," said the PM's spokesman, Vitaly Lukyanenko.

Azarov urged the people not to give in to provocations, *"not to believe all sorts of rumors"*, to separate facts from speculation.



Protesters clash with Anti riot police officers on Independence Square in Kiev early morning on November 30, 2013. (AFP Photo)

On Friday Ukraine [rejected](#) a key integration deal with Europe, as the opposition held large rallies in protest against the rejection.

The deal was rejected in the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, where European leaders gathered. Unlike Moldova, Azerbaijan and Georgia, which signed the first documents towards association agreements with the EU, Ukraine stuck to its decision not to integrate with the union.

Even after announcing that there would be no deal, Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovich went to the summit to personally explain his government's move. He said it would be too painful for the Ukrainian economy to start association agreements with the EU now.



Anti riot police officers arrest protesters on Independence Square in Kiev early morning on November 30, 2013. (AFP Photo)



Protesters scuffle with the police during a demonstration in support of EU integration at Independence Square in Kiev November 30, 2013. (Reuters)



People help a protester after a scuffle with the police during a demonstration in support of EU integration at Independence Square in Kiev November 30, 2013. (Reuters)





Wounded Reuters photographer Gleb Garanich, who was injured by riot police, takes pictures as riot police block protesters during a scuffle demonstration in support of EU integration at Independence Square in Kyiv, Ukraine, on November 30, 2013. (Reuters)

Article 2

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Ukraine truce fails, rioters renew offensive in Kiev, death toll rises to 35

Published time: February 20, 2014 07:43

Edited time: February 20, 2014 11:12

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Independence Square in Kiev February 20, 2014. (Reuters/David Mdzinarishvili)

[Download video](#) (4.54 MB)



First paragraph: The battle for Kiev's Independence Square has reignited as rioters clash with security

Tags
[Ukraine](#)

forces amid sniper fire. The death toll has increased to 35, the Ukrainian Health Ministry confirmed.

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Second paragraph: It has also announced that 505 people have been injured in the turmoil, with around 300 of those admitted to hospital.

Third paragraph: Rioters have reached the Rada building (the country's parliament), while the police have been pushed back into Mariinsky park nearby. An emergency evacuation has been declared and parliament members and employees are leaving the building.

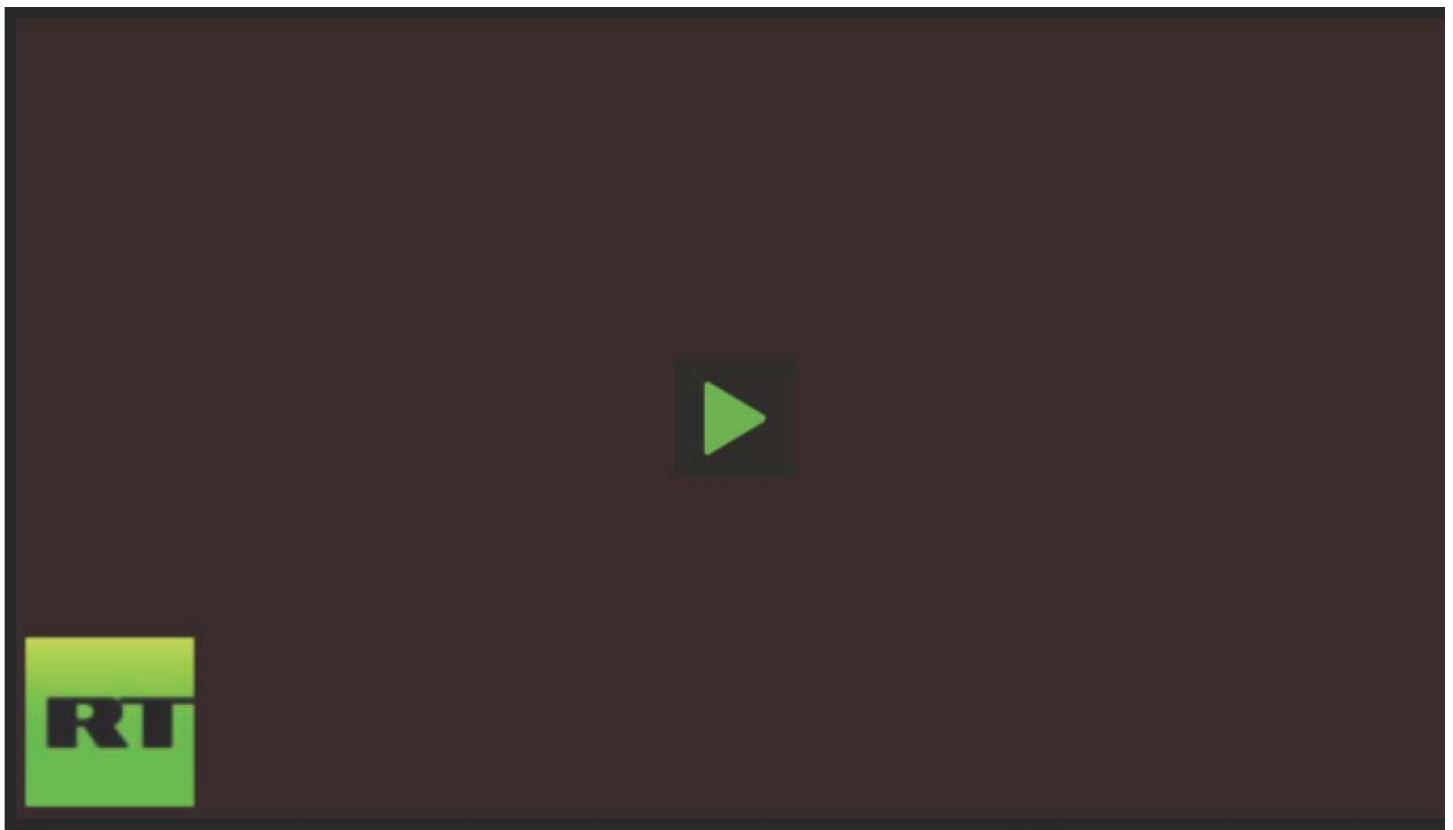
Protesters hurled rocks and Molotov cocktails at the police on Thursday morning as violence broke out once again in spite of the day of mourning that had been declared as a mark of respect for the 35 people who have died in the unrest. Ambulances have been sent to Maidan and video footage shows several people carried away on stretchers. Police are throwing tear gas grenades at protesters, according to Unian news agency.



Independence Square in Kiev February 20, 2014. (Reuters/Vasily Fedosenko)

Protesters pushed security forces off Independence Square and seized Oktyabrsky Palace - a major concert hall in the Ukrainian capital - and Hotel Ukraine. Gunfire can be heard throughout the Ukrainian capital.

Furthermore, a dozen police officers have reportedly been captured by demonstrators on Independence Square.



The Interior Ministry of Ukraine said that at least 23 police officers had been injured by sniper fire on Independence Square. The protesters are "openly using fire arms against the Berkut [Special Forces]," wrote the Interior Ministry in a statement.

"The injured are currently receiving emergency medical help," said the Interior Ministry.

Police say that the sniper fire originated from the roof of Kiev's Conservatory and targeted officers. The Ukrainian opposition claims that protesters were also caught in the gunfire.



Independence Square in Kiev February 20, 2014. (Reuters/Vasily Fedosenko)

"I think the opposition has crossed the line. I think the policy of negotiations has exhausted itself," said the deputy head of the Party of Regions, Oleg Tsarev, in parliament.

Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovich met with opposition leaders on Wednesday evening where a temporary truce was agreed to mourn the victims of the mass unrest. Hardline opposition group Right Sector rejected the truce and urged its followers to continue the offensive.

In response to the continuing violence in Ukraine, the international community has threatened sanctions if both sides do not return to the negotiation table.



Independence Square in Kiev February 20, 2014 (Reuters/Vasily Fedosenko)

Foreign Ministers from Poland, France and Germany were scheduled to meet with Yanukovich and opposition leaders on Thursday, but left the city unexpectedly for security reasons.

US President Barack Obama spoke out against the violence in Kiev on Wednesday evening, warning of *"consequences."*

"We'll be monitoring very carefully the situation, recognizing that, along with our European partners and the international community, there will be consequences if people step over the line," Obama said.

Article 3

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12 most dramatic Kiev videos showing true scale of Ukraine mayhem

Published time: February 20, 2014 15:18

Edited time: February 20, 2014 17:59

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Protesters burn as they stand behind burning barricades during clashes with police on February 20, 2014 in Kiev. (AFP Photo/Bulent Kilic)



First paragraph: The center of Kiev has been transformed into a battleground as rioters clash with police on Independence Square. RT has gathered the twelve most horrifying videos that show Kiev's descent into turmoil.

Tags

[Arms](#), [Clashes](#), [Conflict](#), [Police](#), [Politics](#), [Protest](#), [Security](#), [Shooting](#), [Ukraine](#), [Violence](#)

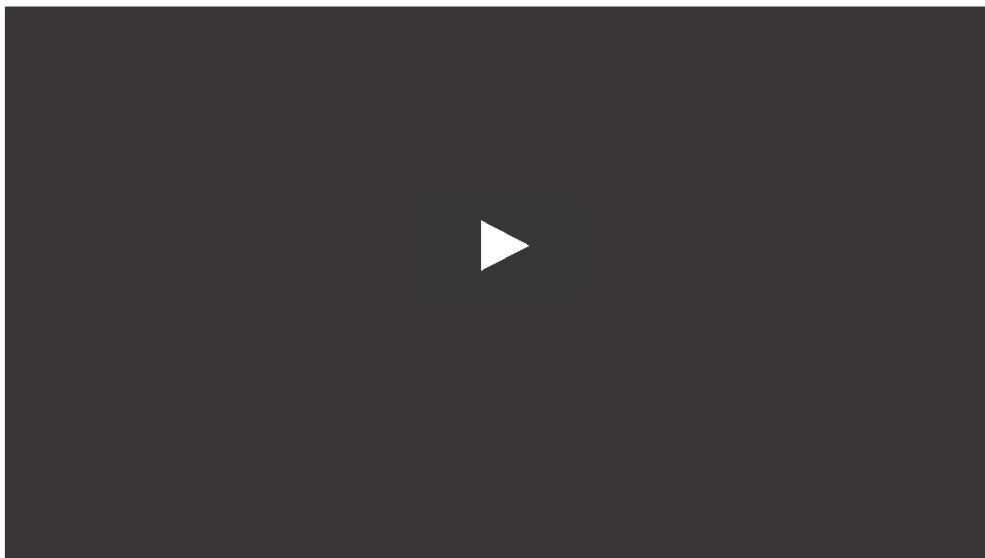
Second paragraph: Ukraine has seen some of the worst scenes of violence over the last few days, with over 60 dead and over 500 injured in the escalating conflict.

1. An exclusive drone video shot by the Ruptly agency, captures a dizzying aerial view of burning Maidan on Wednesday. Massive clouds of black smoke rise from the barricades set ablaze by rioters on Independence Square.

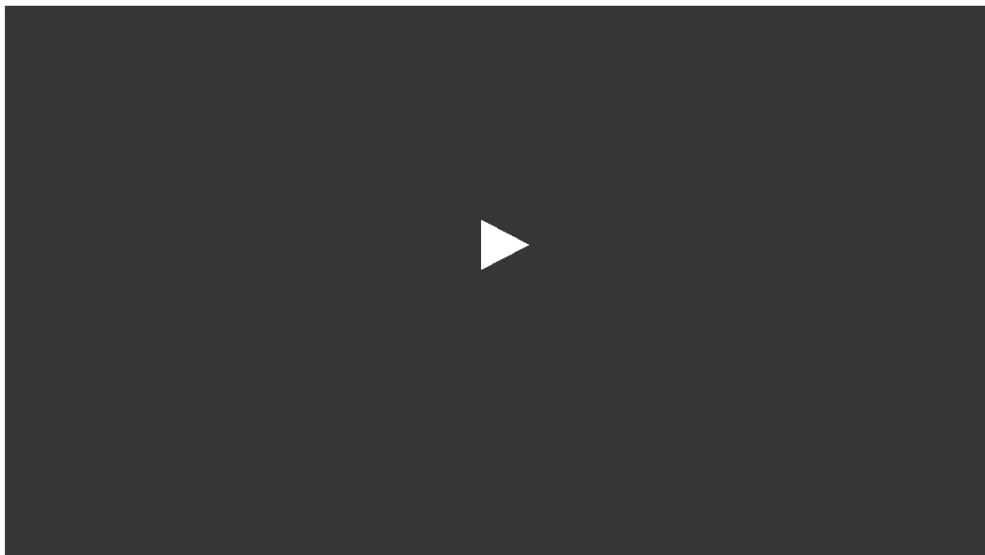




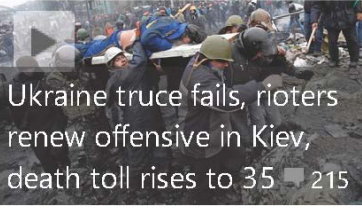
2. An explosion goes off near an injured policeman as a fellow officer tries to help him. Police are pulling back, covering their retreat with live rounds.



3. The raging fires are non-stop on Independence Square, which looks like a veritable warzone. The footage shows surreal scenes on the frontline as the ceasefire falls.



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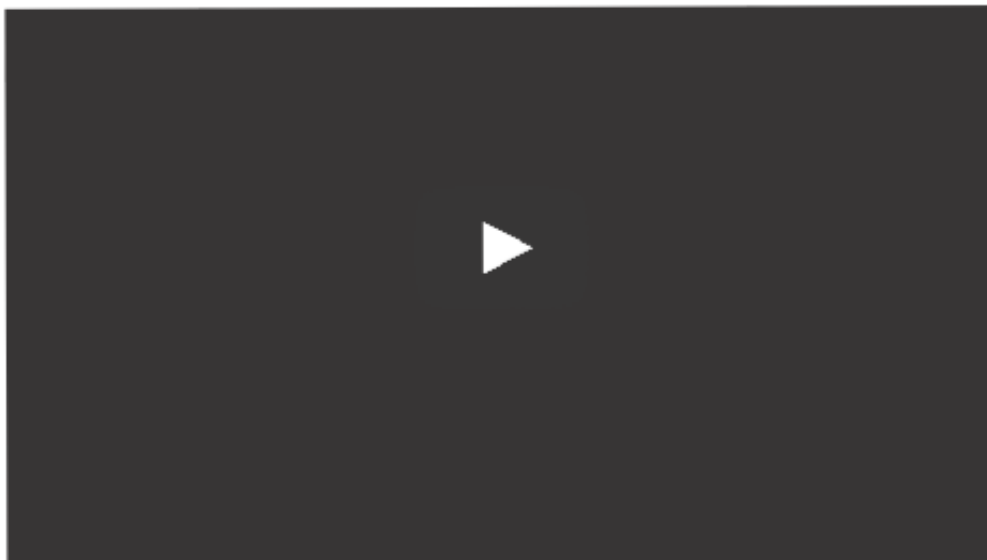


RT News English

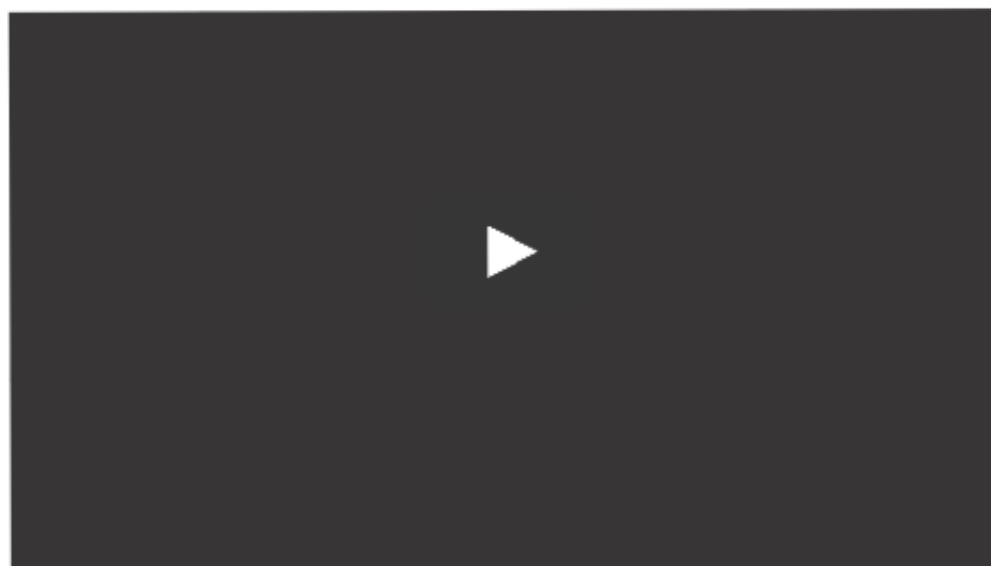
New version
for Android



4. Armed rioters dressed in body armor and helmets use a make-shift catapult to launch Molotov cocktails at security forces.



5. A berserk mob waylays officers, attacking them with stones and sticks, forcing them to retreat. The advancing crowd single out a police officer, surround him and ruthlessly beat him to the ground.



6. Police captured by rioters are seen being frog marched through the center of Kiev. Medical teams struggle to administer emergency aid to people wounded in the violent conflict.



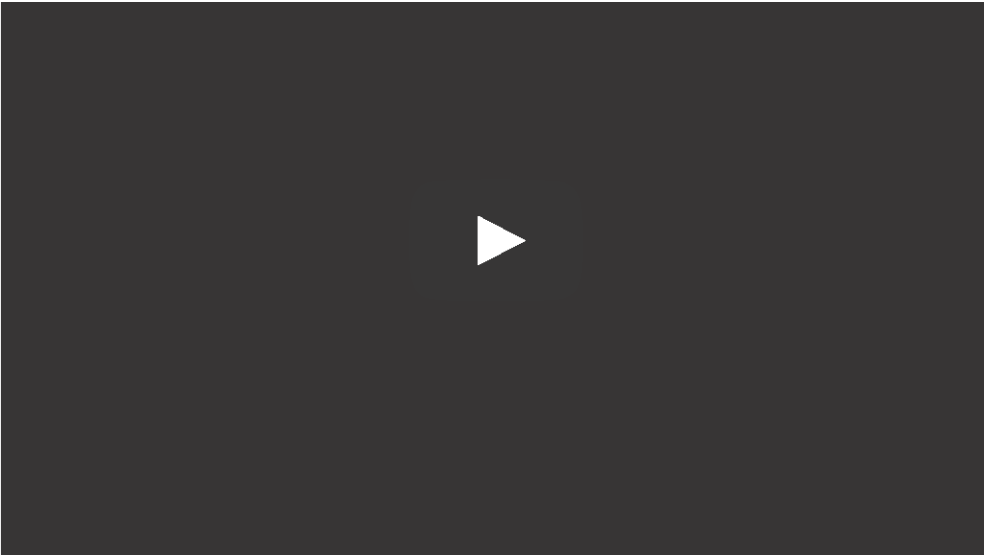
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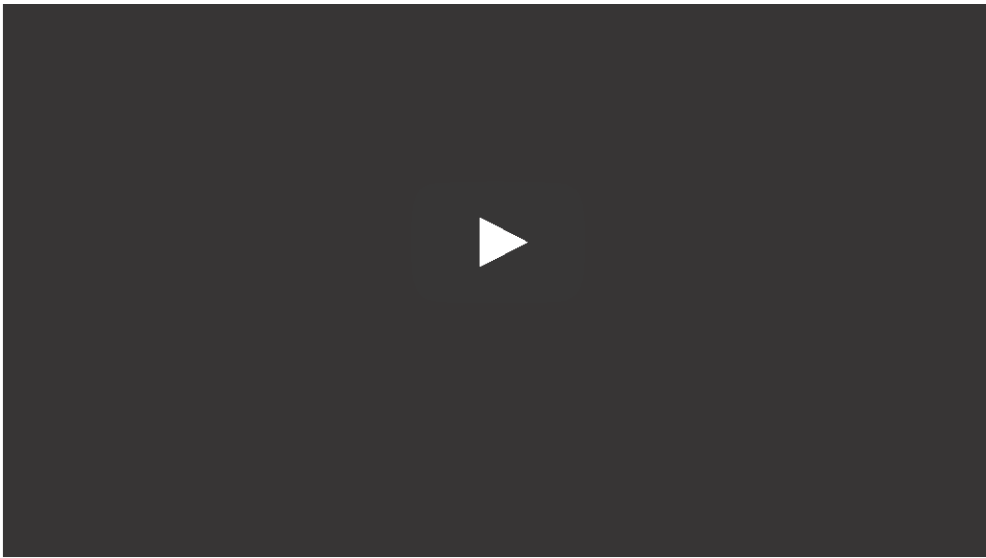
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7.The lobby of the Ukraine Hotel has been turned into a field hospital by the unrest.A seriously injured man grips a priest's hand as he is tended by medics, while volunteers bring in bodies of the wounded on make-shift stretchers. (WARNING:GRAPHIC).



8.The bodies of the conflict's victims line Kiev's central streets, some covered by only a plastic sheet. Dozens of lives have already been claimed by the growing unrest in the Ukrainian capital. (WARNING:GRAPHIC).



9. Mostly using stones dug up from the streets of Kiev, rioters employ everything at their disposal to attack the police including Molotov cocktails, pellet guns, iron batons, pistols/hand guns.





10.Ukrainian authorities have given officers permission to use live rounds in self-defense in the center of Kiev. Their decision follows reports that snipers stationed on buildings around Independence Square shot and injured over 20 police on Thursday morning.



11.Journalists filmed a group of people under fire during Thursday's battles. Using shields for cover, protesters fell to the ground after being shot at from different directions and were then dragged away for medical help.



12. RT camera crews in Kiev came under fire while trying to film the violence from a building on Independence Square. RT reporter Aleksey Yaroshevsky filmed Thursday's unrest in the very frontline describing the situation as *"true mayhem."*



The truce struck between the Ukrainian President and opposition leaders was left in tatters on Thursday, as rioters began a renewed offensive, driving police from Independence Square.

Welcome Ukraine into the EU and restore faith in the project

Granting Ukraine accession wouldn't just help Ukrainians, it could end pessimism in the union and build bridges to Russia



Sławomir Sierakowski

theguardian.com, Saturday 4 January 2014 10.00 GMT



Pro-European supporters celebrate new year in Independence Square in Kiev, Ukraine, 1 January 2014.
Photograph: Stringer/Reuters

First paragraph: In the west, the past two weeks have been a time of respite from politics as people celebrated Christmas and new year. At the same time in Kiev, stalwart Ukrainians in their thousands have spent day and night on "Euromaidan" protesting against the blocking of their road to Europe. It is hard to imagine how someone can stand and sleep on the street in winter for entire days and weeks.

Second paragraph: The determination of Ukrainian civil society should be admired, not only because the weather in Kiev is poor; but because the prospect for change in government policy is also poor. Having received a loan from Russia, President Viktor Yanukovich can wait until the extremely difficult conditions in which the protest is taking

place break the opposition. The next presidential election is some way off – according to the law, it should take place in the spring of 2015 – and the protesters have no new means of placing pressure on the government in the meantime.

Ten years ago, Jacques Derrida and Jürgen Habermas wrote their famous philosophical manifesto, which stated: "It is from their own self-interest, to be sure, that the more closely co-operating member states of the EU will hold the door open. And the probability that the invited states will pass through that door will increase the more capable the core of Europe becomes of effective action externally, and the sooner it can prove that in a complex global society, it is not just divisions that count, but also the soft power of negotiating agendas, relations, and economic advantages."

Since then the EU has almost lost faith in itself. For years, the brightest minds in philosophy and politics have been pondering how to rouse that spirit in an EU plunged into pessimism and national peculiarities. It has taken the actions of brave Ukrainians to awaken it. Nowhere before have so many people manifested support for the European Union as in Kiev. If the European Union ever seeks to shoot an ad, it will find no better visual than the masses of Ukrainians protesting in the winter streets under the EU flag. The Euromaidan protests have become a test not only for Ukrainian authorities, but also for all Europeans and their political elites. Euromaidan is the missing proof for the necessity of the union that European politicians, worried by the decreasing popularity of the European community, have sought.

Today, philosophers and intellectuals from all over the world are returning to this dream, signing an appeal for a Marshall plan for Ukraine – a necessary condition for finally overcoming the deadlock that has lasted for years.

Ukrainians are not just fighting for themselves. They are fighting for completion of the European project and the guarantee of geopolitical safety for the entire region. The autocrat in the Kremlin is rightly worried about Euromaidan – he knows that it can serve as a prelude to an "Eroploshchad" in Moscow: that is, the success of Euromaidan represents an opportunity for democratic forces within Russia. A Russia without Ukraine would become the last country in Europe to deal with the experience of losing an empire and assuming a distance from itself. The EU can build a proper and mutually beneficial relationship only with a Russia that is not imperial, but democratic. The road to this development leads through Kiev.

EU diplomacy has let itself be easily outplayed by Vladimir Putin's primitive methods. Unlike Russia, it did not recognise Ukraine as a priority, and as a consequence Ukraine was offered very bad terms. Less than a €1bn (£830m) in direct aid could not compensate the economic consequences of signing the free trade agreement with EU and a trade war with Russia, especially since the EU also demanded the fulfillment of IMF

loan conditions. EU politicians' insistence that they are not interested in bargaining is unconvincing given what they do in Brussels on a daily basis.

Today no one can doubt that Ukraine is inhabited by European citizens, just like those in England, Germany or Poland. As Derrida and Habermas noted: "What is already a fairly abstract form of civic solidarity, still largely confined to members of nation states, must be extended to include the European citizens of other nations as well." Someone malicious could propose to the growing number of Eurosceptic politicians a hypothetical changing of places with the Ukrainians if they are so enamoured of gaining distance from the EU when there are those who dream of accession. For now, however, the "geographically fortunate" can pout with impunity, without even wondering what their historical fate would be if they were to find themselves in the same place as Ukraine.

The condition for economic aid to Ukraine must be corruption-fighting reforms, but it cannot be prohibitive. There should moreover be unconditional financial assistance to Ukrainian institutions (NGOs, universities, cultural institutions, think tanks) as part of the cultural and social integration of Ukraine with the rest of Europe. Even more so, if political integration encounters difficulties.

To that end, we appeal today to politicians and citizens: let us help Ukrainians to build a new Ukraine – and help us to build a new Europe and a fairer world.

- Sławomir Sierakowski is an initiator of the appeal, along with with Andrea Graziosi, Giovanna Berkoff, Jose Casanova and Frank Sysyn.

Translation by Marysia Blackwood

The violence in Ukraine is wrong – but we'll keep fighting for our freedom

The crackdown on opposition and pro-EU protesters has hardened their determination: the next few days will be crucial



Kateryna Kruk

theguardian.com, Monday 20 January 2014 16.06 GMT



Protesters clash with police in Kiev, Ukraine, on Sunday . Photograph: Kommersant via Getty Images

First paragraph: One could feel it in the air that something was going to happen. Growing frustration among protesters has suddenly changed to anger after the Ukrainian parliament, Verkhovna Rada, passed laws severely restricting demonstrations including banning the wearing of helmets and gas masks. It took the pro-government Party of Regions only 20 minutes to change Ukraine into a dictatorship simply by a show of hands, without even counting how many deputies voted.

Second paragraph: On Saturday , the day before clashes, I tweeted: "Whatever will happen tomorrow, this day will change Ukraine." And it did. For the first time in the history of our state, people have crossed the line from peaceful protests and started a huge street

fight with police. For the very first time since the start of Euromaidan – the protests that began in November 2013 calling for closer relations with Europe – people booed opposition leaders and didn't listen to their orders.

I believe the event that led to the violence took place on Independence Square (Maidan Nezalezhnosti), while oppositionists were delivering their speeches. One activist, from a group organising a picket of officials' mansions, read an appeal asking for the resistance movement to choose one leader. But the opposition politicians present, including former boxing champion Vitali Klitschko, called him a provocateur. At this moment, people felt abandoned and declared that enough is enough.

The Euromaidan protests have been continuing for almost two months. Many people have left their homes and their jobs to join this movement. It is obvious that people are tired of politicians' flowery words, claiming to know how to save the country.

People are afraid that under the new laws everyone will sooner or later be brought before the police or courts. People are angry that their voice is being ignored by both sides. They are frustrated that no one is ready to take responsibility and lead the movement. People are furious that President Yanukovich and his government have not only ruined the whole country, but want to take the most precious thing – our freedom. Many of those who were fighting with riot police this weekend were shouting: "We don't have a way back. Either we will win, or they will put us in jail."

From the very beginning of Euromaidan, I took part in all rallies, tweeting in English and commenting on what is going on in Kyiv. According to the new law, just for these actions I could be sentenced to up to two years in jail. I can't understand that I, a 22-year-old Ukrainian, could become a criminal in my own country merely for sharing information and telling the truth.

Many outside the country may wonder who started the latest conflict and why it has escalated so quickly. The far-right organisation Pravyj Sektor (Right Sector) took responsibility for the first clash. After that, other Euromaidan protesters joined them. I don't support violence; I don't like to see my country on fire. But I can understand why people behaved this way and I can't call them provocateurs. It is sad and wrong that they have expressed their feelings this way, but when there is no leader in the crowd to control people, they start to act as the street teaches them. What happened yesterday was shocking. But responsibility for this lies with both the authorities and the opposition. It looks like both of them failed to listen to their own people.

The next few days will be decisive for Euromaidan, for the Ukrainian opposition and for the authorities. The least we are expecting is for the repeal of the latest laws. But this

should be just a beginning. After what's been going on in Kiev since November, and what happened last night, Ukrainians won't calm down until this president and his government resign. Because with them in power, no one in Ukraine can be sure our country won't lapse back into dictatorship.

theguardian

Teargas and smoke bombs used as Ukrainian protesters clash with police

Activists try to force their way past riot police to parliament in Kiev as harsh laws to halt protests are passed by President Yanukovich

Oksana Grytsenko and agencies in Kiev
The Guardian, Sunday 19 January 2014 19.50 GMT



[Link to video: Anti-government protesters clash with riot police in Kiev](#)

First paragraph: Ukraine's simmering protests against President Viktor Yanukovich boiled over into violence on Sunday after new laws banning large-scale rallies brought hundreds of thousands of defiant opponents onto the streets.

Second paragraph: After the main mass protest in central Kiev, hundreds of radical activists started storming a police cordon, attacking riot police with sticks and chains

in an attempt to push their way towards the Ukrainian parliament, which was cordoned off by rows of police buses.

Wearing masks or balaclavas to disguise their identities, the protesters threw stones, petards and firebombs. The police responded with the stun grenades, leaving a dozen protesters injured.

In a combustible standoff, for the first time in Ukraine's history the police briefly used water cannon on the protesters and warned that participation in the storming of government buildings could lead to up to 15 years in jail.

The world heavyweight boxing champion and leader of the Udar (Punch) opposition party Vitali Klitschko, who tried to calm the crowd, was sprayed in the face with white powder from a fire extinguisher.

"What you are doing now is a big danger," Klitschko shouted to the protesters.

Klitschko, who announced he would participate in presidential elections scheduled for spring 2015 urged Yanukovich to announce snap presidential elections to relieve tensions.

"I'm calling on Yanukovich to find strength and do not repeat the fate of Ceaușescu and Gaddafi," he said, referring to the slain Romanian and Libyan dictators.

The crowd set two empty police buses on fire, shouting "Kiev, give up !" and "Let us in!" as thousands more looked on.

Pro-European protests in Ukraine, known as Euromaidan, started almost two months ago when the country's government abruptly stopped preparations for free trade deal with Europe under Russian pressure. But tensions intensified on Thursday when the country's pro-government parliament passed the new laws imposing a number of restrictions on civil society, including a ban on wearing helmets or masks at rallies and hampering work of public organisations.

Yanukovich signed the controversial bill on the next day despite the criticism of the West, which provoked the resignation of his chief of staff Sergiy Liovochkin and reportedly of his spokeswoman Darka Chepak.

At a peaceful rally earlier in the day many of the protesters booed the opposition, who revealed a plan to gradually organize an alternative government, parliament and elect a "people's mayor" of Kiev.

"After what our leaders said from the stage, such a large number of people will not come

next time," a 26-year-old lawyer Oleksandr Honchar from Kiev told the Guardian. "We need the more active but of course peaceful actions," he added.

A politically active group of car drivers, the so-called Automaidan, rushed to picket the parliament building until politicians rescinded the new laws.

The Automaidan said they had nothing to do with the radicals who fought the police. "I condemn the violence which has happened now. It wasn't our plan," said Arseniy Yatseniuk, leader of the opposition Batkivshchyna party, speaking from Kiev's main Independence Square.

Hundreds of metres from the clashes dozens of men in helmets formed a line in order to defend the camp on Independence Square, which they feared could be stormed by the police.

"What are they doing?! They are storming the empty parliament, which makes no sense," one of them, Taras, told the Guardian. "Our rally doesn't need this."

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Crimea's referendum corrected Soviet-era mistake - Gorbachev

Published time: March 17, 2014 22:28

Edited time: March 18, 2014 00:17

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Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev (AFP Photo)



First paragraph: The people of Crimea fixed a Soviet-era mistake with the Sunday's referendum and the will of the people should not be

Tags

[Conflict](#), [Law](#), [Opposition](#), [Politics](#), [Russia](#), [Ukraine](#)

punished by sanctions, said former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Second paragraph: *"Earlier Crimea was merged with Ukraine under Soviet laws, to be more exact by the [Communist] party's laws, without asking the people, and now the people have decided to correct that mistake. This should be welcomed instead of declaring sanctions,"* he told Interfax on Monday.

Third paragraph: Gorbachev praised the referendum, stating that it *"reflects the aspirations of Crimea's residents."*

He criticized the use of sanctions against Russia in retaliation to the



referendum. *"To declare sanctions you need very serious reasons. And they must be upheld by the UN," Gorbachev added. "The will of the people of the Crimea and the Crimea's possible unification with Russia as a constituent region do not constitute such a reason."*

Over 96 percent of voters in the Crimean [referendum](#) held on Sunday answered 'yes' to the autonomous republic joining Russia and less than 4 percent of the vote participants want the region to remain part of Ukraine. The Crimean parliament also unanimously voted to integrate the region into Russia.

In the meantime the US, EU and Canada have already imposed new [sanctions](#) against Russia following the referendum.

The international observers who were present during the referendum made an official [statement](#) on Monday that the vote was free and conformed to international standards.

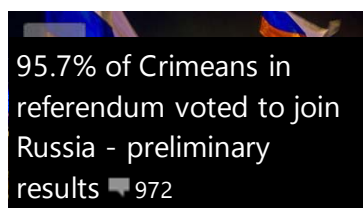
On Monday President Vladimir Putin has [signed](#) an order that Russia recognizes Crimea as a sovereign and independent state. *"According to the will of the peoples of the Crimea on the all-Crimean referendum held on March 16, 2014, [I order] to recognize the Republic of Crimea, in which the city of Sevastopol has a special status, as a sovereign and independent state,"* the document reads.

Crimea also addressed the UN seeking recognition as a sovereign state. *"The Republic of Crimea intends to build its relations with other states on the basis of equality, peace, mutual neighborly cooperation, and other generally agreed principles of political, economic and cultural cooperation between states,"* the parliament said.

Crimea has already officially introduced the ruble as a second currency along with the Ukrainian hryvna. On Monday the republic also created the Bank of Crimea and announced that all budget incomes, which up until now were being transferred to Kiev, will now

be credited to the republic's accounts. The dual currency will be in place for about six months.

Recommended



Article 8

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US steps up Crimea referendum attacks as Ukraine PM visits White House

Obama administration insists impending referendum to annex Crimea to Russia 'would have no legal effect'

[Dan Roberts](#) in Washington

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[theguardian.com](#), Wednesday 12 March 2014 18.40 GMT [Jump to comments \(1147\)](#)



John Kerry shakes hands with Ukrainian prime minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk at the State Department on Wednesday. Photograph: Michael Reynolds/EPA

First paragraph: The White House is stepping up its criticism of a planned referendum in Crimea as it plays host on Wednesday to the Ukrainian prime minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk in a last ditch bid to prevent Russian annexation of the peninsula.

Second paragraph: In a statement issued jointly [on the behalf of G7 leaders](#), the US administration insisted the referendum scheduled to take place this weekend “would have no legal effect” and would not be recognised by the international community.

“Given the lack of adequate preparation and the intimidating presence of Russian troops, it would also be a deeply flawed process which would have no moral force,” said the G7 statement on Wednesday. Western diplomats are anxious to stress how the rushed referendum on joining Russia breaches international law and precedents for dealing with secession issues, but there is increasing concern that separatists in Crimea will use it as a justification for a permanent split from the Ukraine.

“Russian annexation of Crimea would be a clear violation of the United Nations Charter; Russia’s commitments under the Helsinki Final Act; its obligations to Ukraine under its 1997 Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership; the Russia- Ukraine 1997 basing agreement; and its commitments in the Budapest Memorandum of 1994,” added the G7 statement.

“In addition to its impact on the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, the annexation of Crimea could have grave implications for the legal order that protects the unity and sovereignty of all states. Should the Russian Federation take such a step, we will take further action, individually and collectively.”

Ukrainian prime minister Yatsenyuk is due to meet US president Barack Obama at the White House on Wednesday afternoon after a separate meeting with secretary of state John Kerry.

Kerry is also planning further talks with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov in London on Friday.

But independent analysts question whether the blanket rejection of Crimean separatist claims by the west may not be enough to win the argument in neighbouring countries that are more sympathetic to the issue.

“It can’t be enough just to say this referendum is illegitimate,” said Thomas de Waal, a regional expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, who has [argued](#) for a more nuanced response.

“Washington and Europe need to win the argument with Russia as well, not just take the moral high ground, and therefore they should be coming up with counter proposals for Crimean autonomy,” De Waal told the Guardian.

“There are some swing voters here like the other former Soviet republics like Kazakhstan and Belarus who are sitting on the fence and so just condemnation is not enough. They have got to be coming up with a forward-looking plan.”

So far, the US and Europe have largely responded to Moscow’s concerns by suggesting international monitors to ensure the rights of Russian citizens and speakers in the Ukraine are respected.

But the west has not detailed how separatist claims should be adjudicated, other than to insist that the government in Kiev should be involved.